

Simon C Greenbaum

Simon C Greenbaum was born about 1847 in Poland. He was a glazier and immigrated at age 17, sailing from London to New York on the *American Eagle* and arriving on 3 October 1860.¹ In 1863, he registered for the Civil War draft in Marysville, Yuba, California, when he claimed no US citizenship.² In 1870, he was a glazier, living in Virginia City, Storey, Nevada.³ He married Ernestine M Lachman about 1875 in Utah Territory; they had four children.

By 1879, Simon was in Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory, where he ran a general merchandise store that sold wallpaper, cigars, liquor and groceries.⁴ On the 1880 census, Simon was a grocer, living with his wife and two children in Silver Reef.⁵ His family was one of the few Jewish families living in Silver Reef.⁶ Simon and Walk Riche had a boxing match which started in the best of spirits and then Simon got mad and “planted a regular old sidewinder into Walk’s starboard ribs”. Walk retaliated by “catching Greenbaum alongside of the jaw with such force that he upset a barrel of ‘rock and rye’, a case of beer and six dozen boxes of cigars. He picked himself up, ejected two front teeth in a mouthful of blood, and said meekly: ‘Walk, I didn’t tought you vas mad; I tought you vas fooling.’”⁷

Simon’s store was located on the east side of Main Street, next to the store of Wolf & Jordan. In February 1881, Simon and John E Lloyd (known as Sailor Jack) acquired a key from Mr Johnson for the graveyard. They told him they wanted to pull weeds from the grave of Simon’s baby. Simon put a pistol to Lloyd’s head and told him his plan to set fire to the business section of town to obtain his insurance money. They left the graveyard and returned the key to Johnson. Later, Lloyd tried to tell the deputy sheriff Hoag but he didn’t believe him. Lloyd then talked to Cliff Wilson and reported the plan to Captain Henry S Lubbock.⁸

Eventually Simon was arrested, placed in jail, and examined in court. Gibson Clark was the prosecuting attorney. Simon claimed it was a “put up job” but it appeared that most of his valuable goods had been removed from the store to places of safety.⁹ The defense tried to impeach the star witness, Sailor Jack, but was unsuccessful. Simon was held on bail for \$2500. Deputy sheriff Hoag took him to St George by stage.¹⁰

“Hundreds visited the scene last evening and saw in a narrow place between his store and that of Wolf & Jordan, about three feet wide, a large pile of find cedar wood and bark, a box filled with wood fiber packing, and a candle ready for lighting. Close by were two 5-gallon cans of kerosene with stoppers out.”¹¹ It was described as “one of the most heartless, coldblooded attempts at crime that ever come to public knowledge, for there were sick and helpless people in the block, and families living close by, some of whom would have perished in the fire, and half a million of property been destroyed and scores of families left homeless. Only the thought of his wife and children prevented

¹ New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957.

² US Civil War Draft Registrations Records, 1863-1865.

³ United States Census, 1870.

⁴ *Silver Reef Miner*, 1 October 1879, p. 3; Utah Directory and Gazetteer for 1879-1880, p. 386.

⁵ United States Census, 1880.

⁶ Mormonsandjews.org/history/Utah_jewish_history.htm

⁷ *Pioche Weekly Record*, 30 October 1880, p. 3.

⁸ *Salt Lake Herald*, 15 June 1881, p. 1; 1 July 1881, p. 8; *Silver, Sinners and Saints*, by Proctor and Shirts, 1991, pp. 128-131.

⁹ *Salt Lake Herald*, 18 June 1881, p. 8.

¹⁰ *Salt Lake Herald*, 18 September 1881.

¹¹ *Salt Lake Herald*, 18 June 1881, p. 8.

his lynching.¹² Mrs Greenbaum offered her desirable residence, household and kitchen furniture for sale at a bargain.¹³ It appears they moved to California.

Simon died 1 June 1886 and was buried in the Hills of Eternity Memorial Park, Colma, San Mateo, California. The *Santa Cruz Sentinel* reported from San Francisco: "The body of S Greenbaum, cleaner and dyer, who had a place of business at the rear of 1946 Folsom Street, was recovered from the bay off Mason Street wharf. He had evidently jumped overboard with suicidal intent, and from appearances the body must have been in the water two days."¹⁴ Ernestine died in 1904 in California and was buried beside her husband.¹⁵

JUST RECEIVED!

—BY—

GREENBAUM

...A FINE LOT OF...

Wall Paper

—AND—

Borders.

HAVANA CIGARS

....AND THE.....

BEST LIQUORS

To be had in Town at a Bit a Drink

Also a good Supply of

FAMILY GROCERIES

He is Going Out of the Clothing Business and is selling his stock below cost.

FRESH BUTTER & EGGS AT ALL TIMES.

Remember this place sells cheaper than any other house.

(Image from the *Silver Reef Miner*, 1 October 1879, p. 3)

¹² *Salt Lake Herald*, 18 June 1881, p. 8.

¹³ *Salt Lake Herald*, 18 September 1881

¹⁴ *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, 6 June 1886, p. 3; *Record-Union*, 3 June 1866, p. 4.

¹⁵ JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry; *Findagrave.com*



(Image from *Findagrave.com*)