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Article Summary: In the mid-nineteenth century many Jewish immigrants throughout the US made a living as peddlers and then became more prosperous storekeepers. By the 1920s most of the Jewish peddlers once numerous in Omaha had disappeared as a result of municipal restrictions, changing consumer habits, and the availability of other jobs considered more desirable.

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Names: Harris L Levi, Meyer Hellman, Aaron Cahn, Edward Rosewater, Jonas L Brandeis, Bernstein Ginsberg, Louis Ginsburg, Aaron Wolf, Tom Dennison, James Dahlman, Jacob Finkenstein, Victor Brookstein, Herman Kaiman, Samuel Altschuler, Louis Kurs, Barnett Mofson

Place Names: Old Market, Omaha, Nebraska

Organizations: Omaha Hebrew Club, Ladies' Relief Society, Jewish Free Loan Society, Omaha Peddlers' Union, Jewish Peddlers' Protective and Benevolent Association, B'nai B'rith, Modern Woodmen, Jewish Welfare Federation of Omaha

Keywords: peddlers, licenses, immigrants, packing houses, Omaha Hebrew Club, mutual-benefit society, Omaha City Council, Industrial Removal Office, Jonas L Brandeis, Edward Rosewater, Tom Dennison, James Dahlman, Old Market (Omaha)

Photographs / Images: George E Jenkins and Anson V Whiting as they traveled by horse and wagon about 1873 from Marysville, Kansas, into southern Nebraska; peddlers' carts, wagons, and stands along southwest 16th and Douglas Streets, Omaha, about 1906; Table I: estimates of Jewish population of Omaha; Table II: peddlers' licenses issued; schematic map of Omaha in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries indicating Jewish residential patterns and areas where peddlers were prohibited; Table III: peddler mobility; Jonas L Brandeis, who founded J L Brandeis and Sons, Omaha, to supply peddlers; Edward Rosewater, former Cleveland, Ohio, peddler, who became an *Omaha Bee* editor and a politician

Peddlers George E. Jenkins (left) and Anson V. Whiting (right) as they traveled by horse and wagon about 1873 from Marysville, Kansas, into southern Nebraska. . . . (Below) Peddlers' carts, wagons, and stands along southwest 16th and Douglas Streets, Omaha, about 1906. From Bostwick-Frohardt collection, Western Heritage Museum, Omaha.

The Jewish Peddlers of Omaha

BY OLIVER B. POLLAK

Introduction—The peddler played a significant role in American and Jewish history. This much is common knowledge: he traded with farmers on the frontier and Indians beyond; the mid-19th century Jewish immigrant peddled and became a storekeeper; he was followed in the 1880s by eastern European Jews fleeing pogroms; and in great part the Jewish peddler disappeared during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Harry Golden's estimate that at least a quarter of a million Jewish men peddled between 1850 and 1920 hints at the scale of the phenomenon. The often-bearded, black-coated peddlers became familiar figures from Atlanta to Oakland, from Milwaukee to New Orleans.[1]

This essay examines the midwestern and Nebraska socioeconomic history of the Jewish retail peddler. Following a brief description of Jewish peddling in America and its impact on Midwest mercantile and consumer patterns, it describes the distinctions between country and urban peddling. An analysis of the Omaha peddler is based on membership lists of five peddler unions.

Although the Omaha Hebrew Club, formed in 1892, was a culturally and religiously based mutual-benefit society, 14 of its 23 founding members were peddlers. Four retail peddler unions were formed in 1897, 1909, 1915, and 1919.[2] Two groups, organized in 1918 and 1919, served the interests of Jewish junk collectors and peddlers. Jewish immigrants went into retail and junk peddling but the two trades are distinguishable. Retail peddling was more transitory and threatened by established shopkeepers and local government. Junk peddlers, however, benefited from trends that undermined the retail peddler: mass consumerism and planned ob-

solescence. World Wars I and II turned junk peddling enterprises into multi-million-dollar scrap and salvage recycling businesses.

Peddlers' unions created in response to duress are short-lived as their members typically aspire upward mobility. It is possible, however, to trace the careers of members through published city directories, thus revealing peddler occupational and residential mobility and changes in urban consumer styles.

Immigrant Choices—New York was the main port of entry and most Jews settled there. Consequently, social surveys have overemphasized the New York experience. Nonetheless, survey data compiled between 1889 and 1925 are instructive. An 1889 study of 18,000 Jews of primarily German origin indicated that less than 1 percent (0.9 percent) were peddlers and hucksters. An 1890 survey of 22,400 New York Jews indicated that 11 percent were peddlers. Following the influx of Russian Jews a 1900 survey revealed that 24.5 percent were peddlers and hucksters.[3] By 1925 a national study indicated about 9 percent of the survey sample as peddlers and hucksters.[4]

Two million Jews arrived in America between 1880 and 1920. This sent shockwaves along the eastern seaboard of which immigration control and the university quota system are two results. Jewish settlement outside New York City was still predominantly urban. Omaha received 161 Jews in July, 1882.[5] Jewish relief agencies sought to disperse Jews across the country. Increasingly as the flood of Russian immigrants swelled and the 20th century opened, many Jewish immigrants arrived in Omaha under the aegis of the Industrial Removal Office. These Jewish immigrants were in Nebraska within a few weeks of seeing the Statue of Liberty and passing through immigrant receiving stations in New York. Organized immigration was heaviest in 1907 when 336 Jews arrived in Nebraska. Twenty-three Nebraska cities and towns sponsored 2,156 Jews between 1901 and 1917. None of the peddlers in this study appear to have come to Omaha under a formally sponsored scheme.[6]

TABLE I
ESTIMATES OF JEWISH POPULATION OF OMAHA

1904	3,000
1917	10,000
1924, July	9,337
1928	9,929-10,396
1929	11,000

The traditional explanation for the historical overrepresentation of Jews in retail trades and the professions in Europe is their general exclusion from landholding and thus farming. Jewish immigrants to America may have been historically predisposed to the mercantile and urban path to occupy the lowest step of economic middlemen in the trading sector. However, not every Jew who came to America started out as a peddler, and not every peddler managed to climb the slippery path of commercial success and open a retail store.

The smaller the town to which the Jew went, the greater the chance he would become a peddler. The larger the town, the greater the chance that the Jewish immigrant went into industry, and in New York this meant the sweatshops of the garment industry. Thus, for example, the percentage of peddlers in New York was less than Milwaukee.[7] In Omaha many Jewish immigrants worked in the packing houses.

The Jewish immigrant's goal was to save enough money to bring over the rest of his family as quickly as possible. Yet the immigrant spoke little English, his skills were not readily transferable, and he wanted to exercise his freedom. Freedom to the Orthodox Jew meant the right not to work on Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. He was not averse to industrial labor, but work in the factory might be restricted. Unionism and religious prejudice, and the possibility of serving a payless apprenticeship period was unattractive. The German Jews of a generation earlier served as role models for newer eastern European Jews who had progressed from peddling to established sedentary occupations. Moreover, perhaps most important, peddling could commence within a few days of arriving in America and required a minimum of capital to get started. Although there were women peddlers in Europe, the East Coast and Omaha, it was a predominantly male occupation.[8]

Relatives and countrymen already in American could be expected to pitch in the $30 to $75 it took to get started. There were Jewish merchants in several cities that gave a peddler his first pack on credit. Some peddlers worked as outreach store agents selling shirts and the like, keeping 3¢ out of every 10¢ they earned. By 1900 a variety of Jewish agencies provided immigrants with a grubstake. In Omaha the Ladies' Relief Society and Jewish Free Loan Society loaned money to bring remaining families from Europe and to relieve distress. Secondarily they assisted small businessmen but appeared to favor grocers and junk peddlers and dealers over retail peddlers.[9]

A typical "starter kit" in 1910 included a 65¢ suitcase, five mantles, one dozen shoelaces, a dozen soaps (probably perfumed), and six washcloths, as well as some pins, combs, and garters.[10] The total weight of the chest and backpacks was 100 to 150 pounds. The peddlers learned to hawk their wares. When it came to making a sale, profit margins and markup were probably sacrificed to achieve turnover. The peddler's skill was to leave the buyer satisfied and looking forward to the peddler's return later.

Peddling may have been the immigrant's first choice—perhaps the only choice. The pushcart was a means to an end. While peddling has been referred to as a "learning ground" and "preparatory school," a number of immigrants were pressured by sponsors or circumstances into the trade. There was stiff competition between Jewish peddlers and Italian and Greek peddlers thus making this means of livelihood less attractive.[11] One 1906 immigrant to Birmingham, Alabama, recorded that he "despised [peddling] more than anything else in the world."[12] Another 1910 immigrant to Cleveland, Ohio, wanted desperately "to be a worker not a businessman," despite the fact that a painter earned less than a peddler.[13] Thus, many escaped peddling at their first opportunity.

Country Peddlers—Peddlers worked two types of territories, rural and city. The farther from the town the peddler went, the more welcome he was but the more lonely his life without the companionship of fellow Jews. This was true whether in upstate New York trading with the Indians, or among the haciendas between Los Angeles and San Diego. It

was difficult to recite the daily prayers, wear phylacteries, attend service on Sabbath, or maintain the dietary laws. It became common for peddlers to subsist in great part on bread and hard-boiled eggs offered by friendly farmers, such fare not being in violation of Jewish dietary laws. The Cherokee Indians are supposed to have called the Jewish peddler "Jew-wedge-du-gish," the "egg-eater." Specialized peddling perhaps reached its acme in the practitioners who became itinerant opticians.[14]

Joel Elijah Rabinowitz, a Hebrew writer and peddler, poignantly captured the peddler's universal dilemma:

> The peddler also trudges about from town to town and from city to city staggering under his burden. He is parched in the summer and frozen in the winter, and his eyes wither in their sockets before he gets sight of a coin. The farmers have wearied of these peddlers who stand before their doors daily. Still worse is the loss of a peddler who is faithful to his religion and refuses to defile himself with forbidden foods; he is bound to sink under his load.[15]

The peddler, when he had saved some money, paid for his *shiffskarten* (his ship ticket which brought him to America) if obtained through a loan. Once reunited with his family, he saved to purchase a horse and wagon, which made it possible to cover greater distances, carry more stock and supplement the small items in his pack with pots and pans and readymade clothing.

The major business decision was when to stop being itinerant, put down roots, and open a retail dry goods or clothing store. The shrewd peddler had developed a rural network and accumulated capital. Sound business decisions resulted in setting up a store in a small town in the middle of his route and drawing on the goodwill he had developed in his traveling days.

Nebraska's midwestern neighbors, Iowa, Kansas, and Indiana, felt the impact of the peddler earlier and somewhat more forcefully. In Indiana at least two peddlers were able to parlay their embryonic activities into establishments that celebrated their centenaries during the 1970s.[16] Prior to the Civil War, Iowa contained about 100 Jewish peddlers and 125 local merchants.[17] Kansas appears to have had a contingent about as large.[18]

Mid-19th century German Jewish immigrants to America enjoyed occupational and geographic mobility. Their children, the first generation born in America, went into independent business after being employed as store clerks.[19] Rags to riches was not unusual; neither was it the rule. Some immigrants never left New York. Others like Levi Strauss, arrived from Germany, then went via Panama to San Francisco to peddle tenting canvas to the 49ers, and made a fortune in denims.

Peddlers might arrive in a city on a cross-country odyssey looking for a place to prosper and bring the family.[20] Abraham Jacobs, for example, born in Germany, came to America and served as a clerk in Louisville, Cincinnati, and Lexington, Kentucky, before coming to Omaha in the summer of 1857 to venture into business for himself. His final move, to Denver, occurred in 1859.[21]

In Nebraska, Harris L. Levi peddled to the Indians in the 1860s; Meyer Hellman and Aaron Cahn went to Virginia City and Goldfield, Nevada. Edward Rosewater, an Omaha journalist (*Omaha Bee* editor) and politician, had peddled the streets of Cleveland, Ohio. Jonas L. Brandeis traded with the Indians before founding J. L. Brandeis and Sons in Omaha in 1881 as supplier to peddlers. Other peddler suppliers, some of whom extended credit for the first pack of merchandise, included Bernstein and Louis Ginsberg. In 1884 Aaron Wolf, who had recently arrived in Omaha, peddled goods westward through Nebraska to Alliance in the Panhandle.[22] Ella F. Auerbach concluded that "these thrifty, hardworking and ambitious immigrants gradually saved enough to bring over their families, went into business, bought homes" and contributed to the culture and politics of Omaha.[23] The earlier period appears to be less competitive, as market demand outpaced supply, thus making it easier to succeed. By 1902 Jews had established general, dry goods, mercantile, clothing, shoe, and furniture stores in Omaha, Lincoln, and at least 25 Nebraska towns. By 1900 the Jewish country peddlers once operating out of Omaha into Nebraska and western Iowa were already a memory.[24]

Country peddling went into a permanent decline. Mail-order merchandising, exemplified by the Sears catalogs, gave

the isolated farmer a range of selection that the peddler could not match. Although some immigrants still went into country peddling, especially in the South, these ventures were short-lived.[25] The peddler had to offer his cutomers credit to keep them loyal. But even this was only a temporary advantage, as retail chains adopted credit and utilized the developing railroad branch lines and motorized services for delivery of goods. If a country peddler had not found a permanent location by 1900, it was unlikely that he would be able to successfully transform himself from a country peddler into a small-town merchant in the 20th century. While some country peddlers were still on the road on the eve of World War II, theirs was a dying vocation.[26]

Urban Peddlers—The larger the town, the more specialized peddling became. During the 1930s on New York's east side, it was possible to find peddlers selling bagels, hot peas, knishes, and on Fridays candles for the Sabbath. In great part in the giant metropolises, Jewish peddlers served a Jewish clientele. But in the small cities and towns of the Midwest, the Jewish peddler hawked his notions, dry goods, fruit and vegetables throughout the city.[27]

A step above the foot or packman peddler was the huckster who owned property—at a minimum a horse and cart or street stand. Some peddlers, however, rented horse and wagons. In New York the practice of renting led to the creation of a Stablekeepers' Union by cart owners.[28] A peddler invariably hoped to get a horse and wagon and ultimately a grocery, fruit, confectionary, fish, clothing, or dry-goods store.

While peddlers were economically independent, their livelihood was vulnerable. As a fringe community, they faced three problems: changes in retailing, the law, and physical violence. Just as the mail-order catalog jeopardized the country peddler, changes in buying habits threatened the produce and fruit peddler. For example, the refrigerator eliminated the need for daily shopping trips. The trolley car increased the consumer's mobility. Chain stores and five-and-dimes also limited the peddlers' opportunities. Established storefront merchants were vehement in their opposition to the peddler and sought to license him and limit his territory.

Peddlers, though welcomed to rural areas, sometimes faced hostility elsewhere which resulted in beatings and even murder. In urban areas they were frequently "scorned and bedevilled on city streets."[29] While the farmer most often welcomed company—news from the outside world—the city poor had unkind stereotypes of Jewish peddlers. The peddler sold goods in small quantities which raised the price. If he gave credit, he could be resented as a usurer. That peddlers were basically honest, a prerequisite to survival, was too rational an argument to be understood by an oppressed bigot or a street-corner tough.

Complaints against peddlers included purveying shoddy products, use of faulty weighing scales, violation of local ordinances, and making improper advances toward women. When peddlers reported that they had been molested, ridiculed, and taken advantage of, the police might turn a blind eye, or worse, the Jewish peddler might become a victim of harassment by prejudiced officers. If arrested, the peddlers' packs and wagons might be rifled. If they attempted to bribe officials, the result was uncertain.

Faced with such problems, Jewish peddlers in various cities organized unions. The New York Union of Jewish Peddlers supported Henry George, the unsuccessful liberal and labor candidate for mayor in 1886. The secretary of the union appealed to workers to patronize only union peddlers:

> It is true that peddlers are no wage-earners, but proletarians they are. The difference between a working man and a peddler is that the working man gets a starvation wage, while the peddler starves without a wage.[30]

The United Citizens' Peddlers' Association, with 3,000 members in 1906, provided bail for arrested peddlers and intervened with property owners complaining about peddlers in front of their establishments.[31] The League of Citizen Peddlers of Greater New York was established in 1888 and incorporated in 1912. It had 300 members. Its purpose was "to work for mutual aid in social as well as business matters." Its president in 1913, Sam Dictor, a Russian-born pickle dealer, had emigrated to the United States in 1905.[32]

Peddler control in New York was the subject of mayors' commissions. Archibald A. Hill, the secretary of one such commission, indicated the acuteness of the problem: 5,124 peddlers were arrested in 1904. The law required one year's residence in New York before a permit would be issued. The stable keepers who owned the carts made a brisk business in licenses and falsified documents. The most frequent cause for arrest was that the peddler stood unlawfully in one place for more than 30 minutes. Blackmail between police and peddlers was frequent. Thus, in addition to the concerns of the storekeepers' reduced profits, sanitation, overcrowding, and fire hazards, the commission was concerned with police corruption. The 1906 commission recommended dividing the city into "traveling" and "restricted" districts.[33] Half a dozen years later it was observed that New York had allotted 4,000 peddlers' licenses, yet between 14,000 and 15,000 peddlers were doing business on the streets.[34]

In 1896, the Cleveland Jewish Peddlers Protective Society was formed with 92 members. It charged that the police saw no harm in having "a little fun with the Jews." In 1910 they reorganized as the Peddlers Self-Defense Association with 180 members. Their purpose was "self-protection from loafers and rowdies." Alfred A. Benesch, a Harvard Law School graduate, was the group's counsel. They called for "a more conscientious handling of such cases" as police harassment and objected to being made "sport of" by "the corner tough." The Council Educational Alliance provided instructions for peddlers so that few arrests would occur for violating peddling ordinances.[35]

One of the clearest examples of victimization is the case of Willie Provolsky, who peddled matches around Syracuse to augment his family income. He was arrested and tried for stealing tools from a carpenter's shop. A local merchant who witnessed the arrest testified that he carried matches in his stock but had "no chance to sell them because these 'sheen' match peddlers have cut the price so low that I haven't sold a box for a long time." He thought that peddlers "ought to be driven out of this country and sent back to the land they came from." It was clear to the court that Willie was framed and he was found innocent.[36]

Appalling physical violence occurred in Denver. On

Christmas Day, 1905, two Jews loading scrap iron into a railroad car were stoned with iron bolts. Both were killed. The following year two more Jews were murdered under similar circumstances. In 1916 the *Jewish Outlook* recorded that "an old rag picker was set upon and beaten by some kind of Christian hoodlums." His wagon and rags were burned.[37] In Chicago the Peddlers and Helpers Protective Association was formed in the late 1890s to protect peddlers from attacks.[38]

Milwaukee was a veritable promised land for peddlers. The peddler was even welcomed in 1908 by Socialists, who usually scorned him as a parasite with high priced goods preying on the masses.[39] Between 1913 and 1915 Milwaukee peddlers organized to protect their interests at city hall and in Madison against legislation that would have required all retail traders to carry scales and issue receipts. They opposed high license fees and noise ordinances that throttled "barking." Similar complaints against "crying" were made in Omaha.[40]

By 1916 the retail merchants managed to pass a modified licensing bill. By the end of World War I, it was observed that "peddling has completely lost its charm. At the best opportunity dozens of peddlers want to find employment in the shops, or wish they had some other trade with which to make a living." The approximately 500 Jewish peddlers in Milwaukee in 1910 were by 1918 searching for new livelihoods.[41]

Omaha was not immune from violence directed against peddlers. Unpleasant memories focus on the activities of street corner toughs and childish pranks. "Struggling peddlers . . . were frequently attacked by hoodlums and stoned or snowballed by urchins on the street." The charters of the various Omaha peddler organizations invariably stated that a purpose of formation was protection from abuse, violence, and ridicule.[42]

Established businessmen saw peddlers as illegitimate trade cutting into their own honestly earned profits because they had lower overhead and were free from taxes. They did business for unfairly long hours, were open on Sundays, undersold, and violated accepted trade usages.[43] They were mobile, frequently resorted to barter, kept no receipts and records, and were beyond surveillance for taxation purposes.

The city fathers were called upon to regulate this "nuisance," as the frontier moved west. Herman Born, arrested in Davenport, Iowa, in 1867 for peddling without a

license, is but one of many possible examples. Arrests in Omaha ranged from five to 35 per year between 1890 and 1923.[44]

Omaha first licensed liquor sale, stage performances, and Tin-Pan-Alley amusements in the 1850s. Auctioneers were licensed from 1867.[45] The city council proposed a highly restrictive peddler-licensing system in 1869. Peddlers would post a bond of $200 and purchase a license for $50 per year. The license was signed by the clerk and the mayor, both of whom were entitled to receive $1 for the transaction. Peddlers were to be "fair, just and honest in manner" on pain of a misdemeanor charge with a $25 to $50 fine per offense. The bill passed in amended form, the $200 bond being deleted.[46] An 1881 ordinance provided a $30 annual license fee for all vendors and peddlers of products that they had not grown.[47] In 1888 the license inspector reported the issuance of 216 peddler and huckster licenses. In 1889 the inspector, John Trumball, requested additional manpower to adequately process licenses in the rapidly growing city. He reported issuing 120 peddlers' licenses at $60 each and 250 one-day permits at $2 each.[48]

The number of peddlers' licenses issued fluctuated annually. During the depression of 1892, only 115 licenses were issued. In 1893, perhaps to encourage trade, the license fee was halved and regulation differentiated between foot, pushcart, and wagon peddlers. The revenues collected were used to fund schools. In South Omaha the license fees were repealed.[49]

TABLE II—LICENSES ISSUED

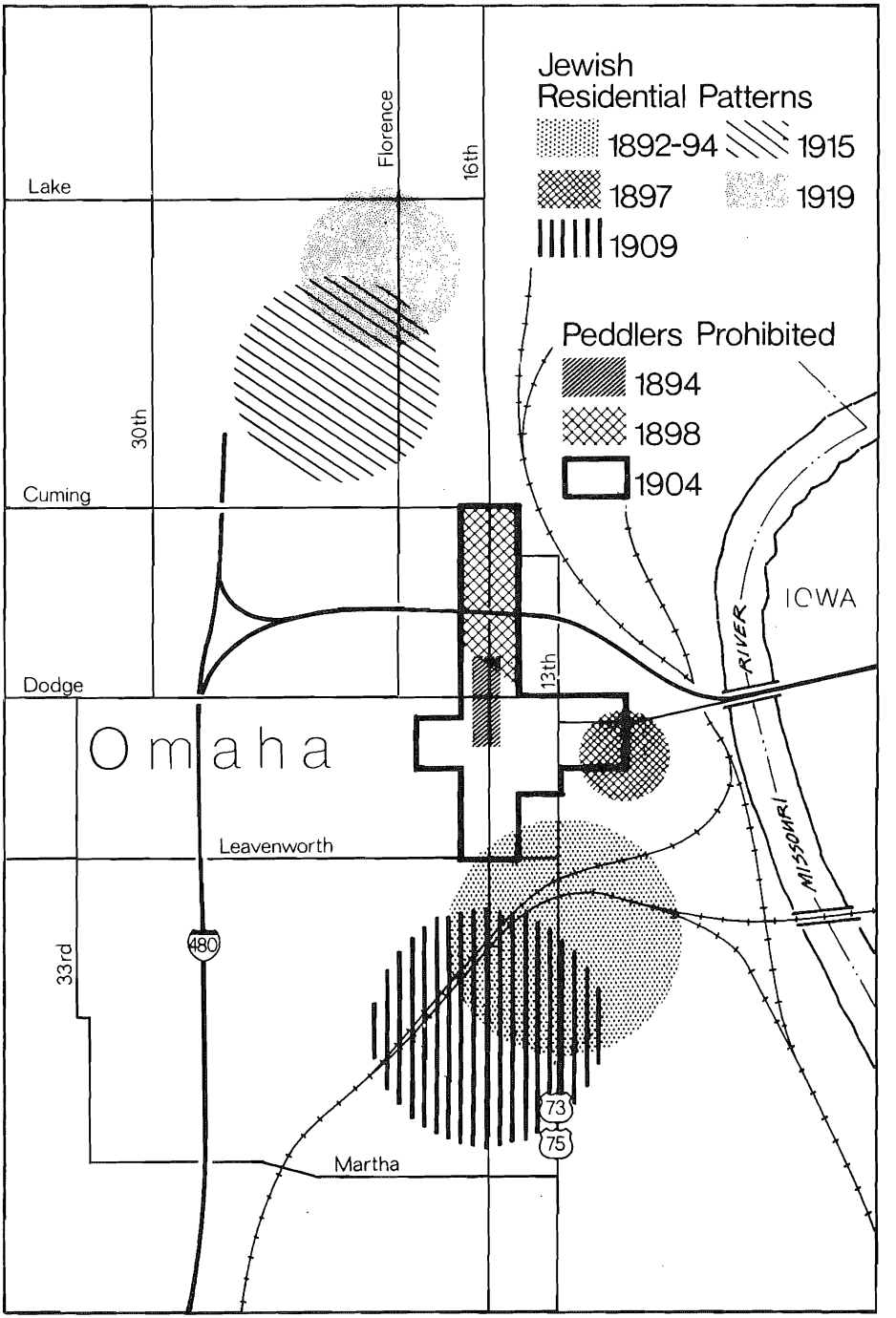
	Foot	Pushcart	Wagon	Total
1892	($10)	($20)	($30)	115
1893	156 ($5)	47 ($10)	180 ($15)	383
1894	76	53	190	319
1895	57	63	160	280
1896	75	46	130	251
1904	25 ($10)	31 ($20)	89 ($30)	145
1905	22	36	68	126
1906	37	36	58	131
1907	17	39	56	112
1908	13	7	42	62
1909	2	9	63	74
1917	18	6	116	140
1921	64		176	240

The founding of a peddler organization could be predicted from the large peddler component in the Omaha Hebrew Club. Founded by immigrants in June, 1892, 14 of its 23 charter members were peddlers, including two of its five officers and trustees. The OHC was organized to provide "relief of its members who are distressed, injured, sick or disabled" and to provide employment and temporary financial aid. Each widow received a payment from the treasury or members' assessment upon the death of her husband. As a mutual-benefit society the group provided legal assistance to its members, especially peddlers, who appeared especially prone to legal difficulties. Other founders included an attorney, teachers, furniture, grocery and second hand store owners, tailors, and fish sellers.[50]

The membership lists of the Omaha Hebrew Club and the subsequent peddler organizations of 1897, 1909, 1915, and 1919 make it possible to trace the occupational careers of 39 out of 44 members between 1884 and 1953. The members of the particular groups lived close to one another, the farthest distance between any two members was usually no more than seven blocks. These men were identified as peddlers by the city directory, their social and economic affiliations, and the census. Analysis of their economic careers is presented in Table III.

The peddlers of the Omaha Hebrew Club were the most upwardly mobile of the several groups. Nine became grocers or fish or feed merchants. One became a painter. The move from peddling to proprietorship took one to 10 years. Of the 14 initially identified as peddlers, only two were still peddlers in 1900 and none were peddlers after 1907.

Peddling was actively discouraged in the late 1890s. As early as 1885 the City Council had discussed the establishment of a central market. The idea languished until the Omaha Commercial Club in January, 1895, saw it as a way to "materially reduce . . . the price of living" and attract people to Omaha. The market was opened on Howard Street between 10th and 11th Streets in 1896. The number of peddlers' licenses issued dropped immediately. George L. Hurst, the license inspector, explained that people who had formerly purchased annual licenses now paid 15 cents per day to use the market. The


Jewish
Residential Patterns
1892-94
1915
1897
1919
1909
Peddlers Prohibited
1894
1898
1904
Florence
16th
Lake
30th
Cuming
Dodge
13th
IOWA
RIVER
MISSOURI
Omaha
Leavenworth
33rd
480
73
75
Martha

marketplace handled 11,995 wagons of garden truck during the first seven months of its operation in 1896.[51]

Peddlers constituted a significant political issue in the 1890s. By the end of the century, ordinances controlled where peddlers could sell goods and their modes of operation. In 1894 the city council prohibited peddling on 16th Street from Capitol to Farnam,[52] a regulation evaded by peddlers obtaining consent of the property owners adjacent to the peddler's stand. Consent arrangements were made illegal. The prohibited area was extended to Cuming Street.[53] In 1898 Ordinance 4,419 prohibited unlicensed peddlers from a 50-square-block area roughly bounded by Cuming, 10th, Leavenworth, and 19th streets. In addition to being licensed, the peddler had to obtain permission of the owner or lessee of the property adjoining his stand.[54]

License fees were doubled in 1897. Peddlers were required to wear badges on outer garments as well as emblazoned "peddler" badges or metal shields on their wagons as required by an earlier ordinance.[55] Foot and handcart peddlers were not allowed to employ assistants. Significantly, established retail merchants delivering goods, farmers coming into the city, and newspaper vendors were exempt from peddler-licensing provisions.

The mounting restrictions prompted the creation of a peddlers' union. In 1897 Louis Frank and Sam Kline, president and secretary of the union, petitioned the city council "as taxpayers and citizens to have the same privilege as anyone from Iowa on the market."[56] Frank, born in Russia in 1856, came to America in 1868. He peddled in Omaha from 1892 to 1901, moving annually for four years until he settled down near 10th and Howard. Samuel Kline, a produce peddler, was born in Ohio in 1872, the son of immigrants. He lived at three different addresses between 1896 and 1900 and disappeared from the directory after 1900.[57]

In July, 1903, peddlers were prohibited from selling vegetables from handcarts. The peddlers retained W. F. Wappich, an attorney, to protest against the passage of ordinances prohibiting street sales and peddling.[58] In 1905 wagon peddlers had to pay an additional $20 for each assistant. In December, 1907, and January, 1908, the City Council introduced a new ordinance that virtually eliminated foot ped-

dlers, pushcarts, and sidewalk stands from a 50-square-block area stretching from Cuming Street in the north to Leavenworth Street in the south, and from 19th Street in the west to 10th Street in the east.[59] Almost immediately thereafter, merchants were calling for the elimination of peddlers and hucksters on Cuming Street between 20th and 27th Streets.[60] Enforcement of these ordinances was another matter.

The City Council was sympathetic to business interests seeking to curb peddler activities. The mayor, on the other hand, used powers granted by the charter to unilaterally grant special mayoral permits, thus bypassing the licensing procedure. S. R. Quigley, a pioneer shoelace vendor who sold four pairs for 5 cents, complained to the city council about a man peddling shoelaces without a license but under a permit from the mayor.[61] Councilman Isaac S. Hascall moved that the mayor comply with the ordinance. He should cease issuing permits without authority, and peddlers should pay the required fees. Mayor Moores was called upon to abide by the precept of "equality before the law."[62] Merchants' petitions and the Omaha City Council called repeatedly, but without much effect, for the license inspector to "strictly enforce" the licensing requirements and territorial restrictions on peddling.[63]

The mayor used his power to placate various interests. Political Boss Tom Dennison and Mayor James Dahlman distributed special permits liberally, thus accounting for the substantial discrepancy between the larger number of peddlers recorded in the city directory and the 62-400 licenses that the license inspector reported being issued annually. In New York where there were thousands more peddlers than issued licenses, the situation was explained with the expression, "A vote for a favor, and a favor for a vote."[64] The Omaha political machine and the mayor also saw it as a form of poor relief. This latter inspiration was legitimized in 1907, when the City Council ordained that any person who desired to be a peddler but

> by reason of indigence is unable to pay the license fee . . . or who, by reason of old age or other infirmity is unable to earn a livelihood in any other capacity, the Mayor is hereby authorized to issue a permit to such indigent, aged, or infirm person to carry on such business.[65]

The council failed to pass a clause requiring the mayor to inform the council every time he made such a grant. The Greater Omaha Improvement Club was still complaining over 10 years later about the number of unlicensed peddlers.[66] M. J. Greevy, secretary of the United Improvement Club, called on the mayor to discontinue his "practice of favoritism" and to cancel the free permits which were outstanding.[67]

How well the 1908 territorial limitations were enforced is difficult to determine. If the mayor could bypass licensing ordinances by granting special permits, no doubt the police could turn a blind eye to peddlers crossing the line until citizen complaints had been filed.[68] Moreover, evidence of merchant complaints into the 1930s suggests the ordinances were haphazardly enforced.

Peddlers in Omaha, as in other cities, confronted by government trading-area restrictions and physical insecurity, responded by creating protective organizations. Jewish peddlers formed the Omaha Peddlers' Union in June, 1909. The *Morning Bee* reported that the document filed with the city clerk was written partly in Hebrew. The constitution provided that "the organization's duty shall be to protect each member and to help one another in case of distress and when lawfully engaged in his business and not when himself is looking for trouble." Members were required to be settlers and to own their own horses.[69]

Nine out of the 12 signatories are identifiable in the city directory. The group, essentially a neighborhood peddlers' association, quickly lost cohesion by deaths and by relocation patterns, which took some members to the North Omaha Jewish community. Four of the members left the union after taking better jobs.

The shortest duration in the directory was three years, the longest 39. The earliest arrived in 1896. Four of the peddlers remained peddlers until they died in Omaha. Four of the members "disappeared" from the directory, suggesting that they left Omaha. The nine members had a total of at least 28 different addresses. The most mobile moved three times within three years. The most stable lived at one address for 18 years. Mobility was clearly higher at the beginning of their careers, and stability was more apparent toward the end.

Jacob Finkenstein had a remarkable occupational history. He was listed in the directory from 1900 to 1911 as a peddler. In 1912 he started to climb the economic ladder. He was reported as a huckster (1912), peddler (1913-1914), salesman (1916-1917), fishseller (1920-1921), grocer (1923-1926), fishman (1928), and peddler once more in 1929. During the 1930s he was twice listed as a salesman (1934-1835), and for the remaining five directories no occupation was entered. He died in 1939, leaving his wife and probably two children. Victor Brookstein, a peddler from 1907 to 1921, then opened a grocery, but became a peddler again in 1926. Herman Kaiman was consistently a peddler from 1908 until his death at the age of 45 in 1928. In sum, four of the 1909 group were consistently peddlers. Two managed temporarily to have shops but ultimately returned to peddling. Finally, one was successful in escaping from peddling, though it is unclear whether he was involved in confectionery, fruit, or produce enterprises in the 1930s.

The Jewish Peddlers' Protective and Benevolent Association was incorporated on September 13, 1915. The purpose of the association was "mutual protection from violence, ridicule and distress." There were 14 signatories.[70] The earliest had arrived in Omaha in 1911. The shortest period in Omaha was nine years, the longest 41. Seven of the members died in Omaha.

Three of the 1915 group subsequently went into junk dealing. It was not uncommon to go from retail peddling into junk, though it was rare for a junk peddler to go into retail trading.[71] Four of the peddlers plied their trade until retirement, death, or disappearance from the directory. At least seven out of the 11 were married.

The most ambitious of the peddlers' unions was incorporated in 1919.[72] The aim of the Omaha Peddlers' Union was to operate a building for buying and selling fruits and vegetables. The three charter members were Samuel Altschuler, Louis Kurs, and Barnett Mofson. They had arrived in Omaha in 1904, 1903, and 1910, and were thus somewhat established in Omaha. All three men married and had families. Altschuler, a peddler until 1925, then operated a grocery until his death in 1937. In 1903 Kurs had been an

agent for the Domestic Mercantile Company, which sold goods on installment, but from 1904 until the mid-1930s he peddled produce. In 1937 he started peddling junk and continued to do so until at least 1941. Mofson had an interesting commercial career.[73] He was a helper (1910), janitor (1912), driver (1914), peddler (1915-1917), salesman for Omaha Peddlers' Union (1920), salesman (1921), and a grocer (1926).

These groups of peddlers organizing in 1909, 1915, and 1919 comprised men who were attempting to rise economically. Individuals tried repeatedly to rise from peddling to storefronts. They were probably undercapitalized and by incurring higher overheads became vulnerable even to mild economic downturns and certainly to the crash of 1929.

Occupational patterns based on the 1894, 1897, 1909, 1915 and 1919 groups reveal that peddling was preferable to being a laborer. Once in trade, peddlers sought to become hucksters, grocery or dry goods store owners, or junk dealers. It was not unusual for peddlers to shift from backpack dry goods to fruit in pushcarts, and finally to junk.

During an economic slump peddlery was a form of "social security." An unemployed Jewish metal or leather worker during the 1914 recession in Milwaukee bought a horse and wagon and commenced peddling.[75] In Omaha some small grocers reverted to peddling. Although a peddler might manage to change occupations, the Great Depression of the 1930s slowed the momentum and prompted some to fall back into peddlery. Federal and state social security legislation, designed to create a fiscal safety net, eventually made it less necessary to overtrade in the marketplace.

One peddler remembered that obtaining food was the first priority. Used clothing was passed around in the family and between families. Renters with few belongings could leave on short notice:

> Everyone lived in very modest homes and the rent was $10 or $12 a month and sometimes it wasn't paid, but no one seemed any worse off than almost everyone else. There were no rich Jews among this East European group. Some did have a little more affluent life.[76]

Peddlers by the nature of the occupation were gregarious. The Omaha Hebrew Club was a multi-occupational cultural

TABLE III[74]
PEDDLER MOBILITY

	Omaha Hebrew Club	Peddlers' Union	Omaha Peddlers' Union	Jewish Peddlers Protective and Benev. Assn.	Omaha Peddlers' Union	
	1894	1897	1909	1915	1919	Total
Total members	(23)	2	12	14	3	44
Identifiable members	14	2	9	11	3	39
Average number of years in Omaha prior to joining	3?	3	4	3.9	13.3	
Occupational Mobility—						
Grocer	6		1	1	1	9
Feed	1					1
Fish	2					2
Meat	1					1
Merchant	1					1
Craftsman	1					1
Manager				1		1
Salesman				1		1
Became a junk peddler and/or second hand store				2	1	3
Government official				1		1
Stayed a peddler	2	2	8	5	1	18
Identified as dying in Omaha	NA		4	7	2	12
Number of residences	NA	4	28	44	23	99
Subsequently disappeared from Directory	1	2	4	2	1	9

Omaha Hebrew Club members lived within 10 blocks of 13th & Pierce.
Peddlers' Union members lived within 10 blocks of 10th and Harney.
Omaha Peddlers' Union lived within 10 blocks of 15th and William.
Jewish Peddlers' Protective & Benevolent Association lived within 10 blocks of 24th and Charles.
Omaha Peddlers' Union members lived within 10 blocks of 21st and Burdette.

group. The peddlers' unions combined occupation, religion, and neighborhood. Only four out of the 21 members have been identified as being active in community affairs, including the Jewish Free Loan, Omaha Hebrew Club, B'nai B'rith,

Modern Woodmen, Jewish Community Center, as well as synagogues.[77] There is a clear correlation between being a successful, upwardly mobile peddler and multiple associational affiliations.

The urban peddler's days were numbered just like those of his country cousin. Most peddlers did not establish substantial storefronts which they could pass on to sons. The metamorphosis of peddler to storekeeper was a 19th century, not a 20th century phenomenon. Peddling was basically a one-generation occupation in which immigrants made the transition for their families into the American mainstream. The creation of the peddler organizations, in what is at heart an autonomous occupation, is a symptom not of strength and growth but rather of adversity and decline. Most peddlers were married and had families. The second generation, if it took up peddling, did so only as a youthful occupation, selling newspapers on the corner or peddling matches and stationery after school.

The peddler's experience in Omaha matched that of other cities. While Jews continued to be over-represented in trade, there was a decline in peddling. In Cleveland the percentage of peddlers and hucksters among the Jewish population declined from 27 percent in 1910 to 13 percent in 1930.[78] In Los Angeles peddlers were reduced to 5 percent of the Jewish population by 1929.[79] Peddlers were going into ancillary occupations either as proprietors or employees. Peddlers died and were not replaced. Of 17 Columbus, Ohio, Jews listed as peddlers between 1883 and 1888, two were listed later as second-hand goods dealers (1897), and by 1907 four were store owners. In 1907 two were still listed as peddlers and eight were unlisted, having perhaps died or sought out fresh opportunities.[80]

Most important in the disappearance of the peddler is that these family men and their children chose other ways to make a living, a social pattern that was no doubt reinforced by restrictive municipal legislation.

Peddlers were under some pressure from elitist coreligionists. During the 1890s, New York Jewish philanthropists attempted to dissuade Russian Jews from entering peddling and to become artisans instead. They feared the creation of a "nation of peddlers."[81] While peddling was always considered an honest living, it was starting to be regarded by some

as socially unacceptable and to be discouraged among the second generation. Julia Richman, a Jew of German origin, led a teachers' campaign in 1907 against Lower East Side New York Jews. The anti-pushcart drive attacked "desperately ignorant Russian Jewish parents for starving their children during the depression of 1907-1908."[82]

In 1924 the Jewish Welfare Federation of Omaha conducted a house-to-house census. The Jewish population was 9,337, of which 1,973 or 21.1 percent were gainfully employed. Of those employed 1,167 or 59.1 percent were in trade. Nine hundred and seven or 78 percent of those in trade were self-employed. Peddling was only one of the 33 trade categories.[83] Studies in the 1920s and 1930s revealed that "native-born children . . . prefer to be employees rather than proprietors of small groceries, candy and cigar stores." American-born Jews, though interested in commerce, preferred to avoid risks and earn salaries as salesmen and buyers.[84] Moreover, peddling by children at their parents' requests—even of newspapers—was sometimes discouraged.[85] American education and Americanization fitted the second generation to work as employees in other people's businesses and to enter the professions. The increased listing of "students" in the household in the directories of the 1920s and 1930s is striking. The Omaha experience is the same as that of Columbus, Ohio, where it was remarked that "the educational achievements of the 'new' immigrants rank alongside the mercantile successes of the 'old' immigrants."[86] At least three peddlers can be identified with three sons who earned the title "Dr."[87] By 1940 peddling had disappeared as a factor in the rural, urban, and Jewish economy of Omaha, a fact that is further amplified by analysis of Jewish last names and occupations in the city directory.[88] The first American-born Jewish generation consisted of clerks, salesmen, and participants in the furniture, clothing, auto parts, second-hand goods, and junk trades. They were also teachers, doctors, and lawyers.

Virtually complete control over peddler activities and the mayor's discretion to bypass licensing were achieved by the reform-minded Omaha City Council in May, 1934. Significantly, this ordinance provided that no permit would be issued without the payment of the fee, thus specifically limiting the mayor's largesse permitted by custom and the ordinance of 1907.[89]

Jonas L. Brandeis (left) founded J. L. Brandeis and Sons in Omaha as supplier to peddlers. . . . Edward Rosewater (right), Omaha Bee *editor and politician, was once a peddler in Cleveland, Ohio.*

Peddling, which had been widely prevalent for much of the 19th and early 20th centuries, had been virtually regulated out of existence. Signals from business and the Omaha City Council were clear: peddling was a nuisance barely to be tolerated and certainly not encouraged.

In 1940 complaints about unsanitary conditions and the movement of emergency vehicles were added to the litany of anti-peddler rhetoric.[90] Refrigeration, long-distance truck hauling, and supermarket and independent chains in the suburbs challenged both the peddler and the small grocer. The five-and-dime and discount store reigned supreme in dry goods. Omaha's Old Market, which in 1903 contained as many as 300 peddlers, had by 1960 been completely eclipsed by the supermarket and ceased to serve as a mercantile hub.[91]

The peddlers of the Omaha Hebrew Club were upwardly mobile. Peddling in the 1890s served as personal transition to something better. In the 20th century the peddler was not so fortunate. For him peddling became a means by which parents might better their children's opportunities. Peddlers' numbers diminished as they managed to open their own shops, became salesmen, retired, and died. By the 1930s peddlers were a marginal and aging economic group.

When the Martin bomber plant was started in 1941, the South Omaha Retailers' Committee called for a "cleanup" campaign prior to the influx of workers. Peddler carts, long considered an eyesore and nuisance to the South Omaha businessman, made the community look "hickish." However, by 1941 Jews were no longer a significant component among peddlers, and the merchants' main complaint was against peddlers cutting overhead by coming out only on Saturday, when the crowds were the greatest, while established merchants stayed open throughout the week.[92]

Jack Wolfe, writing the centenary volume of Iowa Jewry in 1941, noted that peddling had so completely lost its charm that the Jewish peddler is a rarity in America; even the Russian and Polish Jew of later migrations have no need for such occupations." He added, "Perhaps in time the pushcart of the larger cities can be eliminated."[93] The decline of the peddler class represents simultaneously a change in the urban ecology and Jewish occupational opportunities.

NOTES

1. Harry Golden, *Forgotten Pioneer* (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1963), 20.

2. For a complete list of organizations see Table III.

3. Nathan Goldberg, *Occupational Patterns of American Jewry* (New York: Jewish Teachers' Seminary and People's University Press, 1947), 11-12, 16.

4. *Ibid.*, 30; US Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXVII, (Washington, 1911, Immigrants in Cities, II), 139-140, 191-192, 245-246; XXVIII, (Occupations of the First and Second Generations of Immigrants in the United States), 188.

5. Carol Gendler, "The Jews of Omaha," *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly*, VI (1974), 141, citing *Omaha Daily Republican*, July 21, 1882, and *Omaha Daily Herald*, July 16, 1882; Mark H. Elovitz, *A Century of Jewish Life in Dixie: The Birmingham Experience* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1974), 54, gives 1882 Jewish arrivals: Atlanta 35, Baltimore 58, Birmingham 9, Chicago 198, and Cincinnati 10; W. Gunther Plaut, *The Jews in Minnesota. The First Seventy-Five Years* (New York: American Jewish Historical Society, 1959), 91-92, puts the St. Paul 1882 Jewish arrivals as 235; Samuel Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States from 1881 to 1910* (New York: Arno Press, 1969, first pub. 1914).

6. Samuel Joseph, *History of the Baron de Hirsch Fund* (Fairfield: Kelley, 1978, first pub. 1935), 289-290. The IRO was responsible for 73,960 immigrants going to 1,731 cities in all the states. Nebraska was the 11th largest recipient. It has been suggested that the Omaha IRO was highly selective in its sponsorship, thus perhaps excluding peddlers. See note 24 below for the close congruence between the number of cities and towns in Nebraska sponsoring Jews and where Jewish businesses had been established by 1902; Harry S. Linfield, *The Jews in the United States, 1927. A Study of their Number and Distribution* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1929), 18-21.

7. Louis J. Swichkow and Lloyd P. Gartner, *The History of the Jews of Milwaukee* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1963), 406, n. 42.

8. Transcript of National Council of Jewish Women interview with Rose Blumkin, January 26, 1981, 4, 5, 7, Louis Friedman, 6; Moses Kligsberg, "Jewish Immigrants in Business: A Sociological Study," *The Jewish Experience in America* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1969), ed. Abraham J. Karp, 261.

9. Transcript of NCJW interview with Sarah Brodkey Dansky, 7, William Grodinsky, February 22, 1981, 4. Meyer Katzman, 21, and Jewish Free Loan Fund records, Jewish Federation of Omaha. A major early contributor to the Jewish Free Loan was J. L. Brandeis,. "Jewish Communal Survey of Omaha" (typescript, 1929), 157; Jonathan Rosenbaum, ed., *Our Story, Recollections of Omaha's Early Jewish Community, 1885-1925* (Omaha: National Council of Jewish Women, 1981), 46.

10. Lloyd P. Gartner, *History of the Jews of Cleveland* (Cleveland: Western Reserve Historical Society and Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1978), 118.

11. Golden, *Forgotten Pioneer*, 21; *The Italians of Omaha* (New York: Arno Press, 1975), 53; Bertha H. Smith, "The Way of the Pushcart Man," *Craftsman*, IX (1905), 224.

12. Elovitz, *Jewish Life in Dixie*, 61.

13. Gartner, *History of the Jews of Cleveland*, 118.

14. Albert I. Gordon, *Jews in Transition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1949), 23, 119-20; Bernard G. Rudolph, *From a Minyan to a Community, A History of the Jews of Syracuse* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1970), 29; Harold Sharfman, *Jews on the Frontier* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1977), 102.

15. Lloyd P. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870-1914* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1960), 59-60.

16. Joseph Levine, *From Peddlers to Merchants* (Fort Wayne: Indiana Jewish Historical Society, 1979), 1, 22.

17. Jack Wolfe, *A Century with Iowa Jewry* (Des Moines: Iowa Printing and Supply Co., 1941), 27.

18. Frank J. Adler, *Roots in a Moving Stream* (Kansas City: The Temple, Congregation B'nai Jehudah, 1972), 3-14.

19. Elovitz, *A Century of Jewish Life in Dixie*, 23-26, 29; S. Joshua Kohn, *The Jewish Community of Utica, New York, 1847-1948* (New York: American Jewish Historical Society, 1959), 4, 16.

20. Bernard Shuman, *A History of the Sioux City Jewish Community, 1869 to 1969* (Sioux City: Jewish Federation, 1969), 1, 11.

21. Ida L. Uchill, *Pioneers, Peddlers, and Tsadikim* (Denver: Sage Books, 1957), 19.

22. Ella F. Auerbach, "Jewish Settlement in Nebraska" (typescript, 1927), 5-6, 10, 12, 33, 41.

23. *Ibid.*, 46.

24. *Ibid.*, 115-138; transcript of NCJW interview with Sarah Rubin and Rose Walpa, 12-13.

25. Elovitz, *A Century of Jewish Life in Dixie*, 60.

26. Ella Clemons recalls Abraham Elias, a Syrian, going through Monona County, Iowa, in a yellow horse-drawn wagon as late as 1940.

27. Deborah D. Moore, *At Home in America. Second Generation New York Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 81.

28. Archibald A. Hill, "The Pushcart Peddlers of New York," *Independent*, LXI (1906), 919-920.

29. Rudolph, *From Minyan to a Community*, 30-31, and Gartner, *Jewish Immigrant in England*, 59.

30. Elias Tcherikower, *The Early History of the Jewish Labor Movement in the United States* (New York: YIVO, 1961), 315.

31. Hill, "Pushcart Peddlers," 319.

32. *The Jewish Communal Register of New York City, 1917-1918* (New York, 1918), 723.

33. Hill, "Pushcart Peddlers," 916, 918, 920-921, and "The New York Pushcart. Recommendations of the Mayor's Commission," *Charities and the Common*, XVI (1906), 618.

34. "The Markets of the Poor," *Outlook*, CI (August 3, 1912), 750.

35. Gartner, *History of the Jews of Cleveland*, 126.

36. Rudolph, *From Minyan to a Community*, 31-32.

37. Uchill, *Pioneers, Peddlers, and Tsadikim*, 158.

38. Tcherikower, *Early History of the Jewish Labor Movement*, 129

39. Swichkow and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Milwaukee*, 161.

40. *Ibid.*, 161-62; Omaha Council Chamber Journal, located in the Omaha city clerk's office, Doc. 5251/5865, October 22, 1921 (henceforth cited as OCCJ/OCC).

41. *Ibid.*, 162, 164.

42. Auerbach, "Jewish Settlement in Nebraska," 92; Gendler, "The Jews of Omaha," *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly* VI (April, 1974), 227; transcript of NCJW interview with Sarah Brodkey Dansky, 7, and Mrs. Fannie Rothenberg Denenberg, 7.

43. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England*, 61-62, suggests these complaints were universal.

44. Oscar Fleishaker, *The Illinois-Iowa Jewish Community on the Banks of the Mississippi River* (N.P.: 1971), 288, and see various Annual Reports of the City of Omaha, 1890-1923.

45. *Charter and Ordinances of the City of Omaha, 1859*, and *Charter and Revised Ordinances of the City of Omaha, 1867*, 28.

46. Ordinance to Regulate Peddlery, No. 152, May 12, 1868, Omaha city clerk's office (henceforth cited as OCC). State legislation provided as early as 1866 a $30 tax to be collected by the county clerk. It was subsequently raised to $25 for a peddler; $50 for a horse and wagon; $75 for two or more horses; and $100 for an automobile or truck. Thus itinerant merchants outside of city limits had to purchase a license for each county they traded in unless the sale was in interstate commerce. *The Revised Statutes of the Territory of Nebraska 1866*, 332; *Compiled Statutes of the State of Nebraska 1881* (11th ed., 1903), sec. 4983 to 4985; *Rosenbloom v. State*, 64 Neb. 342, 89 N.W. 1053 (1902); *Menke v. State*, 70 Neb. 669, 97 N.W. 1020 (1904). South Omaha distinguished between peddlers of cloth, dry-good notions and jewelry and all other peddlers, charging one $25 per year and the other $20. Wagon peddlers paid $50 per year. South Omaha Ordinance 135, May 10, 1889 (OCC). Soon thereafter the $25 fee was raised to $100. Ord. 166, November 4, 1889 (OCC). Wagon peddlers paid $25 if they peddled food articles of daily consumption and $50 for all other goods.

47. *Compiled Ordinances of the City of Omaha, 1881*, Ch. XXXII; Ordinance No. 1116, July 27, 1886 (OCC).

48. Report of license inspector in *Omaha Municipal Report*, 1888 and 1889.

49. Report of license inspector in *Omaha Municipal Report*, South Omaha Ordinance No. 495, July 31, 1893 (OCC).

50. Articles of Incorporation, G 402, June 6, 1894, Douglas County Clerk's Office.

51. Reports of the license inspector and superintendent, market place, in *Omaha Municipal Reports, 1896*, 240; Docs. 378, March 10, 1885; 41, January 15, 1895; and 52, September 3, 1895 (OCCJ/OCC).

52. Doc. 3969, December 31, 1894 (OCCJ/OCC).

53. Docs. 3970, January 15, 1895; 4028, June 3, 1895; and 4234, June 28, 1897 (OCCJ/OCC).

54. Ord. 4419, April 19, 1898; 4352, February 8, 1898; and 4443, May 21, 1898 (OCCJ/OCC).

55. Ordinance No. 4199, March 23, 1897 (OCC); *Omaha Ordinances, 1890*, Ch. XLVII, Sec. 4-5. Encroachment on peddler's freedom of movement was gradual and sporadic; Ordinance Nos. 4234, July 2, 1897; 4352, February 1, 1898; and 4443, May 17, 1898 (OCC).

56. Doc. 45, July 27, 1897 (OCCJ/OCC). This group is unsatisfactory for statistical purposes because of its small size.

57. United States Federal Census, 1900, Douglas County, Nebraska, ED 30, sh. 1, line 83; ED 28, sh. 1, line 20; and ED 26, sh. 2, line 13.

58. Ordinance No. 5195, July 14, 1903 (OCC), and Doc. 2967, October 20, 1903 (OCCJ/OCC).

59. Docs. 6213, December 11, 1907, and 6242, January 18, 1908 (OCCJ/OCC); Report of License Inspector, 1909. By the early 20th century South Omaha peddler ordinances were similar to Omaha with the exception that South Omaha did not make territorial or zone restrictions; Ord. 954, Sept. 24, 1900, and 1648, October 26, 1908 (OCC).

60. Doc. 519, February 9, 1909 (OCCJ/OCC).

61. Doc. 468, March 3, 1903 (OCCJ/OCC).

62. Doc. 469, March 3, 1903 (OCCJ/OCC).

63. Docs. 3129, November 3, 1903, and 693, February 23, 1898 (OCCJ/OCC). Peddler lunchwagons catered to industrial workers. The Omaha City Council passed an ordinance that would have resulted in reducing lunch-wagon licenses. Restaurant owners endorsed by Omaha Waiters' Union No. 23, however, succeeded in persuading Mayor Moores to veto the bill. Subsequent ordinances permitted lunch peddling under license; Doc. 175, January 16. 1900 (OCCJ/OCC); Ordinance No. 4870, March 11, 1901 (OCC); and *Omaha Revised Ordinances,* 1905, 258, Ch. LI, secs. 1-3. Later ordinances regulated health aspects.

64. Smith, "Way of the Pushcart Man," 225; George R. Leighton, *America's Growing Pains, The Romance, Comedy & Tragedy of Five Great Cities* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1939), 140-236; Thomas Kessner, *The Golden Door. Italian and Jewish Immigrant Mobility in New York City, 1880-1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 55; Harl A. Dalstrom and Orville D. Menard, "The Old Gray Wolf, He Ain't What He Used To Be: Tom Dennison's Omaha," unpublished, 1975, 6-7, 13.

65. Ordinance No. 6214, December 12, 1907 (OCC).

66. Doc. 5649, September 5, 1915 (OCCJ/OCC).

67. Doc. 5776, September 12, 1915 (OCCJ/OCC).

68. See Docs. 5251/5865, October 22, 1912, 4439, December 3, 1929, and 927, May 15, 1933 (OCCJ/OCC).

69. *Morning Bee,* June 29, 1909, and Articles of Incorporation, S 550, June 28, 1909, Douglas County Clerk's Office.

70. Articles of Incorporation, Z 432, September 13, 1915, Douglas County Clerk's Office.

71. Junk peddlers revived mutual protection associations in 1918 and 1919, and some of their group had been in the 1915 organization. Abraham Richard, a member of the 1915 group and the 1919 group, was president of the Co-op Junk House (1919) and a peddler as late as 1929. In 1940 he was in the secondhand clothing trade. *Jewish Bulletin,* September 25, 1919.

72. Articles of Incorporation, F2 552, September 27, 1919, Douglas County Clerk's Office.

73. His name was listed variously as Barnett, Barnath and Bernard.

74. The shortfall between members identified and those unexplainably disappearing from the directory is not remarkable and is in accord with the imperfect nature of the directory reporting system and Chudacoff's hypothesis on mobility out of Omaha. At least one of the disappearances can be traced to Council Bluffs. Howard P. Chudacoff, *Mobile Americans. Residential and Social Mobility in Omaha, 1880-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972).

75. Swichkow and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Milwaukee,* 126.

76. Elovitz, *A Century of Jewish Life in Dixie,* 62.

77. Death notices in *Jewish Bulletin* and *Jewish Press* for associational affiliations; Auerbach, "Jewish Settlement in Nebraska"; Gendler, "The Jews of Omaha"; Rosenbaum, *Our Story.*

78. Gartner, *History of the Jews of Cleveland,* 125, 272, 295.

79. Max Vorspan and Lloyd P. Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publications Society of America, 1970), 128.

80. Chudacoff, *Mobile Americans,* 160.

81. Tcherikower, *History of the Jewish Labor Movement in the United States,* 112.

82. Moore, *At Home in America,* 95.

83. Retail sales and junk dealers were also specifically mentioned, but secondhand stores, and pawnbrokers were not. The latter may have been included under jewelry. "Jewish Communal Survey of Omaha," 46-47.

84. Goldberg, *Occupational Patterns of American Jewry,* 43, 65.

85. "Jewish Communal Survey of Omaha," 136, 140.

86. Marc Lee Raphael, "The Utilization of Public and Local and Federal Sources for Reconstructing American Jewish Local History: The Jews of Columbus, Ohio," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly,* LXV (1975), 28.

87. Gordon, *Jews in Transition,* 220-221, 254-256.

88. Occupations: Peddlers and Hucksters

	1900	1933
Cohan, Cohen, Cohn, Cohon	12%	.075%
Kaplan	11%	2%
Rosen, Rosenbaum, Rosenberg Rosenblatt, Rosenfield	17%	2%

(Name groups include at least 10 persons.)

89. Ordinance No. 14,216, May 8, 1934 (OCC). In 1933 fruit and vegetable commissionmen complained to Police Commissioner Frank Myers that "the activity of itinerant peddlers was hurting their business" and that the ordinance should be enforced. *Omaha Bee-News,* June 8, 1933.

90. Robert D. Hunter, "The History of the 'Old Market' Omaha, Nebraska" (typescript, 1979), 17.

91. *Ibid.,* 19; Omaha City Planning Office, Historic Preservation, Old Market file.

92. Doc. 1878, May 6, 1941 (OCCJ/OCC).

93. Wolfe, *A Century with Iowa Jewry,* 25-26.