



Lewis M. Isaacs

death in 1878. In 1906 his brother, Abram Samuel Isaacs, edited a collection of his addresses, *The Old Guard and Other Addresses*.

ABRAM SAMUEL ISAACS (b. New York city, 1852; d. Paterson, N. J., 1920), rabbi, editor, and educator, was another son of Samuel Myer Isaacs. He studied at New York University (A.B., 1871; M.A., 1873), at the University of Breslau (1874-77), and at the Jewish theological seminary in that city. He was professor of Hebrew at New York University (1885-94), then professor of German (1887-95), of German literature in the post-graduate department (1895-1906), and, finally, professor of Semitic languages at New York University, in charge of the department (from 1906 on).

Isaacs was preacher in the East 86th Street Synagogue in New York city (1886-87). From 1896 until 1905 he was the rabbi of B'nai Jeshurun Congregation of Paterson, N. J. (Barnert Memorial Temple).

Upon his father's death in 1878, Isaacs became the editor of the *Jewish Messenger*. He remained its editor until the periodical was merged with the *American Hebrew* in 1903. Isaacs was the author of *A Modern Hebrew Poet: The Life and Writings of Moses Chaim Luzzatto* (1878), *What Is Judaism* (1912), and, for younger readers, *Stories from the Rabbis* (1894), *Step by Step* (1910; the early days of Moses Mendelsohn), *The Young Champion* (1913; a year in Grace Aguilar's life), and *Under the Sabbath Lamp* (1919). Two of his poems are in the *Union Hymnal*, published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

In 1878 he was awarded the degree of Ph.D., *honoris causa*, by New York University.

LEWIS MONTEFIORE ISAACS (b. New York city, 1877), lawyer and musician, was the son of Myer Samuel Isaacs. He studied at the College of the City of New York (1891-93), New York University (Ph.B., 1897), Columbia University, M.A., 1899, and Columbia University Law School (LL.B., 1900). He was admitted to the bar of New York in 1899, and from then on practised law in New York city.

Isaacs wrote about music and was himself a composer of songs and compositions for the piano and orchestra. He is the author of *Guide to Humperdinck's Königskinder* (1912; with Kurt J. Rahlson) and *Guide to Humperdinck's Hänsel und Gretel* (1913). He was treasurer of the Beethoven Association and secretary of the Edward MacDowell Association. For many years he was a trustee of the West End Synagogue (Congregation Shaaray Tefila).

EDITH JULIET RICH ISAACS (b. Milwaukee, Wis., 1878), editor, was the wife of Lewis Montefiore Isaacs. She studied at Milwaukee-Downer College (A.B., 1897). For a while she was the literary editor of the *Milwaukee Sentinel* (1903) and a departmental editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*. During the first World War, she was head of the department of publicity for women in the Second Federal Reserve District during the Liberty Loan campaigns (1917-18).

From 1918 on, Mrs. Isaacs was editor of *Theatre Arts Magazine*, a quarterly devoted to the study of the arts of the theatre. In 1924 the magazine became the *Theatre Arts Monthly*. Mrs. Isaacs was the editor of *Theatre* (1927, a collection of essays on the theatre), *Plays of American Life and Fantasy* (1929), and *Architecture for the New Theatre* (1935; a collection of essays).

STANLEY MYER ISAACS (b. New York city, 1882), lawyer and city official, was another son of Myer Samuel Isaacs. He studied at Columbia University (A.B., 1903; M.A., 1904) and New York University Law School (LL.B., 1904). He was admitted to the bar of New York in 1905, and practised law in New York city until 1919; from 1919 on he was in the real estate business.

From 1904 until 1912 and from 1916 on, Isaacs was a member of the Republican County Committee of New York County. In the interval he was a member of the Progressive Party. In 1937 he was elected president of the Borough of Manhattan of New York city for a term of four years on a municipal "Fusion" ticket. He aroused much criticism by appointing a communist to the post of confidential examiner in his office. Isaacs defended the appointment on the ground, among others, that in a democracy political beliefs did not bar an appointee from office, if he was otherwise qualified; but because of the appointment Isaacs was refused renomination by the Republican Party, and withdrew his candidacy (1941), but announced that he would run for the City Council.

Isaacs was active in the work of the settlement houses in New York city, particularly that of the Educational Alliance. In 1934 he was president of the United Neighborhood Houses, and was awarded a medal in 1938 for his activity in this field. He was also an officer of the Baron de Hirsch Fund and a trustee of the Federation for the Support of Jewish Philanthropic Societies.

CHARLES REZNIKOFF.

Lit.: Bloch, Joshua, "Abram Samuel Isaacs," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, No. 31 (1928) 265-66; Isaacs, Abram S., "Myer S. Isaacs. A Memoir," *American Jewish Year Book*, 5667 (1906-7) 19-33; Isaacs, I. S., "Myer S. Isaacs," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, No. 13 (1905) 143-46; Kohler, Max J., "The Board of Delegates of American



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he lost his Southern subscribers because of this, persisted in his course, writing in an editorial, "We want subscribers, for without them we cannot publish a paper, and Judaism needs an organ; but we want much more truth and loyalty. . . ." At the memorial exercises for President Abraham Lincoln in 1865, held in Union Square, New York city, Isaacs performed part of the services.

Isaacs was a leader in many communal activities: he was associated with Sampson Simson in founding Mt. Sinai Hospital (1852), originally (until 1871) called the Jews' Hospital, and was its first vice-president; he was one of the organizers of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites (1859) for securing and maintaining Jewish civil and religious rights at home and abroad; he helped found the Hebrew Free School Association in New York city (1864) and the first theological seminary for Jews in the United States, Maimonides College of Philadelphia (1867); and he helped organize the United Hebrew Charities in New York city (1874).

MYER SAMUEL ISAACS (b. New York city, 1841; d. New York city, 1904), a lawyer, was the eldest son of Samuel Myer Isaacs. He studied at New York University, graduating at the head of his class in 1859, and, after receiving his degree in law in 1861, was admitted to the bar of New York in 1862. He specialized in real estate law and lectured on this subject at New York University Law School from 1887 until 1897. He was appointed a judge of the Marine (later City) Court to fill an unexpired term in 1886. Isaacs was active in the perennial attempts to improve the administration of municipal affairs in New York city, and was one of the organizers of the Citizens' Union in 1897.

He worked beside his father in founding the Board of Delegates of American Israelites (1859) and the Hebrew Free School Association in New York city (1864). He was secretary of the Board of Delegates from 1868 to 1876 and president from 1876 until 1878, when the Board was merged into the Committee on Civil and Religious Rights of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; he was secretary of the Hebrew Free School Association in 1864 and its president from 1880 until 1892. In 1889 he was a member of the committee that established the Educational Alliance, into which the Free School Association was merged. Isaacs was one of the founders of the Hebrew Technical Institute (1883), and was one of those who initiated the merging of a number of relief societies in New York city into the United Hebrew Charities (1873). He was also one of the founders of the Montefiore Home (1884) for chronic invalids. He helped secure Seward Park for the crowded East Side of New York city.

From 1881 on, during the persecution and massacres of Russian Jews, Isaacs was one of the New York committee to aid the refugees. He became a member of the executive committee of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in 1881, and was president of the Baron de Hirsch Fund from 1891 until his death. As such he was active in establishing the Baron de Hirsch Agricultural School at Woodbine, N. J. (1895).

He was one of the editors of his father's *Jewish Messenger* from its founding in 1857 until his father's

ISAACS, a distinguished family of New York city. SAMUEL MYER ISAACS (b. Leeuwarden, Holland, 1804; d. New York city, 1878), a rabbi, came to New York from England in 1839 to become the first Hazan and preacher of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun then on Elm Street. The employment of a preacher was an innovation for the synagogue, especially one who preached in English. He was the first to do so regularly in an Ashkenazic synagogue in the United States.

His father had been a banker in Holland but fled to England with his family in 1814 to escape the invading French. Of his five sons, four became rabbis. Samuel Myer Isaacs, before leaving England, had been the principal of an orphan asylum in London (Novoh Zedek in West Norwood, later the Jews' Hospital and Orphan Asylum). In 1847, when a schism in Congregation B'nai Jeshurun led to the formation of Congregation Shaaray Tefila, Isaacs became the rabbi of the new congregation and remained such until his death.

In 1857 Isaacs founded a weekly, the *Jewish Messenger*, in which he opposed Reform Judaism. In 1875, however, he advocated certain minor ritual reforms but found no supporters. He was an ardent advocate of the anti-slavery movement and, although