



If you want to speak French...

ILLUSTRATED BY RUDOLPH CARRASCO

Hebrew language school where you will live in a dormitory and hear and speak only Hebrew.

But if you've studied Hebrew at home to the point where you can impress your more ignorant friends with your fluency and you feel that you will wow the Israelis with your knowledge or at least get credit for trying, just forget it. Israelis can detect an American accent from the word "bavaka-sha" or "please" which will probably be the first word of any sentence you try. If you say, "Please to tell me where stands the autobus to the sea shore," ninety per cent of the Israelis will reply in perfect English. If your accent happens to be as good as a Sabra's (a native Israeli), you are out of luck. The reply will be in rapid-fire Hebrew which you will not understand. If your informant elaborates on his verbal direction by pointing, you are fortunate. He will never know that you are just a tourist. If he does not point, you will smile sweetly, say rapidly, "today rabah" (many thanks) and walk proudly to the wrong bus.

There comes a time in the life of the American tourist in Israel when he or she (meaning me) decides there is no percentage in using her hard-learned Hebrew. There comes a time when it pays to be ignorant. One of these times was on a bus trip returning to Tel Aviv from Eilat, the southern tip of the Negev desert. It started out to be a trip on a sight-seeing bus. When we left early in the morning the temperature was 105° in the shade and there was no shade. After about an hour of travel, when we were half-way up a mountain, even the bus became over-heated. I had felt none too secure about the road in the first place. I could never understand how the Israelis had glued that narrow serpentine strip of pave-

ment to a mountain of loose dirt and rock. I suspected a secret material, perhaps American chewing gum, and felt that at any moment the road would become unstuck and slide down several thousand feet of mountain-side.

The bus driver tried every means of getting the bus started. He even made a sacrificial offering of our iced drinking water to the radiator god, but to no avail. We waited on the mountain-side until the regular Eilat-Tel Aviv bus came along on its one daily run. The more aggressive of the group got seats on the bus. The rest of us had to stand in the aisle for a wild sixty-mile-per-hour drive down the mountain.

Among the seated passengers were two Israeli women, one of whom had been aggressive and offensive in two languages from the moment the tour started. She had wilfully delayed our return trip by a half-hour when the other passengers were anxious to get an early start and we were fairly or unfairly blaming her for the over-heated bus motor.

When after another hour of travelling we stopped at a roadside stand for bottles of soda water and whatever we could get to take the place of the lunch which we would miss, I managed to be among the first served. I dashed back to the bus, seltzer water and cookies in hand, and deliberately sat down in the seat temporarily relinquished by the bilingual offender, but left in the charge of her mono-lingual friend. "Madam," said the woman to me in Hebrew, "this seat is taken." I made like I knew from nothing. I smiled at her sweetly and offered her a cookie.

I kept the seat. The meek may inherit the earth, but they do not inherit bus seats.

"I understand," said Jakobowitz. "If Your Excellency will but give me time until tomorrow morning, I hope by then to devise something for the sustenance of His Excellency Count Baigel while he plays billiards."

On the following day when the baron went to the bakehouse Jakobowitz said: "Does Your Excellency remember the small bread-cakes which you used yesterday to show me how billiards is played?"

The baron nodded. "There they are," said Jakobowitz pointing to a shelf. "But now they have holes in them."

"But what—?" asked the baron. The baker pushed his oven rod through the hole in one of the cakes and gave a creditable imitation of using a cue. "Your Excellency will observe," he said, "that my left hand prevents the cake from slipping down to the end of the cue." He then raised the cue, took a bite out of the cake and resumed the pretended play. No time is lost," he continued, "and two or three or even more cakes can be placed on the cue."

The baron threw a purse of golden coins on the table. "Give me all the cakes with holes that you have baked," he commanded and hurried off with his treasure to Count Baigel's castle where he found the count at play with General Offcushowitz, the commander-in-chief of King Sobieski's army. During this game the count scored a break of 525 including a greater number of cannons than the General had ever commanded. This feat was performed by the count with five bagels (as the cakes were afterwards called) on his cue. The count's life was saved and he put on weight rapidly.

But that is not the end of the story. A few days after he had baked the first batch of bagels two couriers from the king called on Jakobowitz and demanded that he accompany them at once to the palace. Without giving his time to wash the flour off his face and hand or to change his clothes the couriers took Jakobowitz to a carriage in which he was conveyed to the palace and brought into the royal presence.

"You are the baker Jakobowitz who baked the ring-shaped cakes for our noble Count Baigel?" asked the king.

The baker's knees trembled. Had Count Baigel (Continued on page 13)

Nature and Origin of the Bagel

by E. J. Ginsberg

Condensed from THE JUDEAN

"The Judean" is published quarterly by the South African Jewish Ex-Service League, P.O. Box 3995, Johannesburg, South Africa.

It is not correct to describe a bagel as a Jewish doughnut. Both the bagel and the doughnut are circular in shape and have a hole in the middle but the resemblance goes no further than that.

There has been much philosophical speculation as to whether the hole preceded the bagel or vice versa.

Modern opinion, probably influenced by Einstein's theory of the curvilinear nature of space, leans towards the "hole first" theory. Examination of the structure of a bagel will show that the hole has not been stamped out of solid material but that the two ends of a rope-like piece of dough have been joined together to enclose a circular space. It is obvious from this that the hole takes precedence in time.

It has been argued that the hole is nothing. This is a sensory illusion. It is a most definite something and it can be proved mathematically.

What happens when a bagel is divided into two parts for the purpose of making a bagel sandwich such as a butter bagel or a cheese bagel? The bagel is cut latitudinally (never across the circumference) and the result is two half-bagels and two complete holes. If the hole were nothing its division by two would have resulted in nothing. On the contrary, the hole has multiplied into two holes as the result of its being divided. This multiplication by division also occurs in animate nature.

The more interesting aspect of the bagel is its invention. There are several versions but one has the stamp of authenticity and any resemblance which it may bear to the story of the invention of the sandwich is pure coincidence.

During the reign of that most progressive and enlightened monarch, King Sobieski of Poland, there lived in Warsaw a certain Count Baigel. Of ancient lineage, cultured, rich, and in high standing at the court, the count's career and the happiness of his family were threatened by his inordinate fondness for playing billiards. So great was his passion for this game that he begrudged even the few hours that nature obliged him to spend in sleep. He exhausted one opponent after another and when these were lacking played by himself. His friends became seriously alarmed when, through his refusal to stop playing at meal times, he became thin to the stage of emaciation and it was obvious that his health would soon be completely undermined. Dishes of food brought to the billiards room were waved aside with an impatient cue.

The count's lifelong friend, Baron Offredski, was at his wits' end until it occurred to him that the count might be persuaded to take nourishment if by so doing his game was not interrupted. Herrings? Too messy. Potatoes, bread? Too crumbly. Beetroot soup? A potential danger to the cloth of the billiards table. He confided his problem to the baroness who suggested that he should consult Jakobowitz, the Jewish pastry cook and baker.

"But what is this game billiards?" asked Jakobowitz when the baron had explained the difficulty of getting Count Baigel to eat. "Is it played with cards? It is a game for the hands or the feet?"

As an answer the baron took a long rod which the baker used for pushing loaves into the oven and taking them out, cleared the kneading table by sweeping everything on it to the floor and then looked around the bakehouse for something he could use in the place of billiards balls. At length he found three small, circular-shaped, flatish bread-cakes which were tougher than ordinary bread by reason of their having been subjected to boiling before they were baked. He then demonstrated the game of billiards on the kneading table with the rod and the three cakes.

THE YIDDISH SONS OF ERIN

by Bernard Morris

MUCH publicity has been given recently to the Loyal Yiddish sons of Erin, a New York based organization of Irish born Jews and their descendants who have settled in the United States.

Most people on meeting an Irish Jew stare at him with something akin to disbelief. "Jews from Ireland? I didn't know there were any of our people in that country." Well, in point of fact, there aren't too many, a mere 5,000 in the whole country. North and South included. The population has remained static throughout the years as many of the younger people who qualify in the professions leave to work in richer fields.

Historically there is evidence that Jews settled in Southern Ireland as early as the eleventh century. Recently discovered graves and manuscripts substantiate this. It was not until the mid and late nineteenth century (following the exodus from Eastern Europe) that Jews settled in numbers in various parts of this country. Many were on their way from Latvia, Russia and other eastern European centres to America, but for one reason or another stayed to go into business in the "Emerald Isle."

An interesting historical sidelight is the fact that there had been Jews and Maranos serving in the Spanish Armadas — some of their ships were wrecked and foundered off the rocky, treacherous Irish Coast — my own theory is that thousands of these people converted to Catholicism and settled in the country during the 15th and 16th centuries. I offer in support of this theory the names of many Irish families which could easily be distortions of original Jewish names. For instance, Cohen can be translated into Quinn, Kehane, Coen, Cowan, Keone, Conn, McKeown and other similar sounding names; Levy, (which is itself a common non-Jewish name in Ireland) probably led to Leavy, Dunleavy, McAleavy, Levitt, Leary, O'leary, all familiar surnames to any Irishman — even first names like Michael and Joseph are next in order of popularity to Patrick and John. To my knowledge little or no research has been done on the probable ancestry of these family names — but I am more than convinced that should anyone interest himself sufficiently to do so the results would confirm this theory.

Getting back to present day Jewish life in Ireland, however, it is well to note that when one speaks of Ireland one refers to two distinct and separate countries — Northern Ireland which is an integral part of the United Kingdom, governed by a local Parliament but in actual fact controlled by Westminster — and Eire, in the south, and by far the larger part of the country. Here a republic has been set up which has no allegiance whatsoever to England and is ruled by the Dail, or government, with its president, Eamonn De Valera. A customs border exists between the two parts of the country similar to that between U.S. and Canada and this demarcation is strictly maintained and supervised on both sides.

The Jews of Northern Ireland reside for the most part in its capital, Belfast, and number approximately a thousand. It is interesting to note that an earlier settlement of German Jews in this area (around the middle 19th century) produced some noted businessmen and philanthropists whose names live on in industry, commerce and public buildings. The first Jewish Mayor of Ireland was not Robert Briscoe of Dublin, but one Sir Otto Jaffe — a remarkable business tycoon and textile manufacturer who lived in Belfast in the middle of the 19th century. This gentleman settled in Ulster during this period and received a knighthood for his philanthropic work for both Jewish and general communal charities. Sir Otto built the beautiful



synagogue which is used to this day by the Belfast Hebrew Congregation. The Jaffe Public Elementary school bears his name which until recently housed the Talmud Torah and is a well-known landmark in the city. Another famous Jew of that period was Wolfe, an engineer who, with a partner, established the world renowned shipbuilding yards of Harland and Wolfe which gives employment to thousands of Northern Ireland's citizens. It was in these yards that "queens of the ocean" like the Titanic and the Majestic were built. It was in Belfast too that the late Chief Rabbi of Israel, Isaac Herzog, had his first congregation before moving to the larger community of Dublin. Many stories are told of the charity of this great sage — those who remember him in Belfast tell of the days when Rabbi Herzog, then earning a very meagre salary, would often arrive home on pay-day without a penny in his pocket. When his frantic wife questioned him about this he reluctantly admitted that he had given his salary away to beggars in the street on his way home. It appears that on one occasion the learned Rabbi arrived home in his stockings feet after donating his boots to a barefoot itinerant. After this the Rebbitzen collected the salary cheques herself.

Our Ambassador to Canada, Yaacov Herzog, a son of this great scholar, is one of whom Ireland can be justly proud. Another Irish born Jew, Max Nurock, had the honour of being Israel's Ambassador to Australia for some years while

in Israel's Consular Service Yaacov Morris and A. Ben Dor, both Belfast born and educated young men have served with distinction.

The Dublin Jewish community, numbering some 4,000, is recognized as one of the most intensely organized and Zionist minded in the world. Old and well established, Dublin Jewry boasts of no less than seven synagogues, a Jewish school and college, Jewish clubs, an Hahonim House, and a golf and country club. Apart from Ambassador Herzog and Robert Briscoe, many of the Hebrew sons have made their mark in the professional world. The foremost Irish gynaecologist is a fifth generation Irish Jew, Dr. Bethel Solomons, who is reputed to have included among his patients a former Queen of England.

Dublin is also the birthplace of Bernard Cherrick of the Hebrew University, and Jeffrey Wigodur, director of Kal Yisrael Lagola, Israel's outside broadcasting service.

The only other congregation in existence today is that of the city of Cork in the extreme south of the country. This old community has dwindled in recent years to about 60 families from what was once a fairly large congregation. Nevertheless Cork has produced many Jewish novelists and public servants — not the least of whom are the noted writer, David Marcus, and head of the Irish customs service, Laurence Elyan, who is spending his retirement in Israel.

It is no small wonder then that the "Loyal Yiddish Sons of Erin" are proud of the communities from whence they spring. Ireland's history of tolerance and her democratic way of life has given every Jewish son an opportunity to progress and live fully. Those who have sought fame and fortune further afield, in other lands, find it hard to forget the "misted hills and lush green fields" of the land of their birth.

In conclusion I may add that it is a well known fact that the little men of Ireland are really Jews — the word Leprechaun is no doubt the Irish version of Lipper Cohen.

become ill, or died, from eating the cakes? "Y-yes, Your Majesty," he stammered.

The king smiled graciously. "Most excellent cakes — bagels we believe they are now called. We should like to know how they are prepared." Jakobowitz's knees still trembled slightly when he said: "First you take a hole, Your Majesty."

"Take a hole?" "Yes, Your Majesty, like this." He held up his right hand and joined the tip of his thumb in the form of a circle.

"And then?" asked the king. "You boil it." "Boil it?" "Yes, Your Majesty, and then you bake it." "Do you jest with us?" asked the king sternly. "Take a hole, boil it, bake it—"

"Forgive me, Your Majesty," said the baker, "I was confused. You take a hole and put dough around it. You boil it and then bake it." "With the hole?" smiled the king. "Yes, yes, Your Majesty, with the hole."

Jakobowitz was invested with the Order of Sobieski, Class II, and he and his wife lived happily ever after. Mrs. Jakobowitz has not been mentioned before but it was actually she who invented the bagel. This fact is mentioned in the posthumously published memoirs of Baroness Offredski in whom Mrs. Jakobowitz confided when they were discussing a new recipe for borsht.

Nature and Origin of the Bagel

(Continued from page 12)



No blarney . . . she's Irish-Jewish Queen! Beatrice Cohen, 22, wears her crown in New York, after winning the beauty contest of the Loyal League of Yiddish Sons of Erin. The contestants had to be both Irish and Jewish and Beatrice qualified, as her father came from Belfast, now living in Brooklyn. She reigned at the St. Patrick's Day-Purim banquet and festival in New York last March.