

THE EARLY YEARS IN AMERICA – THE SINGERS in MAINE

The Immigrants

[The Khazanovich family lived in what is now Nemunaitis in Lithuania. The family moved to what is now Miroslavas, probably in about 1883-1886. At the time, Nemunaitis was on the eastern side of the Nemunas River, in Vilnius province in Russia; and Miroslavas was on the western side, in Suwalki province in Russian Poland. Both towns are now in Lithuania.]

Abt. 1883-1884: Avrom Khazanovich (b. about 1869) arrived in New York, becoming Abraham Singer. He also went to Boston, where according to his later telling of the story, he had no relatives. His niece Rebecca Singer Robinson commented that Abraham "made his beginning money by selling wrappers or kimonos to houses of ill repute!! Many would not sell to 'whorehouses.' There were many of these houses in Maine, NH, and Mass."

1885: Khaym Leyb Leliansky (b. 1863) arrived in Philadelphia and became Louis Lelansky. His family lived near Miroslavas in Alytus, in what is now Lithuania. According to his later Petition for Naturalization, he lived in Philadelphia for a few years and then moved to Trenton (or Vineland), New Jersey. He then moved to New York, then to Boston.

1889: Ester Khazanovich Leliansky (b. about 1865) arrived in America, joining her husband, and became Ester Lelansky. The destination on her passenger manifest was shown as Boston, but it isn't certain if that was her final destination.

1890: Abraham filed his petition for naturalization. He listed himself as a trader and a resident of Boston, residing at 70 Cross Street. (This isn't proof that he lived in Boston at the time, as it was not too unusual to show the city where the person applied.)

1891: Ester and Louis Lelansky lived in Lewiston, where Louis filed a petition for naturalization. Their son Sam was born in Lewiston in 1892. A directory for the same year shows the family in Biddeford, where Louis is listed as a fruit dealer. In 1894 they lived in Auburn. The family referred to Louis as "the Mover." Louis was said to have brothers in Lewiston/Auburn. One brother appears to have been Morris Lelansky, who was a junk dealer in these years.

1892: Ester's and Abraham's younger brother Mortke Khazanovich (b. about 1875) arrived in Boston. It is a popular story for an immigrant to say they arrived on the Fourth of July, but Max actually did!

Rebecca passed on through her daughter Judy Kamin in 2002, about Max's trip to America: "He never mentioned being sea sick. There were 3 classes on the voyage-1st, 2nd, and steerage. He was in the latter. He brought herring and pumpernickel bread --these would not get moldy on the trip and he would have something to eat." (Rebecca commented later that the steerage passengers were "very thirsty" because of this diet. She said that the steerage passengers had to bring their own food for the weeklong trip.)

He was said to have gone to Lewiston to join Abraham, and took the name Max Singer. He stayed in a boarding house (which caused some hurt feelings, because the family store was that he was only 15 and not invited to stay with Abraham and Minnie). There the other men gave him advice and a box of notions to sell. When he had enough money, one of his first steps was to have his photo taken for his family back in Russia:



Max age 16

[Max was listed as age 17 on the ship manifest, which matches to the 1875 birth year on other records.]

1892: Abraham married Minnie Shohet (from Boston) on December 23rd. Minnie came from a family of rabbis and doctors and had a brother and nephews in these professions who later immigrated and lived in Massachusetts, New York and Chicago. Family members came from what is now Vieksniai, Lithuania. Abraham and Minnie were married by Rabbi M. Margolies, who was related to Minnie and performed marriages for other family members. Max's daughter Rebecca was later married by Rabbi Moses Shohet of Portland.

1893: Abraham Singer and Max Singer both appeared in the Lewiston, Maine directory for the first time, listed as peddlers. Abraham is listed with a home at 68 Lincoln, and Max is boarding at the same address. This is near the boarding house established by the Markson family, for the young, single, Jewish peddlers who had appeared in Lewiston. That boarding house was at 170 Lincoln. The boarding house became a gathering place and was the home of early religious services in the town.

1894: Abraham Singer established his first business in Lewiston, a Fruit and Confectionery at 286 Lisbon St. By 1896 he was selling cigars at this address, though it is still registered as a Fruit and Confectionery. This address in 2002 is part of the Lower Lisbon Street Historic District, a concentration of 18 commercial structures. "The district is significant as the only intact concentration of commercial buildings from the city's most important period of development, 1850-1915."

The following list from the Maine Register shows the subsequent movement of businesses (Singer-owned are shown in red) around Lisbon Street:

1893-94	Chappelle, Louis	286 Lisbon	Dry & Fancy Goods
1893-94	Ehrenfried, Geo & Greenburg, Isaac	240 Lisbon	Dry & Fancy Goods
1894-95	Singer, A.	286 Lisbon	Fruit & Confectionery
1895-96	Singer, A.	286 Lisbon	Fruit & Confectionery
1896-97	Greenburg, Isaac	240 Lisbon	Fancy Goods
1897-98	Greenburg, Isaac	240 Lisbon	Fancy Goods
1897-98	Brown, A.	286 Lisbon	Fruit & Confectionery
1898-99	Brown, A.	286 Lisbon	Fruit & Confectionery
1899-00	Androscoggin Dry Goods	240 Lisbon	Dry & Fancy Goods
1900-01	Androscoggin Dry Goods	240 Lisbon	Dry & Fancy Goods
1900-01	Brown, A.	286 Lisbon	Fruit & Confectionery

1901-02	Androscoggin Dry Goods	240 Lisbon	Dry & Fancy Goods
1901-02	Brown, A.	286 Lisbon	Fruit & Confectionery
1902-03	Shapiro Bros.	286 Lisbon	Fruit & Confectionery
1903-04	Singer, A.	240 Lisbon	Dry & Fancy Goods
1904-05	Singer, A.	326 Lisbon	Dry & Fancy Goods
1904-05	Singer Clothing Co.	162 Lisbon	Clothing
1905-06	J.J. Shapiro & Bros	286 Lisbon	Fruit & Confectionery
1905-06	Singer, Max	326 Lisbon	Dry & Fancy Goods
1906-07	Shapiro Bros.	286 Lisbon	Fruit & Confectionery
1906-07	The Fashion	204 Lisbon & 22 Pine	Dry & Fancy Goods



Lewiston, Me, Lisbon St. from Ash

1895: Max Singer became a citizen.

1897: Abraham Singer went into the Dry & Fancy Goods business with Marx Mendelson, with "Mendelson & Singer," at 255 Lisbon. This was the first of several different dry goods stores owned and operated by Abraham and his family, and the first of his businesses with Marx (subsequently Max) Mendelson. Max was about the same age as Abraham and lived in Auburn.

1898: Two more siblings arrived together at the port of New York and made their way to Lewiston. Sore Khazanovich (b. about 1874) became Sara Singer; Yankl (Yakov) Khazanovich (b. 1883) became Jacob Singer. They traveled together on the ship *Palatia*. Jacob was listed on the ship manifest as 17 years old, but he was really 15. Sara was listed as 22. Jacob carried their money – a total of \$2. (Equivalent to about \$57 in money in 2015.) Both initially lived with Abraham and his wife Minnie, and their two small children. Sara worked as a domestic for Abraham to pay back her passage. This caused some resentment in the family, probably because it was considered degrading for a single woman to work as a paid domestic (see *Notes on Life in the Shtetl, Occupations*), and Sara felt that she was treated in this way, rather than as family. Jacob took up peddling, or worked for Abraham. There is a family story that he was a "pack peddler," carrying goods from the town to the surrounding areas to sell, and he might have done that at this time.

Within the next few years Abraham brought his brother Meyer and brother-in-law Yankl (Jacob) Shohet to the U.S. Meyer wasn't found in the 1900 census, so may have actually arrived later. He became Myer Singer (and sometimes Meyer Singer). He may have lived briefly in Boston. After the arrival of his wife and children in 1903, they moved to Alpena, Michigan where he

peddled furs and hides (his father Yudl owned a tannery in Russia). Myer chose Alpena because of the Polish community living there. Myer developed a fur business in Alpena.

1899: Abraham moved his dry goods business to 240 Lisbon, and it became "Androscoggin Dry Goods." His wife Minnie was listed as a saleswoman in the 1900 Federal Census, so she probably worked in the store. He is listed as a Merchant of Dry Goods.

Looking at the 1900 Lewiston census, it appears that the town's main industry was a cotton mill, and that the residents were largely of Canadian ancestry, and overwhelmingly English speaking (from Canada, the US, Ireland or England). A small number of Polish immigrants appear, and even fewer of Russian/Jewish descent. According to niece Rebecca Robinson, there was discrimination against Jews and French Canadians in the early days.

Louis "the Mover" and Ester Lelansky moved to Brunswick at about his time, where upon his daughter Eva's birth he was listed as a peddler. In 1900 he was listed in the census as a rag peddler, then in 1901 a junk peddler. The family lived in Brunswick until about 1910. Rebecca Robinson remembered Louis as a rag peddler and the family as having very little money. Louis' granddaughter Nettie said that he was "not ambitious." Rebecca said that when the Lelanskys lived in Brunswick, Rebecca's father Max would bring Ester a "wrapper," a cotton dress, as a Passover present, because she had little to wear.

1900: Max Singer married Bessie Gould in Somersworth, NH. Max had been connected to her by a salesman who visited the store in Lewiston where Max was working. The salesman drove Max to meet Bessie, and Bessie and Max wrote to each other until they were married. They were married by Rabbi Margolies of Boston (who had married Abraham Singer and was related to Abraham's wife Minnie).



1901: Sara Singer married widower Bennett Berger from Fort Kent, Maine. They were married in Lewiston by a justice of the peace. Cousin Rebecca Singer Robinson wrote in 2001, "Bennett Berger wrote to a Mr. Lelansky in Portland saying that he needed someone to take care of this three children. Sara was 28 years old and worked for Abraham as a maid. Twenty-eight was old not to be married and here was an opportunity to make a better life (so she thought)."

Sara and Bennett lived in Fort Kent until at least 1903.

Abt. 1902: Jacob moved to Brunswick and opened a dry goods store, "Singer's Dry Goods," at 50 Maine Street (left). An ad for what

may have been the store's opening appeared in the newspaper on March 8, 1902:

"GO WAY BACK AND SIT DOWN!"
With High Prices!

COME ONE, COME ALL

To the Grand Opening of our New and very latest styles of Spring and Summer line of Ladies' and Children's **GARMENTS, HOSIERY, LINEN, LACES** and a full line of **FANCY DRY GOODS, ETC.**, which will take place at . . .

50 MAINE STREET, BRUNSWICK, NEXT TO PEJEPSCOT BANK

Where we will offer **GRREAT BARGAINS** that this town and many miles around have never before offered. We have succeeded after a careful search for the latest styles, to place our Order with the most reliable and leading **Manufacturers** at our own cash price, which means a great saving to us in the price, and this we are ready to share with our patronizers.

Our motto which is **QUICK SALES** and **SMALL PROFITS** will be executed to the full meaning of the words. Our Goods being made up at the most fashionable manufacturing place and every Garment is guaranteed to fit and of the best quality of Goods at a price that can't be beat. We Defy Competition

Would You Miss This Opportunity?

Of course not! Remember the place and bring your friends. This Opening Sale is limited, therefore **Come Early and Avoid the Rush.**

 We also offer a souvenir of an imported Japanese Jewel Basket with a Bottle Cologne with every 98 cents worth of Goods purchased during the Sale

The Singer Dry Goods Co.,
50 MAINE STREET, BRUNSWICK, MAINE

1903: In June of this year Abraham and Jacob took out a mortgage of \$3500 from Charles Whitney for the site of Jacob's store at 50 Maine Street. (Below, fifth store from right.) They put down one dollar and the mortgage was to be repaid at \$700 annually. It had a 26' frontage on Maine Street and was south of what was then the Pejepscot Bank lot.

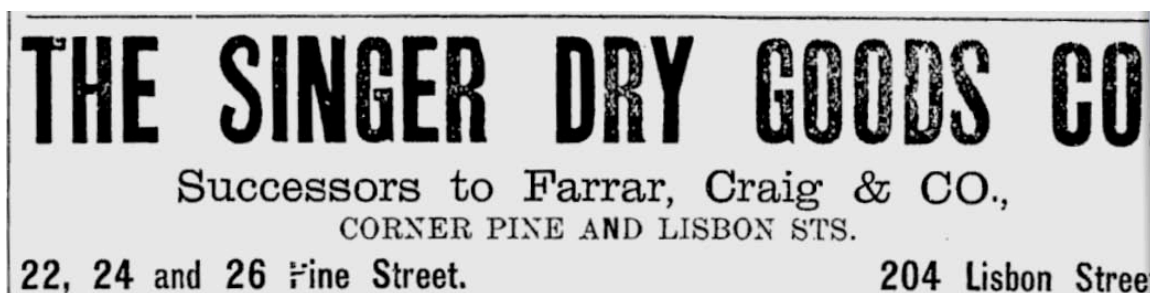


50 Maine St (fifth building from right)

1904: Abraham Singer bought the dry goods store previously owned by Clarence D. Farrar, at 204 Lisbon. The store had additional entries at 22, 24 and 26 Pine Street, and was located in the

Pilsbury Block, a commercial property built for George Pilsbury in 1870. In 1983 it was added to the US National Register of Historic Places.

From July 1, 1904:



[The store subsequently was renamed "The Fashion." Abraham's family retained the store on Lisbon for more than 20 years, and most of the family members worked in the store. From 1912 to 1919 his daughter Nettie was a bookkeeper for the store.]

Also in 1904, Jacob Singer was in Brunswick had appeared in the Board of Trade Journal as an up and coming young merchant.

Jacob Singer.

The youngest business man in Brunswick is Jacob Singer, proprietor of the Singer Dry Goods Company at 50 Maine street. Mr. Singer came to this country from Russia when he was fifteen years old. He chose Lewiston as the starting point for his business career, and after two years of careful management of his traveling dry goods business, during which he traveled miles to supply his ready patrons, Mr. Singer saved enough to start him in the present enterprise. Two years ago he moved from his first quarters into his present two-story building, of which he is the owner.

Mr. Singer carries a full line of dry, fancy and millinery goods, and his patronage is large.

Mr. Singer was born in Russia in 1882, where he attended school. Although he has been in Brunswick but five years, he has earned for himself an enviable reputation of which he may well feel proud.

On November 4th, Jacob Singer married Fannie Waterman, in Portland. At the time, Jacob was considered to be an up and coming young businessman. Family lore is that Jacob was pressured into the marriage by Abraham and Minnie. Fannie was thought to be pretty, and considered to be from a well off family, because she lived with her sister Thressa Bernstein, and the Bernsteins owned a jewelry store in Portland. Rebecca said this was important to Minnie.

Their wedding was announced in the newspaper as follows:

Singer-Waterman

Tuesday evening at Wilson's dancing academy in Portland Jacob Singer of Brunswick and Miss Fanny Waterman were united in marriage in the presence of about 200 relatives and friends. The ceremony was performed at 8 o'clock by Rabbi Weinstein, assisted by Rev. Glassman. The bride was given away in marriage by her brother-in-law J.S. Bernstein. The bride was gowned in a white tulle dress trimmed with gold spangles and carried a bouquet of pinks and roses. She also wore a handsome diamond necklace, the gift of the groom.

The maid of honor was Miss Pauline Bernstein. Miss Bernstein wore a pink silk dress and carried a bouquet of pinks. The best man was Ellis Waterman, a brother of the bride.



The ushers were Morris Waterman, Samuel Sacknoff, John Draker and Sol Soloway of Portland; Samuel Leavitt of Fall River, Mass.; Mitchell Fitzner of New York and Samuel Magdad of East Boston.

After the ceremony a supper was served in the banquet hall under the direction of a committee composed of Messrs. J. S. Bernstein, Mr. Waterman, Harry Stein, Miss Blumentahal, Miss Lena Levinsky and Philip Livensky.

During the evening music for dancing was furnished by the Fort Williams military band. Prizes for the best dancers were awarded to Master Harry Stein and Lena Levinsky.

Ninety-five telegrams and letters of congratulations were read during the dancing, from relatives and friends in different states of the Union.

After a brief wedding trip to New York and as far west as St. Louis, Mr. and Mrs. Singer will take up their residence in Brunswick, where Mr. Singer is engaged in business.

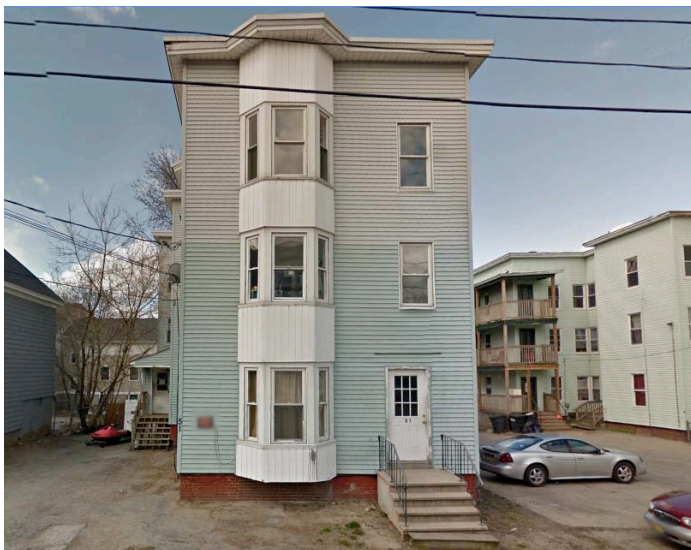
Among the out of town guests in attendance were: Mr. and Mrs. A. Singer, Mr. and Mrs. M. Singer, Mr. and Mrs. Silverman, Mr. and Mrs. Feldman, Mr. and Mrs. Lambert, Mrs. Jane Kurtz, all of Lewiston; Mr. and Mrs. B. S. Waterman, Bangor; Mr. and Mrs. Mack, Brunswick; Mr. Mitchell Fitzer, Troy, N. Y.; Mr. Samuel Maggett, Boston.

Rebecca Robinson said that initially Jacob and Fannie lived in a nice apartment above Jacob's store (where their son Maurice was later born in 1905).

On December 19, 1904, Abraham Singer, signed over the property (at 50 Maine St.) that he and Jacob had purchased in June 1903 to Bennett Berger (their brother-in-law, who was about 20 years older) for one dollar. The condition was that Bennett be responsible for the mortgage. This is a mystery, because the family story is that Jacob owned and ran that store at this time. Jacob seemed to be financially solvent at this time. There is no mention of Bennett in ads. In fact, a year later (see below) Jacob would open a second store, in Bath.

Within a couple of months, Abraham had a lawsuit against Bennett and it appears the property may have been about to go to court, possibly for lack of back taxes or payments of some other sort. In August, Abraham discharged the payments due (\$2,000). Based on later records, the title was left in the hands of Bennett and Jacob.

1904-1905: Abraham and Max Singer both lived with their families in the same building, at 51 Pierce Street (below, in 2016). The next year Max and his family moved to 167 Park Street.



1905: Max Singer appeared in the Lewiston directory as the proprietor of a Dry & Fancy Goods store at 326 Lisbon Street. The prior year this store had been listed as Abraham's store, so it appears that Max bought or took over management of the store. [Note that this 326 Lisbon address is also part of the Lower Lisbon Street Historic District.]

In August 1905 another deed appears in which Jacob Singer and Bennett Berger passed on the land in Brunswick at 50 Maine St (noted above) to Telesphore Lapointe, who ran a dry goods business at 32 Maine St. It's not clear why they gave up the property (and mortgage), but the business continued to exist as Singer Dry Goods with Jacob as the proprietor. The Bergers still lived in town in late 1905 when their son Edward was born, and Bennett was listed on the birth certificate as a merchant but it's not clear where he worked.

1906: Max's daughter Rebecca wrote, "I recall that when I was about 4 or 5 we lived in a tenement house in Lewiston and across the street was a park now called Kennedy Park, named after the President who was killed. This was in Lewiston. None of the tenements had any land. We had indoor plumbing but no bathroom or electricity or hot water.

"We burnt wood in the large kitchen range, and my father on cold nights would get up in the middle of the night to replenish the wood."

(This would have been when the family lived at 167 Park Street, where they appeared in the 1906-07 Lewiston City Directory.)

Jacob opened a second store in Bath in December 1906. (Advertisement next page.)

1907-1908: Max was still shown in the 1908 Lewiston Directory with the occupation "Dry and fancy goods." They moved to Brunswick soon after this directory came out.

Rebecca said that after their daughter Pauline was born in 1907, Jacob and Fannie moved the family to Market Lane so that the children could have more room. Rebecca wrote that at Market Lane her family "lived on the first floor and he and his family resided above us."

OPENING

SATURDAY

New Store! New Goods!

Large Line of

Cloaks and Garments,

Furs, Waists, Petticoats, Trimmed Hats, Children's Garments, Etc., at

178 Front Street

UNDER COLUMBIA THEATRE

Most desirable goods at VERY LOW Prices. Come in and see the bargains.

J. SINGER

Branch of the Singer Dry Goods Co. of Brunswick.

However, Jacob's finances were falling apart. Rebecca said that Jacob had been doing very well in business before he married, but that afterwards he had money problems and may have filed for bankruptcy. Bennett Berger apparently had financial problems too.

According to Rebecca, Abraham arranged for his brother Max to take over Jacob's store in Brunswick, and told Jacob to take a position as Max's employee. Rebecca said that Abraham's motivation was that he wanted his brother Max to leave Lewiston so that there wouldn't be two Singers running dry goods businesses there. Bennett Berger moved to Throop, PA, where he ran a grocery and dry goods store.) The family said he left Brunswick due to financial issues.

Jacob and Fannie also left town with their family, and apparently Jacob rarely spoke of Abraham afterwards. Fannie said that "his brothers had cheated him out of his business." (Jacob's son Maurice was unaware that he had an Uncle Abraham until traveling to Maine in the 1970s, well after Jacob's death.)

Rebecca writes, "When we moved to Brunswick we also lived in a tenement house that didn't have a bath room. The children could bathe in a small tub but my parents had to be content to sponge wash themselves. My father bought a second hand bathtub. Outside was wooden and inside tin. He drilled a hole in the tub and floor so after a bath the water could flow down but he had to continue boiling water in a washtub. He installed it in our dining room; no other place. My mother was creative so my father was asked to make a cover of wood that could be used to cover the bath. My mother covered the wooden cover with a couch cover and placed 3 pillows as the tub was against the wall. The street we lived on was called Market Lane, and the rent was 6 dollars a month." The family was quite proud to have a tub.

"We burnt wood and coal. The coal heated the kitchen and the dining room." It also provided some heat, but very little for the two adjoining bedrooms, and "we often wore our fleece lined underwear under our night wear, with plenty of blankets to keep us warm. The front room, later called the parlor was shut off in the winter so we used the kitchen all winter. Neighbors frequently came in and my mother served tea and the big molasses cookies she made without eggs or milk. Once a week my mother baked several dozen and for the weekend a sponge cake. My mother was well known for her cookies. Our playmates, when they visited us, would ask if they could have a cookie."

1910: Max was shown in the census as operating the clothing store at 50 Maine in Brunswick and his family lived on Market Lane. Soon after, in May, they bought a house at 13 Dunlap Street.



50 Maine St. Interior

(Note the tin ceiling, which was still there in 2002.)

The 1910 census shows Jacob's family living in Rumford, Maine, which is about 40 miles northwest of Lewiston. Their address is 226 Pine St. Jacob is listed as the proprietor of a grocery store.

The Lelansky family had moved back to Lewiston, where Louis was still a peddler, joined by his son Sam. Their daughter Sarah was working as a stitcher in a shoe factory.

According to Rebecca, the Lelansky family lived in poverty until the children went to work. When Sarah was 14 she went to work in the shoe factory. Prior to that, she had worked in a gum factory. She gave money toward the support of the family, but saved out some for her dowry. Son Sam went to work after he finished 4th grade. He became a cutter in the shoe factory. It was a good trade and he made quite a bit of money, which supported the family.

As an interesting historical side note, Louis' family in Russia had been shoemakers.

Rebecca wrote, "Joe and Eva were the only two who graduated high school. Eva was valedictorian of her class." [Eva later married Herbert Gediman and they lived in Washington, D.C., where they both worked for the government. Eva worked at the Pentagon.]

1912: Jacob Singer had left Rumford, Maine and moved to Akron, Ohio, to work for Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. The rubber factories were booming at this time, making tires for bicycles and for the new "horseless carriages." Jacob's brief experience convinced him to go back to peddling, initially making trips into the countryside with a horse and wagon, and staying over with farmers. He sold city goods in the country, and country produce in the city. Later he opened a fruit market, which he kept until his retirement.

According to a November, 1929 story in the Lewiston Evening Journal, Abraham started investing in business properties this year (1912). His first purchases were of the Lamey & Wellahan building at 110 Lisbon and the Pillsbury Block at Lisbon and Pine.

The Lamey & Wellahan building had housed the dry goods store of Cronin & Root in 1912. It was occupied by the Lamey and Wellahan Shoe Store in 1914.

The Pilsbury Block refers to the commercial building at 200-210 Lisbon, at the northeast corner of Lisbon and Pine, built in 1870 for George Pilsbury. Home of The Fashion, it was placed on the US National Register of Historic Places in 1983.



In September of 1912 Abraham went into partnership with Sam Levine in the Bath Department Store at 26 Centre Street, in Bath. More information about his investments can be found in the document "1929_11_02AbrahamsStory."

1916: The Lelansky family had moved to a small farm in Lewiston, at 244 Webster St. and lived there until about 1929. Louis was listed as a "farmer" on one census record.

Granddaughter Frances remembered Ester and Louis' farm in Lewiston - with cows, chickens, fruit trees, grape orchards -- "a wonderful farm." Louis and his sons delivered milk and eggs from the farm. Frances remembered riding with her grandfather Louis in his horse-drawn wagon. She remembered him as being a wonderful person, who was the "first to be there to help" when their children were born. Nettie said the farm was located on Webster Street and was about a city block long.

Sharon Alpert wrote in 2002, "A Mrs. Bell, who knew her grandmother, once told Nettie that Ester Lelansky made money from the farm that she lived on by selling fruits (apples mainly), milk and cottage cheese from a cow on the farm, and by baking and selling her baked goods."

Note that in the shtetl it was considered normal for everyone in the family to work to help the family make a living. The ideal family was one in which the male spent his time studying, protected as much as possible from manual labor or worldly concerns. (See the section *Notes on Life in the Shtetl, Roles of Men and Women*.) Granddaughter Frances Wise Bigman said that, indeed, Louis studied a great deal, reading Hebrew books.

Nettie said that Ester and Louis never really owned the farm, but that at some point their daughter Sarah bought it from the owners. Their cousin Rebecca recalled that Ester and Louis' children helped them buy the farm, and that the farm was sold, they each received a share of the money. The 1920 census shows Louis as the owner of the property.

World War I: Family members who are known to have served:

Joseph P. Lelansky (son of Ester and Louis Lelansky) served from May 1918 – June 1919 in the 90th Division, 360th Infantry. The unit served in battles of the Argonne and Rhine. Joseph was a Private First Class.

Myers Brownstone (future husband of Abraham's daughter Ida), was a dentist when he enlisted and served as a First Lieutenant from December 1918 to October 1919. He served in France and was in the Dental Corps.

1918: Telesphore Lapointe signed over the deed to the store in Brunswick (at 50 Maine St) to Max. Max discharged the mortgage to the Dunlap Street property the next year, 1919. This supports the story from Max's family that the WWI period was a time of prosperity.

Abraham and his family moved to 174 Pine (below, 2016), where they lived for the next 15 years. The house had been built in 1910.



1919: Sam Levine bought out the interest of his partner Abraham Singer in the Bath Department Store. Included in one of the ads for a "Dissolution of Partnership Sale," was an announcement.

Following is an excerpt:

TO THE PUBLIC:—

Six years ago this month, in company with Mr. A. Singer, of Lewiston, I purchased the business of the W. O. Parker Co., and commenced dealing with the people of Bath and vicinity under the name of

THE BATH DEPARTMENT STORE

During those six years I have seen the business steadily increase, month after month, and all due to the generous patronage which I have received from the Bath public.

I have endeavored to use my customers fairly, to see that they received courteous treatment and service and that all of their dealings at the Bath Department Store were satisfactory.

Mr. A. Singer, my partner, notifies me that he wishes to retire from the business and I am taking over his interests. It means a big proposition to me at just this time when the store is stocked with new goods, bought for the Spring trade. It means that I am in immediate need of \$20,000.

The stock of Spring goods is the greatest in the history of the store, yet to show my appreciation of the generous patronage accorded me in the past, I am going to throw the entire stock, at near cost prices, open for your benefit and believe that you will appreciate my action by attending what I promise you shall be

1920: Max's family moved to 5 Federal Street (built in 1916). Several (confusing) records for deeds and mortgages related to Federal Street appear in May of this year. Max and Minnie lived there the rest of their lives, and their daughter Goldie then stayed in the home until long after she retired.

1922: Abraham assisted his niece Basye Cazanovicus (b. 1900) in coming to America. She also worked as a domestic for Abraham. She became Bertha Singer and married Joe Brown. They lived in Boston.

The A. Singer building was built at what is now 112-114 Lisbon Street was built. Based on newspaper stories of that year, this was originally the old Wakefield Drug Store, established in 1852. It went on sale in May of 1922, and in July the city council was debating whether to condemn the building, and it was noted that owner Abraham Singer did not argue against it. The article says that he planned to demolish the building and erect a substantial "brick and concrete" structure in its place. The cornerstone was laid August 15, 1922, according to a later article (August 17, 1922). The 1922 A. Singer building:





1925-1926: Beth Jacob Synagogue was constructed on Sabattus Street, the first synagogue in Lewiston. Abraham was a president and charter member of the congregation.

It was probably about this time that Abraham officially set up Singer Realty. Abraham was president of the company and his son Sam the treasurer-clerk. Sam took over as proprietor of The Fashion, still at 204 Lisbon, and Abraham's son David became manager of The Fashion. Daughter Nettie was also back working at the clothing store. She worked as a buyer for the store. Son Samuel became manager of the store in 1922. Sometime between 1926 and 1932 Samuel became the proprietor of the store and his brother David became the manager.

1927: Among what would be assumed to be many transactions over the years, Singer Realty purchased "a business block" at 137, 139 and 141 Main Street, from Clarence LeBlanc. It was sold in 1950.

1928: In January, Max sold the property at 50 Maine Street to the Pennell brothers, who had been running a men's clothing store at 72 Maine Street. Max's dry goods store remained, but at 47 Maine St. In September 1928 he bought what had been a novelty store in Bath, on Front Street. As of 1924 Mr. Conley did own Conley's Specialty Store, but it was located at 25 Centre Street, opposite the Bath Department Store, so it's not clear where this store was.

The Novelty store on Front street, recently purchased by Morris S. Povich and once operated by Mr. Conley and later Mr. Butler has been sold to Max Singer of Brunswick, who plans to conduct the business in Bath. Mr. Singer has a dry goods store in Brunswick.

1929: On November 2, Abraham's story was told on the features page of the Lewiston Evening Journal. (Shown in a different document "1929_11_02AbrahamsStory".)

On December 16, a story appeared in the Lewiston Evening Journal re a fire occurring at 179 and 181 Main, at a building owned by Singer Realty, with a photo and comments by Abraham:



The block from Park to Lisbon Streets on Main showing building afire.

Abraham Singer of the Singer Realty Co. was warm in praise of the firemen. He stated that it was only due to the efficient work of the firemen that the blaze did not clean up the entire corner.

New Brick Building

Mr. Singer was not able to ascertain the amount of damage that the company will lose. He stated, however, that instead of repairing the structure a new brick building might be built to occupy the entire corner.

He would not say for sure that this would be the outcome because he does not know whether it will be necessary to tear down the building. The upper two stories are so damaged that this will probably be the only way out and in this instance the corner building, altho not damaged by fire, would also be taken down to make room for a large modern brick building.

1931: Myer Singer, whose wife had died the prior year, visited family in Brunswick. From the Bath Independent newspaper, August 8th (photo below, right, is Judy Kamin with her Great Uncle Myer):

Myer L. Singer left last Sunday for his home in Port Huron, Mich., after a five weeks' visit with his brother, Max Singer and family of Brunswick. For many years the brothers have been living in Michigan and Maine, respectively, and this visit marked the first time that they have met for exactly 30 years.



the

1932: Abraham's family moved to 161 Walnut Street.

1933: The Singer Realty Company first appears in the Lewiston city directory at 198 Lisbon Street, which was in Pilsbury Block, which Abraham had purchased in 1912.

(According to an on line photo, there was a Singer Realty Building was located at 193-207 Main St. in Lewiston. Apparently Singer Realty at some time owned nearby properties at 185-87 Main Street, based on the fact that they later leased it out in 1950, but so far no reference has been found to a Singer Realty Building.)

At about this time David Singer took over The Lucille (a clothing store) at 40 (also listed as 33 1/2) Lisbon. In 1935 David's wife Sadye was listed as the president-treasurer of Lucille's Inc. The Fashion disappeared from the directories.

1934: Louis Lelansky died. He and his son Nathan had been listed as fruit dealers. Ester and Nathan moved to 205 Ash St.

Allen Lelansky remembered his father Sam driving up to visit Ester and Nathan, and recalled they had a cold-water flat in Lewiston. Sam was concerned about Ester and moved her to her own place in Portland, ME. Later he moved her to the apartment below his, in a two-family house. Allen said that she always took care of herself and did her own cooking.

Granddaughter Frances said that Ester kept a kosher house, and read the Jewish bible, and that Louis studied a great deal, reading Hebrew books. However Frances didn't recall them as being very religious, in terms of attending temple.

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1935: Abraham moved to 7 Central Avenue, where he lived for the rest of his life. The family also kept the house at 161 Walnut.

1938: Golda Chazanovicius (b. 1920, daughter of the Singer siblings' brother Fayvl) came to the U.S. and went to live with her sister Bertha Singer Brown in Boston. Chazanovicius is the Lithuanian version of the Russian name Khazanovich. Golda said that in addition to Yiddish, Hebrew and Lithuanian, which she spoke and read fluently, she also understood Polish and Russian, and took German in High School. She had also studied Latin. Then when she came to America she learned English. Golda initially worked in a stocking factory, and took English classes. When her English was better she took a job as a sales girl.

1940: Abraham Singer died in Lewiston. With Abraham's death on May 9th, his daughter Nettie Singer Bramson became president of Singer Realty and her brother Samuel continued as the treasurer-clerk.

As an interesting historical footnote, Abraham's obituary in the Boston Jewish Advocate appeared next to that of Emma Goodman, the noted anarchist.

Laurie Graf Singer (wife of Abraham's grandson Dick) writes in 2002, "As far as the money in the family, it very much diminished over time. Most of the properties on Main Street in Lewiston were owned by Singer Realty. Uncle Sam (Abraham's son) managed all of it long after Abraham's death. The property declined in value after the WWII years. Some of the large factories in Lewiston closed. The shoes that had been produced there were now imported. The downtown shops were left vacant due to shopping malls just outside of the city and the economy of Lewiston dropped dramatically."

1941: Family members remaining in Lithuania (Fayvl Chazanovicius, his wife Judith, and their children Rashl, Moshe and Rokhela) were killed by German shooting squads. Their daughter Sara and her husband and daughter were killed by Lithuanian civilians in 1944.

World War II:

Joseph Leo Singer (son of Max Singer) enlisted July 8, 1942 and served in the USAAF in Ghana and France.

William Singer (son of Max Singer) enlisted June 1942.

Isadore Shapiro (future husband of Nettie Wise who was the daughter of Sarah Lelansky Wise, the granddaughter of Ester and Louis Lelansky) enlisted May 24, 1945.

Philip Sneider (future husband of Max Singer's daughter Rebecca) enlisted July 1942.

1946: A fire occurred at the "Singer block" of Lewiston, which was described as being at Park and Ash. It appears to have been on the southwest corner, later the home of Five County Credit Union. An article about the fire is in the Feb. 16th edition

NEPHEW OFFICIATES AT SINGER SERVICES



Abraham Singer

Services for Abraham Singer of Lewiston were held from his home at 7 Central avenue, Friday at one o'clock. The services were held at Beth Jacob synagogue of Lewiston of which he is a past president and charter member. Rabbi David Berent of the synagogue officiated with Rabbi David M. Shohet of Yonkers, N. Y., a nephew of Mr. Singer.

Among out of town persons attending were Mrs. Bertha Brown of Roxbury, Mass., Mrs. Leah Kasdin of Brookline, Mass., Mrs. Leah Cohen of Lawrence, Mass., Mrs. Reuben Feld of Forest Hills, N. Y., Dr. David M. Shohet of Haverhill, Mass., Dr. Gabriel Shohet of Dorchester, Mass., Mr. and Mrs. Frank Weiman of Portland, Hyman Hootstein of Brookline, Mass., Mrs. Charles Farber, Mrs. Rose Rubincoff, Mrs. Ann Brownstone and Mrs. Sarah Epstein, all of Portland; and Rabbi M. Shohet, a nephew of Palestine who is in this country right now.

Mr. and Mrs. Max Singer of Brunswick, Morris Robinson of Lisbon Falls, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Levin of Bath, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Bramson of Portland.

Mr. Singer was member of the Knights of Pythias, a 32d degree Mason and member of all Masonic lodges including Korah Temple Shrine.

His son, Dr. Peretz Singer of New York and the latter's wife, were in Lewiston when Mr. Singer died.

In addition to the surviving relatives already published, Mr. Singer leaves four brothers, Max Singer of Brunswick, Jacob of Akron, Ohio; Myer, of Port Huron, Mich., and Philip of Russia; also a sister, Mrs. L. Lelansky of Lewiston. His grandchildren are Gwendolyn Bramson, Justine and Harold Brownstone, and Richard Singer, all of Lewiston. His wife, the former Minnie Shohet of Boston, died here Sept. 30, 1922.

of the Lewiston Daily Sun. Two aerial ladder units contained the fire.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=IT5EXw6i2GUC&dat=19460216&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>



1947: Golda Singer married Philip Sneider in Boston. They met at Old Orchard Beach. He was from Bangor and worked at the family grocery store (J Sneider and Sons) in Biddeford. It was listed at 37 Hill Street and directories show it at least through 1961. Golda and Philip operated the Beachway Market, on Beach Street in Saco. Golda and Philip lived in Saco. Golda taught Hebrew School, and was an active "Hadassah lady," president of the Biddeford-Saco Chapter. Her cousin Rebecca Robinson said that Golda was a "wonderful girl - kind, so good. When she died there wasn't a place in the synagogue - people were standing outside." She had "made chicken soup if someone was sick -- even if she didn't know them." Golda's interview with the *Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation*, and with the Holocaust Human Rights Center of Maine (<http://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn512636>) along with what she told family members, provided almost everything that we know about the family's history in Miroslavas, Lithuania.

Golda and Philip, in 1978:



1947: Abraham's children donated a pulpit to the Beth Jacob Synagogue, in memory of Abraham and Minnie.

Korean War:

Allen Lelansky (Son of Samuel and grandson of Ester and Louis) served in the U.S. Air Force.

Herbert Lewis Lelansky (son of Joseph Lelansky and grandson of Ester and Louis Lelansky) was a career Marine, serving in both the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

1955:

An article about Ester, in the Tuesday, March 22, 1955 Portland Evening Express said:

The younger generation has a champion in Mrs. Esther Singer Lelansky, 38 Highland St., who observed her 96th birthday over the weekend.



"There is nothing wrong with the young people of today," she said, pausing in her preparations to cut a pretty birthday cake. "They are smart and alert, and far ahead of what youngsters were many years ago when I was young."

Mrs. Lelansky, who has a hearty appetite and does not believe in "new-fangled diets," cut the cake vigorously and enjoyed a good-sized piece herself.

Her recipe for a long and happy life is not to worry. "Have faith and look to the future," she said, "Don't worry. Everything will come out all right."

Mrs. Lelansky was born in Russia in 1859. She was married there in 1878 to Louis Lelansky who came to this country and settled in Lewiston. After four years he was able to send for his wife to join him in "the golden land." They were the parents of 13 children, four of whom are now living, Samuel, with whom she makes her home; Nathan, Augusta; Mrs. Sara Weiss, Lewiston; and Mrs. Eva Gediman, Washington. There are 10 grand and 13 great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Lelansky lives in her own apartment, does her own cooking, laundry and daily housework. She has both radio and television and is interested in what's going on at home and abroad. She has never had to wear glasses.

[Some of this information may be incorrect. Several variations for age and immigration dates have been found for the family, and they are inconsistent.]

About 1956: Ester's daughter Sarah died. Rebecca wrote, "Aunt Ester began to notice that Sarah was not visiting her and she realized that she was either sick or had died. They never informed her about Sarah's death of a brain tumor."

One day Ester took a fall, and Sam was unable to lift her. Subsequently she moved into a nursing home. Judith Kamin remembered visiting Ester with her grandfather Max in the Jewish Old Age Home in Portland, ME. According to granddaughter Frances, Ester was the "most popular" person there.

Granddaughter Frances wrote that Ester was a fantastic lady who was a very loving and wonderful person... a person who "couldn't do enough for you." Grandson Allen described her similarly.

1961: According to her death certificate, Ester died January 23, 1961 in the Jewish Home for the Aged. The cause of death was listed as Arteriosclerotic Heart Disease, which she'd been diagnosed with 2 years prior. She had lived in Portland for 12 years. She was buried at Mount Sanai cemetery in Portland, ME. Her grandson Allen remembered her funeral was held on a very cold day, when the temperature was 25 degrees.

1964: On March 2, Singer Realty sold off 5 downtown parcels in what was headlined in the newspaper as the "city's largest single property transaction."

1969: Max Singer died in Brunswick.

2000: Golda Singer Sneider died in Saco.

Other Family Members in Maine

Descendants of Ester and Louis Lelansky

Ester's son **Sam** (b. 1892) worked in the shoe business (as a cutter) and was a peddler. His WWI Draft Registration shows him, at least temporarily, as a "farmer." At the time he lived with his parents at 244 Webster St in Lewiston. He married Minnie Richardson from Bangor in 1928. They lived in Portland where Sam worked first as a salesman and then in about 1937 set up a wholesale fruit business at 17 Pitt Street. By 1951 the business was at 38 Highland and the family lived at the same address. Ester lived with them for several years until her death in 1961.

Sam's son **Allen** married Marian Meyers of Massachusetts. In about 1961 Sam took over his father's fruit business in Portland and became a wholesale grocer, establishing it at 53 Middle Street. He sold canned goods, meat, etc. and sold the business when he was 47 years old (in 1977). He tired of his early retirement and worked as a representative for the Hobart Corporation, a restaurant supply company that made scales, slicers, etc. He retired from that job in 1988.

Ester's daughter **Sarah** (b. 1894) married Sam Wise in 1920 and they lived in Lewiston. Sam was a merchant all his life. His store, Wise Trading Company, was a combination pawnshop, men's clothing store, jewelry store, and gem shop. Nettie added that Sam sold clothes to the people who worked in the countryside, cutting lumber. [Lumber was and still is a local industry.] Frances occasionally worked in the store when she was in high school when her father was on break. The store was at 99 Main St in 1922 and 1924 directories, then at 340 Lisbon from 1932-42, then at 330 Lisbon from 1942-56. The store is consistently listed as Wise Clothing and Shoes through this period, though in 1940 the census listed him as a pawnbroker. Wise Trading Company was listed a 1992 Bangor newspaper as being in Bangor (at 31 Washington St.), Bath, Augusta, Portland and Lewiston. It is still shown at 498 Congress Street in Portland.

Sarah's daughter **Frances** graduated from Bliss College, a commercial college in Lewiston, and like her Aunt Eva and her sister **Nettie**, left Maine to work for the Federal government.

Sarah's daughter **Rose** married Jack Novick who was working as a salesman in what appears to have been his family's furniture store – Hub Furniture at 440 Congress St, in Portland. By 1956 Jack had become a department manager and as of 1963 Jack and Rose appear to have been Treasurer and Director, respectively. The family still owned Hub Furniture as of 2000 and Rose still managed the store. It is now at 291 Fore Street, and their web site says it has been family owned and operated since 1913.

Sarah's son **Julius** Wise ran a pawn store called New York Pawn & Loan Co, at 103 Middle Street in Lewiston. In 1960 it appears at 2 Spruce Street.

Ester's sons **Nathan** (b. 1896) and **Joseph** went into the fruit business together in Lewiston.

Ester's daughter **Eva** (b. 1899) was valedictorian of her high school class. She married Herbert Gediman, from Boston, who was the nephew of Benjamin Gediman of Bath. When Herby was working in Bath he was part of a group of Jewish boys there who called themselves "The Happy Twenty." Herby and Eva met at a "Happy Twenty" party. Herby followed Eva to Washington, D.C., where they married and both worked for the U.S. government.

Ester's son **Joseph** (b. 1901), after being in business with his brother Nathan, opened then operated a fruit/grocery store in Rangeley, ME in 1931-37. He and his wife Dorothy (Bolduc) lived above the store. According to his son Joseph Jr., Joseph Sr. owned the only grocery store in town and he "carried the town" from 1931-1937 (during the Depression). He was owed money by townspeople who bought groceries, but would not ask them for it. He knew they didn't have the money and he wasn't going to let them starve. As a result, he was bankrupt. He continued

peddling fruit and junk. Son Herbert said he hated it when he went with Joe Sr and Joe Jr to deliver fruit and pick up junk, "because Joe Sr insisted on talking to EVERYONE."

Joseph's son **Herbert** was born in Rangeley and served in the USMC from the time he graduated from Edward Little High School in June 1951 through December 30, 1970. He served in the Korean War September 1951-December 21, 1951 as a Tank Crewman. He went to Viet Nam with an advance party in 1966 and was stationed at Chu Lai through June 1967. While in Viet Nam, he was with the 9th Engineer Battalion. His last duty assignment was in Fort Belvoir, VA, where he taught drafting and engineering. He retired as a Gunnery Sergeant in 1970.

Descendants of Abraham Singer

Abraham's daughter **Nettie** (b. 1894) became president of his real estate business after Abraham's death. The Singer Realty Co was located at that time at 198 Lisbon St. Her brother Sam had been treasurer-clerk. Both retained those positions at least through 1958, according to listings in the Lewiston directory. Nettie married John Bramson in 1924 and after separating from John, Nettie and her daughter Gwen continued to live in Maine, probably on their family money.

Abraham's daughter **Ida** (b. 1895) was a kindergarten teacher in Lewiston in 1922-25. She married Myers Brownstone (originally Brownstein) in 1925 after he moved from Portland to Lewiston. Ida and Myers lived in Lewiston. He was a dentist and had served in France in the Dental Corps in WWI.

Abraham's son **Samuel** Louis Singer (b. 1898) was a student from 1916 through 1921. He later noted having had one year of college education. He registered for the WWI draft in 1918 and seems to have served, although the war ended within 2 months and he was honorably discharged. In 1922 he began working as manager of his father's clothing store, "The Fashion." Between 1926 and 1932 he became the proprietor of the store, and his brother David became the manager. In 1933 his father established the Singer Realty Company and Sam became the treasurer-clerk - a position that continued after Abraham's death. He enlisted to serve in WWII as a Private in 1942, at age 44. According to Diane Lapon, Sam traveled extensively, including a visit to China in the 1950s, which was very unusual at the time. Diane thought that Sam had also made a major contribution to Bates College in Lewiston. It could be that this is where Sam was a student. Sam had a partner, Ruth Small, for many years. They didn't marry because Ruth wasn't Jewish and Sam's family didn't approve of her. Sam lived with his parents until their death, then lived with his sister, Nettie who initially lived in the family home.

Abraham's son **David** (b. 1900) attended Bates College in Lewiston (class of 1924) and then transferred to Boston University. According to the Lewiston city directories Dave became manager of his father's store "The Fashion" in 1932. In 1933 the clothing store became "The Lucille" and moved from 204 Lisbon to 198 Lisbon. In 1935 David was shown as the manager. This occupation continued until 1940, at which time Dave was listed as the manager of the Maine Collection Service at 183 Main Street. This occupation continued through at least 1942. As of 1944 and through at least 1951 his occupation was listed as "Manager, Inter State Home Equipment." As of 1953 and at least through 1958 his occupation was "proprietor, Merchants Service Agency." Merchants Service Agency was located at 145 Lisbon. David married Sadye Hootstein, whose father Hyman owned a furniture store in Boston. Sadye became treasure-secretary of The Lucille. In about 1944 they were divorced, and remarried, then apparently divorced again. David married again to Germaine Arsenault Michaud.

Abraham's son **Peretz** ("Pat" b. 1908) attended medical school (the family story is that Sam paid for it, and it may have been his payout from the family wealth) and became a pediatrician in Boston. He married Ruth Woman from Portland.

Descendants of Max Singer

Max's daughter **Rebecca** (b. 1901) married Morris C. Robinson. They lived in Lisbon Falls and operated a dry goods store for more than 40 years. Morris was the son of Joseph and Lena Leavitt Robinson. He attended Bangor schools and graduated from Thornton Academy in 1921. He was a president of the Lisbon Falls Business Association and a 52-year member of the Ancient York Lodge and a member of other Masonic bodies, including Kora Temple. He was also a member of the Lisbon Senior Citizens, the Jewish Home for the Aged, Congregation Beth Abraham and Congregation Beth Israel. He was a former member of the Apple Valley Country Club in Lisbon.

Over the years Rebecca found the time to volunteer her time and services. She worked for the Red Cross during WWII, in the area of disaster feeding. She founded the local PTA. While living in Lisbon Falls, she helped neighbors and townspeople fill out rebate forms, social security papers and any other type of "red tape" paperwork that came their way. She was also a volunteer worker at Regional Memorial Hospital in Brunswick.

Rebecca was a member of the Pioneer Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star and the Advisory Council for the Right to Read Program. She was a life member of the Lewiston-Auburn Hadassah, the Auxiliary of the Jewish Home for the Aged, and the Beth Abraham Sisterhood in Auburn. She was a member of the Beth Israel Congregation in Bath and the Lisbon Senior Citizens association. She lived to be 102 years old and was still sharp (and beating people at Scrabble). She provided many stories about the family and was critical to the development of the family tree and left documents and interviews, such as this:

<http://www.mainejews.org/~mainejew/docs/Risen/SingerRobinson027.pdf>

Rebecca's daughter **Judith** married Joe Kamin. Judy attended Boston University and became a Home Economics teacher. Joe was the son of Rabbi and Mrs. Jonas Kamin of Boston. His initial job was as an editor for the Portland bureau of the Associate Press. He was News Director at Bowdoin College.

Max's son **Isadore** (b. 1903) married Bessie Greenblatt of Bath, ME and they settled in Bath by the next year, 1935. In the 1940 census he was listed as a life insurance agent. He worked for Prudential for 26 years. He retired early to care for Bessie, who was ill and needed care. According to his daughter-in-law Marina, he was the Vice President of Beth Israel Congregation for about 40 years and then served on the board for another 10 years including 2 years as president while he was in his eighties. It was always important to him to have things "done right" at the Synagogue.

Isadore's son **Stephen** married Marina Shapiro of Massachusetts. He graduated from the University of Maine and was a secondary school administrator for 29 years and as of 2001 was the administrator for the Sagadahoc Sheriff's Department. He worked part time for many years for the Sheriff's Department and Sergeant and full time employee.

Max's son **Morris** (b. 1904) married Shirley Miriam Siff from Chelsea, MA. [Shirley came from a line of rabbis and merchants.] Daughter Pat writes: "An excellent student athlete, he earned varsity letters in basketball and football in high school and ran on the track team at Bowdoin College, earning medals as a sprinter. He left college to move to Boston [in about 1930] where he began a long career in the grocery business.



Morris, front row, second from right

Max's son **Joseph Leo** (b. 1909) married Annette Lillian Shapiro. Annette's father Moses owned a dry goods store in Auburn. He had been in business for some time with his brother Jacob J. Shapiro in Lewiston and Auburn. In the early 1900s the Shapiro's seem to have been operating the confectionery store that had once been owned by Abraham Singer (see Maine Register, above). A large fire at their property in New Auburn in 1912 made the newspapers in dramatic fashion:

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=IT5EXw6i2GUC&dat=19120311&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>

While in Bowdoin College Joseph won various awards for public speaking and debating. He earned his law degree at Boston University while working part time in real estate. He interrupted his law practice in Brunswick to serve in the U.S. Army Air Force from 1941 to 1945 at which time he was stationed in Ghana on the African west coast. According to Joe's sister Goldie, he was in Africa and France. After the war he reestablished his law practice and in 1947 was appointed Brunswick municipal court judge by Governor John Reed. He was a member of the Brunswick Lions Club, the VFW, the Topsham Grange, and was a member of the Beth Abraham Congregation.

Joe's son **Ira** was city manager of Hallowell, ME before becoming Town Administrator of Middleton, Massachusetts.

Max's son **William** (b. 1912) married Anne Silverman of Massachusetts. Son-in-law Yerachmiel Mellovitz writes in 2002, "He grew up in Brunswick, after high school went to university studying agriculture, but did not complete it. He worked in a grocery store, married, served in the Army in the European and Pacific fronts as military police. After the war, he settled in Portland, opened a grocery store and remained in the grocery business."

Max's daughter **Goldie** (b. 1916) graduated from Brunswick High School in 1935, during the Depression, and got a job in a shoe factory. She then worked as a bookkeeper for Berry's Egg Farm in Bowdoinham for about a year. After that she worked for the governor of Maine during his campaign, and after he was elected she worked for a short time for his office, part time. With the advent of WWII she went to work in the Personnel department at the Bath Iron works. She had been told that she was taking a man's job, and that she would lose it when the war was over. She did, but was immediately re-employed at Bowdoin College when a friend recommended her.

She was a payroll clerk, and helped many people in her capacity, e.g. giving them assistance with relocating and other personnel issues. She made many friends there. She rode a bicycle to work, and continued to ride her bicycle after retiring, until an accident caused her to give it up in the 1990s. She retired after working for 35 years at Bowdoin College, and lived in the family home until 2010.

Researched and compiled by Laurel Singer
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