two saloons, one blacksmith, one carpenter and cabinet maker, one tin shop, one tailor, and two meat markets. Denver City, separated from Auraria by Cherry Creek, which was described as one hundred feet wide and three to twelve inches deep, had one hundred and fifty houses, five stores, two hotels, one printing office and two saloons. Auraria boasted the pioneer newspaper, the Rocky Mountain News.

Most of the buildings were of hewed logs, some of earth, and were covered with "Mexican roof," as the earth roofs were called, or with the tarpaulin covers that had been removed from the prairie schooners. The most recent roofs had pine shingles. The few trees found by the pioneers east of the Rockies were the cottonwoods along the Platte River, and the News pleaded to "Save the Trees." Baths were taken in Cherry Creek or the Platte. All of the dust of the plains in the villages, which was ankle deep mud when it rained, was a part of Kansas Territory.

The second oldest member of the little Jewish group to be greeted by this sight arrived in May. Julius Mitchell at the age of forty-seven was old enough to be the father of many of the Jewish Fifty-niners. Like the Salomons he was born in Posen. A well-educated man, who had learned English in Europe, he came to the United States in 1835 where he immediately became a citizen in New York. There he engaged in the mercantile business and acted as a sales agent for a large fur company. He married in 1844, and although doing well, went west to Leavenworth, Kansas, where he remained until the Pikes Peak excitement, when he left his family behind, and set out west alone. In Denver he opened a large grocery and outfitting business. Before the year was over he was joined by his eleven-year-old son, David. As the patriarch of the little Jewish group on the banks of Cherry Creek, he officiated at the first Jewish High Holiday services during the fall of the very first year, 1859.

Later writers described him as a man of decided liberal belief, who conceded to others the same right of expression whether their views were more orthodox or less. Mitchell was the first of a large group who came from, or through, Leavenworth, where a Jewish community existed, and which was one of the principal outfitting points of the Pikes Peak region.

During the same month Leopold Mayer also left Leavenworth, where he had been engaged in the grocery business. It took him sixty or seventy days to make the trip. Walking along beside an ox-team, he covered the entire 600 miles by foot. Several writers claim that he was accompanied by Abraham Goldsmith and Simon L. Wels on this trip. Although the first city directory lists A. Goldsmith as a member of the Mayer firm, coming from Leavenworth, and residing, as did Mayer, in Denver City, neither Mayer's son, Adolph, nor the descendants of the Goldsmith family believe that they came west together.

Mayer was born in Alsace-Lorraine, and came to the United States at the age of nine. In Lafayette, Indiana, he sold matches and there began his lifetime of adventures. He followed the building of the railroads, particularly the building of the Union Pacific, and was present at Promontory Point when the East and West were joined in the first transcontinental road. Of all of the Fifty-niners only the sons of this Jewish pioneer remain in Denver in the mid-twentieth century. The story of Mayer's life is to be found in Denver, San Luis, and Saguache.

Although only Abraham Goldsmith [also Goldschmidt] is listed in the first city directory, there were two brothers, Abraham and Henry, married to two sisters, who made the trip west. The two young couples came from Munich. For four or five months they were on the sailboat bringing them to the United States. The voyage was a hazardous one, with their ship blown to the shores of Nova Scotia. In the United States they tried farm lands in Illinois and Missouri. In Denver City they filed homestead claims, and in October, 1859, Abraham held a grant of Denver lots. On the death of Henry's wife, the first Jewish organization in the Rocky Mountain region was formed.

In June, one of the leading Jews of the city arrived. Abraham Jacobs, who was born in Frendorf, Germany, in 1834, came to the United States at the age of nine. After clerking in Louisville, Cincinnati, and Lexington, he came to Omaha in the summer of 1857 and ventured into business for himself. Next, in Denver, as was typical of Jewish activity during the period, he formed a partnership with a non-Jew, Albert Budde.

Their store, across the street from the Doyle Company and News office, was described as a "finely finished frame building 22 feet by 70. 'Two stories high. The front in superb style.'"

On October 1st, A. D. 1859, A. L. 5559, more than 40 Masons assembled in the hall of Auraria Lodge to witness
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In loving memory of my father
PAUL LIBERT
1892-1951
And to my mother
FANNIE PEPPER LIBERT
who begged me to dedicate this book
not to her
but to the "unknown righteous" men and women—the Tsadikim—
who quietly helped build a Jewish community

Sage Books are published by
Alan Swallow, 2679 So. York St., Denver 10, Colorado
the established business, until 1861, when he moved his store to Central City.

Very little is recorded about the other Jewish Fifty-niners. The name of Simon Wels almost always appears with that of Abraham Goldsmith in the Denver Lodge which succeeded Aurora U. D. In 1872 he was a charter member of the B’nai B’rith lodge. The following year the lodge called a special meeting to grant him a traveling card when he was leaving for a visit to Europe. In 1874 he requested, and was granted, a withdrawal card from the lodge.

Joel Gottlieb [also Gottlieb] who arrived in 1859 and remained in the West for the rest of his life was, unlike his contemporaries, a East European Jew. His birthplace was Plonska, Russian Poland. At fifty-three he was the oldest of the Jewish pioneers, but never seems to have assumed the leadership that his age warranted. Joel had a younger brother, Joseph. Since both were referred to as “J. Gottlieb,” and at least one historian credited Joseph as being one of the pioneers of the Jewish community, it is likely that both brothers were in the Pikes Peak region in 1859.

In the first city directory of 1859, Joel Gottlieb is listed under “merchants,” and as being formerly of St. Louis. The same name also appears in Chicago in 1837. He owned a great deal of property in Denver at the time of his death, according to his will, which also lists property purchased in Virginia City, Montana, in 1864. He is listed in a Utah directory in 1867. Both he and Joseph seem to have spent a great deal of time in Utah, and it was the Euphrates Lodge of the B’nai B’rith of that state that conferred one of the order’s degrees in Utah upon Joseph in 1876, to the chagrin of the Denver lodge, which did not quite know whether he deserved the degrees and membership.

Joel petitioned the Denver lodge in 1873 and was accepted. A few months later he resigned and requested the return of the fees he had paid for the second and third degrees of the order. The following year he died. From his will can be noted that even before Colorado became a state, the Jews were already grouped together on the basis of origin. His will was witnessed by Jews of similar East European birth, and the executor, a Russian Jew, married Joel’s widow. Joel left everything to Flora, his wife, with the exception of three bequests to nephews. To Joseph he left nothing.

The younger brother’s reputation was not of the best. Although he was championed by some, he was not completely acceptable to the conservative Jewish community. Joseph’s first wife, Ellen, died in 1879 at the age of 30, leaving him with four children. Two years later “Justice Whittemore tied the knot for Joseph Gottlieb and Ella Grabosky in a strictly private ceremony.” The following year his oldest son died, and in 1890 his second son died. At the time of his death in 1898 he left three children, born to his second wife. A month after his death another son died.

Joseph seems to have been principally engaged as a pawnbroker. After the Temple Emanuel was erected, he held the note on the building as late as 1876. His first application to membership was rejected in 1875, but accepted in 1878.

Grumpert Goldburg, listed in the city directory of 1859 as being in the auction and commission business in Aurora, did not remain long in Colorado. In August, he was at the diggings in Gregory Gulch, engaged in mining. From Colorado he went on to a mining camp in Montana, then named “Last Chance Gulch.” He married Helena Morris in Denver in 1863, and returned with his bride to the camp which was renamed Helena.

Among the few family men was Simon Nathan, who brought his wife and baby with him. Nathan was born in Kopen, Poland, in 1826 and came to the United States in 1852, later than most of his pioneer co-religionists. He settled in New Orleans, where he remained for four years. From there he went to Leavenworth, where he married Anna Zucker in 1857. During the following year, their first child, Edward, was born. As soon as the baby was old enough, the three joined a covered-wagon procession bound for Pikes Peak. The Narans settled in California Gulch (Leadville) which was enjoying its first “excitement.” One of the early births recorded in the region, and the first or second among the Jews, was that of Louis Nathan, born in Hamilton, October 7, 1860.

Late in the fall another Jew arrived from Leavenworth, Louis Rothchild, who opened a clothing store and completed the group of known Jews.

It is probable that there were other Jews in the region, but either they did not remain long enough to be noted, or they chose to separate themselves from their fellow-Jews. One such Jew was the French- and German-speaking Joseph Block, who came from France. He married a beautiful Catholic girl and brought up his