

Weil, Solomon ^[1]

Weil, Solomon

by Ellen-Fairbanks Diggs Bodman, 1996

7 Jan. 1849–27 Sept. 1914

Solomon Weil, merchant and religious leader, was born in Oberdorf, Württemberg, Germany, the youngest son of Jacob and Yetta Weil. Educated in public schools in Oberdorf and nearby Bopfingen, he emigrated to the United States in 1865 and joined his older brothers Herman and [Henry](#) ^[2] as a partner in the firm of H. Weil & Bros. in Goldsboro in 1866. On 5 May 1875 he married Sarah Einstein (18 May 1859–11 Nov. 1928) of Boston and took his bride to a spacious new home in Goldsboro, a house identical in architecture to that of his brother Henry and built on the adjoining lot. Solomon and Sarah had three children: Edna (Mrs. Adolph Oettinger, 3 Feb. 1876–8 Feb. 1958), Lionel (1 Sept. 1877–11 Feb. 1948), and Helene (Mrs. Leon Strauss, 8 July 1884–31 May 1935).

In 1883 Solomon Weil helped organize the Oheb Sholom Congregation, of which he became treasurer; he then planned the building of the synagogue, completed in 1886. For many years he was a trustee and benefactor of the Hebrew Orphan Home in Atlanta, Ga., and served as president of the southeastern district of B'nai B'rith.

Elected alderman in May 1881, he was an energetic promoter of civic and community improvements, keeping a canny eye on the sound fiscal policies of the growing municipality of Goldsboro. He and his brother Henry marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of H. Weil & Bros. in 1890 by donating Herman Park to the city in memory of their older brother. Solomon celebrated his sixtieth birthday in 1909 by presenting \$5,000 to the Goldsboro Hospital Association to start a successful fund drive for building the Goldsboro Hospital. A [Democrat](#) ^[3], Solomon was more interested in local than in state and national politics.

He shared his love of travel, art, and books with his wife Sarah, who had started a Woman's Club library in Goldsboro. After his death, the Weil family founded and endowed the Weil Lectures on American Citizenship at [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[4] in memory of Henry and Solomon. His home was donated to the city for a public library in 1929 as a memorial to Solomon and Sarah.

Each year in late summer the Weils vacationed in New Hampshire to escape the hay fever season in the South. Solomon died in Fabyans, N.H., just six weeks after the death of his brother Henry. He was buried in Willow Dale Cemetery, Goldsboro.

References:

Bob Johnson and Charles S. Norwood, eds., *A History of Wayne County, North Carolina* (1979).

North Carolina Biography, vols. 4 (1941), 6 (1919).

Raleigh News and Observer, 28 Sept. 1914.

Moses Rountree, *Strangers in the Land* (1969).

Additional Resources:

Weil Family Papers, 1860s-1983 (collection no. 04696). The Southern Historical Collection. Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/w/Weil_Family.html ^[5] (accessed July 12, 2013).

View, Solomon Weil House, Goldsboro, Wayne County, North Carolina. Preservation North Carolina, NCSU Libraries: <http://d.lib.ncsu.edu/collections/catalog/bh2115pnc001> ^[6]

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