



Samuel Saltzman was born in a small village named Kurow in Poland. Here he grew up, was given a limited education, and at age 13 apprenticed to the tailoring trade.

Life in rural Poland was harsh at that time, and the Jewish tailor's apprentice decided to move to Warsaw about 150 miles distant. Conditions in the city were little better however, and with a friend he decided to travel to England. The two young men arrived in London virtually penniless (they were robbed on the wharf), urgently in need of work, and quite ignorant of the English language.

To obtain employment they later moved on to New York. Mr Saltzman's early companion is reported to have made for California and become a millionaire in the motion picture industry.

Although by this time Saltzman had accumulated a sound training in his trade (he was specialising in women's tailoring) Saltzman found the work was becoming seasonal. It was during this period that he moved across the continent finally reaching California. From there he sailed for New Zealand after reading after reading a favourable newspaper story about this country. He landed in Wellington with little in his possession but within a few hours had found himself a position with a leading firm. He then took a trip to Australia but did not find the country to his liking and returned to New Zealand.

Subsequently he worked in various areas in the North Island and then moved south to Christchurch where he established a business of his own with a capital of 20 pounds. He later decided there were better prospects for tailor in Greymouth, so he went there, arriving almost penniless, but this time he began to prosper. On a visit to Dunedin he made a sudden decision he made a sudden decision to start a women's tailoring business in this city and he remained there for the rest of his life.

He was a man who had known great poverty and realising its implications became one of New Zealand's leading philanthropists. During his lifetime he is known to have contributed more than 35,000 pounds to humanitarian causes, building hospitals, clinics, health camps, a sanatorium, a tuberculosis block at Balclutha, the St. John Ambulance building in Dunedin, and a small settlement in Israel. He was recognised in the New Years' Honours List in 1939 with an O.B.E.

Mr Saltzman was not a man to seek publicity and besides his public benefactions there are many who may have well benefitted from his private generosity. During the years of the Great Depression, for example, he gave a total of 1,000 bags of coal for distribution, and anonymously paid for groceries.

"When I sat in my easy chair beside the fire in the winter time in those years," he told a Daily Times reporter, "I had to do something so that others could share the comfort". It was his philosophy that not all are called to serve humanity in the same capacity, but must make the best use of their talents: to some it is given to serve on civic bodies or in parliament, others again can serve in professional capacities. "I have only served in the way it has been possible for me to help".

Samuel Saltzman died in Dunedin Public Hospital on 22 June 1963 as a result of injuries received when he was knocked down by a car while crossing Great King Street. He was unmarried and lived at the Leviathan Hotel, and was survived by a brother Leon of Wellington. He is buried in Dunedin's Southern Cemetery Jewish Section.