How did Colonial Jews Do Shabbat?

though I wanted a hogshead of Philadelphia rum badly for another purpose.

Inclosed you have Richard Merridith's letters, answered per post. I suppose he will do as Roberts did, and see me. Uncle immediately, How much is due him? I have no more to add than to acquaint you our finances are, thanks to God, well and bless their love to Miss Gratz, Miss Bell and family. And I remain, Your Sir,

Your Sincerely,

L. ANDREW LEVY.

Hish. B. --.---. N. --.---. could not wait till the right day; expired, but went to taverns drinking and yesterday held vendue. His behavior here is most indertious. I need not say more, only that he is a worthless rascal: his character will go with him. I suppose he intends soon to visit you on his way to New York. I hope you'll show him no countenance. He has some vainy by him yet. By Shank, you'll receive a tub of butter from my Aunt. Return the tub, as it is not hers.

—Madame Mne. Bajroux Levvey.

1774. WILLIAM MURRAY, PHILADELPHIA, TO BARNARD GRATZ, JOHNSTOWN, N. Y. CONCERNING THE NEW COLONY FOR ILLINOIS. "MURRAY HEADS OF WAR ON THE BORDER. EXPLORING AND "TAKING POSSESSION" OF ILLINOIS.

Philadelphia, May 16, 1774.

Dear Sir:—

I yesterday received your favor of the 10th inst. Little, very little indeed, has been done here to expedite my young braves: and now, as the Devil will have it, you must be informed (forsooth, that Moses was upon the top of a mount in the mouth of Abys,—consequently his followers must for a certain number of days crave to provide for these famales, though perhaps he may be promoted to such high rank above that he may think it beneath his desinty to associate with his countrymen.

In the last affair, I think we have made a pretty good exchange of Mr. Mather Ridley in lieu of 3dd lib. and Mr. Wm. Busvell in lieu of John Inglis. The new members are both of Baltimore and deserve worthy fellows and not hidebound. I wrote letters for D. F. [David Frank] to epose ite his brother, relative to the old and new affair: directly nopthing has been determined upon at last meeting: some settlement to be made by way of taking possession, and all former transactions fully approved by those, whse wee most fervently concerned. as weę ad see the part of the tere hands, one of whom Mr. Ridley, a fine, worship young fellow, was present and answered his friend and partner, Mr. Busvell. He assumed, my dear fellow, that I shall pay all due regard to your interests in the several matters you recomended. D. F. † sends beginning to draw for the required capital £101r. sight in Maryland have signed to the new affair, including Messrs. Russell and Ridley.

The devil of any thing has been yet purchased here. I'm not a little chagreened with MP.

*Mrs. Levy's sy way of expressinag" nger. A leading officer in the proposed ao sd. U oiéay ete Mre. Lee ieaay eeeeeeeeeee eeeeeeeeee. A hae officer ofiiecę r edeany of ined bred iettar, afo- ieeeee aeeeeieeeis aieeeeieeee aaeeee. amil sien aidand of ßaan he coaatd isda tiid da ta ivrain proposed settle gefs, among whom he was stocknied ladol.

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Yesterday a regard, which I cannot believe true, has reached us that 38 or 48 Indians have been killed by white people on the Ohio, but the intelligence is only verbal. Not a word from J. Simons or any other person at Fort Pitt. If this intelligence be true, it would be much against us and greatly endanger my fmily. I hourly hope to hear that the report is void of truth. Ross in here; sold the Virginia land at £10 *per hundred* acre just of f. Year House seill. I suppose Michael cannot on this day nor tomorrow get so much in writing. My Rile prevents her compliments to you. Be assured of the good wishes of

Your Friend and Servant,

W. MURRAY.

Addressed:—To Mr. Barnard Gratz, Merchant, Johns Town Province, New York.

—Citgy, Illinois Sure Hitoricd Lolonry. Encyc Men. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

1774. JOHN CAMPBELL LEAVES LANCASTER FOR PITTSBURGH, HOPING THAT "THE UNFORTUNATE AFFAIR" ON THE BORDER "WILL BE MADE UP." SOME OF MURRAY'S GOODS "GONE FORWARD."

Lancaster, May 23, 1774.

Dear Sir:—

I have to acknowledge the receipt of yourx, covering the keys of the trunk, which is come safe to hand, and likewise to thank you for the trouble you have taken with my things. I must entreat you to forward up here the things of wihat I left you the memorandum and likewise six pieces of handkeris.

There was a tram of brown paper and six papers of hanplésak, which I bought of John Donlap. I don't find them in the trunk with the other things. If ever you not brought it you, please to send for them and forward them up.

I have beard nothing from Pittsburgh but what Mr. Levy acquainted you of. L ete fd know hiygs that unfortunate affair will be made up, or the present at least.

Concernir, I will set off for Pittsburgh. I was not able to set out sooner. We will be governed in our affairs by the state of that country. Mr. Levy will write you if we want any Indian Goods. I am

Your Humbld Servant

JOHN CAMPBELL.

To Mr. Michael Gratz, Merchant in Philadelphia.

Niy compliments to Mr. Murray. I hope he will be able to come up this way. Some of his goods are gone forward.

—Hieny Men. Moravian Society of Pennsylvania. "Jvny."

1774. NEWS FROM THE BATTISH COUNT, VIA LANCASTER. DARTMOUTH, DUNMORE AND THE MONOHENT WEST. DUNMORE'S LAND GRANTS. THE FOX TRADS. L. A. LEVY TO MICHAEL GRATZ.

Lancaster, May 28, 1774.

Dear Sir:—

I have very little to offer you at present. Our families are, thanks to God, well and are hoping this will find you the same. I have had no

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motherless daughter whom she raised from infancy to marriage; in a sense this Rachel was her oldest child.[7] The care and attention this child received, the tender love so lavishly showered upon her, speak loudly of the character and magnanimity of these foster parents. There is hardly a family letter in which "Dear little Rachel" is not mentioned. The same, of course, is true of their own children. The anticipated arrival of each child was, in Miriam's words, an "expectation of a new happiness." Each child had a nook of its own in her heart. "Jacob, whom you have not seen yet," Miriam writes to Barnard, "is a lovely fellow, though he is not quite so handsome as your Godson Joe, who I do assure you without partiality is the handsomest of the flock....My dear Sim...is without exception as good a boy as any of his age. The same goes for Sally and Beck, Rich and Rachel, and the rest of the "flock". Having recounted their virtues, she apologizes somewhat blushingly, "Don't my good Brother condemn me for thinking highly of my blessed children, who I hope will be a comfort to their parents and connections."[8]

The Gratz children were reared in a traditionally Jewish atmosphere. Each new member of the family was ushered into the ancestral faith with all the appropriate religious rites, with the given Hebrew name properly recorded. Child and elder alike participated in these family festivities. "Dear Rachel," age eight, had the thrilling experience of being baby Simon's "Kvaterin" (Godmother) while Grandpapa Simon was honored with "Padrina," as friends joined the happy parents in pronouncing the ancient Hebrew blessing *Hashem yiten l'gadelo l'torah, l'hupah u'lema'asim tovim. Amen. Selah,* may the Lord grant the parents of this child to

childhood. Dr. David Philipson, in his *Letters of Rebecca Gratz*, p. X, mentions a son Jonathan as one of those who died early in life. The source for the above statement is unknown to this writer.

It may be of interest to some readers that Hyman was born in Lancaster and not in Philadelphia, as has been repeatedly stated. In anticipation of a British attack on Philadelphia, the Gratz family settled in Lancaster in the summer of 1776, remaining there for about two and a half years. See Michael Gratz, Philadelphia, to Barnard Gratz, Pittsburgh, July 24, 1776, McAllister Coll., Yi2/7311 F37; Byars, *B & M Gratz*, p. 158. For a description of war conditions in Philadelphia during 1776, and the flight of many citizens from the city, see Scharf and Westcott, *Philadelphia*, 1:306 ff.

[7] Rachel was born in 1764, and her mother, Richea, died shortly thereafter. Rachel lived with Miriam and Michael Gratz from their marriage in 1769 until 1791, the year she was married to Solomon Etting.

[8] Miriam Gratz, Philadelphia, to Barnard Gratz, London, August 16, 1769, McAllister Coll., HSP; Byars, *B & M Gratz*, pp. 101-102.

Michael Gratz, Philadelphia, to Barnard Gratz, Carlisle, January 11, May 2, June 1, 1773, McAllister Coll., Yi2/7311 F37.

Miriam Gratz, Philadelphia, to Barnard Gratz, Albany, July 22, 1774, Ohio Company Papers, vol. 1, p. 111; Byars, *B & M Gratz*, pp. 146-147; Miriam Gratz, Philadelphia, to Barnard Gratz, Richmond, September 26, 1790, McAllister Coll., HSP.

raise him unto scholarship, marriage, and charitable deeds.[9] From earliest youth the children received their training in Jewish living, about the duties of man toward God, and man toward man, by actual examples set by their Godfearing and upright parents. Daily prayers were recited morn and night. Dietary laws were scrupulously observed. The Sabbath and all holidays were dedicated to worship and set aside for joyful rest.

In all the countless transactions recorded in the Gratz documents it is hard to find one that was executed on a Jewish Sabbath or holiday. No business, regardless of urgency, was ever allowed to profane the sanctity of these days. Nor is it possible to produce one single letter written by them, or Joseph Simon, on a Jewish holiday. On the other hand, a number of letters conclude with the remark "Just Sabbath must stop."[10] When in 1776 Barnard was detained in Pittsburgh during the Passover holiday he asked one of his associates to write home a short note stating: "As your brother could not write by this opportunity this being the Holy Days, he desired me to let you know that he is well...."[11] Sometimes the strict adherence to these principles proved annoying to their friends. Thus when William Murray came down from Pittsburgh in May 1774 to discuss the consummation of the extensive Indian land purchase on the Mississippi, as well as matters pertaining to the Pittsburgh store, all discussion had to wait because of Michael's observance of the Shabuoth holiday. Murray, obviously put out, complained to Barnard,

> and now, as the Devil will have it, you must be informed forsooth that Moses was upon the top of a Mount in the month of May, consequently his followers must for a certain number of days cease to provide for their families, though perhaps he may be promoted to such high rank above that he may think it beneath his dignity to associate with his countrymen....The devil of anything has been yet purchased

[9] Michael Gratz, Philadelphia, to Barnard Gratz, Carlisle, January 1, 1773, McAllister Coll., Yi2/7311 F37; Byars, *B & M Gratz*, in transcribing this letter, omitted the passage referring to the birth of this son (Simon). See also note 6, supra.

[10] Michael Gratz, St. Kitts, to Barnard Gratz, Philadelphia, July 12, 1765. Letter concludes: "Being Just Sabbath I can say no more...", McAllister Coll., Yi2/7309 F5.

Michael Gratz, Philadelphia, to Barnard Gratz, New York, April 8, 1774, "In haste as it is just Sabbath," Idem, 7311 F37. The same applies also to Joseph Simon of Lancaster. In a letter, written for him by Levy A. Levy, to Patrick Rise, Philadelphia, May 23, 1777, he concludes: "It is almost Sabbath so wish you health etc." *Ibid*. Another reference to Joseph Simon's observance of Jewish holidays is found in a letter from Michael Gratz to Barnard, April 14, 1774, "Joseph Simon is determined to go to Pittsburgh directly after Passover," *ibid*.

[11] Charles Matheson, Pittsburgh, to Michael Gratz, Philadelphia, April 1, 1776, Etting Papers, HSP, Byars, *B & M Gratz*, p. 154.

XXI

[*Abigail Franks to Naphtali Franks, June 21, 1741*]

New York [Sunday] June ye 21th 1741

Dear Child

The greatest Sattisfaction I can have is to hear from you wich of Late you have bin Very Carefull to Lett us have by all Oppertunitys and beg you will make it your Practice that your Father may have noe more Cause of Complaint You give me Some pain in Makeing Soe many Excuses for not writting me by All Oppertunitys I have Severall times told you its wath I dont nor Cant Expect when you have other buissness to Mind I am not Soe Tenacious of a Compliment due to me Soe I but hear from you any ways I am Satisfyed its the heart and Not the hands that Carrys a Weight with me and I have noe reasson in the Least to Distrust Your Love or duty theirfore I Would have you be Very Eassy on that Score and Only write me when you have nothing of more Consequence to Imploy your time I have received the Medcine you Sent Am Concern'd they Should make Such a doe abouth me I knew nothing of theire writing for any thing or would have hindered em. its my Opinion as a person grows in Years they Contract Infirmitys that will hardly be removed. And as I have thank god Allways had a Great Share of health I must now begin to Expect those Little Ills humane Nature is Liable too And therefore Would not be Troublesome farther then there is a Necessity for to remove a preas[en]t pain nothing in Life Should <in> ingage me to Confine my Self to any Rule by way of Prevention people must be Very fond of Life to make it a trouble to them to prolong it My Physick is Temperence & Content wich I would Prescribe to all the world And would be the best Preventing dose they Could Swallow Indeed I take your advice in ye Pyrmont watter[1] because I Love the Drink but I've noe Opinion that it will any ways Cure the Weakness I have in my Joynts its a pain to me to write I have such a Trembleing in my hands, thats another Infirmity age is Drawing on me.

Your father is Very full of buissness I never knew the benifit of the Sabath before but Now I am Glad when it comes for his Sake that he may have a Little reLaxation from t[ha]t Continuall Hurry he is in In short its a Very great Fatigue And makes him Very Peevish to those he imploys in the Family he is the Same good Nature. Still I offten when I here him Lowd Amongst them take part Against him and then its over for a While You have in Severall of Yours insisted on davids going to Jamiaca[2] but never Gave the reasson why Soe that your fathar has Not Yet resolve'd upon his goeing at preas[en]t that place is Soe Unhealthy that I had rather he Should Stay and goe in the Faull, but if ye Gent[le]m[en] from Jamiaca Should write for him he Shall Soon be Sent thither he is Very willing to goe and if Secrecy is required you may depend Upon him. pray Wait on Mrs. Peirce and ask his Charecter, for he was a great Favourite

Mr. Nap[htal]y Myers[3] I bleive will doe Very well here & if he answer the Charector you give him he may be Assured of any friendly office in the Family he Lodges at Judah Hays[4] who Lives in Mrs. Sims's house[5] Just by Us As you will receive many Letters from the Family You will hear all the Citty News wich at preas[en]t is Somwath Mellancholy[6]

[1] Pyrmont water is a type of medicinal liquid similar to seltzer, islington, or chalybeate all of which were popular in the eighteenth century. See, for example, Diederick Wessel Linden, *Treatise on the Origin, Nature and Virtues of Chalybeat Waters and Natural Hot Baths, etc.*, 3rd edition (London, 1739), chapter IV, pp. 107–134, which deals with the "chalybeat waters at Islington, called Tunbridge Wells," and the works of Dr. Richard Russell, *A Dissertation on the Use of Sea Water in the Diseases of the Glands . . . as also an Account of the Nature . . . and Uses of All the Remarkable Mineral Waters of Great Britain*, 4th edition (London, 1760), p. 288 which refers to the new Tunbridge Wells at Islington; and *A Treatise on the Nature, Properties, and Medicinal Uses of Pyrmont, Spa and Seltzers . . . Being a Proper Supplement to Dr. Russell[']s Dissertation on the Uses of Sea Water, &c.* (London, 1762). A. F. seems to have been suffering from rheumatism or arthritis.

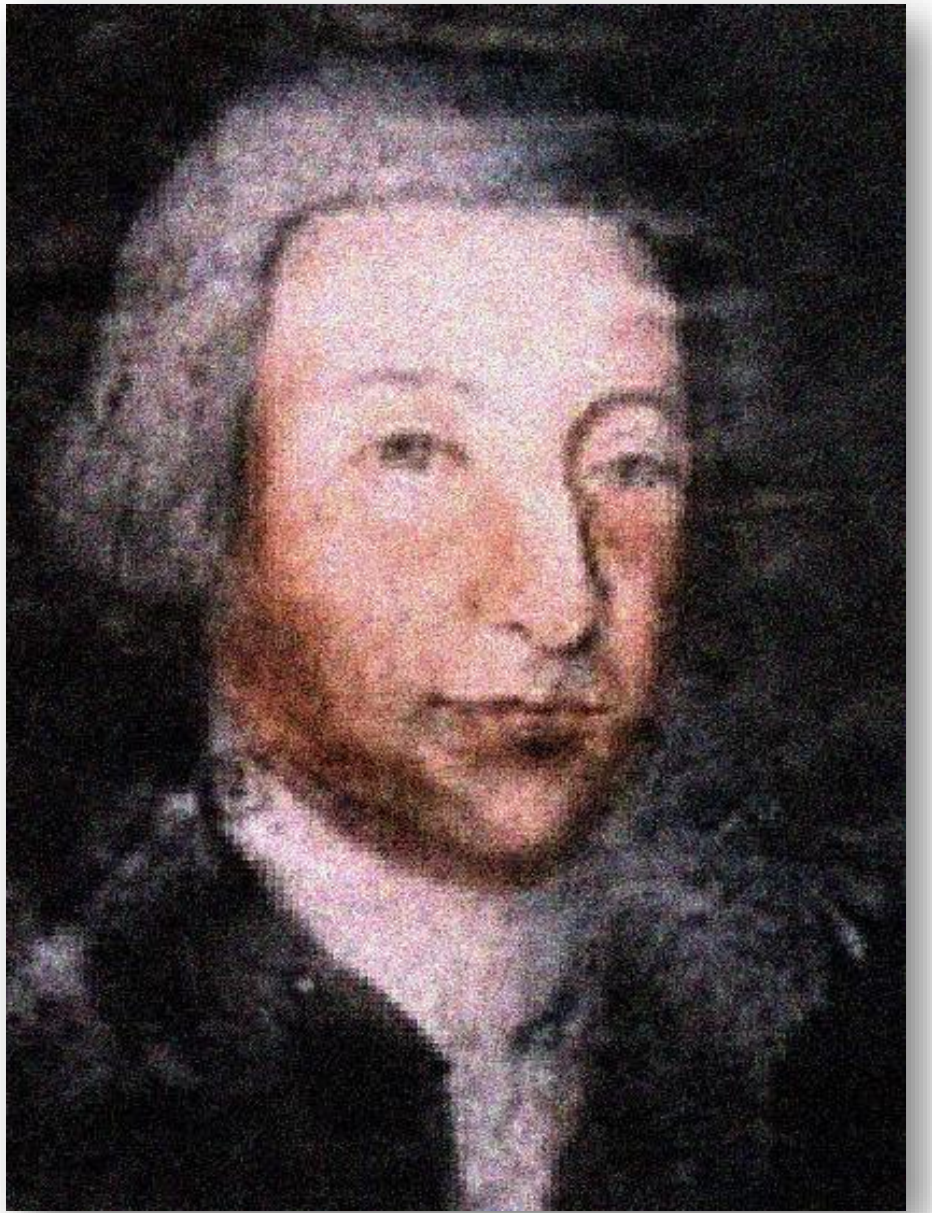
[2] See *supra*, Letter XX, p. 83. Seemingly David Franks was still in New York.

[3] Probably Naphtaly Hart Myers (c. 1711–1788), who was newly arrived from London and who became a merchant in New York City, as well as Newport and Philadelphia. In 1756, he was elected president of Shearith Israel and two years later was appointed administrator of the estate of Samuel Levy of Huntington, Suffolk County, New York. He died in London in 1788. *Minute Book*, pp. 49–51, *passim*; Letters of Administration, vol. 1755–1763, p. 15, New York Surrogate's Court, 31 Chambers Street, New York City.

[4] This is an interesting reference since Judah Hays is mentioned in advertisements appearing in the *Weekly Journal* of May 4, 1741 and June 29, 1741 as being removed to Joseph Murray's house "opposite to Cortlandts' Market, here Persons may [be] supply'd with All Sorts of Goods, wholesale or retale." Perhaps the newspaper referred to his business, not his residence address.

[5] Mrs. Sims, was probably Mary Simmes, widow of James Simmes. Her house was in "Pearle" Street. *NYHSC*, vol. III (1895), p. 175.

[6] It is interesting that A. F. does not specifically discuss the so-called "Negro plot" of 1741, although it is probably the "mellancholy" news she refers to. The newspapers of the period were very concerned with the details of what was supposed to be an attempt on the part of slaves and Catholics to somehow destroy or overthrow existing government and society. Many slaves were tried and some fifty executed in the largest and most hysterical conspiracy trials in the history of New York. A number of slaves belonging to Jews were implicated in the "plot," including Windsor and Hereford belonging to Samuel Myers Cohen, Jack of Judah Hays, Lewis Gomez's Cuffee, and Mordecai Gomez' Cajve. One of Jacob Frank's slaves was involved, but his name is unknown. It may have been Caesar or Dublin, two of Franks' slaves. Moses owned a slave named Samson at this time. *Weekly Journal*, June 15, June 22 and June 29, 1741; *PAJHS*, vol. XXVII (1920), pp. 384–385. For reference to J. F. as slave owner and trader, see Nathan Simson Letter Books, C/104–13, Entry of May 1, 1710, Public Record Office; NOL, CO 5/1220, April 14, 1720; NOL, CO 5/1222, Oct. 11, 1717 and April 14, 1718; NOL, CO 5/1224, Oct. 21, 1730; NOL, CO 5/1225, May 3, 1731; NOL, CO 5/1226, June 10, 1738; NOL, CO 5/1228, June 3, 1729.



CHAPTER XVI.

JEWS AND THEIR SYNAGOGUE.

HAVING received the best portion of my mercantile education from Jews, I desire to offer a tribute of gratitude for their kindness to me during my apprenticeship.

Mr. Joseph Lopez, kinsman of Moses and Aaron Lopez, was chief clerk in the counting-house of Gibbs & Channing, for several years previous to the dissolving of that copartnership. He doubtless became a thorough proficient in book-keeping, under the guidance of his relative, Moses, who was acknowledged to be one of the best of mathematicians and accountants. He and I were mutually attracted. He was deaf, and hence I was constantly exercised in vocal modulation. When my voice was too loud, he would meekly whisper, "Not quite so loud." Sometimes, when he was eager for an answer, I, with boyish impudence, would speak very

low, and then feel conscience-stricken when he ascribed the subdued tone to thoughtlessness. My aged friend, "an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile," felt conscientiously bound to observe the "times and seasons" peculiar to the Mosaic ritual. On Friday afternoons, he left the counting-room about 3 P.M. in winter, and at 5 in summer, in order to prepare for the due observance of the sabbath on the morrow. Passover week, and at the great day of Atonement, my friend would absent himself from business for two or three consecutive days. He was equally conscientions in making up to his employers for his absence on these to him most holy days. During Mr. Gibbs's long business life, he had a singular way of adjusting accounts which he feared, from their long standing, could never be liquidated, save by severe litigation. Some of these bore the following credits: "By death;" "By unable to pay;" "By won't pay." Mr. Lopez, with characteristic exactness, did not deem such settlements *creditable* in an account-book; and so he went to work in a quiet way, and first examined the "By death" item, and, upon corresponding with the supposed de-

Shoe, bright yellow, worn by Joseph Simon's daughter Belah at her wedding to Solomon Myers-Cohen, 1779. Courtesy of congregation Mikveh Israel, Philadelphia

Simon Gratz, a grandson, stated in a disposition for the case of Gratz vs Cohen on August 5, 1833 "Joseph Simon who was as honest and moral a man that has ever existed ...".[62]

There were obituaries for Simon in Lancaster papers. One stated "though called a Jew, he professed in eminent degree, the Christian virtues of character and brotherly kindness."[63] (As if Jews normally could not have such virtues.) The other stated "he was honest and upright in all his dealings, humane and charitable. He died without enemies, and as during his life, he was beloved by all who knew him."[64]

Alexander Lowrey

Simon was a lifetime friend and partner of Indian trader, Alexander Lowrey. When they both were old, friends suggested that they settle their business accounts as they had never written down their obligations to each other. The story is told by Samuel Evans in 1898. "Mr. Simon was held in high esteem by his fellow-traders and merchants. Several years before his death (he was close to 90), it was suggested to him that he and Colonel Alexander Lowery, who had been connected with him in Indian trade for 40 years, ought to make formal settlement of their partnership affairs, to prevent litigation among their heirs. Accordingly arbitrators were mutually agreed upon, one of whom was the late Adam Reigart, Esq., who in giving account of the affair, stated it was the most unique one he ever witnessed. No books or papers were presented for their inspection. When called upon, Mr. Simon reminded Colonel Lowrey that he paid him a certain sum of money at a certain spring in the far West which was duly acknowledged, and Colonel Lowrey reminded Mr. Simon that he had paid him a certain sum of money when seated on a log in the Indian country, which was not disputed. And thus these old Indian traders referred to transactions which covered a period of 40 years without a jar of dispute."[65]

Mary Simon Levy

Joseph Simon had a sister, Mary Simon Levy, living in London. She was the mother of Levy Andrew Levy and was some 14 years older than Joseph. It appears that for many years Simon sent money to England to support her. Apparently she was widowed early in life. Why she didn't come to America with her son in 1746, has not been determined.

The earliest written record of Simon's and Levy Andrew Levy's sending money for Mary's support came from a letter from Barnard Gratz in London to Michael Gratz in Philadelphia, dated 8/10/1769.

"Compliments to Levy Andrew Levy, hope he will remember his very hard, but, poor creature, cannot maintain herself." The "they" in that letter may indicate someone else in the Mary Levy household who has not otherwise surfaced.[66]

In the 1780's, as we will see later, things got financially rough for Simon and horrible for Levy. A letter was received written in Yiddish to Simon from Mary, dated September 1789. Mary would be about 91. Apparently Simon had sent money to Jonas Phillips in London, father of Simon's son-in-law Levy Phillips, for him to give to Mary one-half guinea weekly. She also tells of a ship's captain who indicated she should have received six guineas from Simon and three from Levy but didn't. The letter is very forceful and I quote from it at length.

"If I want to come to him (Phillips) at times to complain about my poverty he answers me, 'what concern of mine is it, do not come to me any more, go to your Kahal' (Jewish Community for charity). My Kahal allows me, since I receive nothing from you any more, two a week. Well, for a long time I have disposed of the nails in the wall (sold them) so as not to die of hunger. In the meantime there is nothing left at all, I will surely die of hunger if you will not have pity on me. Therefore I beg for pity's sake, have pity on me; remember, I am an old stick, and BLIND, cannot move from my place."

"If you cannot afford to allow me much per week, so let it be little, but something for as I heard you lost much money and much that is worth money since the War, which pains me very much, not only for my sake but also for your sake. Still I hope, (as) you carry such a burden of (your) children and yet treat them like Joe Simons (?) that a little for me will not be too much of a burden for you, but not through Yohanan (Jonas Phillips). I also beg, for pity's sake, to let me know about my son Leib (Levy Andrew Levy) whether he is still alive or, God forbid, not. Only let me know whether he is alive, and where he is and how he is, (and) I will be satisfied. As a reward may you have good luck and blessing and success."

Obviously, that is a most distressing letter. One can only hope that Simon and Levy were sending her money, that for unknown reasons, she was not receiving. It should be noted that Levy, four years earlier, in deep financial distress, wrote Michael Gratz in 1785 "received a letter from my poor mother aged 87 years. She received the three guineas I sent her and wish I could send her more but it is not in my power for believe me it is hard struggle to find support for so large a family I have. Yet I am thankful to the Almighty for his goodness and charity towards them."[69] As we have seen, four years later in 1789, Mary does not know where Levy is.

Research in London found in the burial register of the Great Synagogue that a Mary Levy died and was buried on May 19, 1791. Her hebrew name was Miriam Daughter of Samuel Levy and widow of Abraham son of Chaim Levy. This may be the sister of Joseph Simon.

Cecil Roth in his book "The Rise of Provincial Jewry" mentions the circumscision of Manuel ben Hayim Levy (Manuel son of Chaim Levy) in 1733 and his brother Abraham in 1750. These could be two brothers of Levy Andrew Levy who was born in 1734.

The Reverend Dr. David McClure

David McClure (1748-1820) was ordained a minister at Dartmouth College. While appointed a missionary to the Delaware Indians near Fort Pitt, he kept a diary. In it McClure, apparently no friend of the Jews, describes a meeting with Joseph Simon, in Lancaster in 1772.

"We spent the Sabbath at Lancaster and preached. An occurrence happened which shows the strict observance which the Jews pay to their Sabbath."

"We had an order for a sum of money from a gentleman in Philadelphia, on Mr. Abraham (actually Joseph) Simon, a Jew merchant in Lancaster. We arrived on Friday & intending to leave the town on Monday, we waited on him Saturday Morning & presented the order. He said, 'Gentlemen, today is my Sabbath, & I do not do business in it; if you will please to call tomorrow, I will wait on you.' We observed that the same reasons which prevented his payment of the order on that day would prevent our troubling him the day following (Sunday). We [illegible] cessors, ... they neglect the weightier matters of the Law, as Judgment, mercy and faith. They strain at a gnat and swallow a Camel)."

Frankly, Simon did circumvent the restriction of not handling money or transacting business on the Sabbath. Yet it is obvious that this made the diary only because it gave McClure a reason to expound on his feelings toward Jews in general.[70]^

JOSEPH SIMON COMES TO AMERICA

There is no doubt that Joseph Simon is the epitome of the colonial Lancaster Jewish Community and vice-versa. He was their leader spiritually and financially. He was the first Lancaster Jew, and he was the last of the first community.

We know nothing of his parents. His tombstone indicates that he was born in 1712.[70] We assume his place of birth was Germanic Europe as his Naturalization rules out an English birthplace. However his nephew, Levy Andrew Levy was born in Oxford, England. Levy was the son of Simon's sister Mary. Mary Simon Levy, from evidence we have, was born in 1698 and was still alive living in London as late as 1789. We can conjecture that the unmarried and fourteen year younger Joseph Simon and his sister emigrated from Europe to England prior to 1734 (the birthdate of the English born Levy Andrew Levy). In all probability, they came to England earlier and perhaps Mary married while in England. Nevertheless she was widowed early in her marriage. It is of interest that Mary's Jewish name was Mindal Masha, daughter of Simon and Levy Andrew Levy's was Leib be Anshel.

Simon was in Lancaster by 1740 or 1741 and his failure to be listed in religious or tax records of New York or Philadelphia prior to that, seems to indicate that Lancaster was his first stop. It appears, that after he established himself, he brought over to America his then 12 year old nephew, son of his widowed sister. For 40 years Levy Andrew Levy would be his clerk and partner, and as we will see, a semi-adopted son as well. In 1746, Simon, then 34, was ready to take a wife.

Rosa Bunn

As hard as it is to find data on colonial males, it is next to impossible on colonial females. However, in the case of Rosa Bunn, who would become Mrs. Joseph Simon, a will and circumstantial evidence gave your author a break.

Rosa Bunn was a member of the Myers-Cohen family of New York fame. I refer the reader to the Appendix for a fuller discussion of the blood relationships. It is sufficient to say that her uncle Samuel Myers-Cohen was Shohet, Bodek and later President of Shearith Israel. Her uncle Abraham was a New York merchant who would have a son that would marry a daughter of Rosa's. Rosa's Aunt Bilah married Joseph Solomon of Lancaster, whom we met earlier. One of uncle Samuel's children, Richea, would marry Barnard Gratz of Philadelphia, an early business partner of Simon.

The old theory concerning Rosa's arrival in America was that she came over with her uncle Samuel Myers-Cohen in 1730. This can be discounted for several reasons. First, since she was born in 1727, it would have been unlikely that her bachelor uncle would hazard a sea journey with a three year old. Second, there is evidence that Samuel was in America no later than 1728 and perhaps even before Rosa was born. Third, when this theory was advanced, her parents were unknown.

Uncle Samuel wrote a will in 1741. In it he left 25 pounds to his sister "Rachel, wife of Solomon (Hiam) Bunn" and "to my niece, Rosa Bunn, 100 pounds when married with consent of my wife."[71]

This will tells us several things. First, that Rosa's parents were Rachel (Myers-Cohen) and Hiam Solomon Bunn. Second, since Rachel was receiving the bequest, Bunn may have been out of America. Third, Bunn's absence is further confirmed by the fact that Samuel's permission or his wife's, was needed for Rosa to marry. Rosa, in 1741, was 14 years old and close to the marrying age.

Hiam Solomon Bunn

in determining the date of the marriage. Samuel died in 1743 without changing his will. We can guess that Rosa, then 16, was still unmarried. Likewise, it is unlikely that Rosa would have married prior to the return of her father, which was no later than 1745.

Bunn, shortly after his arrival back in America, came to Lancaster. He joined his brother-in-law Joseph Solomon who was already in Lancaster. In September 1747, Bunn prepared a deed transferring a lot and house to Joseph Simon on the southwest corner of Penn Square. This deed was not recorded until September 1748 because Bunn did not obtain formal possession of the property until May 7, 1748.[73] This might explain the one year period between the writing and recording of the deed. It is logical to assume that this transfer was part of a dowry. Therefore, the actual marriage could have taken place in late 1747 or 1748. A more definite date is impossible to determine as the religious ceremony, if any, does not appear in New York or Philadelphia records. Their first child, Miriam, would be born in December of 1749.

Levy Andrew Levy Was Not A Son-In-Law

For the student of American Jewish history to accept this marriage date arrived at by your author, he must accept the premise that certain facts, accepted prior to my article, are erroneous. I refer those interested to the appendix for fuller discussion. We must disregard the previously accepted theory that Joseph Simon had a daughter Susannah who married Levy Andrew Levy; therefore, the oft quoted fact that Levy was a son-in-law of Simon is incorrect.

SIMON'S EARLY BUSINESS VENTURES

Unfortunately, no hard evidence has been found concerning Simon's activities from 1740 to 1751. It appears from his obituary, referred to earlier, that Lancaster was his home or at least his headquarters during that period. We can conjecture that he was involved in Indian trading and sometime during that period, opened his first store. We do know that by 1751, he operated out of a store on the southeast corner of Penn Square owned by David Franks and Nathan Levy.

Nathan Levy

Simon was a first generation American. Nathan Levy and his brother Isaac were second generation. They were the sons of Moses Levy who arrived in New York about 1702. Moses quickly became a prominent merchant.

In 1737 Nathan and Isaac traveled from New York to Philadelphia and became the first important Jews in Philadelphia. They formed a four year partnership selling imported dry goods and hardware.[76]

David Franks

David and Moses Franks were nephews of the Levy brothers, due to Nathan Levy's sister Abigail's marriage to Jacob Franks. Jacob Franks, who arrived about 1711, was one of the most successful merchants in America. He enjoyed many British contracts for the supply of their troops in the New World.

The Franks brothers, also second generation Americans, came to Philadelphia in 1738 and formed a partnership with the Levy brothers in 1742. The Franks and the Levys, for many years, would be the leading Jews in Philadelphia.[77]

Franks and Levy

The partnership of Franks and Levy was what is called merchant-shippers. That is, they would import from England (as shippers), sell the goods received (as merchants) and export needed raw materials back to England (as shippers). One of the items imported on their ship "Myrtilla" in 1752 would be a bell. This bell, brought to America to ring in the State House in honor of the 50th anniversary of Penn's Charter of Liberties, would eventually be better known as the Liberty Bell.[78]

The partnership of Levy and Franks was very, very strong. On the

pres, in commemoration of the ark of the covenant, which was in the temple. Here the Pentateuch is deposited, written on a volume or roll of parchment with the utmost exactness, and wrapped up in silk curiously embroidered. When the Jews say their prayers in the morning they put on a talith or vail over their other clothes, and a robe with fringes at the four corners, with tassels, called Tzitzith ; and also the Tephilin or Phylacteries.*

All the rites, precepts, and ceremonies of the Jews, which are not contained in the Pentateuch, are founded upon and derive their authority from the Talmud. There is, however, some variation in their customs and ceremonies, and in the liturgies which the nation have made use of at different times, and in various countries. The German, Polish, and Russian Jews follow the same ritual. But the Spanish and Portuguese have another, which still varies from that of the Italian and Levantine Jews, those of Jerusalem, China, and some other places. But in the principal points of belief and observance they all agree.†

* "It is an article of faith among us," says David Levi, "that every Jew must every morning, during the time of reading the Shema, and saying the nineteen prayers at least, have on the Phylacteries, because it is a sign of our acknowledging the Almighty to be the Creator of all things, and that he has power to do as he pleases : and therefore on the sabbath, and other festivals, we do not put on the Phylacteries, because the duty concerning of them is a sufficient sign of itself, as expressed in Exodus xxiii. 16."—*Ceremonies of the Jews*, p. 166.

† Oakley's translation of Leo Modena's Ceremonies of the Jews, p. 4. There are three divisions or classes of modern Jews, who are variously denominated from the countries where the arrangements of their liturgies took place, and are known by the designations of German, Portuguese, and Avignon, or Italian Jews.

In the synagogue worship, the Cohen or priest leads the devotional exercises by chanting prayers ; but laymen are admitted to read the book of the law to the people ; the precedence is, however, given to the priest. After prayers, the rabbies frequently deliver a sermon ; but their discourses are not composed in Hebrew, which few of the Jews at present perfectly understand, but in the language of the country where they reside. The passages of scripture and sentences from the doctors are, however, quoted in the Hebrew, and explained.*

The Jews reverete the sabbath above all other festivals, and observe it with the utmost strictness on account of its being enjoined in various parts of scripture, particularly in the decalogue. On this day they are forbidden to kindle or extinguish any fire ; the food is, therefore, prepared on Friday. They are also prohibited from discounting on any kind of business,† from carrying any burden, from riding on horseback, in a carriage, going by water, or walking above a mile from the city or place where they reside, or playing upon any musical instrument.‡ They are likewise forbidden to inter their dead, or mourn, or fast on the sabbath ; but are sometimes permitted to circumcise a child, be-

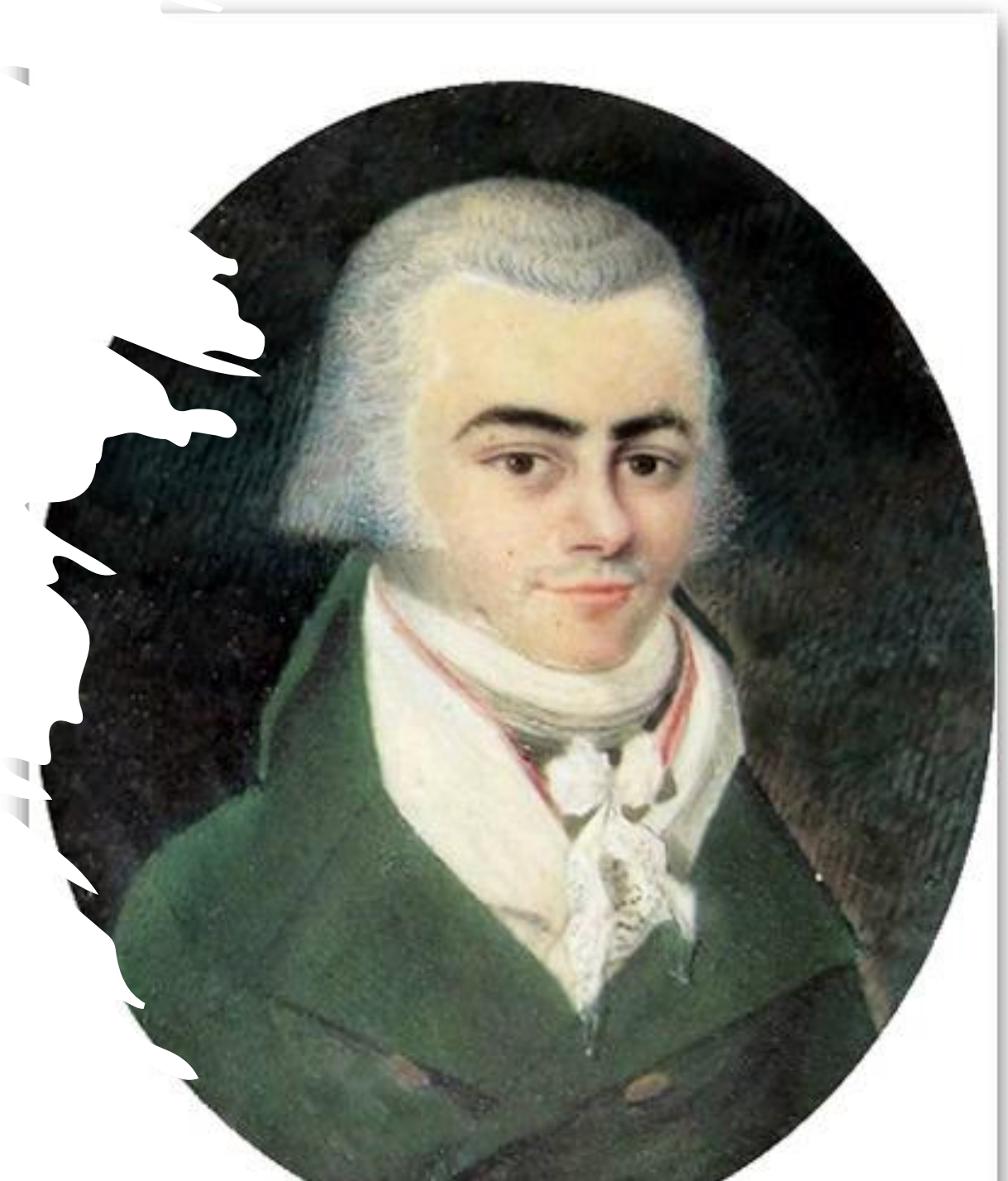
* Levi's Ceremonies of the Jews.

† David Levi's Ceremonies of the Jews, p. 7, 8.—17. The rabbies have reduced the several works forbidden on the sabbath under thirty-nine heads, and enumerated the species under three generals.

‡ Food must be very or eaten in their synagogues, but instrumental music is seldom used ; yet not because it is deemed improper, for the synagogue in Prague had an organ ; but because it cannot be performed on the sabbath or holidays.—*Adam's Religious World Displayed.*

“I have heard it said that they were surrounded with all sorts of affluence and wealth, and when they came to the synagogue—these are the personal touches that I am giving you—when they came to the synagogue on the Sabbath or on a Holy Day, they had their slaves walking behind them through the streets carrying their prayer books and talethim [prayer shawls]. They would walk into the synagogue auditorium with this retinue behind them, and the slaves would deposit their books and telethim on the seats and bow themselves out. That was a regular ceremony every Saturday morning.”

-- “Unwritten History: Reminiscences of N. Taylor Phillips,” *American Jewish Archives Journal* 6 (June 1954): 82.



should be inserted, but as the whole when finished will be entered, reference must be had to the constitution, as it now stands, and it is recommended that it be taken care of and tacked to this book. . . .

The parnas informed the congregation that Mr. Phillips had offered his *sephar* to the new synagogue, and Mr. S. Cohen had presented a new *tabah* cloth, and recommended their having a *mishebarach* every *kipur* night and on every anniversary of the dedication, for ever. Agreed to unanimously.

The parnas read a letter he had received from Mr. Joseph Simons, requesting that he might be admitted to become a *yahid* of this *K. Kadosh* ["Holy Congregation"] Mikveh Israel. Resolved unanimously: That Mr. Joseph Simons be admitted as a *yahid* of this *K. Kadosh* Mikveh Israel. . . .

At the meeting of the parnass and junta on Thursday morning the 4th of Tisra, 5543 [September 12, 1782]. . . .

A petition from Lyon Moses desiring to become a *yahid* referred to the next meeting. A letter directed to the parnass and junta from Messrs. Barnard Gratz, Jonas Phillips, Gershon Seixas, Benjamin Seixas, Simon Nathan, committee for superceeding [supervising?] the building of the synagogue, informing them that the new synagogue is so far finis[h]ed [as] to be concecrated tomorrow, the 5th of Tisra, in the afternoon.

Voted: That the committee be appointed to wait on the governour and council [of the State of Pennsylvania] with an address. Resolved: That Messrs. Gershom Seixas, Jonas Phillips, Barnard Gratz, Isaac Moses be the committee appointed to wait on the governour, etc. . . .

At a meeting of the parnass and junta on Sunday, the 7 Tisra, 5543 [September 15, 1782]. . . .

The parnass represented to the junta that he was informed by Mr. Mordecai M. Mordecai that Ezekiel Levy, contrary to our laws, shaved on a Sabbeth at Baltimore. The motion was put by the parnass to send for Mr. Ezekiel Levy, and being put to vote that Mr. Levy be send for: Yeas: the parnas, Hayman Levy, Michael Gratz, Simon Nathan; nays: Solomon Myers Cohen, Solomon Marachey. Mr. Simon Nathan then made a motion, seconded by Solomon M. Cohen, that Mr. Mordecai should be send for. Agreed to unanimously.

Mr. Levy appearing, the matter was represented to him, on which he desired that the accusers might appear, which was accordingly done, who attented, and being asked wuther he knew from his own knowledge that Mr. E. Levy did shave on a Sabbeth, replied that his information was received from Mr. Isaac Abraham at Baltimore. Therefore, it is resolved that the matter be purponed [postponed], and the parnass is

requested to write a letter to Mr. Abraham for his full information respecting the same. Adjurned. . . .

At a general meeting of the congregation on Wednesday, the 17th of Tisra [September 25, 1782], held in consequence of a letter received from Messrs. Benjamin Seixas, Isaac Moses, and Isaac DaCosta, directed to the parnass, requesting the congregation may be convened. . . .

On motion of the parnass, seconded by Mr. Spitzer, that each person is not to speak longer than a quarter of an hour, but may get up three times in his turn and speak: determined in the negative by a great majority.

Messrs. Simon Nathan, Solomon M. Cohen, and Benjamin Seixas where each of them fined two shillings and six pence for speaking out of their places.

Mr. Benjamin Seixas, seconded by Mr. Spitzer, [moved] that the congregation determin whether any gentlemen who is admisted [admitted] to be a *yahid* have a right to speak in congregational meetings, alltho he has no right to vote: determined in the negative.

Mr. Parnass [the president], having read a letter from Messrs. Benjamin Seixas, Isaac Moses, and Isaac DaCosta, complaining of arbitary proceedings in the junto, he requested that the congregation would form it self into a committee of the whole house, in consequence whereoff the parnass lift [left] the chair, and Mr. Mordecai Sheftall was chosen by a great majority to act as chairman for this particular business, who, having accepted the chair, and a considerable time having been taken in debate by the accusers and the accused. . . .

Mr. Isaac Moses made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Benjamin Nones, vizt., whether the parnass and junto had a right in referring to the committee for regulating the seats in the new synagogue, after they, the committee, had giving out the numbers of each seat for the respective persons on the day of dedication. Several of the members being desirious to speak to the above motion, and it being late, it was resolved to adjourn till tomorrow, five o'clock in the evening.

At a general meeting of the congregation agreable to adjournment. . . .

Mr. Coshman Polock moved, seconded by Mr. Spitzer, that as it appears that nothing criminal had been done either by the committee appointed to distribute the seats in the sinagogue, nor by the parnass or junto, but that many irregularetys have been committed from a misconstruction of the constitution since their election, therefore recommended that every thing that has happened be buried in oblivion. Which was carried by a majority of votes.

their own wampums, though not without a deal of trouble: but at preſent the *Europeans* employ themſelves that way; eſpecially the inhabitants of *Albany*, who get a conſiderable profit by it. In the ſequel I intend to relate the manner of making the wampum.

November the 2d. BESIDES the different ſects of chriſtians, there are many Jews ſettled in *New York*, who poſſeſs great privileges. They have a ſynagogue and houſes, and great country ſeats of their own property, and are allowed to keep ſhops in town. They have likewiſe ſeveral ſhips, which they freight and ſend out with their own goods. In fine they enjoy all the privileges common to the other inhabitants of this town and province.

DURING my reſidence at *New York*, this time and in the two next years, I was frequently in company with Jews. I was informed among other things, that theſe people never boiled any meat for themſelves on ſaturday, but that they always did it the day before; and that in winter they kept a fire during the whole ſaturday. They commonly eat no pork; yet I have been told by ſeveral men of credit, that many of them (eſpecially among the young Jews) when travelling, did not not make the leaſt difficulty

culty about eating this, or any other meat that was put before them; even though they were in company with chriſtians. I was in their ſynagogue laſt evening for the firſt time, and this day at noon I viſited it again, and each time I was put into a particular ſeat which was ſet apart for ſtrangers or chriſtians. A young *Rabbi* read the divine ſervice, which was partly in Hebrew, and partly in the Rabinical dialect. Both men and women were dreſſed entirely in the *Engliſh* faſhion; the former had all of them their hats on, and did not once take them off during ſervice. The galleries, I obſerved, were appropriated to the ladies, while the men ſat below. During prayers the men ſpread a white cloth over their heads; which perhaps is to repreſent ſack cloth. But I obſerved that the wealthier ſort of people had a much richer cloth than the poorer ones. Many of the men had Hebrew books, in which they ſang and read alternately. The *Rabbi* ſtood in the middle of the ſynagogue, and read with his face turned towards the eaſt; he ſpoke however ſo faſt, as to make it almoſt impoſſible for any one to underſtand what he ſaid.*

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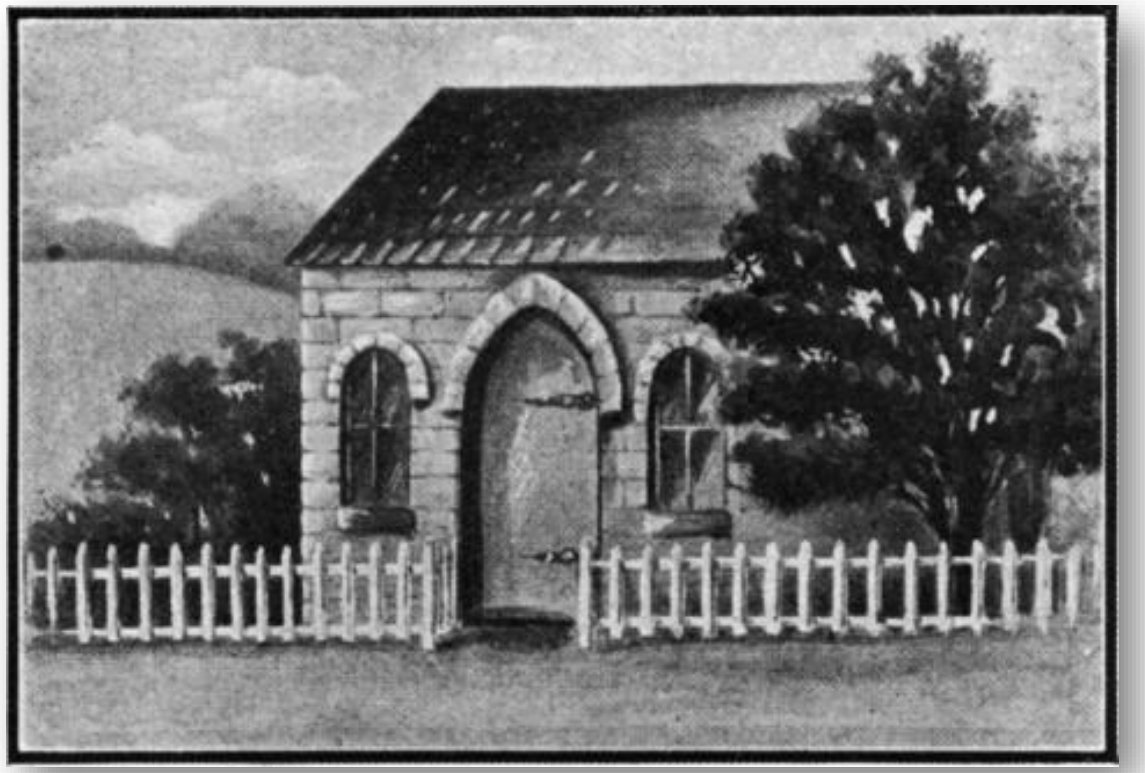
* As there are no Jews in *Sweden*, Prof. *Kalm* was an utter ſtranger to their manners and religious cuſtoms, and therefore relates them as a kind of novelty. F.



Genl Hand, Marchd at our Head. Genl Washington had been at Philadelphia to consult with the Congress upon some weighty Affairs; while he was about to lead them circumstance by the Troops that he had gone to resign his Office. This beloved by many in the Army. Nevertheless, he arrived in the City just before we marched into the City. Through Broad Way we marched round the King's Statue, & went back to the Parade, where we formed the Battalion, & Loul Washington, with several other Genl's, the Judges Advocates, &c., Marched by us, the Officers Saluted, & our Regt' receivd the Particular thanks of the Genl for their good conduct.

I was into the City, visited Dow' Warren, my old Friend; the first time I could find him, tho he had been in the City a Fortnight. Miss Betsy Grinn had returned. Spent about 2 Hours very agreeably, & returnd according to Engagements & dined with Doctor Warren, in Company with Major Cary, Judge Advocato Tudor,[2] & several Young Ladies. I spent the greatest part of the afternoon very agreeably in the same Company in the Gardens, &c. Then went into the City, was called in by Doct' Pasche & Capn Sargentt, drank Grog, &c. Lieut. Hayward & myself took an Evening walk, visited Genl Maugerour, discoursed on some particular Affairs, then on different Subjects; had a Friendly Conference, & got to my Tent about 10 o'clock.

Memorandum No. IV. continued.

June 8th, 1780. This Day being the Jewish Sabbath, I went into the City in the Afternoon with Ensign Bryant to

[1] Eli Hannah, Dr. John Warren, grangranfinter of the present Dr. John Collins Warren, a fine fiend of Bale.

[2] Hon William Tudor, b. 20 March, 1760; d. 8 July, 1819. He was Judge Advocate of the Continental Army from 30 July, 1776, until 1783.

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observe the Method of the Jewish Worship. The Synagogue is a small Square Building, having a Gallery all around, though no Person sat therein. At the Heith of the lower Part of the Gallery in the corners are 4 Candlesticks of Brass hanging from the Roof, each having 16 Candles of Wax; in the Centre of these is another, having twice that Number. At the East End of the Synagogue is a large Closet, which serves as a repository for the Law and (I suppose) other holy things. This is encompassed with Baniaters, and the Ascent thereto is by 8 or 4 Steps. Upon the Corner Posts of the Baniaters are standing large Brass Candle Sticks, about 1½ Feet long, & representtable in Magnitude. In these are Wax Candles of about 4 Inches Diameter and about 8 Feet Long. In the Middle of the Synagogue is the Rostrum or Pulpit looking to the Repository, to which the Ascent is by 3 Steps. On this is a large Table cover'd with Red Tapestry, fringed with Silver Lace. On each Corner of this also is a Candlestick and Candle like the Former. None of the Candles are alight in the day Time, but a Glass Lamp hange from the Roof, facing the Repository, which is kept constantly burning both night & Day. The Priest was a handsome Young Man of about 20. Yearsold in a black Gown, such as is worn by Bachelors of Arts. When he entered the Synagogue, he first walked to the Repository and unlocked the Door, then came down & went into the Rostrum & began to read, or what we should call sing, and soon after the People all joined with him, but they did not observe mys Tilere to their singing (as I then thought it to be, tho afterwards I was informed it was the propper way of their Reading). Sometimes this singing would alter into shaking, & the Priest would mutter his Hebrew much faster than I could read or speak English. This was done all sitting. Afterwards the Priest arose, and stood still singing with his Eyes fixed on

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This report is confirmed by an entry in the Shearith Israel minutes of the year 1757, which reads:

> The Parnassim and Elders having received undoubted Testimony that several of our Brethren in the Country have and do violate the principles of our holy religion, such as Trading on the Sabbath, Eating of forbidden Meats and other Henious Crimes. . . therefore whosoever for the future continues to act contrary to our Holy Law by breaking any of the principles command (sic) will not be deem'd a member of our Congregation, have none of the Mitzote (sic) of the Sinagoge Confered on him and when Dead will not be buried according to the manner of our brethren.[3]

In attempting to cope with the problem of religious laxity, Shearith Israel thus exercised the right of excommunication, the strongest course open to a religious body.

The report of Peter Kalm and the Shearith Israel entry both indicate that there was reason for religious laxity. When a Jew had to travel or when he lived in a rural community, it was difficult for him to secure food prepared according to Jewish law. Nevertheless, the threat of excommunication evidently brought about a renewal of religious observance. Many of the Jews of rural communities who came to Shearith Israel for the divine services on Yom Kippur and who heard the pronouncement of excommunication returned forthwith to a more careful observance of Jewish law. The records of Shearith Israel take cognizance of this revival; six months after the original decree, the *parnass* announced that the Elders had decided to readmit to the fold those who had mended their ways. The Elders also "flatter themselves [that] their pious intentions has in some measure succeeded." The qualifying phrase "in some measure" would seem to suggest that the desired improvement was not universal.[4]

Temporary or permanent residence outside of areas in which there was a concentration of Jews was not the only factor tending to religious laxity. Some Jews who had constant associations or business dealings with neighboring Christians found it difficult to maintain Sabbath observance. Others of the early New York Jews were Marranos who had been, at one time, in the habit of eating forbidden food and desecrating the Sabbath. Such causes for transgression as these must be taken into account.

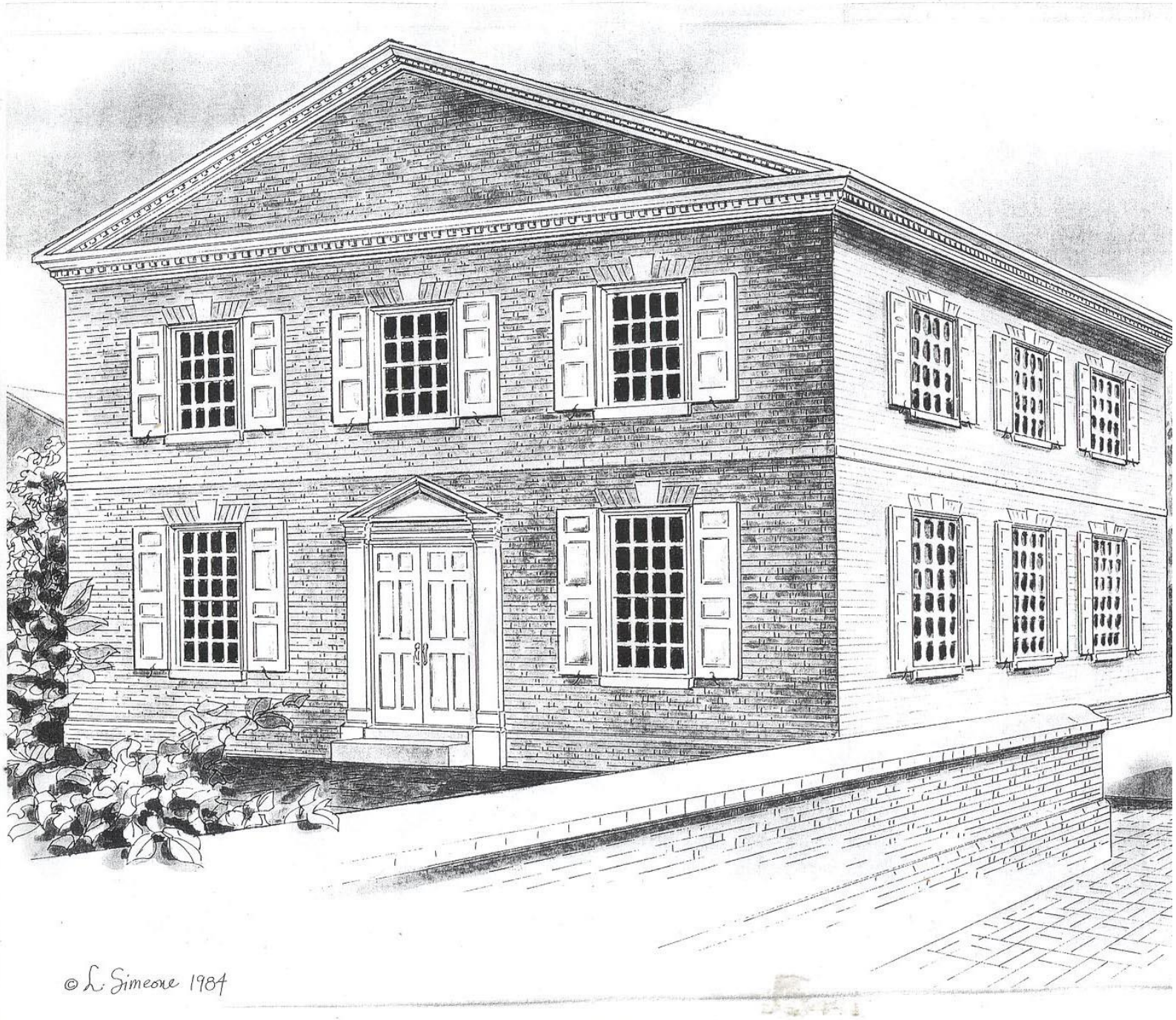
In general, as time passed the trend was to lower the penalty for nonconformity. In 1786, one Lion Jonas having for a considerable time trespassed on our holy Sabbath,

> the Parnassim and Adjustos wrote several letters to the said Lion Jonas desiring his attendance at the Hebra to all which he paid no attention but on the contrary insulted the Parnassim and Adjustos by exposing the said letters on the eve of Tisbeab. . . in a very unbecoming manner. . . It is therefore unanimously resolved that the said Lion Jonas shall have no Mitzva or any other benefit appertaining to the Synagogue. . . till he pays to the Trustees. . . a fine of five pounds.[5]

When Jonas was called to account for trespassing on the Sabbath, he showed the letter of reproof to some people who probably sympathized with him. The punishment meted out to him was mild. Nothing was said of excommunication. Furthermore, Lion Jonas's punishment may have been not for violating the Sabbath but for insulting the trustees. This case reveals a far more lenient attitude toward religious laxity on the part of Shearith Israel; there was even, perhaps, increased tolerance. Certainly the threat of excommunication was a thing of the past.

The organic law of the congregation, adopted in 1790, shows this change. Whereas, in 1757, a few who did not conform in the matters of dietary laws and Sabbath observance were cut off from the congregation, now the measures taken were entirely different. The by-laws now provided that

> Any Yehudi violating our religious laws by eating Trafa, Breaking the Sabbath or any other sacred day — shall not be called to the Sepher or receive any other Mitzva or be eligible to any office in the congregation.[6]



"Any Member or Subscriber, absenting himself from our meeting, at our Sabbath, or Holydays, and shall attend any other Society or congregation, or keep a meeting at his house, if proved shall be expelled from our Society and nevermore become a member, likewise shall no member of subscriber leave the synagogue until the prayers are over or he or they shall pay a fine of twenty-five cents. But in case a person has to go out, and requests the President for leave and it is granted, such a person shall not pay a fine."

-- Article 14 of the Rodeph Shalom Bylaws (ca. 1802?)