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Brown Family by Donald Povich

Donald M. Povich

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The Brown Family

In 1895 Harry Brown and his wife Celia came to Bath Harry Brown had a shop, possibly a pawn shop, on Front Street. He immediately became a part of the Bath Jewish community. He was the thirteenth member to sign the original charter. He and Celia had five children two boys and three girls. Mary, Bessie, Arthur, David and the youngest girl Minnie. Of the five only Mary and David married and they late in life and neither had children.

All attended school in Bath and graduated from Morse High School. Mary and Bessie became excellent school teachers. Arthur worked for the BIW and was long time financial secretary of the congregation. I remember well his routine on Yom Kippor. He would come early and take his seat over there in the fourth pew on the end, fold his arms and sit in a semi trance without movement until the sun set some ten hours later. Then he would rise and walk home. Presumably feeling totally cleansed.

David had the honor of being one of the few Morse graduates to attend Yale University. He became a correspondent for Reuters News. He covered the world and had the distinction of being present of the: Battleship Missouri when General Douglas MacArthur accepted the surrender of Japan ending the Second World War. He spent the last years of his career working for "the U. S. Information Service in Paris.

The most unassuming of the group and the last survivor was Minnie. Minnie remained in Bath and worked at several clerical jobs. She never lost her love for her community, which included her love for the Patten Free Library and the Beth Israel Synagogue. She was not a great spender. She was a beautiful, gracious and caring lady. She lived all her life in her parents home. The home in which she was no doubt born. She loved her neighbors and they loved her. Anyone who attended her funeral here at the synagogue could have seen that although she had no living relatives her life touched the lives of her many friends in very meaningful ways. And at last, this quite lady at the end of her life was so generous that the Patten Free Library was able to finish its addition without debt and the Beth Israel Congregation will endure because of her endowment for years and years to come. And she will benefit members yet unborn.