

= 280  
. J5 H9  
Copy 1

THE JEWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA FROM THE  
EARLIEST SETTLEMENT TO THE END  
OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

BY  
LEON HÜHNER, A. M., LL. B.,  
*New York City.*

---

Reprinted from THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY, No. 12.

---

*The Lord Baltimore Press*  
THE FRIEDENWALD COMPANY  
BALTIMORE, MD., U. S. A.

Gift  
Author  
(Person)

17 My '05

THE JEWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA FROM THE  
EARLIEST SETTLEMENT TO THE END  
OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.\*

BY LEON HÜHNER, A. M., LL. B., *New York City.*

The immense stretch of land known as South Carolina had been donated by the English Crown in 1663 to a number of noblemen, the ablest of whom was Lord Ashley Cooper afterward the famous Earl of Shaftesbury. These men were given absolutely sovereign powers. No authority was retained by the Crown but a barren allegiance. The country was at the time comparatively devoid of population and the first orders given by the proprietors to their agent, Sir William Berkeley were "to get settlers as cheaply as possible, yet at any rate to get settlers."<sup>1</sup>

It was doubtless with this in view, that the Lords proprietaries from the start made the most liberal provisions for religious liberty in their domain. On August 25, 1665, they issued "A Declaration and Proposealls to all y<sup>t</sup> will plant in Carrolina." Article 5 of these proposals is as follows: "We will grante in as ample man<sup>r</sup> as ye Undertakers shall desire freedomes and libertye of contience in all religious or spirrituall things and to be kept inviolably wth them, we haveing power in or Charter soe to doe."<sup>2</sup>

\* This paper was read before the Society in 1899.

<sup>1</sup> George Bancroft, "History of the United States," N. Y., 1886, Vol. I, pp. 408-9.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. 2 of South Carolina Papers in Bancroft Collection of MSS. at the Lenox Library, New York [State Paper Off. No. Carolina B. J.] p. 1. The writer was permitted to peruse this valuable MSS. collection through the courtesy of Mr. Eames, the Librarian.

About 1665, Sir John Yeamans was appointed Governor. This gentleman had resided at Barbados for many years and in the autumn of 1665, he conducted a band of emigrants from there to the new plantation. Trade with Barbados began to flourish and by 1666, the plantation contained 800 souls.<sup>3</sup> In 1671, additional settlers were brought over by Yeamans and shortly afterward arrivals from Bermuda and the West Indies are mentioned.

It is more than likely that Governor Yeamans brought a number of Jews with him on both occasions, though historians have heretofore fixed the date of the arrival of Jews in Carolina between 1740 and 1750, i. e., almost a century later.<sup>4</sup> The trade advantages offered by the new plantation would in themselves have been a sufficient attraction, nor must it be forgotten that Barbados at this time contained a large number of Jewish merchants, a fact which is conclusively established.

Thus in 1660 at the Restoration of King Charles II., a movement was started in England to expel the Jews who had been admitted by Cromwell. Numerous pamphlets were circulated by the advocates of bigotry and one by Thomas Violet who had been a customs official under Charles I., is entitled "A Petition against the Jews presented to the King's Majesty and the Parliament." Among other reasons against allowing Jews in the realm, Violet gives the following: "That it would be to the great damage of our merchants whose trade they engross and eat the childrens' bread and *in the Barbados they do so swarm* that had no care been taken to banish them, in twenty years they would eat out the English, but by the care of this blessed Parliament, they are within a year to be banished thence."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Bancroft's "History of the United States," Vol. I, pp. 411-12.

<sup>4</sup> Charles P. Daly, "Settlement of the Jews in North America," N. Y., 1893, pp. 70, 75. Isaac Markens, "The Hebrews in America," New York, 1888, p. 53. Also, *Occident*, Vol. I, pp. 337, etc.

<sup>5</sup> This rare publication may be found at the Astor Library, New York.

The threatened expulsion, however, did not take place, for Oldmixon's *History of Barbados* published in 1708 mentions the Jews as a numerous class.<sup>6</sup> It appears therefore that they existed in considerable numbers, and the agitation above referred to may well have induced many of them to follow Yeamans to South Carolina, especially as they knew Yeamans, he having lived among them.

An important document in Carolina history also lends support to this theory. Shortly after the arrival of the settlers from Barbados, Shaftesbury in England applied to John Locke, the celebrated philosopher, to draw up a Constitution or plan of Government for the Province.<sup>7</sup> Locke's Constitution was drawn up accordingly and signed in 1669. The country was ridiculously divided up into signories, baronies and manors; high sounding titles were created and a complicated system of aristocratic government devised. The only features of the Constitution that interest us however, are the broad provisions for religious liberty therein contained.

In considering these, we must bear in mind that Locke may have been informed of the presence of Jews in the province or at least of the likelihood of their coming there from the West Indies, especially as the proprietors were anxious to procure settlers. He had also witnessed the agitation against the Jews in England. Be that as it may, Locke certainly anticipated that Jews would be among the earliest settlers and therefore especially provided for them in his system of Government.

Article 97 of his Constitution reads as follows: "But since the natives of that place who will be concerned in our plantation are utterly strangers to Christianity, whose idolatry, ignorance and mistake gives us no right to expel or use them ill and those who remove from other parts to plant there will unavoidably be of different opinion concerning matters of

<sup>6</sup> J. Oldmixon, "*History of Barbados*," 1708, p. 113.

<sup>7</sup> Bancroft's "*History of the United States*," Vol. I, pp. 415-16.

religion, the liberty of which they will expect to have allowed them—and also that *Jews, heathens and other dissenters* from the purity of Christian religion may not be feared and kept at a distance from it—therefore any seven or more persons agreeing in any religion shall constitute a Church or profession to which they shall give some name to distinguish it from others.”<sup>8</sup>

Then follow provisions requiring all over seventeen to belong to some religion, and prohibitions against disturbing any kind of religious assembly or using reproachful or abusive language against any religion or molesting or persecuting another for his opinion in religion or his way of worship.<sup>9</sup> The liberality of these provisions must have afforded the Jews an additional inducement to settle in Carolina, and it is certain that they did settle there long before 1740.

In a curious little volume which the writer found at the Lenox Library entitled “A Peep into the Past by an Ancient Lady of Charleston,” it is stated that the name of Mordecai Nathan is mentioned in an Assessment of the Inhabitants of Charleston as early as 1694.<sup>10</sup> This is within a generation after the settlement of the town.

In 1695 reference is made to a Jew at Charleston in the report of Governor Archdale. After reciting how in that year some Yammasee Indians met some Spanish Indians and captured them “designing to sell them for slaves to Barbadoes or Jamaica as was usual,” he continues, “But I, understanding thereof sent for their King, and ordered him to bring these Indians with him to Charles-Town which accordingly he did. There were three men and one woman; they could

<sup>8</sup> “The First Set of the Fundamental Constitutions of South Carolina as compiled by Mr. John Locke,” reprinted in B. R. Carroll’s “Historical Collections of South Carolina,” N. Y., 1836, Vol. II, pp. 385, etc. See also Bancroft’s “History of the United States,” Vol. I, p. 417.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Articles CI to CVI.

<sup>10</sup> “A Peep into the Past by an Ancient Lady of Charleston,” Charleston, 1853, p. 26.



speak Spanish and *I had a Jew for an interpreter*, so upon examination, I found they profess'd the Christian religion as the Papists do; upon which I thought in a most peculiar manner, they ought to be freed from slavery; and thereupon ordered the King to carry them to Augustine."<sup>11</sup>

In 1702-3, Jews appear in numbers. At that time it was charged that illegal practices had been resorted to at the election.

From Oldmixon's account of this event, it seems that in spite of Locke's Constitution, Jews were nevertheless considered ineligible to vote, for he quotes from a "Representation" that "Jews, strangers, sailors, servants, negroes and almost every Frenchman in Craven and Berkeley Counties came down to elect and their votes were taken, and the persons by them voted for were returned by the Sheriffs."<sup>12</sup>

In 1735 the advertisements of Carvallo and Gutierrez appear in the *South Carolina Gazette*.<sup>13</sup>

In 1740-1 the Jewish population received a large accession from Georgia. The illiberal policy pursued in the latter Colony, induced all the original settlers with very few exceptions to remove to South Carolina.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> John Archdale, "A New Description of that Fertile and Pleasant Province of Carolina with a Brief Account of its Discovery and Settlement," London, 1707. Reprinted in B. R. Carroll's "Historical Collections of South Carolina," N. Y., 1836, Vol. II, p. 106.

<sup>12</sup> J. Oldmixon, "The History of Carolina," London, 1708. Reprinted in B. R. Carroll's "Historical Collections of South Carolina," Vol. II, p. 429. See also McCrady, "South Carolina under the Proprietary Government," p. 391.

<sup>13</sup> *South Carolina Gazette*, No. 64, April 12-19.

I am indebted for this item to Mrs. Lee C. Harby, of Charleston, who kindly sent it to me some years ago, though after this paper had been read.

<sup>14</sup> See "The Jews of Georgia in Colonial Times," by the present writer (*American Jewish Historical Publications*, No. 10, p. 65, *et seq.*), where all the authorities on this subject are collected.

Joseph Tobias appears in 1741 as a Jew naturalized under the Act of 1740.<sup>15</sup>

In 1750, the first synagogue was established at Charleston. It was a small wooden building on Union Street,<sup>16</sup> Isaac Da Costa was Minister, Joseph Tobias, President and among the residents at the time were Moses Cohen, Abraham Da Costa, Meshod Tobias, Moses Pimenta, David de Olivera, Mordecai Sheftall, Michael Lazarus and Abraham Nunes Cardozo.<sup>17</sup> They also established a Hebrew Benevolent Society which still exists.<sup>18</sup> In 1757 the Congregation removed to King Street, and in 1764 to another portion of the same street. From 1765-90, Abraham Alexander was Minister and Israel Joseph, President. Michael Lazarus was Secretary between 1750-80.<sup>19</sup>

The most prominent Jew during the colonial period was unquestionably Moses Lindo who became interested in the indigo industry of the colony and came from London to South Carolina in November, 1756.<sup>20</sup> He at once announced his intention of purchasing indigo for the foreign market and his advertisements appear frequently in the *South Carolina Gazette* for 1756.<sup>21</sup>

Lindo soon became a prominent merchant, and was subse-

<sup>15</sup> Dr. J. H. Hollander, "Naturalization under the Act of 1740," *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 5, p. 116.

<sup>16</sup> Nathaniel Levin, "The Congregation Beth Elohim," *Charleston Year Book*, 1883. "The Centennial of Incorporation," *Charleston Year Book*, 1883, p. 388. J. L. E. W. Shecut, "Topographical, Historical and other Sketches of Charleston," Charleston, 1819, pp. 28-30. Isaac Markens, "The Hebrews in America," p. 53.

<sup>17</sup> Nathaniel Levin, "The Congregation Beth Elohim," *Charleston Year Book*, 1883, p. 301.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 302.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Hon. N. Taylor Phillips, "History of David Mendez Machado," *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 2, p. 52.

<sup>21</sup> November 11, 18, 25, December 2, 9, 16, 1756. See p. 43, note 13.



quently appointed Surveyor and Inspector General of Indico, Drugs and Dyes for the Province.<sup>22</sup>

Jonas Phillips, subsequently the New York Revolutionary patriot, was brought over by Lindo in 1756 and for a time resided with him in Charleston.<sup>23</sup>

Lindo seems also to have been a man of scientific attainments and his experiments with American dyes commenced as early as 1757. In that connection he stood in correspondence with Emanuel Mendez da Costa, the Librarian of the Royal Society of London and one of the foremost naturalists of his day.<sup>24</sup>

During the entire colonial period, the Jews lived on terms of intimate friendship with their fellow citizens. William Gerard de Brahm writing to the King of England about 1772 mentions the Jews and their Synagogue with other denominations and concludes: "All which are composed of several nations, altho' differing in religious principles and in the knowledge of salvation, yet are far from being incouraged, or even inclining to that disorder which is so comon among

<sup>22</sup> Hon. N. Taylor Phillips in *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 2, p. 52. From an item in the *South Carolina Gazette*, March 15, 1773, it appears that Lindo had purchased a stone which he believed to be a topaz of immense size. This he sent to London by the Rt. Hon. Lord Charles Greville Montague to be presented to the Queen of England. See Note A, p. 43.

<sup>23</sup> Hon. N. Taylor Phillips in *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 2, p. 52. Lindo's certificate containing this information is dated July, 1773, and was accompanied by a letter from Joshua Hart, another Jew of Charleston. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>24</sup> *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, Vol. LIII, p. 238. Paper 37, "An account of a New Die from the Berries of a Weed in South Carolina." In a Letter from Mr. Moses Lindo, dated at Charleston, Sept. 2, 1763, to Mr. Emanuel Mendez da Costa, Librarian of the Royal Society. See also Dr. Moritz Kayserling: "Zur Geschichte der Jüdischen Aerzte," in *Frankl-Graetz Monatsschrift*, Leipzig, 1859, Vol. VIII, p. 165, to which Mr. George Kohut has also called attention.

men of contrary religious sentiments. . . . A society of men which in religion, government and negotiation avoids whatever can disturb peace and quietness will always grow and prosper; so will this City and province whose inhabitants was from its beginning renowned for tenderness towards each other and more so towards foreigners without regard or respect of nation or religion.”<sup>25</sup>

At the outbreak of the Revolution, South Carolina had a large proportion of Tories. In fact, it is stated that South Carolina did not lead but follow the American Revolution.<sup>26</sup> It is therefore significant that the great majority of the Jews of the Colony were on the patriot side.

On this subject it may be well to quote from the Sketch of Charleston, published by Dr. Shecut in 1819. “There can be no argument that goes more fully to illustrate the correct principles of our government than that of a reference to the Jews who have settled among us. . . . The Jews were the only settlers among those of the inhabitants of the new world whose religious principles differed from those of the inhabitants of the new. To shew the salutary effects of tolerance in points of religious faith, I will insert the following appropriate observations for which I am indebted to a learned member of their society: . . . . ‘When the War of the Revolution commenced, all of this nation who were in South Carolina able to bear arms, zealously joined their country’s martial ranks for the great but dubious contest. The prize to be acquired in the event of a successful issue, religious and political freedom, was great enough to induce the free offering of every patriotic exertion, and even of fortune and life in the undertaking. They, with the rest of their fellow citizens, shared in the privations and hardships of war, also

<sup>25</sup> “Documents connected with the History of South Carolina,” edited by Weston, London, 1856, pp. 195-196.

<sup>26</sup> John Drayton, “Memoirs of the American Revolution,” Charleston, 1821, Vol. 2, p. 89.

with them share the rich blessings of peace and freedom, the reward of their former sufferings.”<sup>27</sup>

Some of the Jews naturally gave financial aid to the Colony, some supplied the patriots with provisions at a time when the credit of the Colonies was at its lowest. Without going into detail, we need but mention in this connection Mordecai Sheftall who sometimes appears to belong to South Carolina but whose career properly belongs to the Revolutionary history of Georgia, Meyer Moses<sup>28</sup> and Mordecai Myers. The latter figures in the correspondence of General Marion, of Col. Horry and other prominent leaders.<sup>29</sup>

In most of the other Colonies, we find that Jews rendered their most effectual service to the patriot cause as financiers. In the South, however, and particularly in South Carolina, we must look for their services chiefly on the field of battle.<sup>30</sup>

The most prominent Jewish patriot at the outbreak of the struggle was beyond a doubt Francis Salvador, concerning whose life and patriotic services a separate paper has been heretofore prepared by the present writer and published by this Society.<sup>31</sup>

The Jews along with their fellow citizens joined the various

<sup>27</sup> J. L. E. Shecut, “Topographical, Historical and other Sketches of Charleston,” Charleston, 1819, p. 30.

<sup>28</sup> Meyer Moses was the maternal grandfather of Isaac Harby. See Isaac Harby, in *North American Review*, Vol. XXIII, p. 72.

<sup>29</sup> Robert Wilson Gibbes, “Documentary History of the American Revolution,” 1781-2, pp. 182-3. Also Vol. (1776-82), p. 246.

Mordecai Myers seems to have resided at Georgetown. His letters are dated from that place (*supra*). See also Heriot and Tucker’s Letter to Marion, “Col. Lushington has only delivered us Mordecai Myers’ & Cohen’s Accounts,” etc. (*supra*).

<sup>30</sup> In the War of Independence, numbers of Jews were enrolled in the Army of the Revolution.” Mayor Courtenay’s Centennial Address, Charleston Year Book, 1883, p. 388.

<sup>31</sup> Paper read in 1899. *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 9, pp. 107-122. Prior to the appearance of this sketch, Salvador’s career was entirely unknown to writers on American Jewish History.

militia organizations. One of the corps of volunteer infantry organized for the defence of Charleston is said to have been composed chiefly of Israelites.<sup>32</sup> In fact Dr. Fishell seems to intimate that it was organized by Jews.<sup>33</sup> Owing to the destruction of valuable records at the War Office at Washington in 1812, and in the Southern States during the Civil War, it is exceedingly difficult to get the names of members of this military body and information must be gathered indirectly from references rather than from records.

Mr. Kohler has heretofore called attention to Mr. Worthington's address in 1824 on behalf of the emancipation of the Jews in Maryland.<sup>34</sup> Speaking of the military achievements of the Jews during the Revolution, Worthington says: "There were many valuable members, officers principally in the Revolution, from the South chiefly who were nearly all cut off and destroyed early in the war. They were ever at their post and always foremost in hazardous enterprises. Col. Solomon Bush was a distinguished officer in the American Revolution, he died after the Revolution of the wounds which he had received."<sup>35</sup>

With regard to the volunteer company mentioned, Mr. Worthington must have had a complete list of the names before him in 1824 for in the address, he states: "Here is another paper which contains the names of a corps of volunteer infantry in Charleston, South Carolina, in February, 1779. It was composed chiefly of Israelites residing in King

<sup>32</sup> *Occident*, Vol. XVI, p. 142. See also Herbert B. Adams, "A Sketch of Haym Salomon from an Unpublished MS. in the Papers of Jared Sparks," *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 2, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 2, p. 99. See also *Historical Magazine*, Series I, Vol. IV, pp. 52-3.

<sup>34</sup> *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 4, p. 96.

<sup>35</sup> Speech of Col. J. W. D. Worthington, published with "Speeches on the Jew Bill," etc., by H. N. Brackenridge, Philadelphia, 1829, p. 115.

Street and was commanded by Capt. Lushington and afterwards fought under General Moultrie at the Battle of Beaufort.”<sup>36</sup> Solomon Etting of Baltimore writing in 1824 also makes reference to this body.

One of the first persons to be killed during the hostilities about Charleston, was the child of Meyer Moses, whose house was also burnt.<sup>37</sup> The Militia were forming themselves into volunteer uniform companies as early as 1775.<sup>38</sup> A King Street Company is also mentioned<sup>39</sup> and Capt. Lushington appears as a patriot officer between 1775 and 1781.<sup>40</sup> He is often mentioned in Marion’s correspondence and figures as an officeholder in Charleston subsequent to the Revolution.<sup>41</sup>

The importance of such a volunteer company amply appears from an address of the Senate in 1782, which reads: “We reflect with pleasure on the steady resolution with which Charleston was defended by a small body of brave men against such a vast superiority of force and we gratefully acknowledge the meritorious conduct and important services of the officers and privates of the militia who stood forth in the hour of danger. . . .”<sup>42</sup>

A few of the names of members of the King Street Company have been discovered by express reference made to them.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> “South Carolina in the Revolutionary War,” by A Southron (William Gilmore Simms), Charleston, 1853, p. 121.

<sup>38</sup> Moultrie’s “Memoirs of the American Revolution,” 1802, Vol. I, p. 57.

<sup>39</sup> “Kingstree (sic) Company.” Charleston Year Book, 1893, p. 225.

<sup>40</sup> “Lieut. Capt. Charleston Militia.” Journal Council of Safety, 22 Dec., 1775. Charleston Year Book, 1893, p. 232. Later on he appears as Col. R. Lushington. Gibbes’ “Documentary History of the American Revolution,” Vol. 1776-82, pp. 184, 245.

<sup>41</sup> Charleston Year Book, 1881, p. 367.

<sup>42</sup> Moultrie’s “Memoirs of the American Revolution,” Vol. II, p. 314.



Thus, in a letter to which Dr. Hollander has called attention written by Mr. Joshua I. Cohen to Jared Sparks, the writer says: "You will probably recollect a conversation I had with you many years ago during a visit to Cambridge, in which I mentioned to you that Judge Noah, of New York, was then engaged in gathering together the facts and memorials of the part which our people, the Israelites, took in the Revolutionary struggle. *I mentioned to you a militia company that was formed in Charleston, South Carolina, composed almost exclusively of Israelites of which my uncle was a member and which behaved well during the war.*"<sup>43</sup>

Mr. Kohler has heretofore also called attention to an article in the *Occident* which intimates that David N. Cardozo, Jacob I. Cohen and Isaiah Isaacs were members of the Company.<sup>44</sup> Jacob I. Cohen appears to have arrived in 1773. He served as a volunteer under Moultrie and Lincoln and throughout the entire campaign in the Carolinas.

"David Nunez Cardozo was a native of New York, but resided in Charleston for over sixty years. He was a subaltern officer in the Militia of South Carolina during the greater part of the revolution until made a prisoner of war in 1780. He was also attached to 'The Forlorn Hope' when the lines of Savannah were attacked by the combined forces of General Lincoln and Count D'Estaing."<sup>45</sup>

Isaac Harby writing in the beginning of the 19th century for the *North American Review* expressly states: "My maternal grandfather contributed pecuniary aid to South

<sup>43</sup> Dr. J. H. Hollander in *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 2, p. 5. Quite a few of the Jews who served in the Charleston Militia had come from other colonies during the war and did not originally belong to South Carolina.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 4, p. 96. *Occident*, Vol. XVI, p. 142.

<sup>45</sup> See inscription on his tombstone in Coming Street Burying Ground.



Carolina and particularly to Charleston when besieged by the British. My father-in-law was a brave grenadier in the regular American Army and fought and bled for the liberty he lived to enjoy. Numerous incidents of patriotism are recorded of such Israelites.”<sup>46</sup>

The maternal grandfather referred to was Meyer Moses, the father-in-law was Samuel Mordecai.

Manuel Mordecai Noah<sup>47</sup> and Isaac N. Cardozo appear likewise to have been patriot Jewish soldiers of Charleston.”<sup>48</sup>

The names of eleven Jewish soldiers appear in the petition to General Lincoln to which reference will be made hereafter.

The names of other Jewish patriots can also only be ascertained by scattered references. Thus, among those who took the oath of allegiance to Pennsylvania in 1782, we find the name of Abraham Seixas, “formerly an officer in the militia of Charlestown, South Carolina, lately arrived in this city.”<sup>49</sup>

This gentleman was Lieut. Seixas, a gallant officer who is also mentioned in the Lee papers. He had the entire confidence of General Lee and other prominent officers of the South. He was sent both by and to General Lee from Charleston to Georgia with military communications, an exceedingly hazardous task. In July 1776 Col. McIntosh mentions sending Lieut. Abraham Seixas to General Lee.”<sup>50</sup>

In Pulaski's regiment, mention is made of a French Jew, Major Benjamin Nones, who distinguished himself in 1779. The following testimonial written by Capt. Verdier in French is said to be still preserved by the family. It is dated

<sup>46</sup> *North American Review*, Vol. XXIII, p. 73.

<sup>47</sup> Hon. Simon Wolf, “Mordecai Manuel Noah,” Philadelphia, 1897.

<sup>48</sup> *Occident*, Vol. XVI, p. 142.

<sup>49</sup> Thompson Westcott, “Names of Persons who took the Oath of Allegiance to the State of Pennsylvania,” 1777-89 (Philadelphia, 1865), p. 23.

<sup>50</sup> *New York Historical Society Publications*. Vol. II of Lee Papers, pp. 168, 171.

Charleston, December, 1779, and reads: "It is but just that I should render an account of the conduct of those who have most distinguished themselves for bravery in the Legion. I take advantage of the occasion and with much pleasure of my capacity as Captain of Volunteers attached to the suite of General Pulaski to certify that Benjamin Nones has served as a volunteer in my Company during the campaign of this year and at the siege of Savannah, in Georgia, and his behavior under fire in all the bloody actions we fought, have been marked by the bravery and courage which a military man is expected to show for the liberties of his country and which acts of said Nones gained in his favor, the esteem of General Pulaski as well as that of the officers who witnessed his daring conduct."<sup>51</sup>

It is stated that Major Nones subsequently also served on the staff of both La Fayette and Washington.<sup>52</sup> In a letter written by him long afterward, to which Dr. Adler has heretofore called attention, he writes: "I have not been so proud or so prejudiced as to renounce the cause for which I have fought as an American throughout the whole of the Revolutionary War in the militia of Charleston, and in Polafkey's legion. I fought in almost every action which took place in Carolina and in the disastrous affair of Savannah shared the hardships of that sanguinary day."<sup>53</sup> Subsequently Major Nones became the President of the Philadelphia Congregation.<sup>54</sup>

All efforts by the patriots to save Charleston proved unavailing. When it became evident that further resistance would be hopeless and while negotiations for surrender were in progress, a petition was presented by the citizens of

<sup>51</sup> Markens, "The Hebrews in America," New York, 1888, p. 127.

<sup>52</sup> Markens, "The Hebrews in America," p. 126.

<sup>53</sup> Dr. Cyrus Adler, "A Political Document of the Year 1800," *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 1, p. 112.

<sup>54</sup> Rev. Dr. Sabato Morais, "The Congregation Mikveh Israel," *Ibid.*, p. 19.

Charleston to General Lincoln, dated May 10, 1780, reciting that "your petitioners understanding it is an indisputable proposition that they can derive no advantage by a perseverance in resistance, with every thing that is dear to them at stake, they think it their indispensable duty in this perilous situation of affairs to request your Honor will send out a flag in the name of the people intimating their acquiescence in the terms propounded."

This petition has about 300 signatures.

Among the Jewish signers are Js. Da Costa, Jr., Joseph De Palacios, Gershon Cohen, Joseph <sup>his</sup> יוסף <sub>mark</sub> Myers, Markes Lazarus, Solomon Aaron, Philip Minis, David Sarzedas, Meyer Moses, Joseph M. —, Abraham Moses, Jacob Henry, Joseph De Palacios, Joseph <sup>his</sup> <sub>mark</sub> <sup>+</sup> Solomons, Zadok Salomo, and the following pronouncedly Jewish names: Jacob Jacobs, Jacob Valk, Mark Morris, Joseph Phillips and Philip Hart.

Another petition to the same effect by *divers Country Militia* bears among others the signature of the following: Samuel Polak, Meyer Salomons, J. Cohen, Samuel Mordecai, Jacob Moses, Juda Abrahams, Moses Cohen, Philip Moses, Abraham Cohen, Barnard Moses, Jun<sup>r</sup>, and Philip Jacob Cohen,<sup>55</sup>

The city capitulated in 1780 and South Carolina was overrun by the British. During the period of the siege a Miss Samuells is frequently mentioned socially<sup>56</sup> but none of the references enable us to ascertain whether she was a Jewess.

<sup>55</sup> The original MS. petitions and signatures are in the possession of the Lenox Library, New York, Lincoln Papers, Emmet Collection. Transcripts made by Mr. V. Palsits were published with other interesting material in *Charleston Year Book*, 1897, pp. 394-408. The writer acknowledges the courtesy of Mr. Eames and Mr. Palsits, of the Lenox Library, for the perusal of the original MSS.

<sup>56</sup> Letters of Eliza Wilkinson during the Invasion and Possession of Charleston by the British, etc., arranged by Caroline Gilman, New York, 1839, pp. 22, 32, 46, 50, 54, 56, 64, 66, 68, 78, etc.

The siege had been anxiously watched by Jewish patriots in other colonies. Thus, several letters written by W. Croghan from Charleston during the siege, to Michael Gratz give a minute description of the enemy's preparations, of the siege and finally of the capitulation. From all of them it appears that Mr. Gratz was deeply interested and from one of the letters, it seems that a member of the Gratz family was also in South Carolina, at the time, for Croghan writes: "I am uncertain where your brother is, otherwise should write." All of Croghan's letters conclude with compliments for Mrs. and Miss Gratz.<sup>57</sup>

It may be interesting to note also that the distinguished General Gadsden, while confined in prison, after the capture of Charleston by the British and subsequently in prison at St. Augustine, learnt Hebrew. His son states that the General read the old testament in the original and received praise from Ezra Stiles for his proficiency.<sup>58</sup> It is more than likely that the general's teachers were Jewish fellow prisoners.

Some of the patriot soldiers appear frequently in Georgia as well as South Carolina. Thus, Mordecai Sheftall was Deputy Commissary General of Issues for South Carolina and Georgia. He certainly belonged to Charleston in 1750, but in reality his career belongs to the history of Georgia.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Robert Wilson Gibbes, "Documentary History of the American Revolution," Vol. (1776-82) 1857, pp. 129, 133, 134. These letters are both interesting and valuable.

<sup>58</sup> Bancroft MS. at Lenox Library, Vol. I (Misc. Notes), p. 481. The item is apparently in the handwriting of James Gadsden.

<sup>59</sup> *Journal of Congress*, October 28, 1778. Also Dr. Herbert Friedenwald's "Jews in the Journals of the Continental Congress," *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 1, p. 86. Also article by the present writer in *Jewish Comment*, Nov. 9 and 16, 1900.

To that colony also belong the records of Philip Minis and David Sarzedas though they also figure in South Carolina.<sup>60</sup>

Besides those already mentioned, some decidedly Jewish names appear in the ranks of South Carolina. Thus, a Joseph Goodman is mentioned as quartermaster.<sup>61</sup>

In April, 1782, General Greene writing to Col. Laurens on military affairs, adds: "I did not know until this morning that you had Major Moses' Command with you."<sup>62</sup>

Reuben Etting, another Jewish patriot, was so unfortunate as to be captured by the British at Charleston. It is related that when the British learned he was a Jew, they gave him nought but pork. He became so reduced by cruelty and starvation that though exchanged as soon as his condition was learned at headquarters, he died soon afterward.<sup>63</sup>

Under date May 18, 1781, Lieut.-Col. Moore wrote to General Greene from the "prison ship Torbay, Charles Town Harbor," enclosing a threatening letter which the British commandant circulated among the prisoners. "Should it fall to the lot of all or any of us," he writes, "to be made victims agreeable to the menaces therein contained, we have only to regret that our blood cannot be disposed of more to the advancement of the glorious cause to which we have adhered. A separate roll of our names attends this letter." In the roll of militia prisoners on board said ship, accompanying this letter, appear the following decidedly Jewish names, Samuel Ash, Jacob Cohen, Jacob Henry, Daniel Jacobs and

<sup>60</sup> "The Jews in Georgia in the American Revolution," by the present writer, read before the Society in 1901.

<sup>61</sup> Charleston Year Book, 1893, p. 230.

<sup>62</sup> Gibbes, "Documentary History of the American Revolution," (1776-82), p. 150.

<sup>63</sup> Dr. J. Solis Cohen in *Occident*, Vol. XVI, p. 364. See also *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 2, p. 66.



Philip Meyer.<sup>64</sup> Jacob Henry I believe to be the same person who, admittedly a Jew, subsequently became a member of the legislature of North Carolina.

Markens in his book on "Hebrews in America" mentions Jacob de la Motta and Jacob De Leon of Charleston as aides on DeKalb's staff, stating that when DeKalb fell at the battle of Camden, these gentlemen carried him from the field.<sup>65</sup> This statement, however, I have not been able to verify.

After the capitulation of Charleston, several Jews left at once for Philadelphia, the refuge of patriotic Americans in that day. Isaac Da Costa, who had been the Minister of the Charleston Congregation, and his son as well, are found there in 1782.<sup>66</sup> The elder Da Costa appears to have been proposed as Chairman of the meeting which decided to erect a regular synagogue in that city.<sup>67</sup>

Some of the others came to Philadelphia toward the close of the war. Among these are Mordecai and Sheftall Sheftall, who however belong rather to Georgia, Benjamin Nones, Isaac Cardozo, and Abraham Seixas. All of these gentlemen were among the founders of the Philadelphia congregation.<sup>68</sup>

Mr. Worthington, in the address referred to, laid stress on the fact that many of the Jewish soldiers of the South served as officers. This statement is confirmed in part by what has

<sup>64</sup> MS. copies of both letter and roll are in possession of the Lenox Library, Emmet Collection, No. 15670. American War, 1776-82, Vol. 2, Leslie Papers. See also Gibbes, "Documentary History of the American Revolution," 1781-2, pp. 74-5.

<sup>65</sup> Markens, "The Hebrews in America," p. 126.

<sup>66</sup> H. S. Morais, "The Jews of Philadelphia." Markens, "The Hebrews of America," p. 337.

<sup>67</sup> Dr. Sabato Morais, "The Congregation Mikveh Israel," *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 1, p. 12. Also Markens, "The Hebrews of America," p. 337.

<sup>68</sup> H. S. Morais, "The Jews of Philadelphia."



already been said and also by the pension rolls for South Carolina under the Acts of 1818 and 1832. These lists were published in 1835. In the year mentioned, few Revolutionary soldiers were still alive, most of these being over 80 years of age. In the South Carolina contingent, even at that date a few Jewish names may be found. They are David Sarzedas, Lieutenant, Marks Lazarus, Sergeant, David N. Cardozo, Sergeant, and S. Cardozo. Two Jewish widows of Revolutionary soldiers appear as late as 1841. They are Mrs. Judith Abrahams and Mrs. Rachel Lazarus.<sup>69</sup>

In the manuscript collections of the Lenox Library, the writer also found a little memorandum book apparently written about 1838. From this it appears, that pensions were procured for the following widows of Revolutionary soldiers:

Sarah Cardosa, age 73, married 1784; Judith Abrahams, age 75, married 1779; Rachel Lasarus, age 76, married 1776; Mrs. Gershom Cohen (N. York); Rebecca Cohen.

Some of these names appear several times in the MSS. The name of Cicelia Solomon, age 71, married 1785, is crossed out, but legible, while the only Revolutionary soldier in this memorandum is "Dd. Sarzadas, 78."<sup>70</sup>

Shortly after the Revolution, there came to South Carolina, Joseph Salvador, the famous merchant who owned immense tracts of land in America. Part of his estate in Abbeville County, South Carolina, was referred to as "The Jews Land."<sup>71</sup> He died December 30, 1786,<sup>72</sup> and is buried in the

<sup>69</sup> "Report from the Secretary of War in obedience to Resolutions of the Senate of 5th and 30th of June, 1834 &c., in relation to the Pension establishment of the U. S.;" Washington, 1835. Vol. 3, S. C., pp. 14, 35. Also "Letter from the Secretary of War;" Washington, 1820, p. 596. Also "A Census of Pensioners, &c.;" Washington, 1841, p. 146.

<sup>70</sup> This memorandum book belongs to the Ford Collection and seems to have escaped notice heretofore.

<sup>71</sup> See p. 43, note 13.

<sup>72</sup> *The Charleston Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, December 30, 1786. See p. 43, note 13.

old Da Costa burying ground at Charleston. From his will, a copy of which is in the writer's possession, appears the interesting fact that in 1786, Charleston contained two Jewish congregations. By a codicil made in that year, the testator leaves 100£ to Joseph Da Costa "to pay the same to the Portuguese congregation of the City of Charleston known by the name "Beth Elohim Unvey Shalom or the House of the Lord and Mansion of Peace," and there is a separate bequest of 20£ "to Mr. Gershon Cohen upon trust to pay the same to the German Jewish congregation in the City of Charleston known by the name of the Beth Elohim or the House of the Lord."<sup>73</sup>

The writer's original intention was to give a sketch of the Jews of South Carolina down to 1800. The field, however, is so broad, that no attempt will be made at present to include the period subsequent to the Revolution. It is only fair to mention, however, that in 1790, the Charleston congregation joined with those of Philadelphia, New York, and Richmond in an address to Washington. This address was signed by Manuel Josephson of the New York congregation and a reply was in due time received.<sup>74</sup> It seems, however, that the Charleston congregation sent a separate letter of congratulation,<sup>75</sup> and it is but reasonable to suppose that this too was acknowledged by Washington. This latter reply is in all likelihood the letter said to have been destroyed in the fire of 1838.<sup>76</sup>

A copy of this latter address has never been published by

<sup>73</sup> See p. 43, note 13.

<sup>74</sup> The Address and Reply have been published by this Society: "Correspondence between Washington and Jewish Citizens," Lewis Abrahams in *American Jewish Historical Society Publications*, No. 3, pp. 92-3.

<sup>75</sup> Nathaniel Levin, "The Congregation Beth Elohim," *Charleston Year Book*, 1883, p. 388. The Charleston Address was written by Mr. Jacob Cohen, President of the Congregation.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* See also Markens, "The Hebrews in America," p. 53.

the Society although it is published in full in the Charleston Year Book for 1883."

"The address above referred to reads as follows:

CHARLESTON, S. C., July 15th, 1790.

To the President of the United States:

Sir:—We presume to divert your attention for a few moments from the more important matters which require it, in order to express the sincere desire and lively gratitude we experience, in common with our fellow citizens, in your election to and acceptance of the exalted office of President of the United States. As soon as the Federal Government was instituted, the eyes of your fellow-citizens throughout the States were drawn towards you; their unanimous voices at once proclaimed you the most worthy to preside over it, and their anxious wishes awaited your consent to assume your proper station. The spontaneous effusions of heartfelt satisfaction which burst forth, the unstudied plaudits which universally and publicly resounded on the occasion, seemed to us to obviate the necessity of any particular address. But as these have been presented to you from different classes and sects of our fellow-citizens, as additional attestations of your eminent deserts, and their well assured prospects of increasing happiness from your wise and virtuous administration, we are desirous even thus late not to appear deficient in this respect, especially as every day which has intervened has tended to realize what we so fondly anticipated. Various, extensive and invaluable are the benefits which your fellow-citizens have derived from the glorious revolution which, under Providence, you have been the principal instrument in effecting. To them it has secured the natural and inalienable rights of human nature—all the requisite privileges and immunities of freedom, and has placed within their reach peace, plenty and the other blessings of good government. To the equal participation and enjoyment of all these, it has raised us from the state of political degradation and grievous oppression to which partial, narrow, and illiberal policy and intolerant bigotry has reduced us in almost every other part of the world. Peculiar and extraordinary reason have we, therefore, to be attached to the free and generous Constitution of our respective States, and to be indebted to you, whose heroic deeds have contributed so much to their preservation and establishment. In a degree commensurate to its wise and enlarged plan, does the general government attract our regard, framed on principles

In 1794, the new synagogue of Charleston was consecrated. The exercises were attended by Governor Moultrie, the civil and military authorities.<sup>78</sup>

consentaneous to those of the Constitution of the different States, and calculated by its energy to embrace and harmonize their various interests, combine their scattered powers, cement their union, and prolong their duration. They have already felt their salutary effects. The great exploits you performed while you commanded in chief the armies of the United States, during the arduous and perilous conflicts which purchased their freedom; the toils, fatigues and dangers you surmounted during that glorious warfare, entitled you to honorable exemption from public services, and to spend the remainder of your valuable life under the shade of your well earned laurels in sage retirement and dignified repose to which your truly magnanimous disposition invited, and for the pure and rational enjoyment of which your conscious virtue fitted you. But the infancy of the Federal Government particularly required your fostering care, and invoked the aid of your virtues to animate its friends and reconcile its adversaries. The genuine authority which you alone possessed, which has its source in virtue, and is built on the sure basis of merited esteem and implicit veneration, and which once recognized, has more irresistible sway than arbitrary power itself, was requisite to launch the Federal Government on its new and untried voyage into the ocean, clear of rocks and quick sands, and with favorable gales. Your consummate prudence and firmness were necessary to trace out to your successors the courses they should steer, your example to enlighten, excite and strengthen them. When laudable ambition had nothing more to tempt you with, when fame had wearied itself in trumpeting your renown; yielding to the disinterested impulses of uniform protestations, and the urgent invocations of your fellow-citizens, you quitted your peaceful and pleasurable mansion to involve yourself in the cares and fatigues which now throng on you; and you have shown yourself as eminently qualified to preside at the helm of government, as at the head of armies. While historians of this and every age shall vie with each other in doing justice to your character, and in adorning their pages with the splendor of your endowments, and of your patriotic and noble achievements; and while they cull and combine the various good and shining qualities of the Pagan and modern heroes, to display

The presence of Moultrie on that occasion was indeed a tribute to the patriotism of the Jews of South Carolina. The Revolutionary record of several of the members of the Congregation was doubtless familiar to him; and, during the war, he had been in a position to appreciate that the Jews possessed the most unselfish form of patriotism which induces men to risk their lives for their country on the field of battle.

your character, we, and our posterity, will not cease to chronicle and commemorate you, with Moses, Joshua, Othniel, Gideon, Samuel, David, Maccabeus and other holy men of old, who were raised up by God, for the deliverance of our nation, His people, from their oppression. May the Great Being, our Universal Lord, continue propitious to you and to the United States; perfect and give increase and duration of prosperity to the great empire which He has made you so instrumental in producing. May He grant you health to preside over the same, until He shall after length of days, call you to eternal felicity, which will be the reward of your virtues in the next, as lasting glory must be in this world. I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JACOB COHEN,  
President Congregation,  
"Beth Elohim."

<sup>78</sup>Nathaniel Levin, "The Congregation "Beth Elohim," in Charleston Year Book, 1883.

APR 35 1935





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 418 666 7