



Minnie Rosenthal *&* Zilla Goldstein

The Wunderlich sisters and their house of women

The story of the suffragist sisters of Petoskey began with a Jewish businessman. Samuel Rosenthal settled with his family from Poland in Alpena when his son, Alick, was just four years old. Samuel would travel from Alpena to Petoskey to peddle his little cart of goods until Mr. Rowan, owner of a Petoskey boarding house, encouraged him to relocate. So he moved with his family to Petoskey.

Alick attended Petoskey High School and then attended the Detroit Business College. It's not clear how he made his way to Chicago to meet one of our subject sisters, Minnie Wunderlich, there, but somehow

they did meet. The two were married Aug. 18, 1887, in Charlevoix, where Alick held a job in retail. The couple moved to Petoskey in 1894 to open a retail shoe store.

That same year, Minnie's sister, Zilla, who was still living in Chicago, married Cassius Goldstein. The couple had two little girls, Gertrude and Irene.

In 1900, Alick joined his father, Sam, and brother, Moses, in the family business: S. Rosenthal and Sons. That same year, Minnie and Alick moved to 718 Michigan Street. Perhaps it was because the home offered a bit more elbow room that Minnie's mother, Henriette Michaels, moved in from Chicago.

Zilla and her daughters visited Petoskey often — every summer, in fact; but some time before 1906, Zilla separated from her husband because of alleged “cruelty.” (She later filed for divorce on the apt date of July 4, 1910.) That summer, she took her two daughters to live with her sister, Minnie, and brother-in-law, Alick, in Petoskey. And so, Alick, Temple B’Nai elder and Petoskey businessman, became the lone male in a house full of women.

The two sisters wasted no time getting involved in the community. Zilla opened an “Art and Needle Work Shop” in 1908. The sisters and their mother hosted a doll-dressing party at Christmastime, where everyone sewed clothing for dolls and then gave them as gifts to needy children. In addition to being active leaders in their temple, Temple B’Nai Israel, the sisters attended a Petoskey Federation of Women’s Clubs meeting, of which Minnie was a founding member and president, where they were both appointed to the Lockwood Hospital Auxiliary and several committees. Minnie became secretary of the hospital auxiliary, both sisters were members of the Woman’s Club, and Minnie chaired both the Petoskey Home Benevolent Association and Michigan Child Welfare committee.

The family didn’t seem to sit still. Several news articles announced their travels, including New York City buying trips for the family store and lengthy visits with friends and family in Detroit, Traverse City, Mackinac Island and Chicago. Sometimes Alick joined them, but more often, it was “just the girls” — the sisters Minnie and Zilla, and Zilla’s daughters, Gertrude and Irene. When they were home, they were hosting parties much like the doll-dressing party — birthday parties for the girls, a 25th anniversary party for Alick and Minnie, a Women’s Club gathering where the women tended to business and then engaged in the game of the time: Michigan 500. It appears

ART NEEDLE WORK SHOP
CLARK'S OLD STAND
ON LAKE STREET
Opens Thursday, June 18th
and will have a complete line of
Stamped Waists and Linens, and
Hand Embroidered Novelties for
ladies, babies and children.
Free Embroidery Lessons will
be given to customers that pur-
chase stamped goods and mat-
erials until July 10th.
Stamping done to order.
MRS. ZELLA GOLDSTEIN, PROP.

Advertisement for Zilla Goldstein’s shop from the June 18, 1908 Petoskey Evening News

as though this was the thing to play, as Minnie and Zilla hosted a series of parties at their Michigan Street home with the card game as a main theme.

All of this involvement — both civic and social — made up the soil for which the coming women’s rights movements would take root.

In the May 1, 1914, issue of the *Petoskey Evening News*, a bulletin stated: “All those who are interested in Suffrage Day please meet with Mrs. Zilla Goldstein, chairman of Suffrage committee at her home 718 Michigan Street at seven o’clock tonight.”

This is where the sisters’ work in the suffrage fight really revved up. In October of that year, they hosted a guest speaker, Mrs. James T. Blair of Hillsdale. She spoke on suffrage at the Meth-

odist Church as well as in Harbor Springs, Boyne City, and Charlevoix.

The November 4 write-up in the paper about Mrs. Blair's speech, with the headline "Suffragist Lecture and Business Meeting at Methodist Church - Mrs. James G. Blair Gave Fine Talk and Aided in Organization of County Club — Officers Elected" reads as follows:

"Mrs. Blair, of Hillsdale, Mich., spoke to a large audience at the Methodist church, giving one of the most interesting speeches that Petoskey has ever heard on equal suffrage. She said that suffrage is the "up-to-date" question and spreading by leaps all over the universe and advised that Michigan lead, not follow.

"She said in part: "The reason why a woman should vote is the same as the reason why a man should vote; the same as the reason for having a democracy rather than a monarchy. It is but fair and right that all the people who must obey the laws should have a choice in the choosing of the lawmakers. Those who pay its taxes should have a voice as to the amount of the tax and the way the money shall be spent. There is no slavery like a past slavery, and a nation clinging to the conditions and traditions of a past cannot hope to progress.

"This is a man's cause as well as a woman's cause. Where we concede that to give to the woman the ballot, is to make better civic conditions, better laws governing labor for women and children, of the benefit of mankind; why then leave the woman alone to fight the issue? The number of women asking for the ballot is greater by far than the number of men who have asked for anything in the entire history of the world, so it is a man's cause, and should receive the approval and material support of all good men.

"We are often asked what is our platform? The conservation of that greatest of the nation's assets, American citizenship, present and future.

EVERYBODY
INVITED
to hear a good
speaker at the
Methodist Church
Monday Evening
November 2nd
7:30 p. m.

Mrs. James G. Blair
Of Hillsdale

Under the auspices of Petoskey Federation of Womens' Clubs,
will speak Monday evening, Nov. 2nd.

She is one of the foremost Suffragists and club women of the State.
Mrs. Blair comes with a reputation as a most interesting speaker and
one who has made a study of progressive and humanitarian work.

As one of the State workers Mrs. Blair comes with a message to you
from the Bi-ennial of Chicago and the State Federation of Michigan.

Flier courtesy Little Traverse Historical Society

"We stand for the uplift of humanity, the betterment of social conditions. When our constitution was framed over 125 years ago women were not considered competent. Girls were not admitted to grammar schools, nor women to colleges. A married woman could not hold property, nor could a married woman own her own children. Statistics show that more girls are being graduated from our high schools than boys. We have thousands of women in all professions and trades, women have kept pace with men in all walks of life, have shared their joys and sorrows, and are recognized in all phases of social responsibility, except that of the franchise.

"When we ask for the ballot, they say, 'woman's place is in the home,' and it is just, because the home is her place, her sanctuary in which are born and nurtured her own children, those chil-

dren so precious to her, is it a wonder that she is awakening to the fact that she must have a voice with the good men to protect her home, to regulate moral conditions under which the children must be brought up.

“This great army must consist of men and women, they must forever and ever stand together and work together if they are to be equal to the great home-makers’ tasks. ‘Equal suffrage in Michigan,’ this call is sent to you.”

Mrs. Blair acted as temporary chairman of the meeting and a club was formally organized and the following officers elected: President, Mrs. Zilla Goldstein; vice-president, HS Sweeney; secretary, Mrs. James Oldham; treasurer, Mrs. A Cushman; directors, Rev. LH Manning, Mrs. AR Clark, Mrs. Louis Grosenbaugh, Mrs. WH Stone and Mrs. E.L. Barnes. The following delegates were elected to attend the district convention at Traverse City Wednesday, Thursday and Friday: Mrs. CE Erwin and Mrs. AB Backus, Harbor Springs; Mrs. Alick Rosenthal, Mrs. AR Clark, Mrs. A Cushman, Mrs. Zilla Goldstein and Mrs. Elkerton.

In her new capacity as president of the newly formed Emmet County Equal Suffrage Association, Zilla wrote the following for the *Petoskey Evening News*, Feb. 17, 1915, edition, headlined “Emmet County Equal Suffrage Association Ready for Active Work

“Emmet county equal suffrage is very much alive and will have an open meeting in the near future. It earnestly invites the co-operation of every man and woman to join in the great movement. Remember that the women are eagerly asking for knowledge on all political and governmental questions and are interested in the general welfare of their own home town. To enfranchise the American woman will help to solve many of the intricate problems that confront our government today.

“Recognition of women as responsible citizens will uplift humanity and encourage mother-

hood. It will bring contentment and peace.

“‘Thou shalt not kill or destroy what God has ordained to live and what man has achieved,’ is the commandment that every woman teaches her children.

“Our country is not an enlarged fortress but an enlarged home, and women who must abide by the rules of this enlarged home should have equal voice in making the laws and in electing the lawmakers.

“Abraham Lincoln’s argument, ‘I go for all sharing the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burden,’ by no means excludes women.

“In celebration of Lincoln’s birthday more prominence was given this plea, put forward by Lincoln 79 years ago. It comes with especial force today in view of the tremendous burdens imposed upon women by the great war. We know in time the federal government will give us the ballot, but we want our own good men of Michigan to give us the right to vote. We want to serve you. Will you let us help, and will you help us to have ‘a government for all the people, by the people and for all the people,’ and women are people. “Our meetings will be public meetings. They will be announced shortly. We will have good speakers and discussion on the new charter and commission government that you hear so much about.

“Emmet county equal suffrage is officially affiliated with the state association. We are now perfecting our by-laws so we can organize in every township with a chairman in every township with active men in every township who will help unite our forces together, and help to bring Michigan out in the front rank of progress.

“New York is the latest full-fledged campaign state. Why not Michigan?

— Zilla Goldstein

On November 11-12, 1915, Zilla and Minnie took her words and their intentions to the 30th annual convention of the Michigan Equal Suffrage Association in Saginaw, representing Emmet County and the Petoskey Federation of Women’s Clubs.

A few months later, the sisters hosted a Susan Anthony Tea at their home in celebration of the national suffragist heroine. The home was decorated with daffodils, symbolizing the suffrage color of yellow. During the tea, “Mrs. Stone gave the invocation. Mrs. Lomain gave a recitation; Mrs. H. Sweeny, in her charming manner, gave the life history and work of Susan B. Anthony; Mrs. J. McCune told how she met Anthony personally; Mrs. James Oldham, in her able gracious way, gave a resume of the suffrage work done in Emmet county, bringing out how the Petoskey federation felt the need of getting into the rank and file of state work. Mrs. Oldham said, ‘Can you realize that this is big work and our plans cannot be perfected without the cooperation from all women interested in the world’s progress. Join the four million women who will have the privilege to vote for our next president.’”

Zilla wrote for the *Petoskey Evening News*: “The Michigan State Equal Suffrage Association has invited the public in each county to observe Feb. 15 as Susan B. Anthony day. The Emmet County social committee is asking each ward,

precinct and township to have ‘A Get Together Circle;’ call in your neighbors and give honor to that great woman, Susan Anthony, who so fittingly was born in the same month as our two most national honored heroes. Lincoln, who stands out today as our ‘Great Emancipator,’ and Washington, as ‘Father of Our Country,’ who declared that taxation without representation is tyranny; likewise Susan Anthony who drafted the amendment to the federal constitution, asking that the women of this country be given the privileges of a free citizen, and admission to civil and political rights. This very amendment is now before congress and is becoming most interesting history with which every suffragist in the state should be familiar.

“It was drafted in 1875 and first introduced into Congress in 1878, and since that time it has at various times been reported now favorably, and again adversely in both the senate and the house. “However, it was never reported out of the senate committee into the senate until 1887, when it was defeated and again in 1914 to be defeated. It was not reported out of committee into

A word about the daughters of the house

In my research of the sisters Minnie Rosenthal and Zilla Goldstein, I found the activities of Zilla’s daughters, Gertrude and Irene, just as fascinating. These young girls were in high school and college while the suffrage movement ramped up in Petoskey. Irene and Gertrude may not have been named to suffrage committees or found hosting Susan B. Anthony teas and attending marches as their mother and aunt did, but they chased higher education at college and trained to

drive ambulances, camp-counseled and kindergarten-taught, and even led officers for the Petoskey Girl’s Recruitment Corps. As their names appeared in my search window, and in that moment between deciding if I should click on them or not, I realized that these girls, while not at the center of the suffrage movement nationally, were most certainly at the heart of their mother, Zilla, who was arguably one of the most prolific suffragists of Petoskey.

— Renée Tanner



Image from Wikipedia. A rainy suffrage parade with Janet Ayer Fairbank in Chicago June 7, 1916.

the house until 1915, when it was defeated by 78 votes. Manhood suffrage has been from time to time extended and the strong plea made for women suffrage by our most eminent men have been so eloquent, so spiritual that the general outlook is favorable for the amendment.

“Just a few more stones and the wall that has divided this great movement will be removed, and the American free man will recognize the rights of American free woman and crown her with a wreath marked Justice. Side by side in the sight of God and the World as equals.”

— By Zilla Goldstein

With the suffragist women of Emmet County in place and armored with education, the Emmet County Suffrage Association held a meeting on June 3, 1916, to appoint delegates to the Chicago GOP convention that next week. The aim of the suffragists nationwide, some 5,000, would be to march to the Republican National Convention site

downtown Chicago to sway the delegates of the GOP to their cause. Among the 5,000 would be Zilla and Minnie, marching through the pouring rain behind a beautiful woman dressed in white atop a white horse. The parade even had a brass band and an elephant with a “Votes for Women” banner keeping it dry from the down-pour.

The sisters returned to Petoskey to pick up where they left off in serving their community. Minnie remained active in the Michigan Children Welfare League; Zilla sent her oldest off to the University of Chicago.

Sadly, that fall, the home at 718 Michigan Street lost one of its girls: Minnie and Zilla’s mother died. They buried her in the Temple B’Nai Israel Cemetery (located inside Greenwood Cemetery).

In the Feb. 21, 1917, issue of the *Petoskey Evening News*, a full page was dedicated to women’s suffrage. It included a letter written by Zilla, which read in part “...we are forced to enter into a prepared and victorious campaign for 1918. ... Why work for suffrage now — we are not in campaign. The time has come for women to prove themselves to be ready, work quietly, calmly, effectively toward holding up that ideal organization against which nothing can prevail. Then when the final count is made, wisdom will have its reward. The suffragist lamps will

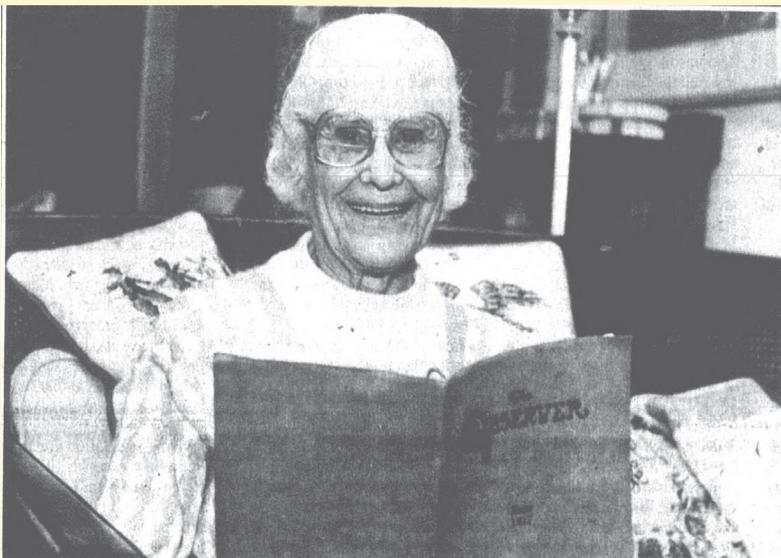
be filled, trimmed and burning.” The Emmet County Suffrage Association planned to canvas the area, going door to door to ask, educate, and, of course, collect money for the cause. Henry S. Sweeny, county prosecutor and husband to a fellow suffragist, Lulu Sweeny, cast his support publicly to the 1918 campaign.

Michigan Gov. Sleeper signed a bill to allow Michigan women to vote in presidential elections. That March, the bill passed the Senate, and in April it passed the House.

Michigan women could take a breath, because the right to vote would be on the ballot. And for the rest of that year, war overshadowed suffrage, both in the nation and in the activities of Minnie and Zilla. The sisters aided in registering men for war. Even the younger sisters, Gertrude

and Irene, joined in this as leaders of Petoskey’s Recruiting Corps. The extra work, however, didn’t seem to lessen the amount of activity for the women. The sisters were honored for their service in the Petoskey Home Benevolence; they continued work with the Child Welfare League through the Woman’s Club; they aided the Red Cross; and they attended an annual convention of the state federation of women’s clubs in Traverse City.

Even though Michigan congress passed the amendment, our Petoskey sisters still held a torch for the nation in the fight. In January of 1918, the House passed the federal suffrage amendment. Zilla wrote for the paper, “Women have now entered into the making of world history. For fifty years this issue has been fought courageously, bitterly and often humiliatingly, and today every



Irene Gordon, 92, looks at the “Observer,” the 1917 Petoskey High School yearbook. The inscription next to her senior photo reads: “Irene ‘Iny’

Goldstein. She is pretty to walk with, witty to talk with, and pleasant, too, to think on.” She hadn’t looked at the yearbook in 25 years.

NEWS photo by Stephen Brede

“My parents were in Chicago, but Aunt and Uncle didn’t have any children, and my mother had two daughters, so my mother shared me with them,” 92-year-old Irene Gordon told a Petoskey reporter in 1991.

Irene Gordon: Hemingway’s lost love?

It was an interesting discovery in my research to find that Irene Goldstein Gordon was a possible “lost love” of Ernest Hemingway according to a 1991 *Petoskey News-Review* article. She recalled meeting him at a friend’s cottage during the 1919 Christmas break. The following summer, she played tennis with him every day. After Irene’s divorce in the ‘40s, she didn’t see Hemingway again until 1949, when he showed up at the family store she was now running, picked her up, and kissed her.

— Renée Tanner

woman must feel that democracy at home means victory for our boys "over there," and suffrage may be regarded as a big war measure coming directly as a just reward for the splendid patriotic service work of our women.

"Today opens the thirty-second annual convention in Detroit at Hotel Statler, under Wayne County Equal Suffrage League hospitality, with our Michigan state president, Mrs. Orton Clark, of Kalamazoo, presiding.

"They urge your assistance and cooperation to make this convention perhaps the last one, worthy of the great cause of which we meet.

Any visiting member will be cordially welcomed, also the privileges and courtesies of the convention floor.

Delegates of Emmet county are Mrs. Leon Chichester and Mrs. H.L. Welling. The dates are the 14th, 16th and 17th of January."

— Mrs. Zilla Goldstein, President Emmet County Equal Suffrage Association"

That April, our sisters hosted a special meeting of the Emmet County Equal Suffrage Association. Mrs. Marie B. Ames, who came with credentials from the national president Mrs. Carrie Catt (of the National American Woman Suffrage Association), spoke to the women in attendance.



Copyright Hart Schaffner & Marx

YOU may have your own ideas about "votes for women;" you may be for or against.

but one thing is pretty certain--you'd like to have all the women vote for you; you'd like to have every one of them cast a ballot for you as a well dressed man. There's another thing just as certain--the surest way to get such a vote from the women who see you, is to wear our

Hart Schaffner & Marx

clothes. That's the best means of being a winning candidate; because these clothes have the style you need, the quality of materials, the tailoring, and the fit.

Special showing of these famous suits at
\$18.00, \$20.00, \$22.50, \$25.00.

S. Rosenthal & Sons

North Michigan home of Hart Schaffner & Marx clothes.

The family business got into the spirit of the vote in this July 9, 1914 ad in the Petoskey Evening News.



The sisters Minnie and Zilla are buried at Greenwood along with their mother, Henriette Michaels, Alick Rosenthal, Gertrude Goldstein and Irene Gordon.

In response to this meeting, the Emmet County suffrage group reorganized. Grace Jessop was named head at the county level while Zilla would head the district.

As far as suffrage goes, we know the end of the story. That November, Michigan men granted women the right to vote. But what happened to Minnie and Zilla? And to Gertrude and Irene?

The sisters steadfastly continued in their many branches of community service, often in leadership roles.

Tragically, on Oct. 5, 1929, Gertrude died at age 32 in an auto accident near Chicago. She had been employed as a kindergarten teacher in Chicago. The family donated landscaping on each side of the cemetery gate in mem-

ory of her. Earlier that same year, in April, Alick's older brother, Moses also died in a car accident in Erie, Pennsylvania, where he had opened another store. This made Alick head of the S. Rosenthal and Sons enterprise.

Ten years later, he died at age 73 of a heart attack, thus moving Minnie up from secretary and treasurer to head of the family store. She gave the position of vice president to her sister. Then, in 1943, when Minnie died, the torch was passed to Irene Goldstein Gordon. She made her daughters, Henriette Gordan Kaplan and Gloria Gordon Levine vice president and secretary/treasurer respectively.

This family of women never wavered in their fight. And their just reward was a legacy of success in the small town of Petoskey.

Mrs. Goldstein Services Today

Funeral services will be held Thursday at 2:30 for Mrs. Zilla W. Goldstein, 72, prominent Petoskey resident who died Tuesday at Lockwood General Hospital where she had been a patient for a short time.

She was born in Chicago, June 12, 1874 and was married to Casius Goldstein in October 1896. The couple moved to Petoskey in 1911. She was vice-president of S. Rosenthal and Sons for the past 17 years and operated a knitting shop in the store for the past 20 years.

SHE WAS A charter member of the Woman's Club, chairman of the Memorial and Happy Day Fund of the B'Nai Israel congregation, active in the B'Nai Israel Sisterhood, and a member of the Garden Club.

She was at one time fashion and feature writer for the Northern Michigan Review.

Surviving are one daughter, Mrs. Irene G. Gordon, of Petoskey; and two granddaughters, Gloria Gordon, of Ann Arbor, and Henriette Gordon Kaplan, of Fayetteville, N. C.

THE SERVICES are to be conducted at the home, 718 Michigan-st., by Rabbi Selig Aurbach, of St. Joseph, Mo. Burial will be in Greenwood.

The Rosenthal store will be closed Wednesday and Thursday and will reopen Friday.

Death Takes Mrs Rosenthal

Mrs. Alick Rosenthal, 75, passed away early this morning at the family home on Michigan street from a heart attack. Mrs. Rosenthal had been downtown during the day and spent the evening with her family. She was taken ill in the late evening and failed to rally.

Funeral services will be held at the home on Friday and burial will be in Greenwood cemetery. Mr. Rosenthal died here in 1939.

Mrs. Rosenthal was born in Fairfield, Maine, November 13, 1868. She came with her parents to Chicago where she resided until her marriage to Mr. Rosenthal. They resided for some years in Charlevoix and came to Petoskey in 1894 to make their home.

She was a leader in the various women's groups in Temple B'Nai Israel and a past president of the Petoskey Federation of Temple Sisterhood, and a past president and honorary president of the organization in Michigan. She was a past president of the Petoskey Federation of Women's clubs and an active worker in the Women's Club and Lockwood Hospital Auxiliary. She enjoyed a wide acquaintance throughout the state and had a large circle of friends.

Surviving her and living with her at the family home were her sister, Mrs. Zilla Goldstein, her niece, Mrs. Joseph Gordon and grand nieces, Miss Gloria and Miss Henrietta Gordon. Also a number of other nieces and nephews.

(Adv. Below Recopied From Petoskey Democrat Aug. 24, 1887)

Mid-Summer Sale

Will Begin at the Store of



And will continue every day during the heated term until our immense stock of

Light Suits,
Wash Dress Goods,
White Goods,
Parasols,
Fans

But to get rid of the goods we must have buyers, therefore we give notice that we want

IN A HURRY

SEVERAL CARLOADS (MORE OR LESS) OF BUYERS TO INSPECT OUR BARGAINS AND

Take Them Away!

AT WAY DOWN PRICES FOR

We Don't Want Them

TO GROW OUT OF FASHION

Walk Up! Be in Time! For it Won't Last Long

S. ROSENTHAL

With Pride and Hope For a Glorious Future We Congratulate Petoskey on Its Centennial...

Pride . . . because Rosenthal's have been an integral part of Petoskey for 73 years . . .

Hope . . . because we know Petoskey's future will be even more glorious in this age of wonders . . .



Original Rosenthals First Wooden Store on Left — Present Location



Samuel Rosenthal Started Store in 1879



MOSES ROSENTHAL attended school here and Notre Dame, married a Traverse City girl and had three children, all of whom graduated from Petoskey High School. The family left here in 1919. Mr. Rosenthal was president of the Emmet County Red Cross during World War I. He died in 1929.



ALICK ROSENTHAL became owner in 1929. Born 1867, he attended local schools and business school in Detroit. He married a Chicago girl and after several years in Charlevoix settled here and became associated with his father and brother in 1889, assisted in incorporating the business in 1900. From 1930 until his death in 1939 he was owner of the firm. He was an active Mason, served on Board of Lockwood Hospital and was for 30 years president of B'nai Israel congregation.



MRS. MINNIE ROSENTHAL, wife of Alick Rosenthal, became president in 1939 after serving as secretary and treasurer prior to her husband's death. Her sister, Mrs. Zilla Goldstein, served as vice-president. She was active in the Women's Club of Petoskey, president of the Federation of Women's Clubs, Lockwood Hospital Auxiliary and president for 30 years of the B'nai Israel Congregation Sisterhood.



Present Store . . . Same Location on Lake St.



MRS. IRENE GORDON succeeded to the presidency upon Mrs. Rosenthal's death in 1943. She spent her childhood in Petoskey, graduating from P.H.S. She married and resided away until 1939 when she returned and took over active management of the store. A daughter, Henriette Gordon Kaplan, is vice-president; the other daughter, Gloria Gordon Levine, is secretary and treasurer.

Watch Your P's and Q's... PRICE And QUALITY

Rosenthal Merchandise is Quality Merchandise . . . Priced Right.

For the Centennial Rosenthal's invites you to come to see the large display of Rosenthal dresses collected during our 73 years in Petoskey.

FREE GIFTS

Register in our Guest Book and Receive a Gift Free . . . a Rosenthal Reminder.

S. ROSENTHAL & SONS

Lake St. and Park Ave.

Established 1879

Petoskey