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Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf and His 1896 Southern Road Map

by

Lynda Barness and Lance J. Sussman *

At the end of the nineteenth century, Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf was one of the most visible Jewish leaders in the United States. In addition to his leadership at Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, one of the largest synagogues in the country, he also founded the National Farm School, which, some 130 years later, is now Delaware Valley University. To develop his school, he needed funding, and in 1896 he turned to the South for help. Krauskopf understood that Southern Jews had developed a network of institutions and organizations, an integral part of a national framework. In 1896 Krauskopf embarked on a fundraising tour of the South that not only confirmed the existence of such a network but strengthened it by reinforcing ties among local communities throughout the region. As the primary purpose of his trip was fundraising, he did not engage in controversial topics of the day, like race relations, but years later he forcefully addressed these issues. Instead, he relied on the cult of personality — both his and Leo Tolstoy's, which will be explained below — and his oratorical skills.

Current secondary literature about Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf does not focus on and hardly mentions his relationship with Southern Jews.¹ A

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¹ See William W. Blood, *Apostle of Reason: A Biography of Joseph Krauskopf* (Philadelphia, 1973); John F. Sutherland, "Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf of Philadelphia: The Urban Reformer Returns to the Land," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 67 (June 1978): 342–62; Abraham J. Feldman, "Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf: A Biographical Sketch, *American Jewish Year Book* 26 (1924–1925):

forthcoming comprehensive book based on primary materials about this sometimes-overlooked rabbi provides the genesis of this article.² The authors found several letters inviting Krauskopf to visit the South.³ In 1895, Adolph Ochs wrote to Krauskopf, "The success of your lectures in any locality in the South would be altogether dependent upon the interest taken by those who encouraged you to come, and the manner and direction of their efforts. Whenever you come to make your southern tour, I will arrange so that you can have a date at Chattanooga, and I am quite sure that I will have an audience respectable in size at least."⁴ The newspapers of the day further document Krauskopf's campaign to raise money for his National Farm School throughout the South in 1896.

Several themes emerge in this study. First, the Progressive Era witnessed a move towards urbanization. New opportunities arose in the cities, and immigrants and young people alike were drawn there. Krauskopf, on the other hand, saw the ills of the ghettos that were being created, particularly among Jews who were new to America. A moment of intense Jewish immigration created in its wake a growing challenge of Jewish poverty in America's cities. Conditions in Russia and Europe, including uprisings, pogroms, and virulent antisemitism, made life for Jews

420-47; Joshua Feldstein, *Evolution of a Unique Institution: Delaware Valley College of Science and Agriculture* (Boiling Springs, SC, 2000); Herbert D. Allman, *A Unique Institution: The Story of the National Farm School* (Philadelphia, 1935).

² Lynda Barness and Lance J. Sussman, *Busy Beyond Belief: Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf and the Re-making of American Judaism* (forthcoming).

³ The authors thank the following archives. For correspondence from, to, or concerning Joseph Krauskopf and the South, see Krauskopf Files: Series A, Correspondence (A/1, A/2); Series B, Russia and Europe Trip, 1887 (1893-1894); and Series C, Lectures and Publishing, 1889-1922, especially sermons on his visit to Tolstoy, Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel (hereafter cited as Krauskopf Files, KI). There are forty-three boxes of Krauskopf material, primarily letters, in the Joseph Krauskopf Papers, Accession No. 98: Series 1, Outgoing Letters, 1884-1907; Series 2, Incoming Letters, 1858-1920s, Temple University Libraries, Special Collections Research Center, Philadelphia (hereafter cited as Krauskopf Papers, Temple University). See also, Joseph Krauskopf Papers, Manuscript Collection No. 183, box 1, folders 1-5, Series A, Correspondence, 1883-1922, Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati (hereafter cited as Krauskopf Papers, AJA); Annual Reports and Catalogs, Correspondence Files (by year, primarily twentieth century), Delaware Valley University Archives, Doylestown, PA (hereafter cited as DVU Archives).

⁴ Adolph Ochs to Joseph Krauskopf, March 22, 1895, Krauskopf Papers, Temple University, box 23.

extremely difficult. Krauskopf wanted to do something to ameliorate the difficulties abroad and also those occurring at home.⁵ Initially he attempted to tackle the issues of the Jews in Russia by developing an extraordinary dream and plan. Then he instituted another dream and plan by starting a nondenominational and nonsectarian national school an hour north of Philadelphia, which focused on farming. Both of these “bold plans and grand schemes” impacted issues of the day.⁶ Another theme was personal. Krauskopf was apparently an exceptional orator, and he realized that he could monetize his skills by traveling and speaking in an effort to raise funds for his emerging school. Sometimes controversial, he was always engaging and in demand throughout the United States. Community-building provides a third theme. Krauskopf’s tour demonstrated to Southern Jews that they had an identity of their own.

Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf’s story begins in Ostrowo, Prussia (now Ostrow Wielkopolski, Poland), where he was born in 1858, and his family’s chain migration to the United States landed him in Fall River, Massachusetts, in 1872. From there, through serendipity and an insightful mentor, he enrolled in the first class of American ordained Reform rabbis, of which there were four, at Hebrew Union College in 1875. Next, Krauskopf went to a pulpit in Kansas City, Missouri, and then on to Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel in Philadelphia, where he remained senior rabbi for the rest of his life.

This young rabbi’s efforts in 1894 were remarkable. As absurd as it may sound, through a series of machinations he tried to arrange to go to Russia to see the czar to petition for farmland for Jews in Siberia. He thought that by finding a workable home for the Jews, where they could be productive farmers, their situation could improve and they could remain in Russia rather than coming to the United States to live in squalor. This plan hit several snags. Russia denied entry visas to all Jews, and it was impossible for Krauskopf to enter the country without one—or so it seemed. Krauskopf had friends all the way up to President Grover Cleveland, and serious attempts ensued to cajole Russia to permit Krauskopf to enter the country. However, these efforts did not come to fruition.

⁵ On Joseph Krauskopf and antisemitism, see Robert D. Priest, “A Rabbi’s Impressions of the Oberammergau Passion Play: Joseph Krauskopf, Antisemitism, and the Limits of the Transnational Jewish Public Sphere,” *Jewish Social Studies* 24 (Fall 2018): 100–26.

⁶ Phrase often used by Isaac Mayer Wise, Krauskopf’s friend and mentor.

Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf, 1895. (Wikimedia Commons.)

*Keneseth Israel, Broad Street and Columbia, Philadelphia, PA.
(Courtesy of Keneseth Israel Philadelphia Archives and History.)*

Krauskopf decided to go to Russia anyway. With so much publicity on his behalf throughout the United States, Krauskopf believed he would be “unmolested” (the word he and the press used), so he began his Russia journey.⁷

Of course Krauskopf never met with the czar. However, the efforts of Andrew D. White, United States ambassador to Russia and a cofounder of Cornell University, led him to a fortuitous meeting with renowned author Leo Tolstoy at Tolstoy’s estate, Yasnaya Polyana, in Russia. Travel to and in Russia proved difficult; part of the rabbi’s journey was by horse and wagon. Krauskopf and Tolstoy met late one afternoon and, although Krauskopf later reported they met under the Poverty Tree, the diaries of Krauskopf and Leo Bramson, who accompanied Krauskopf on the visit, showed no mention of this meeting place. The diaries indicate that the men spoke about the condition of the Jews in Russia. Allegedly, Tolstoy

Count Leo Tolstoy, c. 1884.
(Wikimedia Commons.)

⁷ See, for example, *American Israelite*, July 22, 1894: “Rev. Dr. Krauskopf arrived safely and unmolested in St. Petersburg.”

*Joseph Krauskopf, handwritten letter
from Kiev describing his Russian trip, July 1894.
(Courtesy of Keneseth Israel Philadelphia Archives and History.)*

advised Krauskopf that Russia would never do anything to help the Jews and urged him to help his fellow Jews in the United States.⁸

Krauskopf next traveled through South Russia, probably on Tolstoy's advice, visiting Jewish farm communities before returning home. Most germane to Krauskopf's future endeavors was a stop at a model farm in Odessa of about one hundred acres that had been in existence for three years as a result of the efforts of the Jewish men and women who toiled there. Less than two years later, Joseph Krauskopf purchased 122 acres of land and created a school for disadvantaged boys to learn to farm in rural Doylestown, Pennsylvania.⁹

When Krauskopf returned home in early fall 1894, he quickly started to investigate and create the beginnings of a farm school. An admiring press in America publicized his efforts. Tolstoy's name did not appear in the press until 1896, when Krauskopf started advertising for the school, nevertheless a narrative developed that gave him credit for Krauskopf's decision to open the school. That presumed cause-and-effect, an idealized version of the tenuous link to Tolstoy that actually existed, served as an effective public relations angle for the school.

The story of the National Farm School illustrates the exploits of its founder and his attempt to rescue Jewish immigrant boys trapped in urban poverty. Krauskopf envisioned training youth to become self-sufficient and productive. Although lacking a full model for this agricultural adventure besides what he glimpsed in a short visit to Odessa, Krauskopf had experienced the opening of a school for boys when he enrolled as a student in the first class at the new Hebrew Union College. Krauskopf could relate to the experiences of a young man in a new environment. He came to this country without speaking English, learned it rapidly, and went on to enroll in a new school, the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. The rabbi shared the souls of these young men.

Obviously he needed money for his project. For his proposed venture in 1894 he did not own property, lacked independent wealth, and possessed no roadmap for the practicalities of creating a school from nothing. Nonetheless, Krauskopf possessed one important ingredient: determination. Shortly after his return from Russia, he began developing

⁸ The diaries are located in the archives of Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

⁹ See Feldstein, *Evolution of a Unique Institution*.

a fundraising plan. "Krauskopf applauded the capitalist as mankind's benefactor, placed on earth so 'that the more favored mortals: those spared from wealth and its laborious pursuits, may reap the benefits thereof.'" ¹⁰ For the next two years, Krauskopf worked frenetically. He raised twenty thousand dollars to purchase the land and buildings of an abandoned farm and dealt with the tasks associated with a boarding school for boys — dormitories, staff, furnishings, machinery, crops, instructors, curricula, and the list goes on. Everything required money, and raising money took tremendous stamina, planning, and good cheer. He donated his savings, some \$3,500, and then went on the road to raise money from his speeches. The rabbi was a captivating orator who, as newspapers repeatedly reported, could speak for an hour and a half without notes. He regularly packed the house with Jews and non-Jews. Krauskopf received fees for his presentations and also received proceeds from ticket sales (a reserved seat often cost fifty cents). These funds, perhaps minus some travel expenses, went to his burgeoning school.

In May, June, and July 1895, he embarked on a tour of the western United States and along the Pacific coast, courtesy of his friends in the railroad business.¹¹ Krauskopf possessed wanderlust at a point in history that did not make travel easy or pleasurable.¹² Like Isaac Leeser and Isaac Mayer Wise, Jewish religious leaders before him, he traveled across the United States by train.¹³ He became skilled at planning and traveling, creating routes and itineraries that made sense, and continued to do so for over a quarter century.

In practice, Krauskopf developed what could be called in political terms "stump speeches." He primarily spoke about his experience in Russia with Tolstoy, titling one speech "Tolstoi: Apostle of Russia" and

¹⁰ Sutherland, "Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf," 353.

¹¹ *American Israelite*, May 30, 1895, listed the itinerary: Champaign, IL; Des Moines, IA; Davenport, IA; Omaha, NE; Denver, CO; Salt Lake City, UT; Portland, OR; Seattle, WA; San Francisco, CA; Sacramento, CA; Los Angeles, CA; Albuquerque, NM; Santa Fe, NM; Trinidad, CO, and Pueblo, CO.

¹² After the turn of the twentieth century, Krauskopf traveled to Germany to evaluate the Oberammergau play and later took a year-long trip around the world with his wife, Sybil, and their daughter, Madeleine, as a gift from his congregation.

¹³ Lance J. Sussman, *Isaac Leeser and the Making of American Judaism* (Detroit, 1995); Sefton D. Temkin, *Creating American Reform Judaism: The Life and Times of Isaac Mayer Wise* (Liverpool, UK, 1998).

Joseph Krauskopf, fundraising letter, n.d.
(Courtesy of Delaware Valley University Archives.)

another “Only a Jew.”¹⁴ Unlike Isaac Leeser and Isaac Mayer Wise, his friend, mentor, and founder of the Hebrew Union College, Krauskopf never published a personal newspaper, so he depended on connections with the press and, in particular, Wise’s *American Israelite* to share his exploits. The secular press also became his ally. The newspapers covered his every move with thoroughness and kindness. Krauskopf was a celebrity, and the press proved more than obliging.

Looking South

From the outset, the South proved pivotal to Krauskopf’s strategy for raising money for the school. The years 1895 and 1896 were central to his Southern plan, which he implemented almost immediately. Thereafter, he never stopped networking. An announcement appeared in early 1896 that “Rev. Dr. Krauskopf will undertake a lecture tour through the South next month, from which he expects to realize about \$2500, leaving \$5000 which it is desirable to secure.”¹⁵ In current value, that is approximately one hundred thousand dollars, no small amount to amass.

Why the South? Isaac Mayer Wise, writing in the *American Israelite*, understood the reason as soon as Krauskopf announced the tour: “Knowing as well as I do the extremely liberal and charitable Jews who are domiciled in the Southern States, I venture to say that these large-hearted *Yehudim* will respond to the appeal in their usual happy style. It is dollars against toothpicks that the Sunny South will make up the still needed \$7,500—either in lecture fees, perquisites or by straight donations. Mark my prediction.”¹⁶ Krauskopf knew what he was doing and knew the South had its merit. Moreover, Krauskopf lacked access to potential funders in the North. Baron de Hirsch already funded a school in nearby New Jersey. Krauskopf experienced a stormy relationship for a time with financier Jacob Schiff and thus could not reach out to other big funders in New York.¹⁷ He did well with the wealthy congregants of his Philadelphia synagogue,

¹⁴ “Dr. Krauskopf on Tolstoi,” *Montgomery Advertiser*, March 5, 1896; “Eloquence and Wisdom: Rev. Dr. Joseph Krauskopf on ‘Only a Jew,’” *Chattanooga Daily Times*, February 26, 1896.

¹⁵ *American Israelite*, January 16, 1896.

¹⁶ “The National Farm School,” *American Israelite*, January 23, 1896.

¹⁷ Apparently, a misunderstanding between the two men originated when Krauskopf used Schiff’s name as an early supporter of the school. Whether he had Schiff’s consent was the question, but they worked it out and later Schiff contributed financially to the National Farm School.

but that had its limits. Krauskopf needed to find a pool of receptive donors, and the South offered an existing network in a region anchored in an agricultural economy. Fortunately for Krauskopf, the effects of the Panic of 1893 were fading.

Krauskopf went where the money was with a calculated plan. On February 18, 1895, Adolph S. Ochs, publisher and owner of the *Chattanooga Times*, wrote to a Mr. Lichten, who later became an officer of the school: "Should Dr. Krauskopf pass by or near Chattanooga on his lecturing tour, I should be very much pleased to have him deliver his lecture here." Further, he noted, "Rabbi Krauskopf is doing noble work and is entitled to the enthusiastic support of every self-respecting Jew."¹⁸ The *Chattanooga Times* reported with the headline "An Intellectual Treat in Store": "Rev. Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf, of Philadelphia, conspicuously one of the leading Jewish rabbis of America, at the head of one of the largest and most prosperous Jewish congregations in America, will during the month of April visit this city and deliver a lecture for the benefit of a local Jewish charity and the Jewish Agricultural college."¹⁹

On March 25, 1895, L. Pape of Pape and Sugarman Life Insurance Agents wrote to Krauskopf, "I have come to the conclusion that your idea in visiting the South some time next fall, is by far the best plan. . . . And you can meantime correspond with Nashville, Chattanooga, Vicksburg, Greenville, Natchez, Montgomery and New Orleans, and by visiting these cities in connection with Memphis will make the traveling expense to each city less and the result to the cause much better."²⁰ The *Weekly Democrat-Times*, in Greenville, Mississippi, reported on March 23, 1895, under "Of General Interest": "Dr. Joseph Krauskopf is establishing a model farm near Philadelphia, where graduates of orphan institutions and other capable boys and girls may be trained into skillful farmers. It is to be modeled after one in Odessa, now in the third year of existence. The trade and science of farming, stock raising etc., will be taught practically and technically."²¹

¹⁸ Adolph Ochs to a Mr. Lichten, February 18, 1895, Krauskopf Papers, Temple University, Series 2.

¹⁹ "An Intellectual Treat in Store," *Chattanooga Times*, March 10, 1895.

²⁰ L. Pape to Joseph Krauskopf, March 25, 1895, Krauskopf Papers, Temple University, box 23.

²¹ *Weekly Democrat-Times* (Greenville, MS), March 23, 1895.

On the Road

Krauskopf started traveling and sharing the story of his visit with Tolstoy. Krauskopf was clearly smitten with Tolstoy and extolled his virtues from the pulpit and the lectern. A newspaper reported, "In many ways, the Rabbi could not have chosen a more unlikely hero with whom he had less in common. Tolstoy's back-to-the-land movement was part of a larger effort to find meaning in his own life and ultimately to combat a political, socio-economic system which he hated."²² Krauskopf's talks on Tolstoy, however, provided a segue into his story of his proposed farm school and ultimately fundraising.

Montgomery Advertiser,
 March 5, 1896.
 (Newspapers.com.)

The rabbi traveled extensively through the South in a scripted tour for four or five weeks in early 1896 to raise money for his school.²³ He started on his journey focused on his school, not specifically promoting Reform Judaism, although he was a leading figure in that movement, which numerous Southern congregations practiced. Reform synagogues

²² Quoted in Sutherland, "Urban Farmer," 352.

²³ Different newspapers reported different durations.

across the South already connected through major family and business ties and through the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, which proved central to Krauskopf's ability to travel and speak. Religion became a common denominator, allowing Krauskopf to move from city to city to various synagogues whose rabbis he knew (or knew by reputation), appealing to their congregants for support. Krauskopf took advantage of the cohesiveness in the Reform German Jewish community across the country.

Notable organizations, like B'nai B'rith, the German Jewish men's organization, were active and popular, and the community was strong. Individuals maintained connections through marriage, business, and organizational ties. At the time, the Reform temples increasingly became a place for women, with the National Council for Jewish Women organized within three years prior to his trip. Krauskopf continued traveling in the South because of its networking opportunities. Other contemporary religious figures like Isaac Mayer Wise and Rev. Russell Conwell, founder of Temple College (now University) and pastor of the Grace Baptist Church in Philadelphia, traveled to share their religious views, but Krauskopf directed his message specifically toward his school, its purpose and benefits, and his philosophy of helping immigrants adapt in their new country.

Agriculture in the South remained anchored in cotton, and modern techniques were just beginning to emerge.²⁴ Krauskopf came to cities of the South to talk about agriculture for the future, including practical and scientific farming. He invited his audience to join him in facing the future. He had a vision for a school focused on education for farmers. The repetition of the phrase "scientific and practical agriculture" became a mantra and succinctly explained what made Krauskopf's message reverberate. In 1895 the Cotton States and International Exposition, a world's fair, took place in Atlanta from September 18 to December 31, 1895. With six thousand exhibits and attracting eight hundred thousand visitors, it brought

²⁴ For a reminder that horses were still used on farms rather than tractors, "Charles Hart and Charles Parr set up a business in Charles City, Iowa, in 1900, originally selling a two-cylinder gasoline engine they developed. In 1903 the firm build 15 self-propelled traction engines. . . . [T]hey had a new word for their product, tractor. Peter Liebholt, "These tractors show 150 years of farming history," National Museum of American History, March 1, 2018, accessed June 2, 2026, <https://americanhistory.si.edu/explore/stories/these-tractors-show-150-years-farming-history>.

attention to what the promoters hoped would be the economic transformation to the New South. Thus Krauskopf's message reflected regional trends.

In addition, Krauskopf led the way for Jews to be part of an America that did not trigger antisemitism. Antisemites accused Jews of being unproductive because of their lack of participation in farming, regardless of the fact that land restrictions had been imposed on Jews in numerous European countries. According to Gabriel Davidson, "It still seems to be the general belief that, since their dispersion from their ancestral home, Jews have lost contact with the land so completely and irrevocably that in all of two thousand years they have never been able to thrust new roots into the soil. The truth is that during the whole Diaspora there was never a time when Jews were not engaged in agriculture to some extent."²⁵ To counteract this calumny, agriculture at the turn of the century served as a central focus of Jewish philanthropy, as evidenced by the work of Baron de Hirsch and others, and then by the kibbutz movement in Palestine. Krauskopf linked the future, science, and agriculture, and he invited Jewish communities in the South to participate while showing them how their involvement and support for the National Farm School would be worth their investment. Whereas few Jews in the South pursued farming, the concentration of the region's economy on agriculture directly and indirectly impacted their commercial ventures.

Krauskopf possessed a sense of politics and knew whom to reach. He frequently asked his personal contacts in the South to connect him to others. When he spoke at a gathering he attracted crowds that further extended his fundraising network, which became widespread and continued to grow with him as the main attraction. The Reform synagogues in the South provided strongholds for connections, and others joined in the campaign. In Memphis, Tennessee, Rabbi Max Stamfield gave a pitch before a committee appointed to handle contributions. The National Council of Jewish Women in Atlanta also collected funds for the school.²⁶

²⁵ Gabriel Davidson, "The Jew in Agriculture in the United States," *American Jewish Year Book* 37 (1935-36): 99.

²⁶ "Count Tolstoi, Philosopher," *Commercial Appeal*, February 24, 1896; "Rabbi Krauskopf's Work," *Savannah Morning News*, March 2, 1896.

*Krauskopf's 1896 route through the South, starting in Louisville, KY.
(Map created by Jen Urdang Stern.)*

On the Stump

In February and March 1896 Krauskopf embarked on his Southern tour, speaking to crowds almost daily.²⁷ He knew his audiences and made the message personal in Savannah:

Some years ago I visited Russia to thoroughly acquaint myself with the condition of my people in that country. . . . Imagine, if you can, what would be the result if the government at Washington should issue an order compelling all

²⁷ "Rev. Dr. Joseph Krauskopf will leave next Monday morning on his Southern lecture tour, to be gone about a month. In the course of his journey he will visit the following places: Louisville, Ky., Wednesday, February 19th; Nashville, Tenn., Friday, February 21st; Memphis, Tenn., Sunday, February 23rd; Huntsville, Ala., Monday, February 24th; Chattanooga, Tenn., [Tuesday,] February 25th; Atlanta, Ga., [Wednesday], February 26th; Savannah, Ga., Monday evening, March 2d; Montgomery, Ala., Wednesday, March 4th; New Orleans, La., Friday, March 6th; Natchez, Miss., Sunday evening, March 8th; Vicksburg, Miss., Monday, March 9th; Houston, Tex., Wednesday, March 11th; Galveston, Tex., Thursday, March 12th; San Antonio, Tex., Friday, March 13th; and Dallas, Tex., Saturday, March 14th. The tour will include a number of other cities, for which the dates have not yet been fixed." "Rev. Dr. Krauskopf's Southern Tour," *American Israelite*, February 20, 1896.

the Jews in America to leave their homes and settle in two or three of the southern states, and even there forbid them to live in villages or the country, but force them to huddle together in congested cities. Such was the meaning of the ukase uttered against the Jews in Russia, forcing them to live in the Pale settlement."²⁸

Russia confined Jews into a region in the western area of the empire known as the Pale of Settlement and initiated policies by edict (ukase) which impoverished much of the Jewish community there. The czar's government was inherently antisemitic. The back-to-the soil movement developed in Russia during the nineteenth century, then grew after the rise of antisemitism following the 1881 assassination of Czar Alexander II, and spread to Palestine, Argentina, and the United States. The wave of interest included the *Am Olam* (Eternal People) movement. These forces led to the creation of agricultural settlements in, for example, New Odessa near Portland, Oregon; Happyville in Aiken, South Carolina; Sicely Island, Louisiana; Crimea in South Dakota; Cotopaxi, Colorado; and other colonies. Krauskopf was very involved with the Clarion Jewish Agriculture and Colonization Colony in Utah, and his hope was to expand colonization through his efforts in other states.²⁹

Krauskopf's emphasis on the training of orphans also fit within his milieu. Founded in 1854, the Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans emphasized manual training for its wards. In 1903 the Isadore Newman Manual Training School began to help educate the orphans and prepare them to become self-sufficient adults.³⁰ Manual training, especially of

²⁸ "Rabbi Krauskopf's Work," *Savannah Morning News*, March 2, 1896.

²⁹ The New Jersey colonies numbered among the very few successes. Most colonies died within a short time because of the lack of agricultural experience of the participants. See, for example, Leo Shpall, "Jewish Agricultural Colonies in the United States," *Agricultural History* 24 (July 1950): 120–46; Ellen Eisenberg, *Jewish Agricultural Colonies in New Jersey, 1882–1920* (Syracuse, NY, 1995); Arnold Shankman, "Happyville: The Forgotten Colony," *American Jewish Archives* 30 (April 1978): 3–19; Max Rosenthal, "Agricultural Colonies in the United States," *Jewish Encyclopedia*, accessed June 30, 2026, <https://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/909-agricultural-colonies-in-the-united-states>.

³⁰ One of many throughout the country, the Hebrew Orphans Home of Atlanta opened in 1887. The Atlanta chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women, which welcomed and supported Krauskopf, contributed regularly to the orphanage. Ultimately, many of the Jewish orphanages came under the auspices of B'nai B'rith. See Wendy Besmann, "The 'Typical Kid Overachievers': Instilling a Success Ethic in the Jewish Children's Home of New Orleans," *Southern Jewish History* 8 (2005): 121–59; Marlene Trestman, *Most Fortunate Unfortunates: The Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans* (Baton Rouge, 2023); Reena Sigman Friedman, *These*

orphans, fit well within the Progressive movement. Thus, the rabbi's emphasis on orphans, farming, and manual training followed national and international trends.

The venues for Krauskopf's talks varied as did the benefits. As has been shown, many of these were the elite German Jewish social organizations, and almost all were Reform temples.³¹ He even delivered a discourse at the First Baptist Church in Huntsville, Alabama. "The lecture of Rev. Jos. Krauskopf at the first Baptist church . . . for the benefit of the 'National Farm School' was attended by a large and appreciative audience which was more cosmopolitan in its character than any which ever before listened to a speaker in our city. The lecture was entitled 'Only a Jew.'" He lectured in Vicksburg under the auspices of the B'nai B'rith Literary Association. In New Orleans, "Joseph Krauslopf will deliver a lecture in this city on Friday, March 6th. This will be one of a series of lectures the eminent Rabbi is delivering throughout the South, to benefit the National Farm School Fund, and he expects to realize \$2,000 through this tour, which, with the amount already subscribed will make about \$16,000." In Chattanooga, Krauskopf addressed the crowd at Concordia Hall. Ochs's newspaper reported, "The presence of Isaac M. Wise distinguished this visit and the funds raised at this event were distributed between the National Farm School and the local Jewish cemetery."³² Beyond the financial proceeds, Krauskopf described other benefits:

I have just come from Atlanta. . . . Mr. Landauer of the Southern agricultural works, in Atlanta, has offered to furnish the school with all the plows of every description, and the two Atlanta furniture companies, The Southern and the

are Our Children: Jewish Orphanages in the United States, 1880–1925 (Waltham, MA, 1994); Caroline E. Light, *That Pride of Race and Character: The Roots of Jewish Benevolence in the Jim Crow South* (New York, 2014).

³¹ "Count Tolstoi, Philosopher," *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis, TN), February 24, 1896; "National Farm School: Interest in the Enterprise Awakened by Dr. Krauskopf's Visit," *Nashville Banner*, February 24, 1896; "Count Tolstoi," *The Courier-Journal* (Louisville, KY), February 20, 1896; "Savannah," *American Israelite*, February 27, 1896; "Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf: Philadelphia's Learned Rabbi to Lecture in Atlanta," *Atlanta Constitution*, February 17, 1896; "Dr. Krauskopf on Tolstoy," *Montgomery Advertiser*, March 5, 1896; "Dallas, Tex.," *American Israelite*, March 26, 1896; "An Eloquent and Interesting Discourse," *Natchez Democrat*, March 10, 1896.

³² "Huntsville, Ala.," *American Israelite*, March 5, 1896; *Natchez Democrat*, March 10, 1896; *American Israelite*, February 27, 1896; "Only a Jew," *Chattanooga Times*, February 16, 1896.

*Venues where Joseph Krauskopf appeared on his Southern tour. CLOCKWISE:
McDonald's Opera House, Montgomery, AL. (Carolyn1414, CinemaTreasures.org.)
The Vine Street Temple, Nashville, TN. (Courtesy of the Annette Levy Ratkin Jewish
Community Archives, Jewish Federation of Greater Nashville.)
Grand Opera House, San Antonio, TX. (AR-X-016-I036,
Austin History Center, Austin Public Library.)
Temple B'nai Israel, Natchez, MS.
(Wikimedia Commons.)*

National, have offered to furnish three rooms. The Atlanta branch of the National Council of Jewish Women is going to make an aggregate contribution of money, and the young ladies of Atlanta are to get up a fair in aid of the school."³³

The *Atlanta Journal*, on February 28, 1896, ran a two-column article with a line drawing of Krauskopf and an impressive four-column wide illustration of "The Model School in Which Dr. Krauskopf is Interested." The newspaper observed, "The hall was filled with elegant and fashionable people and the tribute of applause given the lecturer showed the excellent impression he had created. . . . In the reception tendered the lecturer by the local chapter of the national council of Jewish women, a brilliant affair, the secretary [Hoke Smith, Secretary of the Interior and former governor]

*Sketch of the planned National Farm School campus, Atlanta Journal,
February 28, 1896. (Newspapers.com.)*

was a leading figure and an hour was spent most pleasantly in handshaking." In Savannah, the report glowed: "The lecture was one of the best that has been delivered in Savannah on any subject recently. It furnished food for thought, and gave a better idea of the character and purposes of Tolstoi than was possessed by the majority of the audience previously. . . . Dr. Krauskopf might be called a Tolstoi convert, from the fervor with which he indorses the teachings of the Russian apostle of reform."³⁴

The lecture in Montgomery, Alabama, like those in most of the cities where Krauskopf spoke, featured his "Russia speech":

³³ "Rabbi Krauskopf's Work," *Savannah Morning News*, March 2, 1896.

³⁴ *Atlanta Journal*, February 28, 1896; "Dr. Krauskopf on Tolstoi, the Apostle of Russia, Tonight," *Atlanta Journal*, February 27, 1896; "Russia's Model Apostle," *Savannah Morning News*, March 3, 1896.

Last night, while speaking of Count Tolstoi, the Russian Apostle, Rev. Dr. Krauskopf said that his audience was no doubt surprised to hear him speak in the same breath of Moses, of Jesus, of [Buddha] and of Tolstoi. Tolstoi is frowned upon by the mighty, ridiculed by the great and his society is questioned by many because he dons a peasant's attire, lives a peasant's life and does a peasant's work. In his deed and thoughts he belongs to that class of men who a thousand years ago were burned at the stake and who two thousand years ago were crucified. He renounced his princely estate like [Buddha], he associated with the lowly like Jesus, which proves him to be of that material of which reformers, redeemers, saviors and martyrs are made.³⁵

In San Antonio, he spoke again about "Tolstoy: The Apostle of Russia":

Men like Moses and Jesus, like Buddha and Tolstoi, come not as other great men come, to dazzle their brief moment, only to end, meteor-like, in nothingness. Neither do they come as comets come to sweep majestically through the universe their brief hour, and then to pass beyond the horizon of man's vision. They come like the planets. They come to stay and to shine forever. They diminish not in size nor lustre, though years pass into centuries, and centuries into millenniums. The texture of their nature is designed by the master worker, is spun and woven in divinity's workshop. It ages not. It lasts forever.³⁶

Krauskopf's trip to Russia, his meeting with Tolstoy, and his fascination with the author further places Krauskopf and his interested audiences as cosmopolitans.³⁷ Alongside the aforementioned drawings, the *Atlanta Journal* observed: "Rabbi Krauskopf of Philadelphia, well known throughout the nation as one of its most learned and eloquent divines, delivered a lecture last evening in the hall of the Concordia association on Tolstoi, the Apostle of Russia." The article continued:

It is safe to say that no man ever spoke to an audience in Atlanta who used the English language in any purer or more classic form. For more than an hour and a half the fascinating rabbi stood before the gathering, without notes, and delivered a discourse, which for intent and eloquence, has never been surpassed in this city.³⁸

³⁵ "Dr. Krauskopf on Tolstoi," *Montgomery Advertiser*, March 5, 1896.

³⁶ "The Apostle of Russia," *San Antonio Express-News*, March 13, 1896.

³⁷ In a different context, James Loeffler uses the term "rooted cosmopolitans," which can clearly apply to Krauskopf. James Loeffler, *Rooted Cosmopolitans: Jews and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, 2018).

³⁸ "Apostle of Russia," *Atlanta Journal*, February 28, 1896.

*Handbill advertising Krauskopf's
Tolstoy lecture, 1898.
(Courtesy of the Special
Collections Research Center,
Temple University Libraries,
Philadelphia.)*

Tolstoy's *War and Peace* was published in 1869 and *Anna Karenina* in 1878. Although controversial, these books were seen as masterpieces. Thus it was not surprising that the topic of Krauskopf's discourse was a crowd-pleaser. Although Tolstoy was nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature every year from 1902 to 1906 and the Nobel Peace Prize in 1901, 1903, and 1909, he "stated that he would decline if he were a winner."³⁹ Krauskopf's use of Tolstoy's name was in its celebrity; it reflected Krauskopf's idolization of Tolstoy and the cult of his celebrity. The fact that Krauskopf had actually met the famous author offered another draw for his audiences, who were thus exposed to great Russian literature.

The rabbi's visit to Russia and highlighting of Tolstoy provided the headline in almost every location. However, Krauskopf typically gave a second discourse if invited on the following day: "Only a Jew." Krauskopf stressed: "So strange is and has been the fate of the Jew. He is ever the

³⁹ "Nomination Archive, Lev Nikolaevich (Leo) Tolstoy," The Nobel Prize, accessed June 3, 2026, <https://www.nobelprize.org/nomination/archive/show.php?id=7378>.

simultaneously despised and dreaded and distinguished of mankind, ever at one and the same time the despised peddler, the courted Rothschild, the worshiped Jesus, ever simultaneously the scum, the sage, the savior among his fellowmen, ever at one and the same time despised for his meanness, lauded for his intellectual power, revered for his moral and spiritual grandeur." Krauskopf continued by responding to the charge of Jews as Christ-killers:

[T]hat Jews were first to believe in Him and to follow Him, and but for them, the world might never have had any knowledge of him. As to the crucifixion — distinguished historians, both Jewish and non-Jewish, have ere this shown that the Jews did not crucify Jesus, first, because the offense charged against Him was not punishable, according to the Jewish law, secondly, because the crucifixion was not a Jewish but a Roman mode of capital punishment, thirdly, because the Jew being at that time under Roman subjection, had no right to inflict capital punishment, fourthly, because the offense was not the Messiahship claim, but the kingship claim, which especially in those seditious times, was treason against Rome, and brought speedily a traitor's death upon the aspirant.⁴⁰

Krauskopf took it as his mission to advocate better interfaith relations and to overcome antisemitism. In 1900, he traveled to Oberammergau, Germany, where he observed the Passion Play. Returning home, he wrote a book exposing the antisemitism of the New Testament and explaining how the relationship between Jews and Christians is fraught with misunderstandings.

Homeward Bound

After his tour, a report on March 19, 1896, noted that Joseph Krauskopf arrived in Kansas City, the home of his first pulpit after ordination:

[Krauskopf arrived following] a four weeks' lecturing tour through the South in the interest of the National Farm School of Doylestown, near Philadelphia, of which project he is the originator. . . . The lecture tour was in the interest of the project, and added about \$2500 to the amount already raised, which makes a total of over \$16,500. About \$20,000 is needed to complete the buildings. There will be no lecture delivered in Kansas City, as Dr. Krauskopf is hurrying home

⁴⁰ "Eloquence and Wisdom: Rev. Dr. Joseph Krauskopf on 'Only a Jew,'" *Chattanooga Daily Times*, February 26, 1896.

to be ready for the opening of the school, which, it is expected, will take place April 1.⁴¹

When Krauskopf returned to Philadelphia, additional reports included:

The enterprise was made known throughout the South, and a large number of annual subscribers were secured. Several individuals offered to furnish additional rooms in the school, and to provide materials and implements. In Atlanta the National Council of Jewish Women promised to furnish the Dairy of the Model Farm. In Texas considerable land was given for the purpose of providing settlements for the graduates of the school. . . . As a result of Dr. Krauskopf's trip everything is now in readiness for the immediate prosecution of work on the farm.⁴²

The termination of the Southern trip did not end Krauskopf's Southern plan. To achieve his purpose he invited people from the South to visit the school. He sent personal invitations to give addresses at the school's ceremonies and events or for an opportunity to see the school in action, with students performing chores, the dairy in operation, the school buildings newly constructed, and more. Large donors from the South, like the Lasker family who donated a dormitory, received invitations to see how their magnanimous gifts were put to good use. Krauskopf wrote:

[M]embers of the Morris Lasker family, of Galveston, Texas, who, upon my reaching them, made a donation to THE NATIONAL FARM SCHOOL of the handsome sum of \$75,000, which is to be expended upon the erection of the much-needed Domestic Hall. You can readily realize how happy we all are, inasmuch as this is, by far, the largest donation that has as yet been made."⁴³

⁴¹ "Advice from a Jew Leader," *Kansas City Times*, March 19, 1896.

⁴² *American Israelite*, April 2, 1896.

⁴³ Joseph Krauskopf to Charles Kline, November 8, 1916, Krauskopf Papers, Temple University, box 4. Born in Polish Prussia in 1840, Morris Lasker emigrated to Norfolk, Virginia, at age sixteen. He peddled his way to Weatherford, Texas, where he became a store clerk in 1860. After fighting the Apache Indians and then for the Confederacy, he entered a series of business ventures before establishing the Lasker Real Estate Company and then entering into banking. He won election to the Texas Senate in 1895 and around 1906 purchased the Texas Star Flour Mill, besides investing in the cotton business and presiding over the Galveston Cotton Exchange. Natalie Ornish, "Morris Lasker: A Journey from Immigrant to Influential Investor," Handbook of Texas Online, accessed Jun 3, 2026, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/lasker-morris>; John Gunther, *Taken at the Flood: The Story of Albert D. Lasker* (New York, 1960).

That gift would be worth more than two million dollars in 2026.

Krauskopf created a national board at the school and involved members from across the United States. In 1898, two years after the opening of the school, six of the twenty-four members of the national auxiliary board were from the South, including S. Landauer from Georgia, Bernard Bernheim from Kentucky, Isidor Hershheim from Louisiana, Henry Frank from Mississippi, Benjamin Herman from Tennessee, and Alex Sanger from Texas.⁴⁴

According to the school's catalogue in 1898, fifteen pupils of the National Farm School were listed, four of whom—Raymond Clyde Becker and Isaac Kaufman from Pine Bluff, Arkansas; Frank Kerchersky from Atlanta; and Solomon Pizer from New Orleans—were from the South. This was significant in several ways. First, it demonstrated that the word about the school had and would spread. Second, it also was important for fundraising since it would be easy to return to these states to raise money when it could be shown that there would be a tangible difference in the careers of these young men. Further, this could impact the larger issue of scientific and practical farming in their home communities. Finally, this provided evidence of Krauskopf's philosophy of assisting immigrant boys and orphans. Of the students from the South, two were born in America, one in Russia, and one in Germany. Pizer came from the Jewish Orphans' Home in New Orleans.⁴⁵

This same catalogue dedicated five pages to "Extracts from Some of the Many Letters Received." The Hon. Andrew D. White, U.S. ambassador to Germany, was included. When White served as the U.S. ambassador to Russia, he had arranged for Krauskopf to meet with Tolstoy. Extracts from letters of Southerners included those from the Rev. Dr. I. L. Leucht, New Orleans; the Rev. Dr. Adolph Moses, Louisville; Mr. S. Landauer, Atlanta; Mr. B. Bernheim, Louisville; Mr. Isidor Hershheim, New Orleans; Sanger Bros., Dallas; and Mr. Michael Heymann, superintendent of the Jewish Orphans' Home, New Orleans.⁴⁶

Annual reports and school catalogues included fundraising results. For example, in 1898 a list appeared of founders of the National Farm

⁴⁴ *Catalogue of the National Farm School* (Philadelphia, 1898), 1, DVU Archives, accessed June 3, 2026, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/community.29997080.pdf>.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 16–20.

*The original farm of the National Farm School, 1897.
(Courtesy of Delaware Valley University Archives.)*

*Main Building, National Farm School.
(Courtesy of Delaware Valley University Archives.)*

School, which would have been a result of Krauskopf's travels and fundraising in 1896. The list included five founders from Alabama, two from Arkansas, one from Florida, twenty-one from Georgia, nine from Kentucky, five from Louisiana, six from Mississippi, one from South Carolina, forty-seven from Tennessee, twenty-one from Texas, four from Virginia, and two from West Virginia. In 1900, B. Bernheim and J. W. Bernheim, Southern philanthropists and bourbon distillers and distributors, provided the biggest gifts from the South at fifty dollars each, and one contributor from San Antonio and one from Memphis numbered among large donors at twenty-five dollars each. Small gifts came from Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Tennessee, with Arkansas, Alabama, and Texas showing the most support.⁴⁷

During the next decade, the pool of donors grew significantly. The November 1911 annual report of the National Farm School listed the auxiliary board members from the South: Henry Beer, New Orleans; I. W. Bernheim, Louisville; Henry Frank, Natchez; M. Horkheimer, Wheeling; E. Raab, Richmond; Edw. E. Richards, Mobile; Alex Sanger, Dallas; and David Sternberg, Memphis.⁴⁸ For the year ending September 30, 1911, the following cities with donors were included: Alexander City, Birmingham, Gadsden, Huntsville, Mobile (including the Council of Jewish Women), Montgomery, Uniontown, and Wetumpka in Alabama; Helena, Huntingdon, and Little Rock in Arkansas; Jacksonville, Miami, and Pensacola in Florida; Albany, Atlanta, Dublin, Eastman, Sandersville, Savannah, and West Point in Georgia; Brookhaven, Koskiusko, Meridian, Natchez, and Vicksburg in Mississippi; Florence and Rock Hill in South Carolina; Clarksville, Knoxville, Memphis, and Nashville in Tennessee; and Beaumont, Big Spring, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Galveston, Midland, Mineola, Palestine, San Antonio, and Victoria in Texas. Donor "members" in the South reached a high that year of 120.⁴⁹ These lists illustrate that Krauskopf's broad support went beyond just a few cities.

Avoiding controversies that plagued the South and Jews in the region (as well as the nation), Krauskopf did not focus heavily on other

⁴⁷ Ibid., 24–31, 32–38.

⁴⁸ *Fourteenth Annual Report of the National Farm School* (Bucks County, PA, 1911), 3, DVU Archives, accessed June 3, 2026, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/community.29997094.pdf>.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 70–79.

issues of the day like race, segregation, and lynching while on his tour in the South. This is certainly not to suggest that Krauskopf was unaware or uninvolved in these issues, but he likely concluded that it would be imprudent to address them in the context of fundraising. Tensions about race were high at this moment in American history. In the landmark *Plessy v. Ferguson* case (1898), the Supreme Court ruled that racial segregation did not violate the U.S. Constitution, paving the way for the implementation of Jim Crow segregation throughout the South.

Later Krauskopf spoke out, especially as the politics of race sharpened. He invited Booker T. Washington of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in Alabama to be present at the National Farm School to deliver an address in 1907. Washington declined the invitation but wrote, "I nevertheless appreciate the invitation, and it may be that another year if it should be agreeable, I could favorably consider the suggestion."⁵⁰ Both men came to similar conclusions at about the same time regarding the importance of practical and scientific education and served parallel functions in their communities. Their schools grew out of a belief in the value of manual labor and were dedicated to social uplift. Julius Rosenwald, who funded education for Black children throughout the South and supported Washington, did not fund the National Farm School. Rosenwald was a congregant of Emil Hirsch in Chicago, and Krauskopf and Hirsch had a complicated and uneasy relationship that may at least partly explain Rosenwald's failure to contribute to Krauskopf's school.

The Fifth Annual Conference of the NAACP, April 23–25, 1913, was held at Krauskopf's synagogue, Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, and Krauskopf gave an address at the first session.⁵¹ Substantial correspondence exists between Krauskopf and individuals and organizations relating to Black rights, illustrating that the rabbi was an active supporter of their causes. The corresponding secretary of the Philadelphia branch of the Afro-American Council wrote to him, "I had the pleasure of listening to your eloquent sermon in behalf of the Negro delivered Easter Sunday morning. It was an eloquent, instructive and fairminded presentation of the subject and cannot fail to do us much good." In another letter,

⁵⁰ Joseph Krauskopf and Booker T. Washington correspondence, April 22, 1907, Krauskopf Papers, Temple University, box 32.

⁵¹ "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People," *The Crisis* 6 (June 1913): 86.

contradicting the views of Mr. S. H. Rubel of Corinth, Mississippi, Krauskopf declared:

I plead for human rights, irrespective of race or creed or color. I plead for the up-holding of the Constitution and By-laws of the United States, which guarantee unto the negro his full rights. It is true that crimes are committed by others, and wrongs are done, and have been done, in the North, but no less true is it that I have attacked these as strongly in other discourses of mine, as I attacked, in the discourse of which you speak, the wrongs done to the negro.⁵²

In all of his discourses and his extant letters, Krauskopf remained consistent in this view. And in a discourse on April 16, 1916, Krauskopf unequivocally declared, "The white man cannot or will not see that the root of the evil is in the white man's brain, and not in the colored man's skin."⁵³

Conclusion

This quotation from Isaiah 11:4 graces the cover of the catalogue of the National Farm School in 1898: "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks." The use of this passage was consistent with Krauskopf's focus on building community and cooperation. He made each stop in the South more important by creating interconnectedness among the cities he visited. Distinctive connections were nurtured as Krauskopf traveled among cities, as, for example, Natchez knew what Chattanooga was experiencing and a stronger connection and regional identity grew. Positive media coverage provided a dividend. A sense grew of being part of something bigger than their own city; each city knew where Krauskopf had been as part of his roadmap, and each was connected to the others because of it. Southern—and American—Jewry constituted a more cohesive community as a result. Krauskopf may not have initiated this, but he was instrumental in defining and underlining it. The Southern tour was specifically aided by Southern Jews who extended invitations and courtesies to Krauskopf. With the tour, regional consciousness continued to grow. Yet, Jews in the

⁵² Mrs. B.F. Mossell to Joseph Krauskopf, April 17, 1900, and Joseph Krauskopf to Mr. S.H. Rubel, May 5, 1916, Krauskopf Papers, Temple University, box 26.

⁵³ "Americanism Waning, Declares The American Negro," discourse by Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf, 151, Series 29, No. 21, Krauskopf Files, KI. This is a sermon, but Krauskopf called them discourses. Many were printed and distributed. The KI Archives holds the full collection of Krauskopf discourses, many of which can be found in other archives as well.

*National Farm School course of study, 1900–1901.
(Courtesy of Delaware Valley University Archives.)*

South were also aware of the rabbi's initial tour in the West, and they contributed and participated in a national effort headquartered in Pennsylvania. The National Farm School and Krauskopf's outreach thus fostered regionalism within a national model.

Part of his intention, and certainly a result of his tour, was Krauskopf's adherence to the ancient Jewish tradition of self-help. He would have been well acquainted with Leviticus 19:9-10: "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges (*pe'ah*) of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and the stranger." Krauskopf was intensely aware of Judaism's history of social welfare and self-reliance. And so here is a central question: Why would Jews in Natchez, Mississippi, care about a farm school in rural Doylestown, Pennsylvania? Why would Jews in Chattanooga, Tennessee care? Why would any Jews in the Southern states bother to care or to give to this cause?

The answer is complex. Krauskopf felt it was the communal responsibility of taking care of the Jewish poor in America that could ameliorate the possibilities of increasing antisemitism. His actions in the South, and the creation of the National Farm School, were viewed as a shield against the expansion of antisemitism in America. Krauskopf's school was not the first and foremost cause of the German Jews to whom he directed his fundraising, but, as with many causes, the giving felt good, and there was that implicit promise that it would head off an increasing problem. Even without the threat of antisemitism, Jews in the South and throughout the country felt a responsibility to help Jews in need in America and overseas. This may be attributed to a mixture of Jewish values and religious and ethnic identity.

Krauskopf was a master networker and an avid letter-writer.⁵⁴ Always strategic, he knew that by keeping in touch he and his school would reap the benefits. That the rabbi continued to maintain personal relationships and connections in the South throughout his life shows how Southern Jews were a consistent part of the support system for the National Farm School. Moreover, the donors felt a connection with his words and mission. Krauskopf stayed in touch, and his gratitude was palpable. The South was an essential part of the religious, social, and economic network that helped build the National Farm School.

From a broader perspective, Krauskopf's fundraising travels mirrored those who travelled from Europe, the Holy Land, and within the United States during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to raise funds for *yeshivot* and Jews in need. His efforts for the farm school also presaged

⁵⁴ Krauskopf Papers, Temple University, Series 2.

fundraising for Brandeis University, a secular school founded in 1948, sponsored by the Jewish community with significant support from Jews in the South. Itinerant fundraisers and national and international fundraising efforts served as mechanisms for interconnectivity, communications, and an alternative form of Jewish group identity.