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THE WILLI SPIEGELBERG HOUSE

237 East Palace Avenue

*Cultural Properties Review Committee — State Planning Office Photo
Files, State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, N.M.*



THE WILLI SPIEGELBERG HOUSE

237 East Palace Avenue

The Willi Spiegelberg House located at 237 E. Palace Avenue commemorates members of an influential Jewish mercantile family. The first individual of this clan to make his residence in Santa Fe was Solomon Jacob who served as a sutler with the forces of Col. Sterling Price during U.S. occupation of New Mexico in 1846. Solomon Jacob was one of ten children born to Jacob and Betty Spiegelberg, who had lived at Cassel, in the Prussian province of Hesse-Nassau; and at Borgentreich and Borgholz, province of Westphalia in the Kingdom of Prussia. The remaining nine children were: Levi, Elias, Emanuel, Lehman, Willi, Abraham, Minna Speigelberg Grunsfeld, Hannah Spiegelberg Wise and Eva Spiegelberg.

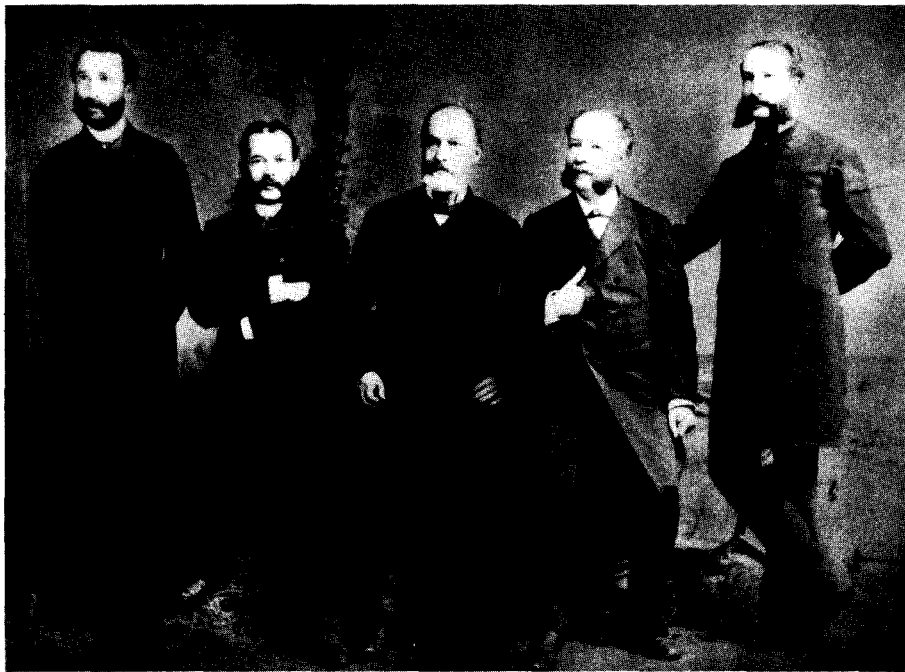
Solomon Jacob's migration to New Mexico was followed by Levi in 1848, Elias in 1850, Emanuel in 1853, Lehman in 1857 and Willi in 1861. Another Spiegelberg, also named Solomon and possibly a cousin, came to New Mexico during the mid nineteenth century. "Sol" Spiegelberg, as he came to be known, opened a store in 1871 next door to the Spiegelberg Brothers' mercantile business. (*Daily New Mexican* June 9, 1871) A Union officer during the Civil War and member of the Santa Fe Board of County Commissioners in 1884, Sol Spiegelberg eventually moved to Las Vegas, New Mexico, where he died in 1910. Solomon Jacob Spiegelberg had left New Mexico earlier, in 1854, after he received a "medical" diagnosis granting him only two additional years of life. The prediction proved false, and Solomon Jacob lived until March of 1898 when he died in Meran, Austria. The number of Spiegelbergs in New Mexico was further reduced when tragedy struck the family in 1855. *The Santa Fe Weekly Gazette* on September 22 of that year reported that Elias Spiegelberg had been smothered in his sleep during the evening hours of September 14 when the *vigas* which supported the earthen roof above his bedroom cracked resulting in several hundred pounds of dirt falling on the sleeping man.

Willi, as previously mentioned, came to Santa Fe in 1861 and quickly fit into the Spiegelberg Brothers' mercantile organization. He was made a full partner by 1862. Maintaining a store on the south side of the Plaza, the Spiegelberg Brothers were both progressive and aggressive within the New Mexico business community. No one had more initiative than Willi who, in 1873, introduced the use of female models in the store's display window. His advertising efforts did not go unnoticed by *The Daily New Mexican* which commented:

Willi has a girl at last. She stands in the doorway of the handsome retail store of Spiegelberg Bros. to attract the eyes and arrest the attention of the passerby. She is a coquette of the most dangerous type . . . We congratulate Willi on his discreet and beautiful girl and although she is the center of a large circle of admirers, we can assume that she will never do anything worse by him than to sell all the goods he has in the house. (Fierman, p. 428)

The House of Spiegelberg was quick to take advantage of New Mexico's expanding economy. The firm invested in mining ventures, land speculation, and insurance and construction enterprises. In order to insure their own credit system, the brothers on August 1, 1872 founded the Second National Bank of Santa Fe with Lehman as president and Willi as cashier. Willi outlined the bank's interest rates in a letter to Tully (Pinckney R.), Ochoa and Co. of Tucson when he noted that the money was loaned "at 1% in the Summer when money is plenty, and 1 ½ to 2% pr. month in the Winter, when money is scarce." (Fierman, P. 418) The bank was first operated in a corner of the Spiegelberg Brothers store, but was later housed in a new two-story building constructed to the east. The Second National Bank reached its peak in 1885 when it had assets of nearly \$500,000. In 1892, after being in business for twenty years, the charter for the bank was allowed to lapse. (Mauzy, p. 15) The presence of the United States Army in New Mexico gave the Spiegelbergs yet another source of revenue. The brothers served as sutlers and mail route contractors for several New Mexico military posts and Indian agencies. However, by 1886 the Spiegelberg Brothers had liquidated their retail business and had become jobbers and wholesalers exclusively.

In 1874 twenty-nine year old Willi had visited Germany and become engaged to eighteen-year-old Flora Langerman. The daughter of Colonel William Langerman who had migrated to California with the forty-niners, Flora met



The five Speigelberg Brothers: Willi, Lehman, Solomon, Jacob, Levi and Emanuel. Photograph courtesy of the Museum of New Mexico.

Willi while studying in Germany. Following a brief courtship, Flora and Willi were married at the new Reform Temple at Nuremberg. The wedding was followed by an extended honeymoon in the best hotels in Munich, Vienna, Paris and London. Arriving in Santa Fe in 1875, Flora soon adapted to the life style of Territorial New Mexico as Michael L. Lawson in his article "Flora Langermann Spiegelberg Grand Lady of Santa Fe" notes:

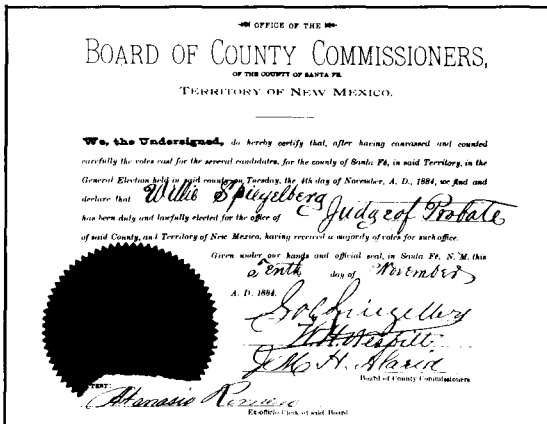
. . . she proved to be remarkably adaptable in absorbing the elements of New Mexico culture and, in the end, she contributed a great deal to it by refusing to compromise her own gentility. (p. 293)

The couple first lived in an adobe house near the Plaza. On November 5, 1879 Lehman Spiegelberg purchased a parcel of land from Dolores Perea de Connelly, widow of Civil War governor Henry Connelly. The tract was described as bounded on the north and west by "a portion of the pasture commonly called La Cienega," on the east by Kentucky Avenue (now Paseo de Peralta), and on the south by Palace Avenue. On November 1, 1880, Lehman quitclaimed the property to his brother, Willi. Earlier in that same year the Willi Spiegelberg House had been built for Flora and Willi by European artisans who had come to New Mexico because of the extensive building program of Archbishop John B. Lamy. They were probably the same workmen who built the Francisco Hinojos House at 355 East Palace Avenue, since the two buildings possess similar architectural elements. Although of adobe construction, the exterior of the Willi Spiegelberg House is European in appearance. However, the woodwork is of typical Territorial design. Shallow fireplaces intended for coal burning rather than for wood were placed in most of the fourteen rooms. *The Daily New Mexican* on September 23, 1880 commented:

The first house in Santa Fe to have gas pipes is the residence of Mr. Willi Spiegelberg on Palace Avenue. Mssrs. Irvine and McKenzie have just finished supplying this building with appliances for affording it gas as soon as the works are finished.

Willi Spiegelberg in addition to his many commercial pursuits also dabbled in politics and was elected probate judge on November 4, 1884. Known for their hospitality, the Spiegelbergs gained many friends in New Mexico. One such close acquaintance was Archbishop Lamy. In her reminiscences, Flora claimed that one day she glanced out her window and saw the Archbishop planting a pair of willow saplings near the front gate. A later owner of the house removed two large, but diseased, willow trees from the front yard in the 1960's.

Willi and his wife had two daughters, Mrs. Rose E. S. Eising and Mrs. Betty S. Frank, who were both born in Santa Fe. In 1888 Willi, the last of the Spiegelberg brothers then still living in New Mexico, decided to follow his brothers and move to New York. The Willi Spiegelberg House was sold for \$3,000 to Mrs. Teresa Symington, wife of New Mexico doctor John Symington. Willi lived in New York



Willi Spiegelberg's certification of election to the office of Probate Judge. Sol Spiegelberg, who signed as one of the county commissioners, was possibly a cousin. Courtesy of State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

until his death in January, 1929. Flora continued to live an active life until her own death in 1943 at the age of eighty-seven. Dr. Floyd S. Fierman in explaining why the Spiegelbergs left New Mexico notes:

One hazards the opinion that they moved not because of economic reasons, but because their respective wives, one by one, urged them to do so. Thus Willi and Flora were the last to leave. It would seem that they, too, wanted to raise their children in an environment more hospitable to Jewish survival and to have their children marry into their own faith. (Fierman, p. 431)

The second owners of the Willi Spiegelberg House were Dr. and Mrs. John Symington. The son of John and Elizabeth Symington of Maryland, Dr. Symington came to Santa Fe in 1867. He soon settled in Albuquerque where he practiced medicine and edited an Albuquerque newspaper known as the *Review*. Sister Blandina Segale in her journal *At the End of the Santa Fe Trail* gives the following account of Dr. Symington's marriage to Teresa Armijo of Albuquerque:

Mrs. Symington's parents and the parents of a distinguished rich and powerful family in New Mexico arranged an alliance between the two families. Neither of the betrothed had ever met. The day for the wedding was set and elaborate preparations were being made by both families. The groom gathered his retinue in marching order, cavalry style, a coach drawn by a span of the best bred horses decked in green and gold and all mountings solid silver — on horses and coach. The cavalcade approached the splendor of old time princes going from

Spitz had founded the S. Spitz Jewelry and Manufacturing Company in Santa Fe and a son, Bernard, later managed the jewelry store. The Spitz family owned the Willi Spiegelberg House until it was sold in 1963 to the present owners Dr. and Mrs. Edward S. Cook. Some remodeling was done by the Spitz family. A portal originally built on the west side of the building was taken down and several fireplaces sealed, most of which have been reopened by the present owners so that the structure is now substantially as originally constructed. Dr. Cook, a former Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Historic Santa Fe Foundation, maintains his dental office in the building with the remaining portion being used as offices by a law firm. This historically valuable Santa Fe property was entered in the National Register of Historic Places May 25, 1973.

James H. Purdy
May 15, 1978



Willi Spiegelberg at the age of eighty-four. Photograph courtesy of the Museum of New Mexico.

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Old Santa Fe . . . Yesterday and Today



A portion of the Spiegelberg Brothers' Store (on the extreme right) and the Second National Bank (left of the store). This photograph taken about 1900 shows Solomon Spitz, another owner of The Willi Spiegelberg House, having his jewelry store in the old Second National Bank Building.

Historical Society of New Mexico Print in the Robert H. Martin Collection, State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico.



The Spiegelberg Brothers' Store (Building with territorial brick trim) and the Second National Bank (structure to the left with fake vigas) as they appear today.

Photograph courtesy of Hope Curtis.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE FOR 1978

It is with deep thanks that the Historic Santa Fe Foundation announces a very rewarding response to its drive for new members in 1978 as well as renewals.

Many hours of volunteer work were required to accomplish this and the Foundation would like to thank those Members who contributed their time so enthusiastically:

Miss Dorothy Alvord	Mrs. Jeanne Hurd
Miss Lina Borthick	Mrs. Eloisa Jones
Mrs. Sylvia Bovis	Miss Maryfrances Mackel
Mrs. Rene Clayton	Mrs. Cindy Mares
Miss Gladys Daniels	Mrs. Irma Miller
Mrs. Russell Davis	Mrs. Shirley Ortega
Mrs. Katy Hadley	Mrs. Octavia Peyton
Mrs. Mabel Ham	Mrs. Ella Roberson
Mrs. Patricia Hathaway	Miss Helen Rose
Mrs. Sue Watkins	

all of which resulted in a total of over 175 new Members, giving us a Membership of 653.

We are very gratified that so many merchants, as well as individuals and organizations, feel that the work we are accomplishing and the goals we have outlined for the Foundation are worthy of their support.

Mrs. Richard Chilson
Membership Chairwoman

"We can only pay our debt to the past by putting the future in debt to ourselves."

John Buchan

Special Thanks to the Volunteers at Loretto Chapel

Miss Dorothy Alvord	Mrs. Ken Luyster
Mrs. Winnabelle Beasley	Miss Maryfrances Mackel
Mrs. Patt Berardinelli	Mrs. Cindy Mares
Miss Lina Borthick	Mrs. Estafonita Martinez
Mrs. Martha Booker	Mrs. Isabel Martinez
Miss Jean Buchanan	Mrs. Mary Meyer
Mrs. Rene Clayton	Mrs. Adela Miera
Miss Gladys Daniels	Mrs. Irma Miller
Mrs. Peggy Ellis	Miss Virginia Ortiz y Pino
Mrs. Roland Goodman	Mrs. Bertha Perez
Mrs. Katy Hadley	Mrs. Ella Roberson
Mrs. Ray Ham	Mrs. Ophelia Romero
Mrs. Jean Hurd	Miss Helen Rose
Mrs. Susie Klemos	Mrs. Anita Thomas
Mrs. Sue Watkins	

Mrs. Jordie Chilson
Miss Gladys Daniels
Volunteer Coordinators

REMINDER — MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

To those members who have not yet renewed their membership for 1978 — the Historic Santa Fe Foundation needs and would deeply appreciate your support. Please send in your dues for the current year. Remember, it is only through your support that the Foundation is able to continue its important research and preservation of the historic buildings here in Santa Fe and its environs.

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NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

THE HISTORIC SANTA FE FOUNDATION, Inc.

Membership dues (Income Tax deductible) 19____

ANNUAL:

Individual	.....	\$ 5.00	_____
Husband and Wife	.....	7.50	_____
Commercial	.....	10.00	_____
Sustaining	.....	50.00	_____
Life	.....	1,000.00	_____

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION to help preserve the historic buildings and sites of Santa Fe \$ _____

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The Restoration of the
Pinckney R. Tully House —
A Continuing Saga



*South side of the Tully House showing exposed adobe.
Hope Curtis*



Front facade of the Tully House ready to be replastered. Hope Curtis



Simulated brick wall finish which was discovered under south side porch. Hope Curtis

NEW MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

At the annual membership meeting of the Historic Santa Fe Foundation on January 16, 1978, three new board members were elected to fill the positions of outgoing members Donna Quasthoff, A. B. Martinez, Jr. and Jody Ellis.

Coming from a long line of prominent Santa Fe families, Eloisa Jones has a natural interest in the town and its history. The daughter of Rosina Bergere Brown and Dr. Robert O. Brown, Mrs. Jones' maternal grandparents were Eloisa Luna Otero Bergere and Alfred Maurice Bergere. Mrs. Jones and her husband, Gene Jones, a regional vice president for Northern Savings and Loan Association, are both natives of Santa Fe and with the exception of six years spent in Bolivia and two-and-a-half years in West Africa, Mrs. Jones has always lived in New Mexico. Of her time abroad she says that it served to a great extent to enhance her appreciation for Santa Fe and for its culture: "We see what a unique situation we have here and how important it is to keep it," she commented, "but it doesn't stay that way without a lot of work." In keeping with this outlook, Mrs. Jones has been working to canvas for new members for the Foundation's current membership drive.

Louann Jordan, a freelance graphic designer, brings a solid and varied art background to the Board; some members may already be familiar with Miss Jordan's drawings of historic Santa Fe buildings for the Foundation's notecards and with her illustrations for its recent promotional brochure. Originally from Ohio, Miss Jordan is familiar with many areas of the western United States, having lived in Montana and Colorado, as well as spending vacations at the Taos Ski Valley, before coming to Santa Fe from Chicago seven-and-a-half years ago.

Combining her art talents with an interest in history, Miss Jordan has produced two guidebooks to the area, one to Santa Fe and one to Las Golondrinas, a seventeenth century Spanish colonial ranch in La Cienega. The ranch is operated by the Colonial New Mexico Historical Foundation of which Miss Jordan is also a board member. She is now working on a third guidebook to the Taos Ski Valley. Her other activities include teaching continuing education classes at the College of Santa Fe — a graphic arts class in winter and a summer class entitled "Historical Sketch Tour of Santa Fe", and working as Public Relations Chairman for the Fiesta Council. Most recently, Miss Jordan has undertaken the task of organizing summer tours of historic homes in Santa Fe for the Foundation's members.

Margaret Alcock first came to Santa Fe from New England in November of 1976. A former history teacher, Miss Alcock spent the two Bicentennial years of 1975 and 1976 working as Assistant Director of the Ralph Waldo Emerson House in Concord, Massachusetts. Her work included making a detailed inventory of the Museum's furnishings, a job which entailed research through the journals and published writings of Emerson and his contemporaries, as well as through personal notes and letters still held by the Emerson family. During this time Miss Alcock also served on a committee which successfully worked to reopen the School of Philosophy originally founded by Bronson Alcott, father of Louisa May Alcott, on the grounds of his Concord home in 1879. In May of 1976 she

spent a month as Acting Curator of the Henry David Thoreau Lyceum, holding lecture and discussion sessions at the Lyceum for high school and college groups from the Boston area.

Miss Alcock is currently employed in Santa Fe as a legal secretary and will be working on the Foundation's publications.

SUMMER TOURS

This summer the Foundation hopes to revive the popular historic home tours of past years. One or two tours of single homes will be offered for MEMBERS ONLY, so if you have a friend who is planning to join the Historic Santa Fe Foundation, now is the time. Information will be sent to each member when the first house and date are selected. This will be a fine opportunity to see a plaqued residence.

The owner of the Donaciano Vigil House is pleased to announce that her home will be open every Monday this summer for individual or group tours. Please make an appointment by calling 982-8915.

Terms to Know in Historic Santa Fe

casas reales. "Royal houses"; used to identify government buildings.

hacienda, Landed property or estate usually containing a sizeable residence.

kiva. Pueblo Indian ceremonial room.

oratorio. Private chapel.

plaza mayor. The main town square, situated in the center of a settlement.

torreon. Defensive tower.