

4 : Libbie L. Braverman

Woman for 11 Seasons

1900–1990



Libbie L. Braverman, 1979.

Courtesy of the Western Reserve Historical Society

Born to Teach

Libbie L. Braverman, born in Boston on December 20, 1900, came to cherish learning at an early age. She fell in love with it despite having to adjust to many new schools as her parents, Rabbi Morris A. and Pauline (Drucker) Levin, moved the family frequently. The Levins finally settled in Cleveland when Libbie was in high school. The many dislocations did not disrupt her studies or her early and lifelong appreciation for Jewish family life. She loved her maternal grandmother, who ran a Jewish bookstore and made the wine for their Passover celebrations. She admired her maternal grandfather, “the proud scholar who rarely left his books or the House of Worship.”¹ Her grandfather and father, Orthodox rabbis who served in congregations and communal settings, inspired her with the value of Jewish learning. She studied at her father’s knee and admired him as a scholar and great educator.

Yet Braverman was far from a docile, passive recipient of knowledge. She defiantly reveled in being the only girl in Torah and Hebrew classes at Chicago’s Talmud Torah and rejoiced at besting boys for school prizes, foreshadowing, at the dawn of the twentieth century, the militant feminism that was to become a significant part of her persona and led her later to emphasize how remarkable it was for her, a woman, to hold an influential position in a synagogue.² She became the first woman board member of the National Council for Jewish Education (1952) and later became its vice president. She was the first woman to lecture for the Jewish Chautauqua Society.³ Her flamboyant hats, knee-length plastic boots, and regal demeanor said more than “take note of me.” Her appearance proclaimed a refusal to succumb to the past, a rejection of gender stereotyping, and a public announcement of her determination to make it as woman in a profession overwhelmingly dominated by men.

Libbie D. Levin married Sigmund Braverman in 1924. Despite her strong feminism, she always preferred the name, Libbie L. Braverman.⁴ Libbie and Sig agreed to honor each other’s separate careers, unencumbered by children. But Jewish teaching assuredly honors them as “parents.”⁵ Teacher Libbie was a nurturing mother to students and children of students, teachers and thousands more who learned from teachers she trained. Architect Sigmund was an artisan in whose buildings, adorned with Jewish symbols and Hebrew letters, untold numbers of children and adults studied. Their art- and award-cluttered penthouse apartment in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, in a building Sig designed, became a sanctuary and a meeting place for Jewish intellectuals.

Braverman was very proud of the fact that she became a Hebrew teacher while still in high school, although she later attended Cleveland Normal School and earned a BS at Western Reserve University. Her first job was as Hebrew teacher in a Chicago Talmud Torah; later she taught in a Chicago Reform temple. When the family moved to Cleveland, where her father led the Cleveland Hebrew Schools, Libbie carried a letter of reference to Euclid Avenue Temple (Reform) where Rabbi Barnett Brickner, a Benderly boy, promptly engaged her. Braverman also taught at Cleveland's Congregation B'nai Jeshurun (Conservative). But it was Euclid Avenue Temple (later Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple) that became her home from her high school years to adulthood. As a youngster, she never mustered the courage to tell her Orthodox father that she walked to the Reform temple every Saturday to teach. She would later claim she brought Yiddishkeit (Jewish learning and living) to Euclid Avenue Temple, remaining there for thirty-five years of a long career, progressing from teacher to educational director, a position Rabbi Brickner had originally created for Nathan Brilliant in 1927, when eleven hundred pupils crammed the classrooms.⁶

Brilliant's arrival heralded a novel partnership that bolstered Braverman in her ceaseless campaign to share with teachers and pupils her fervent devotion to Hebrew, Zionism, Yiddishkeit, and the arts. She acknowledged the difficulties, noting, "We were often accused of bringing back Orthodoxy (heaven forefend)," but she never forgot her goal: to introduce Zionism to students and their parents through drama, pageantry, music and student activities.⁷

Braverman distinguished between Orthodoxy and tradition. She rejected the Orthodoxy of her father and grandfather that, she believed, erected Keep Off the Grass signs.⁸ She championed responsible Reform Judaism based on knowledge and respect for Jewish origins. She carried that message first to students and teachers in her schools, then to the American Reform movement by sharing her ideas and enthusiasm with teachers around the country. Those who knew her work remember her best for her labor in the trenches, although her Jewish educational worldview, influenced by Dewey, Kaplan, Benderly, and Emanuel Gamoran, led her to theorize about goals, means, and educational systems. Braverman was an out-of-the-mold school principal and a teacher of teachers who, in their turn, carried her commitment to Reform Judaism, Zionism, Israel, and Hebrew to the next generations. Her venues were community activities, teacher workshops, articles, and her many books for teachers and children.

Braverman was a grateful pupil who acknowledged standing on the shoulders of predecessors like A. H. Friedland, her inspiration and mentor. Her tribute to Friedland gave full credit to Jewish education's historical context by including a review of Samson Benderly's work and the founding of the Council for Jewish Education.⁹ Though not one of the Benderly boys, she was a kindred spirit who personified the innovation, modernity, community,

and experimentation Benderly represented. For that very reason, Friedland's Cleveland Bureau of Jewish Education was a logical and grateful beneficiary of her talent, enthusiasm and material support. She chaired annual meetings and celebrations, served on committees, and was an unofficial and welcome adviser to its professional and board leadership until shortly before her death.¹⁰ She received the Bureau's prestigious A. H. Friedland Award in 1975, and an honorary doctorate from the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies (June 6, 1981) for her achievements, financial support, and advocacy. The Cleveland Jewish Community Center named her a Life Trustee in recognition of her contributions to its education program through the arts. She became an honorary member of the UAH-C-CAR Joint Commission on Jewish Education not only for her accomplishments, but also because she so effectively championed Reform Judaism in her community activities and her writing.

Incorrigible Rebel

A stubborn feminist, feeling underpaid and underappreciated because she was a woman, Libbie abruptly resigned from Euclid Avenue Temple in 1952 having served as teacher (1917-32), head of the club and Hebrew departments (1933-39), associate education director and director of extension activities (1940-46), and education director (1946-52). Colleagues and friends, surprised by her resignation, remarked on the event, dividing into two camps typified by these comments: "I was shocked to learn of your separation from the Euclid Avenue Temple . . . a great blow to the cause of Jewish education." "PPS And lots of luck in your new status as a free woman & educator. I hope your husband will be happy to have you around more often. He's a lucky guy & I hope he appreciates it."¹¹

Libbie welcomed Nathan Brilliant's influence on her and her future. She credited him with keeping her involved in the temple until she finally retired from her public school teaching to work with him, creating new educational initiatives. Euclid Avenue Temple soon became famous as a laboratory for modern Jewish education, for which she credited Brilliant's deep understanding of the needs of the time.¹² Conscious of her place among her people and the responsibility that entailed, she honed her native abilities to excel at writing, training teachers, enthusing students, experiencing her large world intimately and completely. The Brilliant-Braverman nexus modeled the best that synagogue schools could be.¹³ It also enriched the Jewish education literature, particularly and uniquely in the use of performance and Hebrew to teach Jewish life cycle and holidays. Word of their avant-garde work reached Emanuel Gamoran, director of the Reform Commission on Jewish Education, who encouraged them to share their pioneer achievements with a wider audience.¹⁴ They reported their work in three groundbreaking publications that schools across the continent quickly began to utilize.¹⁵ Gamoran lauded the

uniqueness of *Supplement* and *Activities*: “The major contribution of these two volumes . . . is to be found not only in the discussion of how to conduct various activities in the Jewish school, but also in the detailed descriptions of the experiments initiated and carried out under the direction of the writers and in the creative work which these experiments stimulated on the part of both teachers and children.”¹⁶

Braverman’s departure from Euclid Avenue Temple was neither the blow to Jewish education Friedland called it nor her acceptance of the homemaker role Cohen predicted. She and Sig were confident she could continue in her career because “we had a good maid who would take care of the house and get his meals.”¹⁷ She became the educational consultant at Temple Israel, Akron, Ohio, in January 1953, and in 1966, the educational director at Temple Sinai, Stamford, Conn.¹⁸ She remained with the Stamford congregation for only one year, even though its rabbi, Samuel M. Silver, was an old friend and colleague. Troubled by an absence of educational standards in the school, furious at parental resentment over many of her decisions, convinced that she did not receive the support she expected from her rabbi, and cajoled by her Cleveland friends to come home, she returned to Cleveland in 1967. Once there, Braverman joyfully entered on what became a gratifying and highly productive life as lecturer, trainer of teachers, and author. She produced four major works in little over a decade while continuing a flurry of newspaper and journal articles and speaking engagements, as well as organizational activities for Cleveland Hadassah.¹⁹

For Zion, Everything

With notable exceptions, the founders of American Reform Judaism believed in the ascendance of a messianic era, a united humanity, unobstructed by alienating national demarcation lines. For them, “nation” was chief among the obstacles to messianic fulfillment. Thus they were opposed to Zionism and were reluctant to accept the Jewish state.²⁰ Braverman was among the minority of Reform leaders who worked selflessly for Palestine and Israel.²¹ She considered Palestine essential to the souls of Jews of all ages and recognized early on its cultural importance to the diaspora Jewry. Unapologetically enamored of *Eretz Yisrael*, she early and often spoke about her Palestine adventures and promoted the welfare of its Jews.²² She campaigned for Israel’s rebirth and visited Palestine and Israel frequently, often for a month or longer. She supported its institutions financially and morally, even as she insinuated Zion into her teaching and her writing. Starting in the early 1930s, she turned her energy to local and national Hadassah, which became a forum for lecturing and writing about life and politics in Palestine and, later, Israel. She was a respected Hadassah leader, was present with Henrietta Szold when she founded Youth Aliyah, chaired several committees, and was

president of the Central States Region from 1939 to 1940. In December 1937, she celebrated the Cleveland chapter's twenty-fifth anniversary with a pageant about the recent Arab revolts against Palestine's Jews.²³ She was an early supporter of Israel Bonds,²⁴ and in 1956, the founding chair of its Cleveland women's division.²⁵ She spoke before many groups throughout the 1930s and beyond about Palestine and, especially, about Youth Aliyah, through which she worked diligently to help children who settled in Palestine.

Braverman's early Zionist activism earned her a delegate's seat at the seventeenth World Zionist Congress in Basle in 1931. She recalled the extraordinary and overwhelming assembly. "It was exciting to see representatives of the Jews of the world gathered together in Switzerland. I saw all the greats of modern Jewish history. . . . Heated discussions dominated the Congress. To please the Arabs, a not unusual activity of the British, His Majesty's government issued a white paper to curb Jewish immigration."²⁶ She conveyed her observations and reactions to the public.²⁷ Five years later, when she returned from her 1936 visit, she emphasized Palestine's growing need for assistance to keep alive its prophetic march to statehood.²⁸

She was again a delegate when the twenty-first World Zionist Congress met in Geneva in 1939, on the eve of World War II. What happened next reinforced her gratitude for being a Jew in America, in a way she never imagined. Braverman described the plight of the delegates fleeing Geneva, making their ways to Paris, then to Le Havre to board a refugee ship the French refused to release despite President Roosevelt's intervention. After several traumatic days in port and following an urgent U.S. demand, the ship, in total blackout, finally sailed. Its sailing impressed on her how fortunate American Jews were. "We weren't refugees after all — driven from pillar to post. It was good to be an American — to feel that America vouched for us and would do all it could to obtain a safe return of its sons and daughters."²⁹

For Braverman, the twenty-first congress telescoped the tragedy of Europe and the distress and misery of European Jewry who sought freedom from lands of bondage and new homes in the Promised Land. The vitality and courage of the Palestine group captivated her. It was the only group, she believed, to express optimism, as they stood ready to defend their rights to the national home and to welcome refugees seeking to return home. Her remarks emphasize American Jewry's obligation to give help and moral support to the defenders of Palestine who "stand ready to give so much!" Her report includes a fervent appeal to support immigration to Palestine, a theme to which she returned often.³⁰

In early 1948, Braverman warned her audiences that the real task lay before them because of British "neutrality" and the Arabs' avowed goal to destroy the fledgling Jewish state. Nevertheless, she was firm in her conviction in the indestructible will of the Jewish people to build its homeland despite the tremendous struggle to come. "For at long last," she concluded,

“the Jewish people is coming home.”³¹ Her diaries and miscellaneous musings capture her understanding of the connection between Jews and *Eretz Yisrael*. Two examples are “a people has a soul and the soul of the Jewish people — all that the Jewish people feels and sings and lives by — is in Jerusalem,” and “we have soaked up the tides of the incoming refugees like a thirsty sponge.”³² Braverman’s words influenced others through the power of her passion and personality. Si (Isaiah) Kenen, director of information for the Israeli Delegation at Lake Success, probably spoke for all her disciples when he wrote. “I do think you should know how deeply I sense my obligations to you both for having done so much in the years I was in Cleveland to make me conscious of both the responsibilities and rewards of being a Jew.”³³

Energized by her devotion to the land, refreshed by visits to familiar haunts, and eager to record changing political and social conditions, Braverman was prepared to take herself to Israel at a moment’s notice. At the same time, she recognized that the Jewish future belonged to youth, for whom group tours were essential. Her 1953 teen program apparently sold out.³⁴ She created the Fairmount Temple NFTY (North American Federation of Temple Youth) Exchange Student Award (Cleveland, 1978) to encourage high school students to participate in the Eisendrath Israel Student Exchange Program (Reform). For adults, her Hadassah activities included organizing and leading tours for the Central States Region, the first on Purim, 1959. Soon after the Six-Day War, she published a two-part report on Israeli families and the war’s high human cost.³⁵ During three months in Israel in 1971, her letters brought readers eloquent, optimistic, and graphic depictions of everyday life. Nine months later, she initiated a series of articles to share her impressions of Soviet immigrant absorption, a Jewish-Arab student dialogue project and vignettes of life at the *kotel* (Western Wall).³⁶ She contributed a series on life in Israel to the *Cleveland Jewish News* while on an extended visit in 1972. Her ceaseless and intense concern for Israel is evident as late as 1985. Her blistering review of Jimmy Carter’s report of the Camp David accords in his book *The Blood of Abraham* included a firm defense of Menachem Begin and Israel.³⁷

While Cleveland Hadassah satisfied her self-imposed hometown Zionist obligations, it hardly sufficed to carry her ardent Zionism to the larger audience she sought, so she turned to writing textbooks. For Braverman, Zionism and teaching were inseparable. She insisted on twin teaching objectives: to understand the marvelous development then taking place in Palestine and to appreciate that life in Palestine was a source of inspiration for Jewry throughout the world and enriched and vitalized holidays in the diaspora.³⁸ From her earliest Cleveland days, she had produced a steady stream of books and publications to connect Jewish children in America with their Israeli family. She emphasized three themes: the need for American children to know about their ties to a biblical homeland; the homeland’s cultural and religious

importance for diaspora America; the obligation to support the valorous Palestine Jews in their march toward nationhood. The latter appears very early in the pageant *Havlagah* (Self-restraint), in which she extols the heroism of Palestine's Jewish pioneers and represents on the school stage their character traits she so admired.³⁹

Her first Palestine trip, a monthlong journey in 1931, produced an assessment of progress in the Zionist colonies, and a series of "twins" stories in several publications.⁴⁰ The adventures of the Palestine twins introduced Hebrew terms and Palestine's sites to young, English-speaking readers. One interviewer noted:

In the summer of 1931 she went to Palestine. When she returned, the children at the Euclid Avenue Temple naturally wanted to know all about her trip. Conscientious teacher that she is, she wanted to give the children more than just a Cook's tour lecture. . . . She proposed to give the children a well-rounded picture of the normal, natural, year-round life of the modern Palestinian Jews. She therefore invented [twins] Tamar and David . . . to make real . . . the natural, wholesome lives of our Halutzim and the wonder of the new Jewish Homeland. . . . Chapter by chapter, the story was told by Mrs. Braverman from the assembly platform. . . . Their young American friends could not hear enough. . . . It was only natural, therefore, that the adventures of the twins should be written down. . . . Upon her return from her second trip, Mrs. Braverman went back to her twins . . . and now it is a book.⁴¹

One reviewer called *Children of the Emek* "pioneering," but warned club leaders and teachers not to use the book as a textbook, rather to allow children to enjoy it as an experience and not as a homework assignment.⁴² I am sure Braverman took this as a high compliment. Always the pedagogue, she produced a workbook complete with formal learning activities, illustrated horah dance instructions, puzzles, music, and a foldout map of Israel—everything the teacher required to turn the stories into teaching opportunities.⁴³ For Braverman, the school assembly was another significant way to maintain contact with pupils through her own storytelling and a medium for student expression in plays and pageants.⁴⁴ Because she insisted that performances come out of the classroom experience, she also looked on the assembly as a "mirror of the school."⁴⁵

In *Children of Freedom*, Braverman undertook to tell young readers Israel's saga starting with the ingathering of Holocaust survivors. Morris Epstein thought it lacked continuity, was too preachy, and too filled with facts.⁴⁶ It reads that way today as well. In a sense, Braverman suffered the consequence of a fervor that impelled her to assess and to chronicle—especially for American Jewish children—the magnitude of the miracle of Israel's rebirth a mere five years after the event. Perhaps she reached too high too soon with

Children, which she unabashedly called the record of the story enacted by the children of Israel, and demanded that students have a right to know in depth about the modern ingathering and its biblical roots.⁴⁷

The 1967 Six-Day War prompted *The Six-Day Warriors*, coauthored with Samuel Silver in 1969, continuing Libbie's desire to point out the similarities between American and Zionist values. One reviewer observed, "The spirit of Israel shines through the too-few pages of this book. Without propagandizing, the authors make it clear why all Americans can feel a spiritual kinship with the kind of patriots, young and old, who laugh at odds."⁴⁸ Braverman was right, of course, about the big picture and the pedagogic value of making explicit the comparisons between Israel's struggle for independence and freedom and America's early history. She wanted to share her passion for the burning Jewish cause of the mid-twentieth century.

The Mother Tongue

Braverman included Hebrew in as many school settings as possible and spared nothing to provide teachers with training sessions and the tools they needed, like carefully selected Hebrew language textbooks, including her own. She believed that a light hand and fun enhanced Hebrew learning, but admonished that games and the like are important only as a means to an end.⁴⁹ She early and consistently advocated for an integrated curriculum. Thus, in 1955, shortly before *Teach Me to Pray* appeared, she cautioned that Hebrew in the one-day-a-week school is not a subject in itself but rather part of a broader learning experience that includes topics like customs and ceremonies, holidays and religious worship.⁵⁰ An earlier, prescient publication called for Hebrew readiness in kindergarten followed in ensuing grades by increased numbers of Hebrew prayers and songs and greater emphasis on understanding prayerbook Hebrew. Her goal was to enrich the teaching of the holidays, integrate the Hebrew language with customs and ceremonies, train students in fluent and accurate prayer reading, and prepare them for participation in children's services.⁵¹ This much Hebrew teaching was remarkable in the 1940s in a large Reform congregation that was indisposed to Hebrew altogether and to Braverman's commitment to Yiddishkeit.

She vigorously promoted sales of her Hebrew materials, many written with Nathan Brilliant. Large numbers of schools ordered multiple copies of titles like *Devices for Teaching Hebrew*, *Prayer Study Manual and Teacher's Guide*, and *Hebrew Prayers*, the latter a Hebrew-centered curriculum that sold out by September 1952, attesting to the growing need for such material in the Reform movement and Libbie's genius in marketing. Although she valued Hebrew as a living language and a link to the ancestral home and studied in an *ulpan* (immersion program designed to promote fluency) frequently, she did not want to teach Hebrew as a separate subject. Rather, she channeled her Hebrew

curriculum through the language of prayer and holiday celebrations to allow for repetition. She understood the centrality of reinforcement through performance, but she also wanted to embed Hebrew study in memorable childhood encounters in order for children to live Jewishly and to grow up with an awareness of the richness of their heritage and the beauty of its holidays.⁵²

Knowing well what teachers need, she wrote large numbers of practical, user-friendly pedagogic aids and classroom-based projects about teaching prayer, Jewish holidays and home observances. She included how-to components so teachers could present the novel material easily. In her very early "A Purim Carnival," for example, she articulates her bedrock confidence in risking new approaches for new times. She presents a Purim observance in American schools to mirror the holiday in Palestine when Jews and Arabs would stream into Tel Aviv (in contrast to "the usual anemic form that the celebration of Purim takes in this country"), painstakingly detailing instructions for everything teachers required to fulfill her vision.⁵³ This may all seem obvious today, but the approach was new with her, a perfect melding of her beloved Palestine and her holiday curriculum, the forerunner of today's Jewish-content Purim celebrations. While many of Braverman's writings were published by her congregations, others appeared in a variety of venues, including holiday publications.⁵⁴ Her self-promotion and her unquestioned innovation made an impact on a wide educational community.

Theory and Practice

Braverman's early training and teaching in the public school informed her educational philosophy, for there she came to understand the importance of giving credence, in a coherent educational amalgam, to all the experiences that come a learner's way. She coupled that insight with the conviction that teachers must reach pupils on more than one level. She designed and concluded a ten-year project of school-related club activities that effectively increased the hours of Jewish instruction. The project demonstrated the efficacy of her basic belief that the child does not exist in a vacuum. Therefore, the Jewish school must be coherent with the secular school curriculum and integrate the Jewish with the secular, relating the Jewish child to the non-Jewish environment.⁵⁵ Braverman sought to achieve her goal by helping Jewish students read, think and study with Jewish material, much of it presented through art, music and drama. A practitioner as well as a theoretician, she provided the teacher and club leader with sample programs and implementation instructions that grew out of her certainty that Jewish learning comprises more than the formal classroom setting. She did not coin the term "informal learning." But she practiced it.

Although Braverman was able to increase instruction time and motivation in her synagogue schools through clubs and theater, she became dissatisfied

with the structure of Jewish education and the realities that prevented dedicated Jewish teachers from achieving maximum results. She was impatient with a community, a board of education, a religious school committee, and a great mass of parents unaware of goals, vague about philosophy, with no purpose or design. At the same time, like Benderly, she opposed the all-day Jewish school, which, she believed, too frequently meant the transfer of the eastern European approach and method to the American scene.⁵⁶ She spoke to parent groups and cajoled school committees to make the one-day-a-week program a better learning experience. Throughout her career, in her writings and lectures, she struggled with how to involve home and parents, how to reconcile the American and Jewish experiences, how to bring modernity to Jewish learning.

Braverman was a first-rate Jewish educator, motivated by her persuasion that Jews value education. Fully community-minded, without relinquishing her loyalty to the synagogue, she understood, as did Benderly and the leaders of the New York *Kehillah*, that bureaus of Jewish education propel the educational effort across the widest spectrum.⁵⁷ She was a perceptive theorist whose journals, articles, and notations on envelopes, paper napkins, concert programs, menus, and scraps of paper attest to her never-ending occupation with generative, broad questions of Jewish education's purpose, content, and context.

She was concerned about the Jewish education profession, probing always for a better system, a stronger theoretical base. She was acutely aware that the world around her was changing dramatically but that the Jewish school moved slowly because the Jewish community moved slowly, pursuing its own agendas as if the world outside did not matter. At the same time, she believed in a teacher's ability to effect change, that the Jewish teacher was Jewish education and was uniquely positioned to assure the school's viability, while depending on the community to provide infrastructure and materials. Like Benderly and Kaplan, she wondered why the teacher didn't enjoy the status he or she deserved and how to professionalize Jewish education. She answered then, as we do now, by emphasizing that adequate compensation, changing teachers' self-perceptions, and helping teachers become models of wholeness entail both communal and professional responsibility.⁵⁸ She goaded others, but led by example. To show her appreciation for teachers, she established the Fairmount Temple Faculty Recognition Award (Cleveland, June 1971), the David Yellin Teachers College Faculty Recognition Award (Israel, November 1976), and the Bureau of Jewish Education Creative Teaching Award (Cleveland, March 1980).

Braverman was a careful and strict observer of the classroom and held teachers responsible for how they discharge their obligations. Her reach and compassion encompassed all children as she tried to formulate an approach for those who fall behind due to absence, attitude, or different abilities. She

pioneered with programs of individual help that first diagnosed the problem and then provided comprehensive remediation to strengthen the child by preventing failures, relying on summer school, and enlisting parents' cooperation via written notes and phone calls. Attempting to assist all who try to bring Judaism to young people structure their efforts, she identified a list of teachable moments like community children's programs, youth groups, vacation school, adult institutes, PTA meetings, festival celebrations, shut-ins, congregational groups, and religious school. Yet she was wary of gimmicks: "Aids are not substitutes for good teaching; they are *aids* for good teaching."⁵⁹

She appreciated camping's potential, although concerning her first camp position she wrote, "The only training I had in preparation for this job was the course on theater I had taken at Western Reserve University." She later served as head counselor at camps Pinegrove in Massachusetts, Tabor in Pennsylvania, and Carmelia in Vermont. She believed that each girl in her Jewish camp became well prepared to face the problems of life — self-reliant, poised, confident, sure — and would ultimately become a valuable, intelligent member of the American Jewish community, an ambition she held for the children of her school as well. Here, as in other educational dimensions, she was ahead of her time as seen, for example, in an article on camping that reflects her educational philosophy and the lessons she learned about camping's contributions to personality and character development.⁶⁰

Braverman's formula for good teaching rested on two fundamentals, respect for the individual and for the community. She discussed the first in the spirit of the progressive education of her day, "Individualize a child and give him an outlet for his creative ability."⁶¹ While attending to the uniqueness of the individual, she was equally adamant about the place of group mores and values. She became judgmental and impatient when the education that defined her life lost sight of its deepest Jewish roots. She took one author to task because she wholeheartedly believed that every prayer should link children to religious concepts whereas the author had failed to attach the values to their Jewish sources.⁶²

She spoke her mind in person and in print in defense of her certainty that Jewish education was sacred and too often taken for granted. She understood that it was a lifelong process decades before the term became popular. She expected all ages to enjoy Jewish education under all circumstances. She recognized nearly a century ago that too many parents, progressive and enlightened in their secular education, advanced no further than bar or bat mitzvah or confirmation, thus failing to appreciate the importance of continuing their children's education. Therefore, she placed great emphasis on adult learning. Jewish education, she believed, far from constraining young people, enriched them, making them better adjusted members of American society.⁶³ She appreciated the necessity and the difficulty of winning parents

to the enterprise. She told them that Jewish education connected the child with humanity's richest spiritual treasures, the moral and ethical formulations of democracy, and a religious culture that ennobles human society. She knew the pitfalls in the appeal to parents: "What do you have to know to be a good parent? Nothing! What the child learns in the school you can unlearn in the home."⁶⁴ Speaking to the Reform Movement, she campaigned for the now well-understood principle that parents must be living examples of the faith the temple proclaims, that the transition from Orthodoxy is not to escapism but to a living Judaism and an undiluted education.⁶⁵

The Play's the Thing

Braverman never wavered in her faith that the arts, drama especially, communicate Jewish values most enjoyably and, therefore, most expeditiously. Music and song feature prominently in her curricula as well as in her pageants. If words, music, stage directions were lacking, she wrote them. She tried to get others to recognize the importance of music in Jewish group activities. In her handbook for song leaders, she set out to arouse teachers about Israel as she was inspired, and to give them the resources they needed to captivate their students. She taught that song was central to the lives of ordinary Jews in Palestine; the *halutz* (pioneer) in Israel celebrates in song, songs "grown from the soil of *Eretz Yisrael*."⁶⁶ She urged teachers to recognize that holiday songs are not merely hymns of praise, but that holidays are stellar occasions to carry out the joyous repetition of songs that relate to the story of the holiday and individual characters of the festivals.⁶⁷ Many of her earliest publications extol the arts' pedagogic virtues and provide detailed instructions for others to follow.⁶⁸ At the same time, she extended her interest in the arts beyond the school and beyond the synagogue.⁶⁹ She frequently conveyed to others her faith in the power of Jewish stage shows, in which creative dramatics provide the best instrument for achieving the maximal educational aims. She knew what hard work it entailed, yet was confident that performance, thought through and written by the group itself, would produce unparalleled results.⁷⁰ She was alert for students who showed a flair for the arts and counted the artist, Joan Carl and the playwright Jerome Lawrence, a former Euclid Avenue Temple student, among her friends.⁷¹ Lawrence acknowledged Braverman's significant influence on his Broadway career: "Libbie appointed me editor of the religious-school magazine, 'The Ner Tomid.' 'It's better to be a writer and a director (than an actor),' Libbie told me. 'Now you get to play ALL the parts.' With her blessing, with the warm wind of her love at my back, I've been trying to do that ever since."⁷² At her death, Lawrence wrote, "Libbie's light shines down through the years, an impetus to idealism, a constant inspiration to care, not only for the everlasting light of Judaism, but for the perpetuity of the human race."⁷³

Jewish in America

From the moment New Amsterdam's Peter Stuyvesant met and imprisoned the Recife refugee immigrants in 1654, Jewish responses to the challenges of adaptation/assimilation have varied considerably in North America in an ongoing struggle with a dichotomy of nationality imposed by the majority culture. Braverman understood, appreciated, and factored questions of identity into her pedagogy. She was explicit about her own position, asserting that Jewish life in America should be neither superimposed on nor separated from American life but should adjust so as to make for a wholesome, well-integrated Jewish personality. She actualized Dewey's understanding that childhood is more than preparation for later life into ways to help Jewish children live fully as Jews in the present. That led her to club programs that extended hours, enriched curriculum, capitalized on gregariousness, strengthened temple bonds, channeled interests into Jewish life, promoted sympathetic attitudes to other Jews, provided varied and obvious Jewish experiences, developed lay leadership.⁷⁴ She provided curricula to help young people integrate their Jewish and secular worlds, yet was too much of a realist not to worry about the legitimate outside activities that so frequently resulted in postconfirmation separation from the synagogue. In confirmation-year programs designed to motivate continuation into the high school, she constructed appealing activities connecting Judaism and the American mainstream. She taught that learning can and should be fun for adults as well as children.⁷⁵ She counted on the excitement of the performing arts to merge the students' American and Jewish selves.⁷⁶ Braverman continued to believe this to the end of her life, convinced that even the complexities of modern life would respond to her formula, if educators would take it seriously and try it.

A Pioneer in Family Jewish Education

Braverman's focus on the total Jewish child led her to sweep the Jewish home into her fervent grasp. She knew well that the Jewish religious school could not function without the home, which must play the major part in the Jewish education of the child, providing subliminal learning and reinforcement. Not content with theory alone, she packaged a program to involve parents creatively and meaningfully in several ways: study groups designed to help parents understand the classroom learning; inviting parents to visit the school; enlisting parents to participate in school activities; providing conferences for individual parents and groups of parents; and reaching the home through printed materials.⁷⁷ Although such intercessions are fundamental to modern Jewish education, the program she presented seventy years ago created a new concept for educators to consider.

Braverman's pedagogy comprehended the importance of the Jewish home

in a child's education. She concluded that home observances, customs, and practices embody the spiritual aims of Jewish education and cannot begin too early. Therefore the school has a stake in helping the home provide religious experiences that give meaning to religious values and abstract precepts.⁷⁸ An unwavering confidence that the home and parents are essential to build the ground for later Jewish learning motivated her meticulous attention to the form, setting, and substance of Jewish learning throughout her long, productive career.

If Not for Herself

Libbie Braverman smiled always (some say it was a Mona Lisa smirk), even when angry. She greeted me with her trademark smile when I last visited her in Cleveland's Montefiore Home a few days before she died in 1990 at the age of ninety. But her twinkling eyes disarmed, masking an unmovable will that buttressed strongly held opinions on just about any topic. She breathed Judaism, and it nurtured her. Zealous about the arts, Braverman discovered how to infuse them with Jewish meaning that appealed to her pupils and their teachers. Her schools echoed with plays, cantatas, and pageants on every imaginable Jewish theme. Essay, drama, and art contests pervaded her curricula and a variety of Libbie Braverman awards went to the winners. I watched her in action for nearly fifty years and worked beside her often. I respected and honored a complex, compelling, confidence-exuding, sometimes exasperating colleague blessed with limitless energy, loving Jewish knowledge and the Hebrew language, as comfortable on a lecture podium as in a classroom or teaching peers in small groups.

Braverman acknowledged God's plan for the universe, but claimed none for herself. She believed that her career emerged in spite of her lack of planning, that the variety of activities in which she found herself were the signposts that showed her the way. She was certain that the people she met and places she'd been were responsible for what happened to her. At the same time, she recognized that to enter open doors is, in fact, a plan. She believed that her "peculiar kind of preparation, the seemingly unplanned activities" led to her life's work. She didn't intend to become a Hebrew School teacher just because she went to Hebrew School. She didn't plan to produce plays just because she took a Shakespeare course. She did not envision carrying the torch for Women's Liberation. The only goal she acknowledges pursuing was to take teacher training at the Cleveland School of Education.⁷⁹ Early family influence, standards she absorbed from grandparents and parents, insatiable curiosity, high self-esteem, joy of Jewish life — these turned Braverman into one of the foremost and most prolific of twentieth-century Jewish educators.

Sure of herself and conscious of her worth, she unabashedly pushed her publications and advertised her availability for lectures and seminars without

regard to travel cost, which she always billed along with her fee. She multiplied those efforts following her resignation from Euclid Avenue Temple in 1952. Her reward was a steady income from the large number of engagements she procured as lecturer, consultant, leader of interfaith workshops, and trainer of teachers at local and statewide institutes and at individual schools.

She insisted that friends and colleagues help her. For example, she urged the director of the Jewish Welfare Board lecture circuit to schedule appearances for her, suggesting places and topics.⁸⁰ She wrote to an extensive mailing list, reminding potential clients that she was available and that her background included many years of experience in Jewish education.⁸¹ The American Association for Jewish Education, in a letter to all Jewish schools, advertised her availability and noted that she “is exceedingly skillful in conducting workshops for teachers and parents.”⁸² The Braverman archives contain voluminous correspondence growing from her suggestions to invite her back to places where she had spoken over the years. She demanded, “publish my *Holiday Handbook for Parents and Teachers*.” She told another colleague to use her *Activities in the Religious School and Supplement* in his school and to bring a copy for her to autograph when he visited Cleveland. She distributed her articles nationally and sent complimentary copies of her books to encourage educators to use them in their schools. She engaged a secretary to handle her growing volume of mail, make her travel arrangements, and manage her schedule. Publication of her autobiography *Libbie* brought a rash of book-signings as well as the proclamation of Libbie Braverman Week, March 29–April 5, 1987, by Beachwood, Ohio, mayor Harvey Friedman — at her suggestion.⁸³

Braverman’s image management was extensive. The archives overflow with personal appeals to market her availability and advertise her publications. The 1930s files and her scrapbook pages are replete with newspaper and magazine clips reporting on a multitude of addresses on Palestine and education, as well as committee activities, camp leadership positions, and her books. The files also contain many letters from schools seeking advice and materials and thanking her for consultations with the school and with teachers. Withal, she respected and listened intently to colleagues, attending Jewish educational conferences as often as possible, and saving her notes. In an unidentified and undated page of conference notes she wrote, “If the survival of Israel and the security of Soviet Jews are the most important international problems facing the Jewish Community, the future of Jewish education is the most crucial and decisive domestic issue confronting this generation of American Jews.” She dedicated her life to that challenge.

Her self-promotion worked not only because of advertising, but because she had so much to offer, was an acknowledged expert, and excelled in public speaking, which played to her strong interest in drama. Diverse organizations wanted and appreciated her, among them United States and Canada Hadasah, Mississippi Valley Historical Society, Pioneer Women, Bonds for Israel,

synagogues, Zionist Youth Commission, B'nai B'rith Women, Young Judea, Jewish Book Council of America, National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, Jewish community centers, Rotary, Jewish National Fund, and various central agencies for Jewish education. Synagogue schools benefited from her curriculum talents, but so did others, as in her 1949 courses for the Hadasah School for Adults and her leadership of Cleveland's Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations. Her countless book reviews in many publications, especially the *Jewish Welfare Board Circle*, spanned her wide range of Jewish interests: biography, the arts, Hebrew, Zionism, literature, Jewish thought. She was a font of educational wisdom and Zionist history who knew that others admired her; she advanced her public image with the same energy and zeal she brought to all aspects of her life. Interviewer Carl Kovac told her, "You're a fascinating woman.' 'Of course I am,' she replied. It wasn't that she lacked humility. It's simply that Mrs. Braverman is a woman who knows what she is all about . . . living proof that Judaism is not just a religion, It's a way of life . . . it's a continuous happening."⁸⁴ Kovac captured her essence: always on stage, always confident of the future, always advocating by her actions as well by her words for the things that commanded her loyalty.

Epilogue

Following Sig's death in 1960, Libbie built living memorials to support their interests and encourage excellence in others. She initiated the Sigmund Braverman Cultural Program at the Cleveland Jewish Community Centers as a "living memory to his high principles of Jewish culture."⁸⁵ She endowed a cultural lecture series in his name at Cleveland's Fairmount Temple. In 1963, she established the School of Architecture Sigmund Braverman Award at Haifa's Technion Institute and, in 1967, the Sigmund and Libbie Braverman Annual Board-Staff Institute at Cleveland's Jewish Community Center. There followed the Libbie Braverman Scholarship Fund in Memory of Sigmund Braverman at Israel's Hadassah Community College in 1978. She devised and organized the Sigmund Braverman Art Collection at the Cleveland Bureau of Jewish Education and arranged for it to acquire two commissioned Jewish sculptures in Sig's memory: in 1977, Pearl Amsel's *Teacher and Disciple* and, in 1979, David E. Davis's *The Tsadik*. In the presentation she observed, "According to Davis, the work symbolically portrays the concepts of saintliness and truth." Libbie noted in her autobiography, "A 'Tsadik' in honor of the 'tsadik,' Sigmund Braverman."⁸⁶ She later inaugurated the Sigmund and Libbie Braverman Annual Lectureship in Jewish Studies and Jewish Learning at the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies (May 1981). She maintained her involvement in all of the projects throughout her life.

At a posthumous dedication of one of Sig's temples, she said, "[He] believed [the synagogue] must integrate the Religious, the Educational and the Social

functions, all rooted in Jewish history and Jewish tradition. . . . He dreamed the dream . . . he saw the vision. . . . I, too, saw the vision. I knew it when it was a spark in his eye."⁸⁷ They were of a single mind and one heart in comprehending the synagogue's importance to Jewish survival and its allegiance to learning and prayer. They shared a profound and abiding interest in Zionism and Jewish communal matters. She fondly observed that of their synagogue skills a writer once observed, "He builds them and she fills them."⁸⁸

Five years after his death, reviewing her husband's papers, Braverman wrote that in his designs for well over forty synagogues and other Jewish institutional buildings she could sense his authentic voice and his wry humor, his devotion to his craft, and his commitment to Jewish ideals.⁸⁹ She spoke of him constantly, pointed with pride to his Cleveland buildings, and recalled their travels together. Though their careers required many separations, some of them lengthy, they cherished their vow to support one another's accomplishments and projects. Jewish learning, Jewish culture, and Jewish institutions framed the essence of two remarkable people whose gifts of soul and substance continue to bless the Jews in Cleveland, throughout the United States, and in Israel.

Libbie Braverman possessed multiple talents and an uncommon ability to conquer obstacles. Those privileged to work with and admire her said so. The Akron community had welcomed her as one of the finest leaders in Jewish culture and education. They were impressed that before the building was completed Braverman wore a fur coat and galoshes so that the first school session could take place; that she moved furniture and swept floors while establishing fine principles to govern the education program.⁹⁰ She remained true to those principles throughout her long and active life.

Of her many legacies, perhaps none is more significant than this: "Thus did Libbie influence and change the hundreds, the thousands of people she came in contact with, in classrooms, from lecture platforms, or through the pages of her books. Their attitudes to Judaism and Jewish culture and the Jewish nationalism, which we call Zionism, as well as patterns of family life, were shaped accordingly. These influences were passed on to second and third generations, increasingly remote from the original source, but still subject to the consequences of the first contact. And still these ripples make themselves felt."⁹¹

NOTES

I am indebted to the Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio, and its staff, especially associate curator for Jewish history, Sean Martin, for facilitating access to the Libbie L. Braverman collections, nos. 4566 and 4812. I am grateful also to the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland and Director Seymour Kopelowitz for defraying research expenses.

1. Libbie L. Braverman, *Libbie* (New York: Bloch, 1986), 3-5.

2. Oral history, tape 1, side A, no. 490. All "oral history" citations refer to Braverman

interviews, January–February 1983, in the Jewish Women of Achievement Oral History Project conducted by the American Jewish Committee, Cleveland chapter.

3. Libbie and I were the only nonrabbinic Jewish Chautauqua Society lecturers in the 1950s and 1960s. We also worked together in a variety of teacher training programs for the Reform Movement, notably at the Union Camp Institute in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, founded by Rabbi Herman Schaalman, then director of the UAHC Chicago region.

4. Cleveland Board of Education. Name-Change Notice.

5. “Who teaches a neighbor’s child Torah is accounted the child’s parent,” Talmud: Nezikin/Sanhedrin 19b.

6. Oral history, tape 1, side A, nos. 345, 313.

7. Libbie Braverman. “Nathan Brilliant Memorial Address,” July 1960. Libbie L. Braverman collections, nos. 4566 and 4812.

8. Braverman, *Libbie*, 141.

9. Poet, Hebraist, and educator, Friedland was the founding director of the Cleveland Bureau of Jewish Education. He served as director from 1924 until his premature death in 1939. Braverman, “Profile of a Pedagogical Giant,” *Jewish Education* (Fall 1982).

10. As a former Bureau director, I appreciated Libbie’s advice, although sometimes it could be an unwelcome intrusion. Some of my predecessors were less accepting.

11. Unidentified news clip, June 15, 1952; oral history, tape 1, side A, no. 689; letter from Rabbi Eric Friedland, Chicago. June 23, 1952; letter from Rabbi Jack J. Cohen, Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation, July 2, 1952.

12. Libbie Braverman. “Nathan Brilliant Memorial Address,” July 1960.

13. Nathan Brilliant left Euclid Avenue Temple in 1946 to direct the Cleveland Bureau of Jewish Education, becoming the first Reform educator to head a major communal agency. I was the second, following the same path in 1978, from Fairmount (formerly Euclid Avenue) Temple.

14. Emanuel Gamoran was the founding director of the Commission; he served from 1923 until his retirement in 1958. He was associated with the Commission until his death in 1962.

15. Nathan Brilliant and Libbie L. Braverman, *Religious Pageants for the Jewish School* (New York: UAHC, 1941, 1943); Brilliant and Braverman, *Supplement to Activities in the Religious School* (New York: UAHC, 1950); and Brilliant and Braverman, *Activities in the Religious School* (New York: UAHC, 1951).

16. Brilliant and Braverman, *Activities in the Religious School*, vi.

17. Braverman, *Libbie*, 142.

18. *Akron Beacon Journal*, January 1953; *Connecticut Jewish Ledger* (n.d., 1966).

19. Braverman’s four major works were *Children of Freedom* (New York: Bloch, 1953); *Teach Me to Pray*, with David I. Cedarbaum, 2 vols. (Chicago: Board of Jewish Education, 1955, 1957); *Children of the Emek* (1937; New York: Bloch, 1962); and *The Six-Day Warriors*, with Samuel M. Silver (New York: Bloch, 1969).

20. The 1869 Philadelphia conference of Reform rabbis asserted “universalism as the union of all the children of God.” The 1885 Pittsburgh platform declared, “We consider ourselves no longer a nation but a religious community.” Reform’s journey to Zionism began with the 1937 Columbus platform.

21. Oral history, tape 1, side B, nos. 904–1069.

22. For example, Braverman, “The German Situation in Relation to Palestine,” address to the Jewish Women’s Federation Symposium, October 20, 1933; report on an address to Hadassah on her recent return from two months in Palestine, *Detroit Jewish Chronicle*, September 1934.

23. *Monthly Bulletin*, Cleveland Hadassah, November 1937.
24. Letter from Henry Montor, October 6, 1953, congratulating her on organizing a highly successful Cleveland Women's Bond Event.
25. Cited in *Cleveland Jewish News*, August 1, 1986.
26. Braverman, *Libbie*, 99.
27. *Review and Observer*, September 1931, reported her forthcoming address to a Junior Hadassah meeting on the topic "a visitor's impressions of the World Zionist Congress and Palestine."
28. Jewish National Fund Women's Committee Report. November 23, 1936.
29. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, September 13, 1939.
30. "They Rely on Us," Cleveland Hadassah, *Monthly Bulletin*, October 1939.
31. Cleveland Hadassah, *Monthly Bulletin*, January 1948.
32. Diary entries, undated, but probably around 1948.
33. Letter from Si (Isaiah) Kenen, June 30, 1948.
34. Letter from Rabbi Philip L. Lipis, Highland Park Ill., March 3, 1953, expressing hope that space remained for young people from his community.
35. *Cleveland Jewish News*, September 1967.
36. *Cleveland Jewish News*, June 1972.
37. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, May 28, 1985.
38. Libbie L. Braverman, *Palestine Program* (New York: Young Judea, 1936), foreword.
39. The pageant was "inspired by the remarkable self-restraint exhibited by the Chalutzim during the disturbances in Palestine." With Nathan Brilliant, Cleveland, Euclid Avenue Temple, undated, but in the late 1930s.
40. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, September 27, 1931. One of the earliest of the twin stories was "On the Yarkon: Meet the Twins," *Young Judea*, October 1935.
41. "Teacher Writes Book," October 1937, interview with Libbie about *Children of the Emek*, author and venue unknown.
42. Israel S. Chipkin, *Young Judea Leader*, October 1937, 15.
43. Braverman, Workbook for *Children of the Emek*, (Cleveland: Bureau of Jewish Education, 1950).
44. Braverman, "The Jewish Assembly," Religious Teacher's Association of Ohio-Michigan-Indiana, 1952.
45. Oral history, tape 2, side B, no. 829.
46. Review in *Jewish Welfare Board Circle* (January 1954).
47. Braverman, *Children of Freedom*, foreword.
48. *American Examiner*, November 4, 1969.
49. Introduction in Braverman, with Nathan Brilliant, *Devices for Teaching Hebrew Reading*, (Cleveland: Bureau of Jewish Education, n.d.)
50. Braverman, *Hebrew Study in the One-Day-a-Week School: A Guide for Teachers* (Cleveland: Euclid Avenue Temple, 1955).
51. Braverman, *Curriculum* (Cleveland: Euclid Avenue Temple, ca. late 1940s).
52. Review of Lillian S. Abramson and Lillian T. Liederman, *Jewish Holiday Party Book* (New York: Bloch, 1955), *Pedagogic Reporter* (Spring[?] 1955).
53. *Jewish Education* (January-March 1935): 49-51.
54. Braverman, "Nine Purim Games," in *Games of All Kinds for the Jewish Club* (New York: National Jewish Welfare Board, n.d.), 11-12. Braverman, *A Holiday Handbook* (Oakland, Calif.: Jewish Education Council, n.d.); Temple Sinai, Stamford, Conn., re-

issued this apparently well-received source book of introductory materials for Shabbat and holidays in an expanded version. Braverman, with Nathan Brilliant, *A Passover Seder in Action and Pictures* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Bureau of Jewish Education, n.d.). Braverman, with Renee Shulman, *On the Wings of a Century* (Cleveland: Euclid Avenue Temple, 1942); this was a dramatic pageant to celebrate Euclid Avenue Temple's one hundredth year. Braverman, with Nathan Brilliant, *A Modern Haggadah* (Cleveland: Euclid Avenue Temple, 1938). "A Program for a Hanukkah Assembly," *Jewish Teacher* (November 1933): 10ff. Braverman, *Chanukah: A Manual of Suggestions for Parents, Teachers, and Club Leaders* (Cleveland: Euclid Avenue Temple, n.d.).

55. Braverman, "Club Activities in the Religious School," *Jewish Education Magazine* (January–March 1937): pp. 20ff. Originally presented at a convention of the Jewish Religious School Teacher's Association of Maryland, Va., and Washington, D.C., which she twice served as president. She was also a president of the Ohio Michigan Indiana Religious School Teachers' Association.

56. Undated handwritten page with many shorthand notations.

57. Notes scribbled on program booklet of a Jewish National Fund gathering honoring Ohio congressman Charles A. Vanik, March 9, 1975.

58. Miscellaneous jottings, undated and scattered throughout Libbie's papers.

59. Diary entries, undated, but probably around 1948.

60. Braverman, *Libbie*, 61, 64; "Individualizing the Camp," *Camping Magazine* (n.d.).

61. *Cleveland College Life*, January 25, 1932.

62. Review of Samuel Halevi Baron, "Children's Devotions" (New York: Bookman, 1954) in the *Jewish Welfare Board Circle*.

63. Undated address to Cleveland Hadassah.

64. Diary entries, undated, but probably around 1948.

65. Miscellaneous jottings, undated and scattered throughout Libbie's papers.

66. Braverman, *Come, Let's Sing* (New York: Hadassah Education Department, ca. late 1930s).

67. Undated journal entry.

68. A typical example, Braverman, with Nathan Brilliant. "Maimonides Octocentennial Pageant" *Jewish Teacher* (April 1935): pp. 24ff. The pageant provided lessons about Maimonides in five scenes. Similarly, Braverman, with Nathan Brilliant, "Proclaim Liberty throughout the Land: A Pageant of Freedom to Celebrate the Birthdays of Washington and Lincoln" *Synagogue* (January 1939): 9, demonstrated that she saw a natural connection between Jewish teaching and American civic values.

69. *Independent and Review*, June 1934, reported that Libbie had become the founding president of the Anglo-Jewish Art Theater.

70. Braverman, "Dramatics in the Synagogue Center" *Synagogue Center* (March 1942): 7ff.

71. Correspondence files, 1975–87. Libbie often told me of her particular attachment to Lawrence and her pride at having discovered him first. Jerome Lawrence (1915–2004) wrote or collaborated on dozens of screen, stage, and TV adaptations, including *Auntie Mame* and *Inherit the Wind*.

72. Braverman, *Libbie*, x.

73. Letter from Jerome Lawrence, November 14, 1991.

74. Braverman, "Club Activities in the Religious School," *Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Institute of the Jewish Religious School Teacher's Association*, November 1936.

75. Braverman, with Nathan Brilliant, "Laying the Groundwork for Temple Affiliation," *Jewish Teacher* (June 1940); Braverman, *Libbie*, 65.
76. Braverman, *With Lifted Hands: A Choral Pageant Concerning Jews in America* (New York: National Federation of Temple Youth, 1954); Braverman, with Sam Silver, *They Helped Build America* (Stamford, Conn.: Temple Sinai, 1954); Braverman, "Three Hundred Years—Thirty Anniversaries," pageant written in cooperation with David I. Cedarbaum, Hyman Reznick, Yosef A. Schub, in *The American Jewish Tercentary, 1654-1954: Teaching Units*, ed. David I. Cedarbaum (Chicago: Board of Jewish Education, 1954); Braverman, *Three Hundred Years: A Confirmation Choral Reading* (Cleveland: Community Religious School, 1955).
77. Braverman, with Nathan Brilliant, "Relating the Parent to the Jewish School," *Jewish Teacher* (November 1939): 18ff.
78. Braverman, "Religious Values Caught or Taught," *Religious Education* (September-October 1956).
79. Braverman, *Libbie*, 89-90.
80. Letter to Samuel Freeman, June 1953.
81. Promo on Libbie's letterhead, June 11, 1953.
82. Letter from Judah Pilch, executive director, December 4, 1952.
83. Letter to Jacob Behrman, Behrman House Publishers, September 2, 1952; letter to Rabbi William Silverman, Nashville, Tenn., undated, but probably 1952. Without prompting, and calling it a tribute from a former student to an esteemed teacher, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, mayor Beryl Rothschild, declared December 20, 1985, Libbie Braverman Day in honor of Libbie's eighty-fifth birthday.
84. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, October 24, 1974.
85. Letter to George Goulder, June 6, 1960.
86. *Cleveland Jewish News*, November 4, 1977, and October 10, 1979; Braverman, *Libbie*, 161.
87. Excerpted in *Voice*, Temple Beth El, Baltimore, January 16, 1973.
88. Undated publicity sheet Libbie circulated as a bio and to solicit speaking engagements.
89. *Cleveland Jewish News*, June 25, 1965.
90. From a tribute given at Temple Israel, Akron, Ohio, April 18, 1953.
91. Carl Alpert, "Libbie Braverman: A Personal Tribute," Haifa, Board of Governors, October 1991.