

The newspaper on April 9 noted that the lodge was organized "last Saturday." This was the culmination of a week's activities.

From the first until 1912, the B'nai B'rith was almost the sole voice of the Jewish community. Even when the community was divided in the early part of the twentieth century, the lodge room was the only place in the city where both sides of the divisive issues could be aired. The meetings were not always peaceful, friendly discussions. The minutes of many a meeting in which the Brothers had spent the greatest part of the morning rising to points of order, demanding apologies, and threatening to withdraw from office, end with the amazing closing signature, "Benevolence, Brotherly Love and Harmony prevailing. . . ."

When the lodge was a year old, "It was moved and seconded that this Lodge return their Charter. . . . After a spirited discussion the motion was lost. In the affirmative were F. Z. Salomon, A. M. Appel, B. Berry, Isidor Dietsch and Julius Londoner."²⁷ In the negative were David Mitchell, H. I. Weil, H. Schayer, John Elsner, M. Hattenbach, and A. H. Fleischer. By one vote the lodge kept its charter.

The lodge, with a little more than a score of members, met the appeals made to it with admirable generosity. The first appeal was to contribute to the mission of the American consul, and leader of the order, Benjamin Peixotto, in his efforts on behalf of the Jews in Rumania. Four months after the lodge was instituted, a committee raised \$112 for the purposes.²⁸

While increasing numbers of tuberculous sick descended on the Denver community, the lodge still contributed \$75 for the "relief of Yellow Fever Sufferers in the South,"²⁹ made its annual Purim contribution to the *Alliance Israelite Universelle*,³⁰ sent \$100 for the relief of the victims of the pogroms of 1881,³¹ and made its regular contributions to the Cleveland Orphan Asylum.

The national organization kept the Jews of Denver, and of the entire state who belonged to it, alive to the needs of their co-religionists throughout the world. It also brought information and guidance to the conservative group in the West, which was always on the verge of becoming self-satisfied.

It was to the lodge that a Jew in distress was likely to turn first. The lodge acted on almost every issue involving the civil rights of individual Jews, as well as the entire Jewish community. One of the earliest tasks it took up occurred in April, 1874, when the *Rocky Mountain News*, which delicately referred to the Jews as

"Israelites" or "Hebrews," printed a story on "The Murder of Perry, by Fareber, the Jew."³²

A few days later the newspaper reported that Fareber claimed that he had not committed the crime of murder, but of homicide, "which took place at my rancho at the junction of Sangre de Cristo and Abeyta Pass, in defence of my home and life. The deceased had a lot of money on him which I didn't touch." He claimed that he had tried to surrender, and asked for an impartial investigation.³³ He was jailed in San Luis. When the case was brought to the attention of the Denver lodge,

Bro. Anfenger rose, and with a few appropriate remarks referred to the perilous condition of a co-religionist. Mr. Fareber, who was lying in jail in St. Louis [San Luis] Colorado under the charge of murder. Fareber had asserted his innocence and appealed to friends for assistance in obtaining a fair trial. Bro. Anfenger was not aware that Fareber belonged to our order, in fact, thought he did not. But it being one of the cardinal principles of our order to battle against prejudice and to vindicate justice, his opinion was that, our lodge should take steps to secure for our unfortunate co-religionist a fair and impartial trial, and to employ good available counsel for him. He did not wish in the least, and he knew it could not be the intention of our lodge, to shield anybody from justice, but the wise benefits which the law accords to every prisoner, should also be shared by Fareber, and that to accomplish, we ought to do all in our power.³⁴

A committee was appointed, funds were collected, and a lawyer, E. L. Smith, was engaged to defend Fareber. The *News* carried the outcome of the case in August, "Fareber, the Jew, who murdered Perry in the Sangre de Cristo Pass was sentenced at San Luis last week by Judge Hallett to five years in prison. . . ."³⁵ The minutes do not record whether the intervention of the lodge had "vindicated justice," or not. At the very least, while the newspaper still called him "Fareber, the murderer," the sentence he received absolved him of the crime of murder.

A similar case was brought to the attention of the lodge ten years later, in January, 1884, by Bro. N. Weinberger of Gunnison:

asking cooperation in procuring suitable counsel in defending Mr. Prince of Irwin, charged with the killing of a man, it being claimed that Mr. Prince is a member of Achim Lodge No. 175 of St. Louis, and that the killing was done in self defense.³⁶