

Lancaster's First Jewish Community

1715 to 1804

The Era of Joseph Simon

by David Brener

INTRODUCTION

It would be nice to be number One, first. Lancaster Jews are not first; we are fourth. We are the fourth oldest Jewish community in North America.

Lancaster did well however. Only New York (1654), Newport (1677) and Philadelphia (1703-1738) welcomed Jews earlier. All those cities, and several that came after Lancaster, had one thing in common: a natural waterway. Lancaster is landlocked, it had no right to have Jewish settlers before Savannah (1733) Charleston (1749) and other seaports.

Yet Lancaster was the most important inland city in colonial America and it was that importance, as we will see, that attracted Jews here. Although populated much earlier, Lancaster County was born in 1729. From as early as 1715 to his death in 1732, Isaac Miranda, a Jew by birth, would maintain a farm and trading post in Lancaster County. It is his presence that dates Lancaster ahead of a boatload of Jews that arrived in Savannah in 1733.

It was typical of colonial towns to have one or more Jews as their leaders both spiritually and financially. In Pennsylvania, Philadelphia would have Nathan Levy, David Franks and later Michael and Barnard Gratz. The smaller Jewish communities around Lancaster—York, Reading, Easton and Heidelberg (Schaefferstown)—were led by Elijah Etting (1750's), Myer Josephson (1756), Myer Hart (1752) and Barnard Jacobs (1759) respectively. In Lancaster it was Joseph Simon who arrived in Lancaster town no later than 1740.

This research effort is divided into several parts. Part I is a general introduction to Jews coming to America. Part II deals with Pennsylvania and Lancaster's Jewish community in general. Part III is the story of Joseph Simon, Lancaster's first and only important colonial Jew. Part IV deals with the Simon estate and his descendants. Part V contains various appendices which, for those who desire more insight and detail, is suggested reading. Also in that section are family trees, which are a must to understand the relationships between people. Part VI is the bibliography and footnotes.

This is not a historical novel. Perhaps it is not easy reading. It is a presentation of facts surrounded by words. It is not "the greatest story ever told." Jews in America were not in a position to do great things. What they enjoyed in religious and economic freedom, they were lacking in political freedom. Their reluctance to take "Christian oaths of office" effectively kept them out of power and, in many colonies, they were not allowed to vote. Yet the Jews' presence was felt, and, on the economic front, it helped to make and secure America.

I am an amateur historian, but I make no apologies. Unlike many of the academic historians with doctorates, I had no phobia against digging into dusty records and traveling to far off places to find and *confirm* facts. I have noticed that far too often, a person writing a history will accept as gospel what a prior historian has written. I learned early in the game to question everything. As a result, I have, in my opinion, disproved several existing statements once considered to be true. Additionally, as the first researcher on Lancaster Jews and Joseph Simon in some seventy-five years, proudly, I have many new facts to relate.

I direct your attention in the introduction to the bibliography in which I express my appreciation to those who have been helpful to me. Those interested in learning more about American Jewish history will find a discussion of the books that were most useful to me.

A glossary of Jewish terms follows this introduction. It should make your understanding of this article easier. I am grateful to the late Rabbi Samson Shain for the definitions.

Now, I invite you to learn about colonial Lancaster Jews. I encourage your comments and recognize that errors are to be found. The minute one publishes a history, a new fact surfaces to dispute it. This is to be encouraged. Please take time to advise the author.

GLOSSARY

ASHKENAZIC JEW — Term mainly applied to Jews of Northern and Eastern Europe.

BODEK — He who inspects the animal after its ritual slaughter.

CIRCUMCISION, RITUAL — Circumcision is one of the most important of Jewish commandments. It was interpreted as a sign of the covenant between God and Israel and, therefore, indispensable as a mark of affiliation with Israel. It consists of amputation of the male prepuce. Appropriate benedictions are recited before and after the circumcision, and the child is given a Hebrew name at the time.

GENTILE — Any person not a Jew.

HAZZAN — [Cantor] In 18th century America, without its ordained Rabbis, person who was reader and leader of prayers at communal services, teacher of children and one who performed marriages.

KAHAL — Jewish communal self-government during Middle Ages and early modern period.

KETUBAH, WEDDING — [Literally means *writing*]. Traditional marriage contract, detailing duties of wife and husband, and providing money penalties for divorcement of wife.

KOSHER MEAT — Meat that is ritually proper. Kosher, in the main, is applied to food prepared in accord with traditional Jewish law.

MINYAN — The minimum of ten Hebrew males over thirteen required for communal prayers.

MOHEL — Authorized functionary performing ritual circumcision.

RABBI — Literally, "my master", "my teacher". He functions today like clergymen of other faiths, providing pastoral guidance and supervision of religious ceremonies.

SEPHARDIC JEW — Descriptive title applying mainly to Iberian Jews and their descendants, largely centered on the Mediterranean.

SHOHET OR SCHOHET — Ritual Slaughterer.

TALLITH — Prayer shawl of wool, silk or other fabric, bearing fringes (tzitzit) on each of its four corners.

TALMUDIC PRECEPTS — The collection of writings constituting the Jewish civil and religious law. It consists of two parts, the Mishnah (text) and the Gemara (commentary on the Mishnah). The Mishnah contains traditional oral interpretations of scriptural ordinances completed by the Rabbis about 200 C.E.

TEPHILLIN — (Phylacteries) The leather cubes strapped to arms and head by observant Jews during daily morning prayers; each contains quotations from the Bible.

TORAH — The whole body of Jewish religious literature, including Hebrew Scripture, the Talmud, etc.

YIDDISH — A language derived from Medieval High German, spoken by East European Jews and their descendants in other countries. It is written in the Hebrew alphabet and contains borrowings from Hebrew, Russian, Polish, English, etc.

PART I

THE REASONS JEWS CAME TO AMERICA

Before I can dwell on the Jews of Lancaster, it is best to understand, in simplified form, why Jews came to America in the first place. It really started back in 70 C.E. [Christian Era] when the ancient state of Palestine was overrun by the Romans. Although some Jews remained in the mid-East, the vast majority spread out to all nations of western and eastern Europe.

By the ninth century, Moslems crossed the Straits of Gibraltar and conquered Spain. Under the Moslems, Jews lived in relative peace. However, by the thirteenth century, Christian governments took over from the Moslems. Competition developed between Jew and Christian. Christians became envious of Jewish wealth, and their role as advisors, tax collectors and financiers of Kings. Anti-Jewish laws soon developed, anti-Jewish violence followed and Jews were blamed for the Black Plague. They were blamed because Jews, who followed strict rules of cleanliness and ritual food preparation, were not stricken with the dreaded sickness in the same proportion as Gentiles. Fanatics had the populace convinced that Jews practiced ritual murder to obtain Christian blood for the Passover feast. The period of the Inquisition followed with Jews forced into conversions. Those who converted outwardly and practiced Judaism in secret were called Marranos or "pigs."

Finally, in 1492, Jews were forced to leave Spain. At first they fled to Portugal (where they were expelled in 1497), Morocco, Egypt, Italy or Holland. Columbus, for his voyage in 1492, had so much Jewish scientific and financial support, that there are those students of Jewish history who feel Columbus may have been of Jewish blood. Nevertheless there were at least six "baptized" Jews with Columbus and one of these, the interpreter of the fleet, Luis de Torres, was the first person to set foot on New World soil.¹

In 1631, the Dutch captured from Portugal, Recife, Brazil. Under the Dutch, Jews, who had fled there, lived in virtual freedom. It is estimated that some 1,500 Jews emigrated to Brazil. However in 1654, the Portuguese recaptured Recife and the Jews again fled. Some went back to Holland, but others boarded a ship for New Amsterdam (New York).

In September of that year, 23 men, women and children arrived at

the harbor of New Amsterdam. They were greeted by Peter Stuyvesant who wanted the ship's captain to turn around and leave without letting the Jews enter his Dutch colony. The captain refused as these poor Jews had not the money even to pay for their voyage to New Amsterdam.

Peter Stuyvesant did his best to restrict the freedom of these newly-arrived Jews. He feared that allowing one minority in would encourage even less desirable minority groups. Many times, under the leadership of Asser Levy, the Jews had to go over his head to the Dutch West India Company to gain the rights that the other inhabitants of New Amsterdam enjoyed. While under the thumb of Stuyvesant, Jews could not purchase a cemetery or have a formal house of worship.²

The English Gain Control

In 1664, the British drove the Dutch out and New Amsterdam became New York. Almost at once a cemetery was purchased and, with the consent of the English, Congregation Shearith Israel was informally organized in 1686 and given a bonafide charter in 1729. It would be the oldest Jewish Congregation in North America. The second Jewish settlement would be Rhode Island in the city of Newport. The community dates back to 1677 with their cemetery being deeded in 1678. Their synagogue, constructed in 1763, Yeshuat Israel (Salvation of Israel), better known as Touro Synagogue, is the oldest surviving Jewish house of worship in the United States. It is not premature to point out that Lancaster's Congregation Shaarai Shomayim's synagogue on the corner of Duke and James Street is the fourth oldest, still in constant use, in the United States. It was constructed in 1896.

PART II

JEWISH MOVEMENT INTO PENNSYLVANIA

The Jews of New York and Rhode Island were, for the most part, Sephardic. That is, they were of Spanish or Portuguese blood. The majority of Jews who first came to Pennsylvania were Ashkenazic or Germanic Europeans. Some were even second generation Americans. The Sephardic Jews, who first came to America, were fleeing the Inquisition. Many who came over in the 1700's came of their own free will.

Why did the European Jews come to America? In the eighteenth century, America was not the place of "Golden Opportunity" which it would be for Jews in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Indeed, Europe, by the mid 1700's, was becoming tolerable for the Jews. Protestant Europe, unlike Catholic Europe, did not try to convert the Jew under threat of death. Rather it recognized their skills in commerce and flair for international trade. Slowly, ever so slowly, Jews were

gaining respect and freedom in Europe and England.

Still Jews came to America, often over strong objections of relatives and friends. Even though there was progress, Jews still had to live under petty political disabilities. Among these were: having to live in ghettos; wearing of badges; exclusion from honorific office, political rights and the owning of land; not being allowed to join craft guilds or attend schools and universities; exclusion from certain professions; prohibition from marrying; subjection to humiliating oaths and discriminatory taxation; and the restriction of inheritance from father to only one son.

It was from this that the Jews fled to America in the 1700's. Others simply had a lust for adventure. Dr. Jacob Marcus, director of the American Jewish Archives said it best in his *The Colonial American Jew 1492 to 1776* in a chapter titled "Whence, Why, Who, When, Where."⁸

Very little of the traditional anti-Jewish medieval legislation took root in British North America, and so there were fewer laws that hampered Jews. The Colonies possessed no feudal heritage, developed no guilds; knew no prohibitions in the purchase of land. The only truly effective barriers here were nature herself, her savage Indians, and man's own personal incapacity.

The Jews could make progress here because there were no bounds to his freedom of movement, his freedom to settle where he wished and marry whom he would. Capital went further in America than in Europe and competition was less keen. Additionally the American Jew's strong family ties in Europe were a boon to the import and export industry in which they would engage.

Jews were under less pressure when they came to America. They came by choice and were not forced.

The colonial Jew was scarcely ever forcibly uprooted or in flight from a situation of crisis. Desperation led very few Jews to come; there were few indentured servants and fewer criminals among the Jews who sailed to America.

The typical Jewish immigrant of this period was either wealthy enough to have or to have quickly earned the six to ten pounds needed to purchase passage across the ocean. It could be said that the American Jew being wealthier, better educated, fostered by cohesiveness to other Jews and having his family ties in Europe, had an excellent opportunity to find peace, freedom and economic success in America.

Philadelphia

It was only natural that the first city in Pennsylvania and the third in North America to welcome Jews would be Philadelphia. Under pressure, Stuyvesant allowed a handful of New York Jewish merchants to travel down the Delaware for the purposes of trading. The first of these were Isaac Israel and Isaac Cardoso in 1655.

Philadelphia in 1663 was a small settlement of tiny cabins called Wicaco. A "Councillor" named Israel, perhaps Isaac Israel, held the political office of being in charge of this small settlement of Indian

traders. Individual Jews appear in Philadelphia records as early as 1703. Yet, it would not be until 1738 that Jewish leadership in the form of David Franks and Nathan Levy would come to start a bonafide Jewish community. Levy would purchase a cemetery and Jews worshiped informally as early as 1740 with congregation Mikveh Israel being chartered in 1771.

William Penn's Philosophy

Pennsylvania was a good environment for Jews. William Penn tolerated minorities. His "advertising agent" Gabriel Thomas wrote this in 1698 to attract Jewish settlers:

The Natives, or first inhabitants of this Country in their original, are suppos'd by most people to have been the Ten Scattered Tribes (of Israel), for they resemble the Jews very much in the Make of their Persons, and Tincture of their Complexions; they observe New Moons, they offer their first Fruits to a Maneto, or suppos'd Diety.....and have a kind of Feast of Tabernacles. ⁴

James Logan was not Jewish; he was a Quaker born in Ireland. In 1699 he accompanied Penn on his second visit to Pennsylvania. From 1701 to 1717 he was appointed by Penn as Secretary of the Province or in other words, the man who ran things for Penn. He was absolutely brilliant and among his many languages was Hebrew. His interest in the Jews, their culture and history was amazing. He had the finest Hebraic Library in Philadelphia and in America outside of the universities. ⁵ He was also a friend of Isaac Miranda.

Isaac Miranda •

It is based on the travels of Isaac Miranda, that Lancaster County places fourth in order of Jewish settlement in North America. He emigrated to Pennsylvania between 1710 and 1715 from Tuscany (Italy). He was born a Jew and apparently was well to do. At first he engaged in Indian trade with James Logan but soon went out on his own. By 1720, he was in Indian country, in the wilds of Lancaster County. He ran a trading post near Campbell's Inn. His farm was located along, just below and southeast of Conoy Creek running along the Susquehanna River about seven-eighths mile. It was about 210 acres in 1737 in his son George's name, but was about 500 acres when listed in Isaac's will of 1732. Perhaps his son sold part of it off by 1737. Originally, this land was in Donegal Township, but in 1842 became Conoy Township. When Isaac first settled there, it was part of Chester County.

He did quite well on his farm and in his Indian trading post. There is record of his purchasing a pair of silver candlesticks, a pair of snuff-ers, and a stand for them in 1720. Through his friendship with Logan and his willingness to take Christian Oaths of Office, he obtained political jobs. In 1723, he was sent by the Governor to negotiate details con-

cerning a mine beyond the Susquehanna. Under orders, he apparently acted against the best interests of the settlers.

In 1726, in a letter to a friend, Logan described Miranda as "an Apostate Jew or fashionable Christian" and warned his friend to be careful in dealing with Miranda. In 1730 the Indians filed a formal complaint against Isaac who they claimed defrauded them. In all probability it was the gullibility and childish wants of the Indians which made them give their valuable furs in exchange for trinkets, mirrors, rum and blankets. Such was the nature of Indian traders.

In 1727, he was an "Agent to Receive and Collect Perquisites (compensations) and Rights of the Admiralty" and later that year he was named "Deputy Judge of the Court of Vice-Admiralty of the Province of Pennsylvania." His time in office was short, and he was fired for failure to carry out an order of the Vice-Admiralty Judge. Corruption of others may have been involved.

Miranda was able to hold these offices because he had converted. In the gentile world of Lancaster County, he led a lonely Jewish existence. There was no minyan (ten males) for services, no Kosher meat and no fellow Jews to observe his Jewish life or lack of it. Worse, there were no Jewesses to court and marry. It was no surprise to the historian that Miranda took a Christian wife and, by default, he and his children left the practice of Judaism.

He was a "wheeler dealer", mixing politics with Indian trading. By the time of his death in 1732, (his place of burial is not known) he was quite wealthy and had extensive landownings. In his will he left a large tract of land along the Rahway River in New Jersey to his son George (also an Indian trader who would be an early partner of Barnard and Michael Gratz); he bequested to son Samuel, 500 acres of land in Donegal (Lancaster County), and to daughter Mary several houses in Philadelphia. Even in death he had politics on his mind. He left to James Hamilton, Esquire (who laid out Lancaster), several thousand acres of land in New Jersey and a large amount of personal property, if he married Miranda's daughter Mary. Hamilton did not marry Mary, but did become Governor of Pennsylvania.

That is about all we know of Isaac Miranda, the first person of Jewish blood to enter Lancaster County. It is he and he alone that places Lancaster ahead of a boatload of Jews that arrived in Savannah in 1733.

Lancaster Town 7

Before we turn our attention to the arrival of Jews in Lancaster city, we should briefly review some basic facts about early Lancaster.

The Proprietaries of the Colony of Pennsylvania decided to establish a town ten miles from the Susquehanna "situate on or near a small run of water." This land was originally granted in 1682 by William Penn to Richard Wooler of London. His sons in turn granted

this land to Samuel Arnold in 1714. In 1730, Andrew Hamilton purchased these 500 acres and sold the land to his son James for five shillings. James then proceeded to plat the town of Lancaster.

Prior to 1729, Lancaster was frequented by Indian traders. Some settled here establishing friendly relations with Indians with whom they bartered powder, blankets, trinkets etc. for valuable furs. By this year it is estimated that Lancaster County had some 3000 inhabitants and what was the beginning of Lancaster city, 15 households.

Originally part of Chester County, the settlers found it inconvenient to travel from Lancaster to the county seat of Chester to transact legal business. Furthermore, no attention was given to the needed roads and bridges. Following a petition of the settlers, Lancaster County was created May 10, 1729, and Lancaster Town was chosen the county seat.

Lancaster soon became the most important inland city in America. It was far enough (two days ride) from Philadelphia to be economically self-sustaining. Emigrants moving into the wilderness of the West stopped in Lancaster to buy cattle, wagons, guns, trading articles, hardware and utensils for their journey. The merchants of Philadelphia and New York would import these items from England and sell them through the Lancaster shopkeepers. Likewise, the furs these Indian traders took in trade would be exported to London by these same big city businessmen. By 1741, Lancaster city had grown to about 300 to 400 citizens.

Lancaster's First Jew

From all indications, the first Jew to settle in Lancaster was Joseph Simon who arrived in 1740 or 1741. Certainly prior to that date, Miranda or other Jewish traders passed through or even stayed a while in Lancaster. But Simon was the first to make his home here. One early American Jewish historian in 1888, without proof, stated, that Simon arrived in 1735, but I have not been able to confirm that date.⁸ Joseph Simon's obituary of 1804 stated that he had been "63 years in the city."⁹ Furthermore, Simon was "naturalized" in 1749. Naturalization was an English law giving certain trading rights to colonists who were not born in England, but who had been in America at least seven years. The bulk of this paper will deal with Joseph Simon and his nephew Levy Andrew Levy who arrived in 1746. At this point, I will merely introduce them, Simon being the first and Levy an early Lancaster Jew.

Identification of Lancaster Jews

As anyone who has researched the pre-Revolution knows, it is no small task to find out who and when settlers arrived or what they did. No birth or death records were kept and, as we will see later, there were no religious records kept either. We can place and date people by the

tax lists, wills, deeds and other legal records. Another source that has been used in personal correspondence of early American Jews. Fortunately large collections, referred to in the bibliography have survived.¹⁰ All these sources, when each fact or event is recorded and then taken as a whole, give us some information on Lancaster Jews.

The first thing that became apparent is that with the exception of Joseph Simon, Levy Andrew Levy and Joseph Solomon and their families, no other Jew made Lancaster his home for the bulk of his adult life. When Lancaster was the last civilized outpost from 1740 to 1760, many Jewish traders were in town for various periods of time. After 1763 when Carlisle and Pittsburgh became the westward outposts, the Jewish population declined. It rapidly built up again from 1776 to 1781 when Jews and others fled the British occupied cities such as Philadelphia and New York for the safety of Lancaster. After 1783 the population of Jews dwindled significantly.

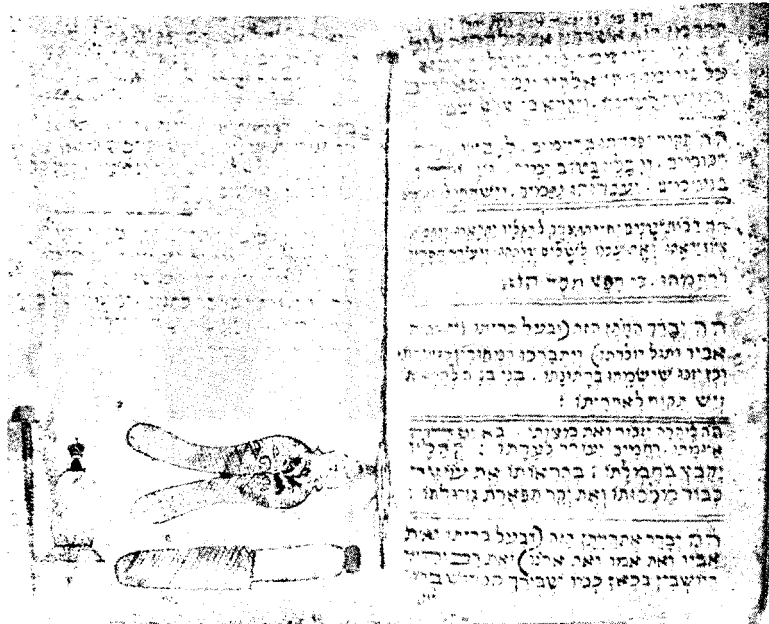
It shall be my purpose to identify Jews who were known to have been in Lancaster. I will try to identify what they did here and also to give a short biography of each. By reading this one can get a feel of the lifestyle of the colonial American Jew. In the appendix is a chart that "logs" the Jews of colonial Lancaster. With the exception of the boatloads to New York and Savannah, most Jews immigrated as individuals. Jewish population in North America by 1776 totaled only about 2,000 out of a total population of two or two and a half million or about one tenth of one percent of the population.

Barnard Itzhak Jacobs 11

It is only fitting that we start with Barnard Jacobs. He played a role of great importance to the community and to the modern American Jewish historian. He was Lancaster County's Mohel or ritual circumciser. By Jewish tradition and law, each male child must be circumcised on the eighth day of life. Amazing as it sounds, Jacobs' record or diary (when compared to birthdates confirmed from other sources) indicates he was always there on the eighth day whether the birth was in Philadelphia, York, Lancaster, Easton or Reading.

Jacobs' value to the historian is that he kept a record of some 33 rituals he performed between 1757 and 1790. That record has survived and is the property of Congregation Mikveh Israel of Philadelphia. His record has proved invaluable in pinpointing the dates and places of birth and names of parents of the sons of this colonial era. The first seven pages of the book contain the ritual in Hebrew and it is illustrated with drawings of his technique and instruments used.

Jacobs was probably born in Germany. By 1757 he was in Heidelberg, then in Lancaster County and now known as Schaeffers-town of Lebanon County. In partnership with Isaac Levy, he ran a general store. (One could not make a living in being a Mohel.) In 1770, after both Isaac Levy died and Jacobs' wife Clara died, Jacob married



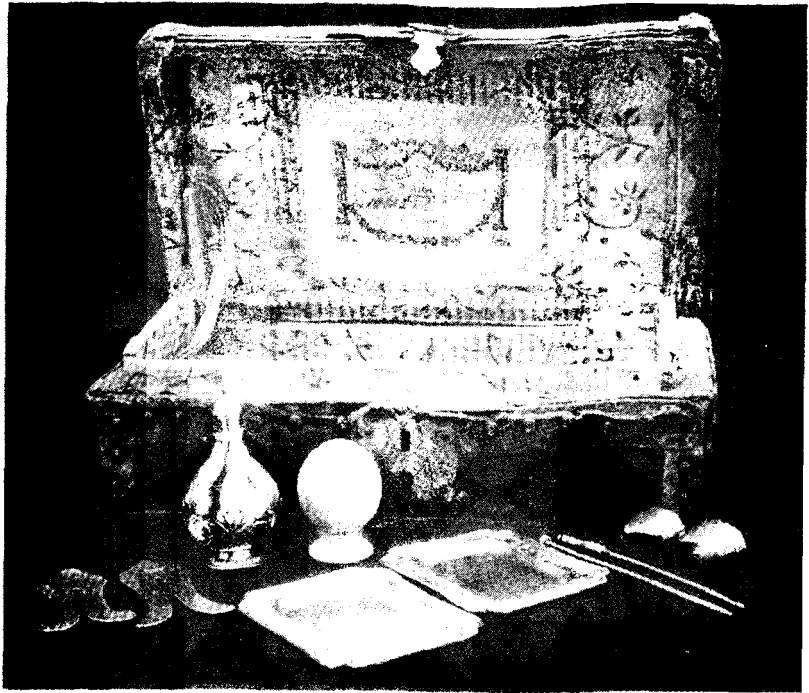
Circumcision Book of Barnard Itzhak Jacobs, ca. 1765

Levy's widow Judica. Apparently he was respected in Heidelberg by the Christian community. He was given the honorary title "Jew Rabbi" and was made manager of a lottery to raise funds to build Millcreek Church. He was accused of stealing some of the funds, but was completely exonerated.

He was in Philadelphia from 1770 to 1776 and spent the war years of 1777 to 1783 in Lancaster. From 1783 to 1788, there is no trace of him. However, in 1788, he was back in Philadelphia for the marriage of his daughter. In 1790, his last recorded circumcision was performed on his grandson, Naphtali Raphael.

He moved to Baltimore about 1790 but was gone by 1796. He did not perform the ritual on his second grandson in 1792. Perhaps he was incapacitated due to old age or even dead by that date.

Jacobs seemed to have his financial ups and downs. Often he was at odds with Joseph Simon, and Simon had to sue him in 1762 to collect some debts. He was known to have been in prison, but it is not clear if it was for failure to pay debts or for that false accusation of stealing. Yet David Franks once asked Jacobs for money to help ransom a Nathan Levy (not of Philadelphia fame) who was aboard a British prison ship. This would indicate some wealth.



Circumcision set typical of the type that may have been used by Barnard Jacobs. This one belonged to Moses Mendes Seixas (1744-1809). Courtesy of the American Jewish Historical Society.

Daniel Mendez da Castro ¹²

A prime example of knowing about someone only from legal records, is the story of Daniel Mendez da Castro. His story revolves around a lot and house he owned in Lancaster. This lot was known as Hamilton lot #175 located at the rear of present day 20-32 North Queen Street and is now part of the Central Market Building. Apparently Castro had a shop or store there.

This is what the deeds tell us. On November 10, 1744, he purchased from James Hamilton the above lot measuring 40 feet by 139 feet. As was common with sales by Hamilton, he had to promise to build a house and to pay Hamilton three pounds yearly as "ground rent."

One month later, on December 28, he mortgaged this property to David Franks and Nathan Levy of Philadelphia for 102 pounds. In all probability this was in security for goods sold to Castro for sale in his store. On April 29, 1745, Franks and Levy gave him a second mortgage of 50 pounds.

Joseph Simon, by virtue of power of attorney, on August 15, 1746, guaranteed a third mortgage of 54 pounds to Jacob Franks and Naphtali Hart Myers of Philadelphia.

In a Philadelphia newspaper of December 1746, Castro advised that he was going back to Curacao and called in his debts. He apparently left without clearing up his mortgages however.

These financial dealings came to a conclusion when the sheriff on September 15, 1750, sold at public sale his property to Peter Spyker to satisfy a judgment due Franks and Levy. The property sold for 230 pounds. That is all we know about Daniel Mendez da Castro, which is unfortunate, as he was probably the second earliest Jew in Lancaster.

Isaac Nunes Henriques ¹³

Isaac was probably the third known Jew in Lancaster city. He was married in London in 1726 to Abigail Sequeiro and was on that first boatload of Jews that arrived in Savannah in 1733. Economic problems in Georgia and the fear of Spanish Florida (the Inquisition was still on their minds), caused most Georgia Jews to leave the colony. Henriques went to New York and learned the art of being a Shohet (ritual slaughterer). By 1736 he was granted a license as both a Shohet and Bodek (inspector of meat).

He was still in New York in 1741 when he was naturalized. Yet as early as 1743 or by 1747 he was in Lancaster, where on February 3 of that year, he joined Joseph Simon and deeded a cemetery for use by the "Society of Jews settled in and about Lancaster." He lived next door to Simon on the south-west corner of Penn Square and in all probability was the Shohet for the community. Tax records indicate that he was gone by 1756, and he died in Philadelphia in 1767.

Abraham de Lyon ¹⁴

Abraham de Lyon was unique. He left London in 1732 and was also on that first boatload of Jews in Savannah. However, he was from Portugal and was an expert grower of wine grapes. With the encouragement of the Trustees of Georgia, he planted a vineyard with seedling he brought with him. By 1737 he had excellent grapes. After spending 400 pounds of his own money, he appealed to the Trustees for financial help. Since it was not forthcoming and since slavery (in Georgia at that time) was outlawed, he no longer could afford to grow grapes. Thus he left for New York and was naturalized with Henriques in 1741.

In a New York business record there is an entry in 1743 indicating that de Lyon had "gone to Conestoga", (perhaps with Henriques) a reference to Lancaster. What he did here or how long he stayed is not known. The earliest Lancaster tax list of 1750 indicates that he was gone by then.

His daughter Zipporah married Mordecai M. Mordecai. Mordecai was at various times in Lancaster, but his name fails to appear on any tax lists. He lived a colorful life and often was a self-proclaimed Rabbi. An excellent account of his life was written by Rabbi Malcolm Stern and can be found in the bibliography.

Sampson Lazarus ¹⁵

Sampson was an early Lancaster shopkeeper. His name first appears in the 1751 tax list. However, by 1757, he seemed to have left Lancaster for Frederick(town), Maryland. He spent part of the War years there helping to care for British War prisoners for the Continental Congress. By 1780, he was back in Lancaster when his daughter Brandy, on March 28, 1781, married Joshua Isaac. Joshua (1744-1810) and his bride (who gave birth to a son on March 28, 1782) left Lancaster in 1785. Sampson left in 1783 and died in New York in 1788.

Joseph Myers ¹⁶

Lancaster tax lists from 1769 to 1780 mention a Joseph Myers as a silversmith in 1771. There is some confusion as to who he was. In New York there lived a famous silversmith named Myer Myers. He had a son Joseph who was born in 1764 and died in Richmond in 1827. Obviously, Myer Myers' son could not have been the Joseph Myers of 1771 at the age of seven. Yet Myers' son Joseph does appear in a religious record in 1780 at the age of sixteen. To further confuse matters, a Joseph Myers appears on deeds of 1753 in Lancaster and a Joseph M. Myers is well documented in Philadelphia Jewish circles in the 1780's. At best, we can say that a Joseph Myers, who may have been three different persons and perhaps Jewish, was in Lancaster from 1769 to 1780 and in 1771 was a silversmith.

Eleazar Lyons ¹⁷

Eleazar Lyons (1729-1816) was a native of Holland. He is said to have married a Hannah Levy also of Holland who was reported to have reached the banks of the Susquehanna near Harrisburg in 1776. Eleazar was in Lancaster tax lists from 1775 to 1781 and by 1786 was in Baltimore. Later he migrated to Surinam, a Dutch Colony in South America, but returned to Philadelphia where he died. He, too, may have been a merchant or shopkeeper.

Moses Lazarus ¹⁸

It was common practice for Joseph Simon to hire a person to serve as his and the community's Shohet and to teach the children. A letter of 1768 indicates that Moses Lazarus, who had served Simon in that ca-

capacity, was leaving the family. When he first came is unknown and as a non-property owner and a boarder of Simon, he did not appear on tax lists. There was a Moses Lazarus who served as Shohet for Congregation Shearith Israel in New York in 1771 and who in 1785 applied for a peddler's license in Baltimore.

Joseph Solomon 19

Joseph Solomon was born in London in 1710. He married there, in 1738, Bilah Myers-Cohen and became the uncle of Rosa Bunn, the future wife of Joseph Simon. Shearith Israel records indicate that he was in New York as early as 1742 and again in 1747. However, the business record of Daniel Gomez indicates that he was in Lancaster as early as 1744.



Joseph Solomon (1710-1777), early Lancaster Jew and shopkeeper. Buried in Shaarai Shomayim cemetery.

By 1747 he joined his brother-in-law Hiam Solomon Bunn and his niece Rosa Bunn in Lancaster. In that year he witnessed a deed transferring property (a dowry) from Bunn to Joseph Simon. He was naturalized in Lancaster in 1749.

His name appears on the 1751 to 1775 tax lists with the exception of 1769. It can be assumed that Lancaster became his permanent home. He was a shopkeeper and his name appeared on the list of approved Indian traders in Pennsylvania. From time to time, prior to 1768, he served the community as shoet. He usually filled in when Simon was unable to hire a permanent one.

Solomon may have made a trip back to London in 1769-70. In a 1770 Michael Gratz letter, Gratz signed a bond to secure return passage for a Joseph Solomon from London. This is further confirmed by his name failing to appear on the 1769 tax list and that his son Isaac signed a petition (rather than the father, Joseph) in 1770 for a new road between Strasburg and Philadelphia. In 1763 Joseph Solomon was a charter member of the Friendship Fire Company and assisted in putting out a fire at Joseph Simon's house in 1765.

Joseph had two daughters. Rachel (1747-1797) would marry the tailor Levy Marks (1737-1781). Shinah (1744-1822) would marry Elijah Etting (1724-1778) who was the only colonial Jew in York, Pa. Their son Solomon Etting (1764-1847) would take, as his first wife, Rachel Simon in 1783. In other words, Joseph Solomon's great-grandchildren would be Joseph Simon's grandchildren. However Solomon died in 1777 before the marriage. He is buried in the "Shaarai Shomayim's" cemetery and his stone is readable today.

Joseph Solomon had three sons: Myer (1740-1800), Isaac (1742-1798) and Levy (1748-1827). They worked with their father as shopkeepers but all three eventually moved to Baltimore. Isaac left in 1782 and Myer was the last to leave in 1793. Levy Solomon became quite wealthy and prominent. Isaac and Levy never married. Myer on December 23, 1778 married Catherine (Caty) Bush, and had seven children. Their daughter, Arabella (1786-1826) married in 1805 Zalegman Phillips, who, in 1799 was the first professing Jewish lawyer in Philadelphia. They had numerous children.

Dr. Jacob Marcus relates an interesting story about Myer. Eleazar Lyons, in a letter to Barnard Gratz in 1771, relates that Myer had to be begged to attend religious services. It wasn't that he lacked Jewishness. Apparently he was angry with some local Jews, and by staying away it made it more difficult for them to find the required ten males needed to conduct worship services.

Levy Marks ²⁰

Levy Marks was a gentlemen's tailor who as early as 1760 travelled between shops in Lancaster and Philadelphia. Levy's date of birth is considered to be 1737. Michael Gratz, in an early will, lists Levy and

his brother Henry (1729-1809 a manufacturer of starch) as cousins. In 1764 Levy became part of the Joseph Solomon family by marrying Rachel Solomon. By outfitting the wealthy Philadelphia families, he made a good living. By 1767 he had an indentured servant of his own.

He had the distinction of being the first Philadelphia Jew to join the Masonic Order, having been raised in 1762 to the Third Degree in Lodge No. two. He was a benefactor and trustee of Mikveh Israel during its formation in 1773.

Marks seemed to have spent a good portion of the war years in the safety of Lancaster. In 1777 he joined other Lancastrians in supplying the money to pay for a messenger between Lancaster and the armies of George Washington. In 1777 he petitioned the Continental Congress in hopes of being named to the post of supervising the making of Army uniforms. It appears that he did not get the job. Christopher Marshall, who kept a diary of his personal activities and thoughts during the Revolutionary War period both in Lancaster and Philadelphia, on November 8, 1778 speaks favorably of Levy Marks for inviting him to dinner. In 1780 Levy is listed in Philadelphia records as well as Lancaster and he died in 1781. His son Solomon (1766-1824) was listed as a tailor in Lancaster in 1782, but left shortly thereafter.

Lazarus Isaac 21

Lazarus Isaac was a "glass cutter and engraver upon glass" who advertised in May of 1773 in the *Pennsylvania Packet* for a job. He was hired by William Henry Steigel, June 14, 1773. He worked for Steigel from August 10, 1773, to February 14, 1774 in the famous Elizabeth Furnace in Lancaster County, and was paid five pound - ten per month. It is comforting to know that some of that famous Steigel glassware was carved by a Jew. There is no doubt that he was a Jew, because his contract, still in existence, was signed in Hebrew. (Lezar bar Yitzhak).

Aaron Levy 22

Aaron Levy is not unknown to historians of American Jewry. He was thought to have been born in 1742 in Amsterdam and to have emigrated to America in 1760. His first ten years were spent in and around Lancaster and Philadelphia. The earliest official record of Levy was in 1772 when he purchased a lot in the frontier town of Sunbury, Northumberland County. He was listed as a "merchant," a title of higher standing than a "shopkeeper," in early Sunbury tax lists. He had business connections with the Gratzes, Joseph Simon and Levy Andrew Levy (no relationship). He handled imported goods, selling them to the military units and local inhabitants. He also did a little Indian trading and land speculation. During the Revolutionary War, the British encouraged the Indians to raid and massacre Sunbury residents. Levy and his wife Rachel fled and arrived in "safe" Lancaster in 1778. There

he bought out Levy Andrew Levy's interest in some of Joseph Simon's enterprises. Levy was patriotic, having served in the militia in Sunbury as well as under Captain John Ewing in Lancaster. An entry in the *Journal of the Continental Congress* indicated that by 1781 he had invested in treasury loans. He left Lancaster about 1782.

Aaron Levy's greatest fame is the 334 acres of fertile countryside in Penns Valley, situated 30 miles west of Northumberland, which he laid out as Aaronsburg in 1786. His dream was to make this city the capital of Pennsylvania. His dream was shattered when in forming Centre County, the authorities by-passed his town and made Bellefonte its County seat. Soon Levy found himself the only Jew in town. He had no children and longed for a Jewish society. So in 1790 he moved back to Philadelphia. He had plenty of land, but no cash. He befriended and "adopted" Simon Gratz, son of Miriam Simon Gratz and Michael Gratz. In exchange for being "taken care of in their old age," Levy turned over almost all of his land holdings to young Simon. In 1805, Simon Gratz took some of this land and created the Borough of Gratz in Dauphin County. Gratz and Aaronsburg were the first two Jewish named towns in America. Levy returned to Lancaster in 1797 to avoid the yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia. He died in Philadelphia in 1815.

There is an interesting story as to how Levy met his wife Rachel. One day, while walking in pre-Revolutionary Philadelphia, he came upon an indentured servant girl crying on the front steps of her master's house. Levy asked what was wrong, and she explained she was a Jewess and her master demanded she work on Saturday, the Sabbath. Levy at once paid the master her indenture and married the now free lady.

Dr. Isaac Cohen

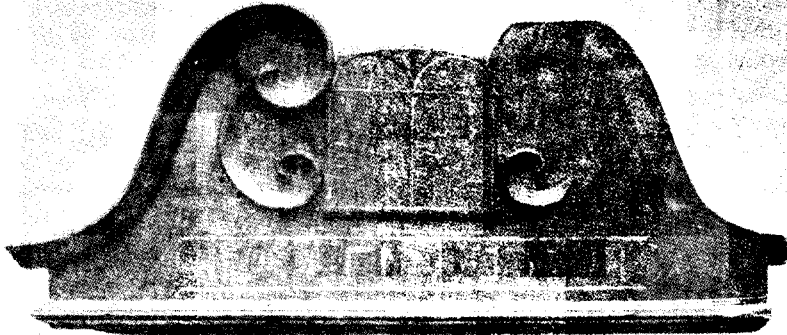
Dr. Isaac Cohen had been incorrectly "dated" by American Jewish historians. He was first reported by Ellis and Evans in their 1883 history of Lancaster County. All we know of him is his calling card dated August 14, 1797. In Monroe Hirsh's article of 1901, the printer incorrectly listed the date as 1747. This error of 50 years would have made him the first Jewish doctor in America. His card reads as follows:

Dr. Isaac Cohen, from Hamburg, Germany, who studied seven years in the City of Copenhagen, informs the public that he has lately arrived in Lancaster, where he intends to practice physic and the art of healing, at the house of John Hatz, inn keeper, at the sign of the Penn Arms, North Queen Street. N. B. Poor persons cured gratis if they can show a certificate from a clergyman that they are really poor. He expects letters addressed to him to be postpaid and those who live at a distance and desire his aid will please send a horse for him. (Ellis and Evans, *History of Lancaster County*, 1883 page 250)

We should stress again that these people in many cases never called Lancaster their home. There is evidence that they were in Lancaster at one time or another during their lives. At best it gives the reader an insight into the backgrounds and lives of various Colonial Jews.

It is perhaps hard to believe that America did not see its first trained and ordained Rabbi until the 1800's. The reason is simple enough and although it sounds less than acceptable, we have to accept it. First, the American Jewish Community could not afford a trained Rabbi and second, why would a Rabbi want to leave the comforts and security of England, Holland or Europe for the wilds and dangers of a new World?

Judaism is fortunate in that Jews do not need a Rabbi to properly practice their religion. Basically, a Rabbi is a teacher. Furthermore, it is the tradition of Judaism that the father, within his own family, have the responsibility to teach his children the tenets and heritage of Judaism. Judaism is a home-based religion, and it was this strength that allowed Judaism to survive even in environments where its open practice meant death.



Ark (aron kodesh) from the home of Joseph Simon (1712-1804) used in home worship in Lancaster, Penna. Courtesy of the American Jewish Historical Society.

In effect, a Rabbi was a luxury which the colonial Jew was able to do without. However in New York, Newport, Philadelphia, Savannah, Charlestown and other cities, formal congregations did organize with by-laws and separate structures. These congregations did have employees or religious functionaries. That is, they had a Hazzan who was the reader and teacher (although not an ordained Rabbi), a Shoet for ritual slaughtering of kosher meat and a Mohel to perform the ritual of circumcision. In addition they had their President, Officers and Board of Trustees.

Lancaster's Organized Religion

Did Lancaster have an organized Congregation?

It is only natural that the first thing Jews did when settling a new community was to provide for a place of worship and a place of burial. In 1747, Lancastrians, Joseph Simon and Isaac Nunes Henriques, purchased a plot of ground "in trust for the Society of Jews in and about Lancaster, to have and use the same as a burying ground." Total cost of this one-half acre of land was six pounds sterling or about fifteen dollars.²³ In the period 1747 to 1804 only six people were known to have been buried there and five stones remain today. In all probability, others lie in unmarked graves. This Jewish cemetery, the fourth oldest in the United States, belongs to and is maintained by Congregation Shaarai Shomayim.²⁵ Even today, burials are made in this original plot of land.

With the first requirement obtained, we can turn our attention to the congregation. It is really a matter of semantics. If by "congregation," one means a formal charter and a separate structure in which they worshiped, the answer is there never was a congregation in colonial Lancaster. If by "congregation" one means ten adult males who worshiped together and practiced the rites and ritual of the faith of their fathers in a strange new Land, the answer is an emphatic-yes! These colonial Jews, mostly of Ashkenazic background, worked hard to be "good" Jews.

As we have seen, Lancaster Jewish population was very fluid. With the exception of the families of Joseph Simon, Joseph Solomon and Levy Andrew Levy, no other Jewish households made Lancaster their permanent home in the 1740 to 1790 period. Three backbones of a Jewish community do not make a congregation.

Yet there is ample evidence that there were at least ten Jewish families in Lancaster during most of that 50 year period. In 1747, Rev. Richard Locke of the Anglican Lutheran Church wrote: "Here are less Quakers than in many other counties, and very few Indians appear—here are ten families of Jews."²⁶ I assume he was correct, but I would be hard pressed to name those ten families. In the Journal of Witham Marshe, who was secretary for the Maryland delegation to the negotiation of the Lancaster Indian Treaty of 1744, we find this June 27, 1744 entry about a social dance held. "The females (I dare not call them ladies, for that would be a profanation of the name) were, in general, very disagreeable. The dancers consisted of Germans and Scotch-Irish; but there were some Jewesses who had not long since come from New York, that made a tolerable appearance, being well dressed and of an agreeable behavior." Marshe, who said earlier in his journal that there were a few Jews in Lancaster, most have thought the Jewish ladies attractive and the only bright spot in an otherwise dull dance.

Myer Josephson, of Reading, in a letter to Michael Gratz in 1763, tells Gratz "that I am going to Lancaster for minyan for Yom Kippur." What Myer is saying that he is going to nearby Lancaster where he is sure to find ten males required for worship services on this most holy of holidays (Day of Atonement)

A Jewish community was important to the American and Lancaster Jew. In 1784, when the first Lancaster Jewish community was on the decline, Levy Andrew wrote to Michael Gratz. Levy, at the age of 50 with seven children, was in grave financial difficulty and was leaving Lancaster. He writes that he desires:

to remove to a place were a Congregation of our Society (was) and that I might bring up my children as Jews—this my Dear Sir is part of my troubles & which I often consider of, for a family to be remote from our Society (a Jewish community) is shocking. The Almighty I hope will be my guide and protector, in him I place my trust and hope forgiveness should I be drawn against my will to a strange place (because of my poverty), that my capacity (wealth) cannot afford me to keep a person to kill (meat according to ritual) for me.²⁷

Like every other town, Lancaster's Jewish Society, as Levy calls the community, needed four things to properly practice and observe their religion: A Mohel to perform the Abrahamitic covenant on their sons; a Shohet to slaughter meat in accordance with Talmudic precepts; a Torah and a place of worship; and a Hazzan to serve as reader, teacher and perform marriages. Let us see how Lancaster, without its formal Congregation, provided these basic religious needs.

Of course, Barnard Jacobs from 1757 to 1790 acted as the Mohel not only for Lancaster, but for surrounding communities. His diary lists 33 such rituals during that period.²⁸ Prior to Jacobs, it was the responsibility of the father or someone else who, in a pinch, had the ability to perform the "operation." After Jacobs, Philadelphia's Congregation Mikveh Israel provided the Mohel.

The community Shohet was provided by Joseph Simon. He would hire and house the ritual slaughterer for the community. Many people filled that job. Among them were Isaac Nunes Henriques, Moses Lazarus and Joseph Solomon. Apparently a Shohet was not always available as this February 23, 1768 letter from Levy Andrew Levy to Michael Gratz indicates:

Moses Lazarus is going to leave our Family, my Uncle (Simon) pay'd him off yesterday— can that man who boarded at Moses Mordecai be spared, and if he would come live with us my Uncle will allow him the Salary of 20 pounds per year— to kill meat for us and to each the children— if none to be had at Phila., it is my Uncle's request will write to New York & Endeavr. to get him a Sober man if possible—²⁹

Joseph Solomon temporarily filled in but by July of 1768, he would no longer kill for Simon and the community.³⁰ Yet we can safely assume, that at the insistence of Simon, Lancaster was never without its kosher meat.

Lancaster never had a Hazzan of its own that we know of. Indeed for the marriage of Simon's daughter Miriam to Michael Gratz in 1769, young Gershom M. Sexias had to be brought in from New York at a fee of ten pounds. On his way to London, Michael's brother Barnard made the arrangements. Armed with a letter of introduction to Simon, the father of the bride, Sexias made his way to Philadelphia. Sexias later, as leader of Shearith Israel in New York, would become famous for

closing the synagogue and fleeing with the Torahs during the British occupation of New York during the Revolutionary War.³¹

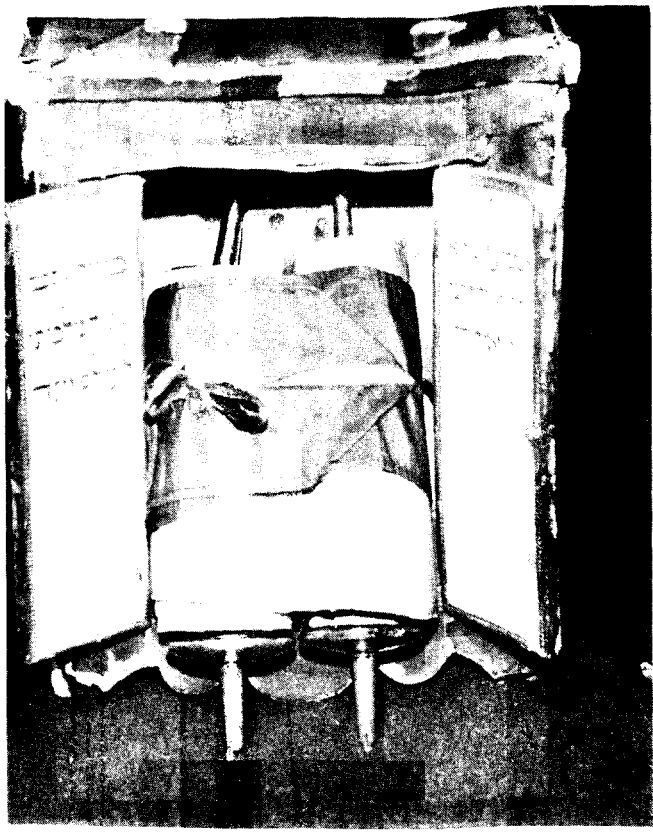
Joseph Simon also provided the place of worship. It was a room in his home on the southwest corner of Penn Square in downtown Lancaster. In the room was an Ark. A portion of that Ark is in the possession of the American Jewish Historical Society. It was presented to them by the daughters (Simon's great-great granddaughters) of Sarah Ann Gratz Hays Mordecai. It is a strange coincidence that the Hebrew inscription on the Simon Ark is the same as the "Know Before Whom Thou Standest" that adorns the arch above Shaarai Shomayim's pulpit. In the Ark, at least by the time of Simon's death, were two Torahs.

Simon's will directed that "the silver plate used or appropriated for the purpose of religious worship in my family and the two rolls (Torahs) containing the Five Books of Moses each shall immediately after the death of Levy Phillips (a son-in-law), who shall have use of them in the family for the same religious purposes during his life, be placed in the synagogue of the Jews of Philadelphia (Mikveh Israel) for the use of said Synagogue and those who worship therein."³² Mikveh Israel today has those Torahs.

Formal congregations were slow in forming in Colonial America. Jews were in New York by 1654, but Shearith Israel was only informally structured in 1686 with formal Constitutions in 1703 and 1729. Philadelphia Jews informally gathered as early as 1740 and had a constitution by 1771 and a synagogue by 1782. Lancaster and Philadelphia grew up together. Obviously, the proximity of Lancaster Jews to Philadelphia and the strong business and family ties that kept them together, put no pressure on Lancaster for a congregation of its own.

Other evidence for a no Congregation thesis is as follows: In 1761 Simon and Jews from Reading signed a receipt to borrow a Torah from Shearith Israel for use in Philadelphia.³³ In 1782, Simon's gift of twenty-five pounds was the third largest to the Mikveh Israel Building Fund. In 1791, Lancastrian Solomon Etting was the local agent for the sale of "lottery tickets" to raise monies to "enable the Hebrew Congregation of the city of Philadelphia to extricate their house of worship from its present incumbrances."³⁴ Simon, in 1782, was also trustee appointed for the Mikveh Israel cemetery.³⁵ These involvements of Lancaster Jews in the Philadelphia community indicate there was no local congregation of their own. Of course, the will of Simon, leaving the Torahs to Mikveh Israel, is conclusive evidence.

Yet Lancaster did come very close to a congregation. During the War, many Jews fled the occupied cities of New York and Philadelphia to the safety of Lancaster. It was only natural that these Jews, now in substantial number, formally organize into a congregation. A Pinkas (offering book) has survived, dated 1781. In it were listed 15 members to-be of a congregation-to-be in Lancaster. Pledges were to be solicited via this book toward the new congregation. However the book was



One of the two Torahs left by Joseph Simon in his will to congregation Mikveh Israel of Philadelphia. The Ark containing the Torah is 18th century, but not Joseph Simon's.

never used and with peace coming shortly thereafter, many Jews left Lancaster. ³⁶

Further evidence of the almost Congregation comes from the Mohel record of Barnard Jacobs referred to above. For Lancaster circumcisions he always used the date and the term "in Lancaster." However, in 1776, and twice in 1782, he uses the phrase "holy Congregation of Lancaster." That is, for those three events, Jacobs considered Lancaster to have a Congregation. Yet, twice in 1777, and 1779, he reverted back to "in Lancaster" and after 1783 it was always "in Lancaster." The 1776 entry coincides with the British occupation of New York. The 1782 entry would coincide with the Pinkas mentioned above.³⁷

There are two other references to a Lancaster congregation. In September 1880, in "Statistics of the Jews of the United States" published by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations it is stated that in 1776 a congregation was organized in Lancaster ³⁸ In 1789, General

Edward Hand in a letter to Congress urging the adoption of Lancaster as the nation's capital, wrote this about the largest inland city in America. "There are several places of worship besides a temporary synagogue."³⁹ He must have meant Simon's home.

In conclusion, we must say there was no formal Congregation in colonial Lancaster. The census of 1790⁴⁰ lists only three Jewish households in Lancaster, and when Simon died in 1804, he was the last. In 1837, Rebecca Gratz, granddaughter of Joseph Simon, who had visited Lancaster wrote "the last day I spent in Lancaster I visited his (Simon's) tomb, the fence was broken, cows were grazing among the high grass and weeds covered it— and I came away sorrowful."⁴¹ There was no Society of Jews to care for the cemetery Simon deeded to the community until 1856 when Congregation Shaarai Shomayim was chartered and was declared, by the Superior Court of Pennsylvania in 1903, as the legal heir to Joseph Simon's "Society of Jews in and about Lancaster."⁴²

Jewish Landowners In Lancaster

It would follow, that since few families made Lancaster their permanent home, the number of Jewish landowners in Lancaster city would be small. This is quite correct. Those who felt that they would not be staying long, usually boarded in homes. And because of the Jewish dietary laws, they usually boarded with a Jewish family.

James Hamilton Lays Out Lancaster

James Hamilton was most systematic when he laid out Lancaster. He plotted out some 500 lots in a six square block area around Penn Square. All streets were 65 feet wide, his lots 64' 4-½" by 245' deep, four lots to a half block with a 14 foot alley behind them. In today's term, each of those lots has been sub-divided into several individual homes and later businesses.

Hamilton would sell these lots with two provisions: one that the owner build a house and second that he pay yearly ground rents to Hamilton. These ground rents would vary from three to 15 pounds yearly. Most of these first lots were sold by 1800, and although most downtown landowners have freed themselves from ground rent, some are still paying them. An excellent and invaluable study of these lots and their original owners appears in the *Lancaster County Historical Society Journal* Volume XLVI No. 2 and 3 of 1942.⁴³

Lots Owned By Jews

To determine which Jew owned which lot and for how long is an exercise in futility. Even after a thorough study of these 1700's deeds, one is still quite confused. Often, one deed with its description of the adjacent property owner, is in direct conflict with another deed. Never-

theless, to the best of our knowledge, the following were properties owned by early Lancaster Jews.

Levy Andrew Levy, from at least 1775 to his departure from Lancaster in 1785, lived on lot #508 or 15 North Queen Street. Prior to that, or at least until his marriage in 1762, he lived with his uncle Joseph Simon.

Joseph Solomon, from 1750 to his death in 1777, (and his family thereafter until the 1790's), lived on lot #122 or 3 to 5 East King Street. Daniel Mendez da Castro lived where the Central Market now is or the rear of 20-32 North Queen Street or lot #175.⁴⁴

Joseph Simon's Land Holdings

By far the most extensive Jewish land owner was Joseph Simon. Like most everyone else, in the beginning he boarded with someone. His future father-in-law Hiam Solomon Bunn, in 1748 by the deed referred to earlier, transferred ownership of a lot and house bordered by West King Street and South Queen Street. The lot measured 21' by 48'. This was part of sub-section E of Hamilton lot #178. In a 1762 deed, his lot was described as being 66' by 57' indicating that he had acquired additional land. In 1767, at sheriff sale, he purchased 33' of additional front footage on Queen Street. His ground rent became 15 pounds per year. By the time of his death, these two lots (which adjoined in the rear) had two—three story brick buildings on them. His heirs in 1814, sold them to William Jenkins, noted local attorney for \$12,700. Today, the Commonwealth National Bank sits on these lands.⁴⁵

Simon's Open Door Policy

Simon needed his two multi-story dwellings. In addition to his family, which was as high as ten at one time, he housed, at least until 1775, Levy Andrew Levy and his wife. After his daughters married, the sons-in-law often worked as partners of Simon, and they too lived with Father. During the War years, Miriam Simon Gratz, wife of Michael Gratz and their five children lived in the homestead. Additionally, friends such as Aaron Levy, would move in when in town. And of course, Simon had at least two or three slaves or servants at all times.

By the 1780's, however, he was able to rent out his Queen Street home. It is known through correspondence between General Edward Hand and Jasper Yeates (Lancaster attorney and State Supreme Court Justice) that Hand rented from Simon from at least 1781 to 1783 just prior to moving into Rockford. The correspondence tells of a dispute between Simon and Hand concerning subletting the property while Hand was off fighting the War.⁴⁶ The 1790 census indicated that his daughter Belah and her husband Solomon Myers-Cohen and their four daughters lived with Simon. In the mid 1790's, grandsons Hyman and Simon Gratz, who were apprentices under Simon, lived with him.⁴⁷ At

the time of Simon's death, Mathais Barton rented the Queen Street property.

Simon's Place of Business

From at least 1759 (or from 1751 when his partners David Franks and Nathan Levy owned it), Simon ran a store or trading post at 2 to 4 East King on Hamilton lot #127. This store was in operation at his death and was torn down for the Watt and Shand building.

As we will see later, Simon was involved in no less than 12 partnerships. At least four of these operated out of this location, often simultaneously. Levy Andrew Levy, from the 1750's to 1785, was Simon's Indian trading partner and store clerk. From 1759 to about 1775, a hardware store was run in partnership with William Henry - gunsmith, inventor and statesman. From 1784 to 1787, it was a $\frac{2}{3}$ Simon- $\frac{1}{3}$ Solomon Etting partnership and after 1787 to 1804, a partnership with Levy Phillips. The latter two were sons-in-law.⁴⁸

20 West King Street ⁴⁹

In 1752, Simon purchased 20 West King Street from Nathan Levy and David Franks for 371 pounds. There is no clear evidence as to what Simon used this for. In 1767 he sold the front part to Christopher Heyne, a tinman and pewterer for 600 pounds. The rear of the lot was Simon's brick stable which was sold to Frederick Steinman, copper-smith, in 1814 for 175 pounds.

226 To 250 West Chestnut Street ⁵⁰

At the time of his death, he owned 226 to 250 West Chestnut Street where Shreiner's Cemetery is now. Lot #363 on the Southwest Corner of West Mulberry and Arch Street was purchased by Simon in 1757. In 1769, he purchased lot #365 located between Arch and North Mulberry and, in 1782, lot #366 on the southeast corner of North Mulberry and West Chestnut Street. He rented these homes out, and they were sold by his heirs in 1833 (described as three lots adjoining).

Five Acres In Manheim Township

Actually what Simon owned was in both the city and Manheim Township. The location of this piece of ground, purchased by Simon in 1751 for 110 pounds, eluded your author for quite some time.⁵¹ Fortunately, John W. W. Loose, President of the Lancaster County Historical Society, came to my rescue and determined its location.

The deed of the sale of the property in 1813 described the property as being "on the road to Binkley's Bridge." I quickly found out that Binkley's bridge was the first stone bridge built in the state (at a cost of

\$17,000) having been built in 1798. It was located along Route 23, to the left of the present metal span, near the Eden Paper Mill. Two "dead-end" roads lead to where the bridge stood. The bridge was destroyed by ice and water in 1857.

My natural assumption was that the property was close to Binkley's bridge. This assumption was wrong, since in the 1700's the location of the property was quite outside of town, on the road to the bridge, but according to today's standards, right in town. It turns out to be a plot of land along New Holland Avenue from the RCA building back towards town to where the row of houses begins. It included the present day fire house, railroad bridge and old Penn Dairies building. When Simon's heirs sold it to Robert Coleman, it was all farmland.⁵²

Simon built two buildings on the land and used it either as a small farm or a warehouse for his goods. Starting in 1800 Simon, rented this land out to Casper Lorentz and John Slater both listed as laborers.

These properties were those owned by Simon at his death. Deeds indicated he purchased other properties which were sold during his lifetime. In many cases, he purchased property at sheriff sale and later sold it for a profit.

Tax Records ⁵³

Many early tax records listed only names. Others would detail family size, slaves owned and livestock owned. It might be useful to list some of the information from some of these tax lists.

The lists from 1750 to 1759 gave us names and amounts of tax or value of property. In all these lists, Simon was the wealthiest usually followed by Joseph Solomon and Sampson Lazarus. Levy Andrew Levy was listed, starting in 1757, as a freeman (non-property owner).

1759 listed Solomon as being a shopkeeper with a lot while Simon had a slave age 20, one horse and one cattle. By 1763, Solomon hadn't changed status, but Simon now had three slaves aged 10, 15 and 20, one horse, two cattle and a tenant. In 1771, Simon gained a second horse.

In 1773, Joseph Myers owned a slave, age 25. Simon had three, ages 12, 30 and 40 (only one of which could have been a holdover from 1763). The 1777 list indicates Levy Marks for the first time and he is second only to Simon in wealth. In the War years of 1777 to 1781, the ranking of wealth was, with relative values, Simon 200, Levy Marks 180, Myer Solomon 98, Levy Andrew Levy 28, Aaron Levy 14, Eleazar Lyon 12, Joseph Myers 4, Levy Solomon 1.

The 1781 tax list indicated that all Jews listed took the Oath of Allegiance to the new country. 1782 tells us that Sampson Lazarus had a female slave and a horse and was a shopkeeper, Levy Andrew Levy was a "gentlemen" with two female slaves and one house, Aaron Levy lived with Simon. Myer Solomon had a house, Levy and Isaac Solomon lived with brother Myer, Simon had one slave, one horse and two cattle, and

was also a "gentlemen."

1783 lists sizes of households. Simon had seven persons, Levy Andrew Levy eight, Myer Solomon five, and Sampson Lazarus three.

From 1786 to 1790 the only property owners were Solomon Etting (a Simon son-in-law) who had one slave, Myer Solomon who had two houses, two horses, one cattle and one slave and Simon with up to five houses, three lots, two slaves, two horses and two cattle. All were listed as shopkeepers.

Jews and Slaves

Jews and Gentiles were quite alike when it came to slaves in the 18th century. Both were importers of, sellers of and owners of slaves. Neither concerned themselves with the moral issue. Slaves were a commodity, cheap labor, and, at the time of the Revolution, it is said that every fifth person in North America was a slave. Jewish tradition and laws did not preclude rigorous labors for slaves. The only restriction, as expressed by the Spanish Jewish philosopher Maimonides, was that "piety and wisdom command us to be kind and just." Jews many times throughout the ages were slaves, as they were in the land of Egypt out of which Moses led them.⁵⁴

As we have seen Joseph Simon owned slaves. He once owned a slave named John who had to be chained and thrown into jail after almost killing a man. Simon eventually sold that slave at a loss. There is a deed dated December 25, 1793, in which Simon sold to Christian Barr a Negro boy named Cudago, age 15, weight 65 pounds, to be held until age 29.⁵⁷

Levy Andrew Levy once had a slave who preferred freedom with the Indians to servitude under Levy. The slave ran off with a local tribe.⁵

Myer Josephson of nearby Reading, in October of 1762, writes twice to Michael Gratz showing concern for the health of his "nigger wench." The first letter asks Gratz to find some medicine for her kidney problem as the local doctor is no expert. In the second letter he wants to send her to a Philadelphia hospital as the local doctor is an "ignoramus." In July of 1762 he wants to sell his maid as she is always drunk and his wife lives in fear of her.⁵⁶

Although Simon was not an importer of slaves, there is, among correspondence that has survived, reference to Simon's sending slaves to Fort Pitt for various people. It is not clear if Simon was the sales agent for the slave or merely arranging his or her transportation to Fort Pitt.

PART III

JOSEPH SIMON — A PERSONALITY PROFILE

Before digging into the events of Joseph Simon's life, we should try to learn a little about Joseph Simon the man. Unfortunately, no portrait of him has survived nor is there evidence that he ever sat for one. His physical size and shape have never been described. He was no weakling however. He traveled far and wide and into areas loaded with dangers. Fathering ten children, the last at age 58 and living to be 94, speak highly for him too.

Simon Was Illiterate

It has always been known that Joseph Simon hired clerks to write his letters. Of the hundreds of letters seen in the original, not one seemed to have been written by Simon. Those written for him by Levy Andrew Levy and Solomon Etting were practically flawless. A letter from England written by his sister in Yiddish, starts out: "Because he (Simon) himself can not read (it) the letter might be withheld; therefore I bothered Mister (Manuel) Josephson (of Philadelphia) and asked him to please read the letter to you." From this one can assume that Simon could not read Yiddish.

Proof that he could neither read nor write English came as well, from the transcript of a court case Gratz vs Phillips, in 1830, before the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. A disposition of Simon Gratz, who clerked and wrote letters for Joseph Simon in the 1790's, stated "Mr. Simon, who could neither read nor write 'except his name' "... 59

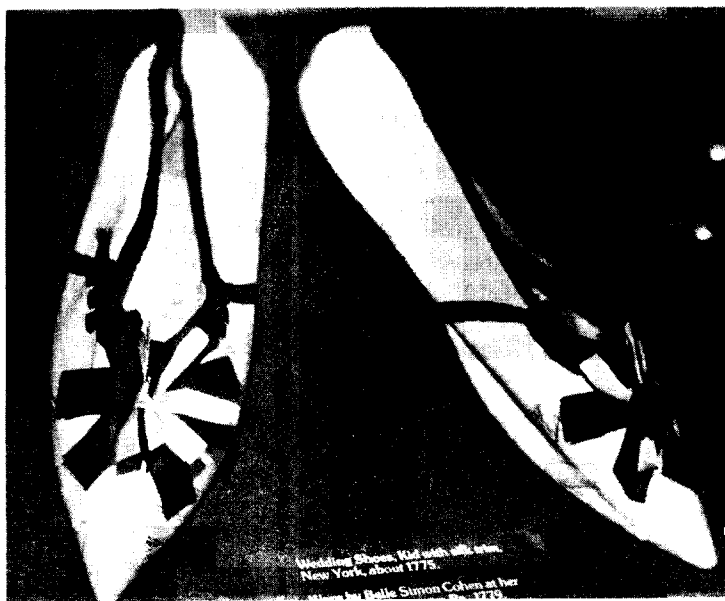
Testimonies To Simon's Honesty

There is ample evidence in the written words of others, of the complete and absolute integrity of Joseph Simon. Not one bad word about him has surfaced. He was a wheeler dealer of the first degree. He became wealthy quickly, but did it with class and honesty. There is no reason to believe that he ever cheated anyone. In his many partnerships or joint ventures, he was the silent partner, the one with the brains or money or both.

William Henry, noted gunsmith and community leader, described Simon as "a wealthy Jew of High Character." It is interesting that most Gentiles found it necessary to describe Jews as high character or honest as if this were the exception rather than the rule.

On July 22, 1767, the Reverend Thomas Barton of Lancaster wrote to Sir William Johnson, British Indian Agent, whose son Barton was tutoring.

"Give me leave, Sir, to introduce to your knowledge Mr. Joseph



Wedding Shoes. Worn with silk and
New York, about 1775.
Worn by Belle Simon Cohen at her
wedding to Solomon Myers-Cohen, 1779.

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, a worthy, honest Jew and principal merchant of this place, who has always been employed as a victualler to the troops that have been quartered here and has given general satisfaction. This Gentleman keeps up the silversmith's business and has workman well skilled in making Indian trinkets. If you should at any time be pleased to employ him, he will be grateful for the favor and I am persuaded, will study to serve you faithfully..."⁶⁰

Again on December 7, Barton writes to Johnson.

"Mr. Simon, mentioned in a former letter, is an eminent trader in this town. He keeps the business of a silversmith going, and has for several years supplied the Indians at Pittsburgh with silver truck (trinkets). He sent you, he says, by Colonel Croghan, who is expected here any day, a sample of his work, and begs to recommend himself to your favor in this way. He is esteemed a man fair in his dealings and honest from Principle ..." ⁶⁰

Family Member Comments

Simon's granddaughter, Rebecca Gratz, wrote in 1837:

"Ben (her brother) has told you (Ben's wife) of our Grandfather's patriarchal habit of living—of his hospitalities to his brethren and his

amiable disposition—he had told you too, how liberally and justly he dealt with all mankind and he was beloved by his neighbors and poor who were within reach of his bounty.”⁶¹

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 Lowrey, 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 poor mother with something soon, as it is uncertain when she will get something from Trent whom I have not seen yet.”⁶⁶ Trent was associated with Gratz and Simon in the Indiana Land Company and was in London when Barnard Gratz arrived. Apparently, Simon and/or Levy gave money to Trent to periodically give to Mary.

On January 11, 1770, Barnard wrote to Michael that “Levy’s mother is well-gave her 1½ guinea.”⁶⁷

A letter written by J. Barnett London to Barnard Gratz, now back in Philadelphia, on December 3, 1771, states:

“I am very glad that Mr. Simon will remember his Sister by next ship, for THEY are very indigent, and she is in much distress and works 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.⁶⁸

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 here 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.

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 apologized for our intruding on his Sabbath, & told him we would wait until Monday. He replied, you are on a journey, & it may be inconvenient to you to wait. He went to call in his neighbor, Dr. Boyd, & took from his Desk a bag, laid it on the table & presented the order to the Dr. The Doctor counted out the money and we gave a receipt. The Jew sat looking on, to see that all was rightly transacted, but said nothing, & thus quieted his conscience against the rebuke of a violation of his Sabbath; but I thought he might as well have done the business himself as by an agent."

"The Jews in general are said to be very strict & punctual in the observance of some of the traditionary ceremonies of their law, (but hesitate not to defraud, when opportunity present. Like their predecessors, ... 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.^{69A}

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

The New York Franks' family correspondence mentions Bunn in a 1735 letter.⁷² We can conclude that Bunn and family were in America by that date, and that Bunn came over after his brother-in-law Samuel was established. Rosa, who was born in 1727,⁷³ was most likely born in Europe. Shearith Israel records list Bunn as a Shohet, and we find his name in records of 1740 and 1741 but not again until 1746. His absence from 1742 to 1745 confirms the will and guardianship of Rosa's uncle Samuel. Bunn was naturalized in Philadelphia in 1752 which indicates that he was back in America by 1745.⁷⁴

Rosa and Joseph's Marriage Date

The actions of Uncle Samuel and the movements of Bunn are vital 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, 1748.⁷⁵ 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 interest-

ed 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.

Joseph Simon In Business

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 one hand, they had their fathers in New York, and on the other, their family in London. In the 1740-60 period, Isaac Levy would spend much time in London. Moses Franks left brother David and moved permanently to London when he joined another brother Naphthali who was already there. These loyal family representatives in London were invaluable. It was their responsibility to arrange for the purchase of goods to be imported by their American brothers, to sell the goods exported from America and, most important, to keep those British government contracts in force.

The Utility of Simon

Thus, on two fronts, Levy and Franks were well covered. But there was a third front to their enterprise. Once the goods were unloaded at the docks, they had to be distributed and sold. Also, the raw materials they would export to England had to be secured from the interior of America.

These would be the functions of Joseph Simon. Simon operated out of Lancaster, a land-locked city. He could not directly import or export. He had to rely upon merchant-shippers in both New York and Philadelphia for that. No doubt, in the 1740's, Simon sought out Levy and Franks for the goods they could supply him for trade with the Indians and for the market they provided for the furs he received.

Yet, Simon was of equal value to Levy and Franks. He would purchase or take on consignment a portion of the shiploads of materials. Simon would do three things with these goods. First, he would sell them in his own store. This was his "shopkeeper" hat. He would also wholesale them to other shopkeepers in Lancaster and other towns. This was his "merchant" hat. Third, he would outfit packtrains (and barges when he used waterways) and transport these imported goods to western Pennsylvania and into the Ohio and Mississippi River Valleys. There he would trade with the Indians or sell directly to the growing number of hardy settlers now in that area. Although it has not been proved, Simon is considered to be one of the first white men to reach the Mississippi from the Pennsylvania area during the 1740's and 1750's.⁷⁹

Furs were a big exportable item and in great demand in London. These furs which were taken in trade, would be transported back to Lancaster, stored in warehouses, sorted, culled and prepared for shipment to the counting houses of Levy and Franks. The mode of transportation to Philadelphia was usually wagons operated by Mathais Slough. Slough was a neighbor of Simon's who also ran the White Swan Inn. A typical load of August 17, 1762, consisted of 975 fall deer-skins, 501 raccoon pelts, 279 summer deerskins and 173 beaver pelts.⁸⁰ It was big business and profitable business.

What certainly was at first a business relationship, soon developed into a full partnership. Simon's expertise in his end of the operation, meant profit to both the Lancaster and Philadelphia partners. There was, after 1748, some relationship by marriage among Levy, Franks and Simon. Moses Levy, the father of Nathan Levy, had a brother Samuel. Samuel married Rachel Asher. Samuel died in 1719 and the widowed Rachel married Samuel Myers-Cohen, the uncle of Simon's wife Rosa.

Beyond any doubt, the partnership of Levy, Franks and Simon was the most daring, adventurous and strongest merchant conglomeration of its time.

Imported Goods Sold By Shopkeepers and Merchants ⁸¹

"The merchants and shopkeepers sold dry goods (textiles and apparel), notions, jewelry, cutlery, china, mirrors, groceries (especially candles and molasses), fish, tobacco, snuff, and wet goods (liquor and wines). He handled drugs, and medicines, Indian goods, cordage and sailcloth, naval stores, lumber, ships and lottery tickets— and there were times when his merchandise included a 'parcel' of Negroes to be sold or hired out, and white indentured servants."

"He would stock most anything his customers wanted. Some of the more unusual items might be— coffin handles, Bibles, psalters, spelling books, millinery, bathing suits, perfume, furniture, hardware, bricks, lime, paint pigments, coal and real estate or rooms for rent."

"Among the luxury goods were— cocoa and chocolate, Jews harps, violins, and silver or anything available in London."

Goods Exported By Shopkeepers and Merchants ⁸¹

"Typical of the items exported to Europe were: timber, naval stores, large quantities of copper ore, flaxseed, furs, potash, pearls, ash, indigo, coconuts, spices, mahogany, dyewood and barrel staves."

Additionally, the merchant-shipper would be involved in coastal shipping which, put simply, was the trading of items from the northern colonies for items of the southern colonies. Again the shopkeepers and merchants were the agents between the suppliers of the raw material and the merchant-shippers. They would often purchase the goods locally and in combination with other lots they purchased, transport them to Philadelphia for sale in America.

The End Of An Era

It was this first partnership that made Simon a very wealthy man. But all good things have to end. Two events terminated this prosperity. The first was the death of Nathan Levy in 1753 at the age of 50 and the second was the hostilities that culminated in the French and Indian War.

The French fought the British for control of the Ohio and Mississippi Valley and the lucrative fur trade of the area. Years before the battles started, Indians attacked pack trains, white bandits took advantage of the turmoil and the bloody massacres scared the traders and settlers back to the safety of the East. In short, Indian trading collapsed for the duration of the War.⁸²

All Indian traders were affected. It was common practice, when at all possible, for several traders or merchants to combine their pack trains into a single one. The purpose, of course, was for convenience and greater security. These raids on combined trains caused all the traders to suffer very heavy losses. Levy, Franks and Simon were no exception. Only the magnitude of their operations and overall strength kept them from bankruptcy. Others, many their friends, were not so lucky. Brothers Daniel and Alexander Lowrey were very hard hit. As a token of friendship and to keep the Lowrey's from going under, Simon and Franks on July 6, 1754, waived all interest on a mortgage they held against the brothers.⁸³

Wartime Partnerships

The French and Indian War would stretch from 1754 to 1763. Indian trading would not begin again until the British were in control around 1760. Meanwhile, Simon, on his own, and sometimes in partnership with David Franks, involved himself in other ventures.

The actual hostilities of the War did not touch Lancaster. Fortunately, Lancaster citizens had cultivated friendship with the remaining Indian tribes in the area. Yet Lancaster was affected by the War. It was far enough away for safety and was close enough to the British command posts in the coastal East. War materials were stored here and pack trains to the western front passed through Lancaster. Lancaster had numerous gunsmiths to provide some weapons. The citizens often were called upon to house troops.

David Franks had the contract to supply the British troops. Simon as his Lancaster partner, certainly shared in that business. There is record of one of Simon's pack trains meeting up with General Braddock in 1755 during his ill-fated drive to capture Fort Duquesne. Franks was reported to have sold £750,000 worth of supplies to the English.

In 1759, Simon supplied the cloth to make "Baggs" for the British troops. Colonel Henry Bouquet, who gave him a special contract for these bags, complained that Simon only used Lancaster people to manufacture them. "Mr. Simon had no business to make all the Baggs at Lancaster. If he had sent according to my directions the stuff (cloth) to York, Carlisle or Reading, they would have been sooner ready and I would not have complaints every day for Baggs at these places."⁸⁴

The papers of Colonel Bouquet also relate the details concerning Simon and his inn-keeper, neighbor Matthias Slough supplying wag-

ons, men and teams to transport war material from Lancaster and Carlisle to Fort Pitt. These June and July 1763 letters concerned Bouquet's desire to pay per hundred weight hauled and Simon's informing Bouquet that their wagonmasters wanted to be paid per day. The compromise was that the 32 wagon owners would be paid seven shillings six pence per day and 50 shillings per hundred weight.^{84A}

Other 1754-1763 Business Ventures

In 1757 Simon purchased a one-half interest from Dr. Samuel Boude, "practioner of physic", in a building and in equipment for the making of pot or pearl ash (potassium carbonate). The building was located on the south west corner of Arch and West Chestnut Street. The men were encouraged by town proprietor James Hamilton who waived their ground rent for seven years, "at which time they will not only know whether the scheme is like to answer their expectations, but will also be able to suit themselves with a proper situation for business." The pot ash was used in the manufacture of glass (Baron Stiegel glass-works of Manheim) and in soap and was often exported. However, by 1767, they were forced to sell their business due to lack of time to properly manage it, forced to sell "all the works therein erected, such as kettles, vats, furnaces, coolers, and every other thing necessary for carrying on the work" but the purchaser would be taught "how to make pot or pearl ash."⁸⁵

In 1759, Simon was a partner of the German blacksmith John Miller who made horsebells, beaver traps and wagon parts.⁸⁶ The partnership of Simon with Mordecai Moses Mordecai and John Miller produced "Distill'd Liquors", "Annesses, Caraway seeds, Callamus, Cinnamon, orange, Snake root and spirits" combined to produce what we hope was an acceptable beverage.⁸⁷

Also, during this period Simon was active in lending out money in the form of mortgages. The majority involved property but in the case of Jacob Frederic Curtis in 1756, Simon took as security for a 650 pound loan "Handerchiefs and wearing apparel."⁸⁸ Simon did land purchasing also. He often purchased a distressed lot at sheriff sale and later sold it for a profit. In 1754, he purchased from the sheriff, 150 acres in newly founded Maytown and in 1760 sold them.⁸⁹

Community Involvement

To the extent possible for the non-voting, non-office holding Jew, Simon was involved in civic affairs. In 1759 he was one of the founders of the Juliana Library, which was the third such public library formed in America. There is evidence, that, while he was in partnership with William Henry, the books were stored in their store, a rather odd situation for a man who could not read nor write.⁹⁰

In 1764, he helped to organize the Union Fire Company and was a

“doorman” in their organizational structure to fight fires. A 1765 fire at his multi-story home was the impetus for the Friendship Fire Company to purchase ladders to reach the two and three story homes that were popular in Lancaster.⁹⁰

It was very common for lotteries to be run to provide funds for the building of churches, roads, bridges etc. in those years. On September 29, 1769, an act was proposed “for raising, by way of a lottery, the sum of 3,543 pounds, one Moiety (half) part for erecting a bridge over the Conestoga Creek, where the road crosses the same, leading from Philadelphia to Lancaster and the other Moiety for paving the Streets of Lancaster, the distance of the first squares from the Court House.”

Each lottery had a manager or treasurer whose name appeared on the ticket. Joseph Simon’s name appeared on the ticket for this lottery, but the tickets, although printed, were never sold. His majesty, in England, had placed a temporary ban on all such lotteries.⁹¹

Joseph Simon In Partnership With William Henry

A most significant partnership of Joseph Simon’s was with William Henry. William Henry, a gentile, was a foremost citizen of Lancaster. His life has been told many times, the most recent being in the Papers Read before the Lancaster County Historical Society, Volume LIV, n. 4 1950.

We should briefly spend some time on the biography of William Henry, a leader in civic and national affairs, master gunsmith in the period when Lancaster was making rifles new to the world, inventive mechanic whose application of steam to navigation turned the trend in shipbuilding.

Henry was born in 1729. At the age of 14 and fatherless, he was apprenticed to Matthew Roesser, the leading gunsmith in Lancaster of 1744. He lived with the master on the northeast corner of West King and Concord Streets. By 1750, Henry was making guns on his own. In 1756 he was well known enough to have young Benjamin West paint his portrait holding one of his rifles. Lancaster was famous for its “Pennsylvania Rifle” whose range and accuracy were a vast improvement over the smooth bore, heavy rifles then in common use in Europe and by the British in America. The range and accuracy of the rifle were due to the precision of the rifling (of the bore), the fit of the rifleball, and the proper type of greased buckskin or linen patch to seal the rifling grooves against the escaping powder gases. Making the ball slightly smaller than the bore and encasing it with a greased patch which fit easily into the grooves of the rifle, imparted the spin to the bullet which enabled the weapon to have greater range and accuracy. This rifle, lighter and easier to use, was a major factor in giving the patriots a fire power advantage during the Revolutionary War. Henry alone, during a six month period in 1779, sold to the Continental Congress \$60,000 worth of rifles. For reasons unknown, Henry did not put his “mark” on

the weapons he made. Although his rifles have survived, not one can be identified as definitely being his.

During the French and Indian War he traveled with and was armorer for Generals Braddock and Forbes. Colonel George Washington wrote in 1758 requesting that Henry "put all the Virginia Arms (Washington's troops) in the best repair you can." Henry started his public career as canal commissioner in 1771. Following the outbreak of hostilities between England and the Colonies, he aligned himself with the patriotic cause with intense enthusiasm. He was on the Committee of Safety for Lancaster, Superintendent of Arms and Accoutrements and assistant Commissary General. He was chief Continental Congress fiscal agent for Lancaster.

During the War, Thomas Paine was his house guest, and Paine wrote his *Crisis* #5 while in Lancaster. He was a justice of the peace and of the Court of Common Pleas and its president after 1780. He was County treasurer from 1777-1786 and a member of the Continental Congress from 1784-1786. He died in 1786 at the age of 57 cutting off a career that could have risen to much greater heights.

William Henry pioneered in the application of steam power to navigation by testing such a vessel on the *Conestoga* in 1763. John Fitch, who is credited with the first steam powered vessel on the Delaware in 1787, visited Henry in 1785. Robert Fulton, as a child, must have known of Henry's work, and Fulton sailed his vessel on the Hudson in 1807.

There is some confusion as to when Henry and Simon became partners. Earlier, we stated that he called Simon a "worthy Jew of High Character." It is known that Henry went to Europe for a year in 1760 and from that point until about 1776, he and Simon ran a hardware store in Simon's general store (which was in partnership with Levy Andrew Levy) at 2 to 4 East King Street next to Matthias Slough's Tavern.

Earlier historians had incorrectly thought that Simon was in partnership with Henry from 1750 to 1759 and that Simon financially backed Henry when he opened his own gun shop in 1750. The confusion was due to the translation of Henry's German memoirs written three weeks before his death while he lay dying. There is in it a sentence that reads, "In the year 1759, I () partnership with Joseph Simon of Lancaster in the iron business." One historian has translated the word () as "closed" and another "dissolved." If translated as "closed", it could very well mean that he "closed the deal" to the partnership in 1759, and hence Henry was now free to travel to Europe in 1760. The word "dissolved" must be wrong as the partnership was very much alive as late as 1776. In September of that year, the Journal of the Continental Congress states that Simon and Henry were paid \$17 for some drums. This is the last reference to Simon and Henry. The partnership certainly must have ended soon thereafter as Henry became very

involved in politics and was already quite wealthy.

Simon handled a full line of hardware, both domestic and imported, as well as rifles made by Henry. They shipped pig iron to Pittsburgh, Baltimore and London; 100 tons alone went to Baltimore. It is of interest to read the list of items printed in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 11, 1762. I challenge anyone to identify the use of more than 75% of these items.

"JUST IMPORTED BY THE LAST VESSELS FROM ENGLAND, BY
SIMON AND HENRY

And to be Sold Cheap for Cash or Short Credit, at their Hardware Store at the Corner of King Street, next Door to Mr. Matthias Slough's, Tavern-keeper, near the Court House in LANCASTER.

Iron-monger's goods, locks, latches, hinges, bolts, wood screws, frying pans, box irons, sad irons, shovels, and tongs &c. fenders, candlesticks, snuffers, tinder boxes, saws, planes, edge tools, hammers, axes, hatchets, bills, hoes, scythes, augers, dogs, scale beams, gimblets, anvils, bellows, vizes, files, rasps, shovels, spades, trowels, brass cocks, brass candlesticks, clocks, pins, sponges, handles, escutcheons, &c. guns, swords, cutlasses, hammer heads, pistols, horse bells, iron plate, hardware, buckles and chapes, sleeve links and studs, coat and breast buttons, ivory and horn do., tortoise shell snuff boxes, enamelled do., gilt and plated do., paper and painted do., japanned &c. painted waiters, do. trays and tea tables, do. bread baskets, do. tea chests; steel watch chains, do. watch keys and hooks, do. seals &c.; steel spurs, plated do., corkscrews, key swivels and rings, sugar and nail nippers, nut cracks and plyers, gunworms and charges, black quart jacks and pints; brass warming pans; brass chafing dishes; brass mortars and pestles, pig brass, copper tea kettles, brushes and brooms, coffee mills, compasses, nippers, rules, silvered spoons, plated candlesticks, gun mounting &c., blue pots, crucibles &c., pumice stone, rotten stone, bar lead, clocks and clock work, pewter, cutlery goods, carving and table knives with silver and ivory handles, &c., buck and stag do., ebony and horn do., cocoa and bone do., paper, skin &c., cases for knives and forks, Negroe knives, shoemakers do., childrens knives, knives and forks in sheaths, sheep and horse shears, taylor's shears, scissors, razors, horse fleams, brass ink-pots, leather, horn &c., steelyards, toys, stone buckles, set in silver, sleeve links and studs, do. shirt and hat buckles, stone waistcoat buttons, necklaces of all sorts, stay hooks, do. silver watches, chains, keys and seals, instrument and toothpick cases, in metal, enamelled or paper, of various sorts, smelling bottles and numerous articles too tedious to mention."

Simon and Benjamin Nathan

In partnership with Benjamin Nathan, Simon ran a store in Heidelberg (Schaefferstown). The exact date of the beginning of this partnership is not known, but the following advertisement appeared in the weekly Philadelphia German Paper "Staatsbote" No. 108, in 1764.

"Joseph Simon and Benjamin Nathan

Have for sale in the newly founded store in Heidelberg, in Lancaster County, for cash or short credit, an important assortment of merchandise, just received by the last ships from London and suitable throughout for the Germans: Fine Broad cloths of all colors, Rattines, Kerseys, half-lined, flan-

nels...duroys, durggets, safathies, thicksets...calimancoes...all kinds of iron ware...window glass, gunpowder and shot...and numerous articles too tedious to mention" #3

Nathan himself arrived in Heidelberg about 1759.⁹⁴ Although the business relationship with Simon and Levy Andrew Levy may have prospered for awhile, by 1773 things had gone sour. From several Yiddish letters on reel 108 of the Gratz-Joseph collection at the American Jewish Archives, a series of events is described about the falling apart of the partnership.⁹⁵

The first letter dated November 11, 1773, was from Joseph Simon to Eleazar Lyon. Simon orders the sheriff to seize Nathan's goods for one year's rent due Simon. Bernard Jacobs then writes a note to Nathan telling him to meet Mr. Simon at his store and to bring the keys to the shop and his trunks. "It might still be better than you think", says Jacobs.

Simon writes to Nathan that he does not find in the trunks the large silver spoon, tea spoons, cream jug, the large bed quilts and many other things. Simon sends back to Nathan his Tallith, Tephillin, prayer-book, Shehitah knife (for kosher slaughtering) and grindstone, so that Nathan could be a good Jew.

Simon mentions that he is keeping the rest of Nathan's books for the charity money. What Simon meant by this is unclear. Perhaps Nathan had used charity money for his own use. Simon accuses Nathan of being dishonest and squandering his money in saloons. If Nathan does not give his (account) books to Bernard Jacobs, Simon will sell his clothes, his wife's clothes and their bed. Nathan later wrote that for 15 days he was without his Tephillin, pots, spoons or bed.

Nathan in a letter to Barnard Gratz complained bitterly about the way Simon brought the sheriff. Nathan quotes Simon as saying "Get out you dem sona vebitch." Apparently the dishonest acts of Nathan really annoyed Simon.

Neither Nathan's drinking nor Simon and Levy's feeling toward him changed after a year. For in a letter to Michael Gratz in 1774, Levy Andrew Levy states:

"Benjamin Nathan could not wait until the eight days (of mourning) expired, but went to taverns drinking and yesterday held vendue (a public sale). His behavior here is most ridiculous. I need not say more, only that he is a worthless rascal; his character will go with him."

A TYPICAL "BUSINESS" LETTER

This letter of August 29, 1762 was written to Barnard Gratz, who, with his brother Michael, was just beginning a long business relationship with Simon. Notice the five different "wagons" or people Simon used to transport his furs to Gratz for export. Letters were the only

form of long distance communication available. The contents of the letters would range from pure business to religious matters, to family affairs and even to personality conflicts and rumors. The dozen or so collections of manuscripts that have survived, provide a wealth of information and are a pleasure to read. This particular letter is from the McAllister collection and is re-printed in Byars' Gratz Papers page 57-58.

Lancaster, August 29, 1762.

Mr. Barnard Gratz,

Sir:—I received your favor per Mr. Levy; am obliged to you for your care in getting me a good negro wench; hope she deserves the good opinion you appear to have for her. The 11th November, 1761, I sent you by Hitter's wagon, 8 bundles skins and furs. The furs I desired you to deliver to Mr. Franks. These skins were Simon and Mitchell's. I desired you to keep an account of what you had delivered and to render it to me with the account of sales, but you have not done it. And November 24th, following, I sent you by Bausmann's wagon, 7 bundles skins and furs of my own and desired you to deliver the furs to Mr. Franks. And June 21st, 1762, I sent you skins by Stricker's wagon and Slough's, of my own. The furs were wrapped with bearskins which I likewise desired you to deliver him. Please to send me the account of what you delivered. Please to buy me a brass blowpipe for my silversmith; any of the silversmiths will tell you where they are to be bought.

By Commodore Shank's wagon, you'll receive:

WP	1 Small Bundle		
	14 damaged	Wt.	52 lb.
	Fall skins. Sell and send me your account directly.		
IS	1 Bundle Fall		
	23 Good Fall		107
do.	1 Small Bundle		
	Summer		39 lb.
SM	3 Bundles Fall Skins		
	90 Skins	Wt.	363 lb.
"	3 Bundles do.		
	72 do.		304
"	1 Bundle, damaged		65

Please sell the above skins to the best advantage for my account and keep a regular account of the same. Send me account of what skins you have delivered Baynton and Wharton. Their skins were all culled here and merchantable; so don't let them cull too much. I wonder Mr. Derham did not give me notice of a vessel up for London and the people all packing below. Don't fail to send me by return of the wagon, tobacco dust. I intend to pack 14 chests of skins this week. Tell Mr. Derham to buy no more breeches and not to send up any candles. He may provide 200 or 300 pair fine shoes, mostly all large. There is always too many small amongst what comes up. Please to pay Mr. Michael Gratz £30 and charge to my account. Mr. Henry will be down this week,—so take care to have some money ready for him. You'll receive by Shank 1 beaver blanket to make you a hat and one for myself. If it is not enough, add a little more to it. Send my hat and breeches before the holidays. I beg you may send all the things I wrote you for before and now, by return of Shank's wagon. And send me one gross, saddler's brass tuft nails, not looped but smooth at the heads; and send me one doz. blue melting pots, No. 3. You can pack them up safe in a cask. I am, with regard, Sir,

Your Most Humble Servant,
JOSEPH SIMON.

As the Indian treaties pushed the Indians westward, the Jewish Indian trader went with them. Before the outbreak of the French and Indian War, Simon was an active trader in the area to the west of the Allegheny Mountains. By 1761, he had a house in Carlisle, a stopping off point on the five or six day journey from Lancaster to where Pittsburgh would be at the juncture of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers forming the Ohio River.

Indian traders had been in the area since 1725, and by 1745 they numbered about 60. By the outbreak of the French and Indian War, the number had grown to about 150. It wasn't until England gained firm control of the area in 1758, that actual settlement began. Simon, by 1760, had opened a store or trading post. This was the partnership of Simon, (William) Trent, (Levy Andrew) Levy and Company. The "Company" was David Franks, who because of his position as supplier to the British and his utilization of Simon's store, decided to remain a "silent partner."

Merchandising around Fort Pitt was very risky. On many occasions, the traders fled with their wares inside the Fort for protection from the Indians. On two occasions, they burned their houses and stores so they would not provide shelter for the Indians. Floods in 1762 and 1763 had almost the same effect. The constant task of rebuilding their homes and shops did much to discourage these merchant-traders.

By 1761, the population had reached 332, but by the time of the uprising of Chief Pontiac in 1763, only the Fort remained. All homes and stores had been razed. By as late as 1770, only 20 homes, mostly occupied by traders, had sprung up again. Pittsburgh, until 1781, would be a town of traders. Like the Lancaster of the 1740's, Pittsburgh was now the last stop west for the settlers.

The absence of Levy Andrew Levy's name from the Lancaster tax lists of 1759 to 1775 (when he purchased a home in Lancaster) seems to indicate that Levy may have lived or spent much time in Pittsburgh in search of pelts. We know that in 1763, during that Pontiac Indian uprising, Levy was captured by the Indians and then released. He had been "granted" safe passage from Presque Island (in northwest Pennsylvania near Lake Erie) to Fort Pitt. On the way he was grabbed. It is known that he kept a diary, but to the dismay of the historian, it has not survived.

Competition was very keen among the traders. The Indians would come to the other side of the river with a bundle of pelts. They would yell across, and the trader who was the quickest would run for a raft to ferry them across. Once on the other side, the Indians would walk from shop to shop looking for the best deal. Often traders would use rum as bait to get their attention.

The goods the traders would barter with would be cloth or duffel.

blankets, checked shirts, axes, knives, guns, powder, rum, tobacco and trinkets. Competition was so keen that the English command tried to restrict the number of traders.

The major competition of Simon, Trent, Levy and Company was the Philadelphia gentile based firm of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan. However, they were forced out of business by 1768. This first Pittsburgh partnership of Simon was so aggressive that its rivals complained that they extended too much credit to the Indians, supplied too much rum during negotiations and cut prices. This first partnership closed in 1769 with Trent owing Simon and Franks some 4,082 pounds. To secure this debt, Trent gave Simon and Franks a mortgage on some 7,500 acres in Cumberland County. As we will relate later, this simple mortgage would eventually wind up in the Supreme Court of the United States some 81 years later.

Other Fort Pitt Partners ⁹⁷

From about 1762 to 1765, Simon was also in partnership with Abraham Mitchell who may have been Jewish. Mitchell was one of the signers, in Philadelphia, of the Non-Importation Agreement of 1765.

By 1766 and as late as 1769, Simon was associated with a James Milligan. In 1766, Simon complained to Sir William Johnson about the efforts of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan to open a trading post on the Scioto River thus hindering Simon's "monopoly." Of course, it didn't matter since Wharton and Company were out of business some three years later.

Simon and Mitchell added a partner named McClure. By 1773, it was Simon and John Campbell.

Simon, Campbell and John Connolly

For many years, the colonies of Virginia and Pennsylvania fought for ownership of the Fort Pitt area. This was a complicated affair, but, put simply, both their charters could be interpreted to include the disputed area. Dr. John Connolly was Virginia's administrative deputy in the area. Pennsylvania authorities also had their system of government.⁹⁸ In the early 1770's, when Virginia had the upper hand, the loyal Pennsylvania merchants and traders were roughly treated.

The Virginians drove away Indians friendly to the Pennsylvania traders and they taxed each pelt four pence. Simon and Campbell's store seemed to be the only one that prospered. This fact along with their friendship with Connolly seemed to indicate that Simon and Campbell sided with the Virginians claim for territorial jurisdiction. This did not make Simon popular with the other Pennsylvania traders.

Connolly became indebted to Simon and Campbell. He deeded to them several thousand acres of land at what would be Louisville, Ky.

Simon and Campbell had planned to found a city at that location during the 1770's. The War delayed their efforts and after the War only Campbell pursued this idea. Simon must have sold his interest in the lands to Campbell.

The Non-Importation agreements forbid the importation of English goods. Among these items was tea, the resulting scarcity of which was quite a hardship for the colonials. To satisfy this demand for tea, the Gratzes smuggled British tea into America. It was impossible to sell this tea in the super-patriotic cities of the east coast without being caught. They did offer it for sale in the Fort Pitt store of Simon and Campbell.

The year was 1775 and luckily Simon and Levy were out of town.

"Before long, however, it became known in the country that Simon and Campbell's store was selling tea, and certain earnest and intolerant patriots resolved to put a stop to it. On the night of August 24, 1775, more than a score of Westmorelanders headed by Colonel Archibald Lochry rode into town. Just what followed is obscure, but at any rate the next morning John Campbell was summoned to appear before the combined West Augusta and Westmoreland committees. He acknowledged that he had tea and delivered up all that remained unsold— two ten gallon kegs, one box and one bag—and this was carried to the liberty pole and there burned."⁹⁹

James O'Hara (1754-1819), who would become Pittsburgh's first important industrialist, received his early training by clerking for Simon at the age of 20. The exact date of the breakup of the Simon-Campbell partnership is not known, but it was active until Campbell was captured during the War. The Revolutionary War killed trading. The Indians would rather scalp (for British bounty) than barter with the Indian traders.

Joseph Simon In Western Trade and Land Speculation ¹⁰¹

Perhaps the most perplexing aspect of Joseph Simon was his dealings and holdings in the land area west of the Alleghenies. Indeed the whole subject of land ownership in the Ohio River Valley and Pittsburgh is more than just a little confusing.

The interest of the Jew in that area was intense. With the various Indian treaties of the 1700's, the Indians were pushed westward. It follows that the Jewish Indian trader likewise had to travel west of the mountains in search of pelts to take in trade for hardware, guns, rum etc. needed by the Indians. Furthermore, it was apparent that the Indians and settlers that would inhabit that area were a ready market for the goods imported from England. Finally, for those who could obtain huge tracts of land, money could be made by selling lots and creating towns. But we are ahead of our story.

Who owned the lands of the Ohio and Mississippi Valley? Of course, at first it was the Indians. Then in the 1740's, the British and the French were competing for control of the area and the "right" to

negotiate with the Indians for land ownership and valuable trading rights.

The French, starting with La Salle, approached the area up the Mississippi from New Orleans. In 1749, they sent Celoran de Blainville into the area. He planted lead plates claiming the territory for France and built a series of forts to solidify its claims.

The British and the Colony of Virginia and its Ohio Company in particular, would, in 1748, send agents into the area to stake their claim and to build a fort at the forks of the Ohio. In 1754, Washington politely asked the French to leave the area, and their answer, in simplified form, was the French and Indian War of 1754-1763.

At first, the French had control, and the fort under construction became Fort Duquesne. General Braddock, in his June 1755 ill-fated attempt to recapture the fort, would be supplied by a Simon pack train he met at Big Crossing, 15 miles above Little Meadow near the Laurel Hills. Eventually, however, by 1758, it was apparent that the British would be victorious.

Now that England controlled the area, Pennsylvania and Virginia would battle, with words, politicians, troops, and overlapping governments for this area of America. Both their respective charters could be interpreted to include the disputed Fort Pitt, Ohio Valley area. In the end, with the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, Pennsylvania would be given this land.

Prior to the French and Indian War, England did not encourage settlement in this area. Yet they were fortunate in having loyal settlers there during the French and Indian War. By Proclamation of 1763, they officially made this western area one huge Indian reservation and forbade white settlers from "All the land and territories lying to the westward of the sources of rivers which fall into the sea from the west and northwest." This, of course, did not keep the white settlers out. There is no reason to believe that Joseph Simon, as an Indian trader, did not frequent this area in the 1740's and 1750's. As related earlier, his formal Fort Pitt trading posts and partnerships started in 1760, even before peace was restored. Simon and his partners were aggressive traders and by the 1770's had a virtual monopoly. It might be said that as native Pennsylvanians, they sold out and became loyal supporters of the Virginian claim to this territory. Yet, it was this close relationship with Virginia and their local agent Dr. John Connolly that gave them their strength.

Land Companies

From as early as the 1740's, land companies would be established to control vast tracts of land. Some companies negotiated directly with the Indians for title to the land; others were given land by the colonial governments; and still others received them as compensation for losses

suffered at the hands of the Indians. But in order to validate these grants, the land companies had to secure a grant from the King. In no case, for various reasons, did the King ever validate any of these grants.

Of the more than ten such land companies, Simon was actively involved in only two. He was joined by other Jews such as Levy Andrew Levy, David Franks, Michael and Barnard Gratz. Gentiles associated with them, who represented the best known Indian traders, were George Croghan, William Trent, William Murray and Sir William Johnson. Supporting their claims in England were the kin of David Franks: brothers Naphtali and Moses, son Moses, nephew Jacob and, yes, Benjamin Franklin. On March 20, 1776 at the Indian Queen tavern in Philadelphia, Simon met with Franklin on land grant matters.

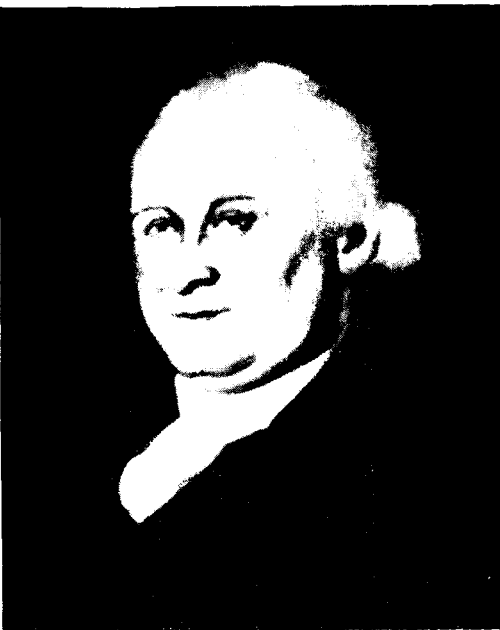
Specifically, Jews were involved this way. In 1754, just prior to the outbreak of the French and Indian War, a combined pack train of many traders was attacked by the Indians with the encouragement of the French. The results were very heavy losses and the participants organized into the "Suffering Traders of 1754" and sought compensation from the Indians and/or the British. They never received any.

In 1763, after peace was restored and guaranteed by the British, the renegade Chief Pontiac went on a rampage. He managed to capture several British forts and attacked the pack trains of traders. These traders organized as the "Suffering Traders of 1763." The groups of 1754 and 1763, having many people in common, re-organized as the Indiana Land Company.

The Indiana Land Company pushed for compensation from London. In 1765 they sent George Croghan to London to aid the Franks in pursuing their claims. They promised five percent to Croghan and the Franks for their efforts. They were actively aided by Benjamin Franklin's desire for a unified settlement of the West. His son William's interest in the Indiana Company did not retard his efforts either. Nevertheless, their efforts were unfruitful.

The Indiana Company then changed tactics. Under the leadership of Sir William Johnson, the Indians and the British were meeting at Fort Stanwix in New York in 1768. Sir William pressed the claims of the 1763 group. (He denied the 1754 group, as the French, and not the British, were responsible.) The Indians ceded land to the British, some 2,500,000 acres of which was set aside for the 1763 group. This grant included lands east and south of the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers from Kittanning down, or much of southwestern Pennsylvania and part of West Virginia.

Still it was no victory. This land was given to the King IN TRUST for the 1763 group. They still had to have it validated by the King. The King accepted the entire Indian grant, thus moving the allowable land for settlement westward, but did not approve the specific grant to these traders.



Barnard (1738-1801) and Michael (1740-1811) Gratz. Brothers in partnership in Philadelphia and associated with Joseph Simon in many joint ventures. Michael married Miriam Simon and Barnard married Rosa Simon's first cousin, Richea Myers-Cohen.

The politics now swung back to London. The King and his minister still would not help. They feared western expansion. On the one hand, being that far from the ports, the settlers would be tempted to start their own manufacturing outlets. Imported English goods would just be too expensive to haul across the mountains. On the other hand, there were rumblings in the Colonies, and having settlers that far from British troops was not a good idea. To make a long story short, the grant was not validated and the War of Independence took the King out of the picture.

The second Jewish venture was one sponsored by Barnard and Michael Gratz. They sent William Murray, in 1773, into Illinois country to purchase land from the Indians. Carefully following the rules of negotiation (not too much rum), he purchased, for thirty seven thousand dollars worth of goods, two parcels of land. One was the lower triangle where the Ohio meets the Mississippi and the second was northward along the Illinois River. These parcels (the Southern half of Illinois & Indiana) were well chosen for they could control the traffic coming from the south up the Mississippi and from the north down the Illinois from the Great Lakes. There were twenty-two shareholders in what would be first, the Illinois, and later, the Illinois and Wabash Land Companies and eight were Jews. Among the shareholders were: David Franks,

his son Moses, his brother Moses and nephew Jacob Franks, Barnard and Michael Gratz, Joseph Simon, Levy Andrew Levy, William Hamilton (of the Pennsylvania and Lancaster family), John Campbell and William Murray. Again the King did not validate this purchase that was far westward of the new 1768 settlement line.

After the War, it was hoped that validity to these grants could be received by the States. Unfortunately Pennsylvania, Virginia and now New York, claimed the Fort Pitt area. Until the State with jurisdiction could be determined, the grants could not be confirmed. Simon and the other Jews involved in the grants felt that Virginia would be given control, and, hence this was another reason why Simon "worked with" Virginia. In the end, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 gave the land to Pennsylvania and made invalid all grants to land companies by the Indians or England without any compensation to the participants.

If, however, these land grants and companies had been validated, Jews would have owned a major part of the mid-west Ohio and Mississippi Valleys. Instead the massive investment of funds and efforts of Simon and others became absolutely worthless.

Pittsburgh Holdings ¹⁰²

Simon did legally own land in the Fort Pitt area. To secure a mortgage of 300 pounds, Simon became owner in July 1775, with Mordecai M. Mordecai, of a plantation and improvements including building, two copper stills, utensils and household furniture on Sucks Run near Pittsburgh. Mordecai was granted a license on September 20, 1775 to run a tavern and to distill hard liquor.

Simon's part of the 1768 land grant was 10,580 acres on Racoon Creek near Legionville (formerly Logstown) some ten miles northwest of Pittsburgh. He also owned 295 acres near "Nine Mile Run" which is where present day Routes 30 and 981 intersect near Ligonier (Fort Ligonier).

In the city of Pittsburgh in the 1780 to 1796 period, Simon owned and sold five lots bordered by Water, Front, Second, Ferry and Market Streets along the Monogahela River. Specifically these were lots #158, 159, 172, 177 and 231 on "Colonel Woods Plan of the Town of Pittsburgh." Simon also owned, along the Allegheny River, lots #73 and 74 between Wayne (10th) Street, Penn Street and the River. What Simon did or used these lots for is not known and I will leave for an aggressive Pittsburgh historian. Nevertheless, Simon had sold all these lands by 1796 as part of his "cashing in" process during his eighty-fourth year.

Pre-Revolution Business Interests

Simon's major thrust of activity from the wind-down of the French and Indian War until the Revolution, revolved around Fort Pitt. He and



Rebecca Gratz (1781-1869), daughter of Miriam Simon and Michael Gratz. Granddaughter of Joseph Simon. A Philadelphia beauty of charm and culture. A woman of many accomplishments, best known for founding the first Jewish Religious school in America.

Levy Andrew Levy considered Indian trading their strength, and west of the Alleghenies was where it was happening.

As related, Simon and his series of partnerships were the strongest trading force in the area. As an example in March of 1765, Simon re-outfitted George Croghan for his trip into Illinois Country. He sold him some \$5,000 worth of trading goods among which were: ten dozen silk handkerchiefs, 19 dozen jews harps, 17 tomahawks (one of which almost cost him his scalp when his pack train was raided) and axes, 52 pewter basins, 2,400 gun flints, 36,400 pieces of black wampum (beads), 27 hair plates, 136 wrist bands, 163 dozen broaches, 107 pairs

of "ear bobbs" and other items.¹⁰⁵ Croghan's trip was the first major venture into the area for the purpose of earning the confidence of the Indians for future land concessions from them.

With the marriage of Michael Gratz to Miriam Simon in 1769, Simon placed more and more of his business with Barnard and Michael trading as B & M Gratz out of Philadelphia. He was also involved with them in the various land companies. Barnard Gratz would spend two years in London (1769-71) on their combined behalfs.

The correspondence of Michael and Barnard indicates that Barnard, the older brother, did most of the traveling. His letters came from London, New York, Richmond and Fort Pitt. In these letters, we learn of the travels of Simon. Simon too spent the greater part of his days in travel between Lancaster, Fort Pitt, Carlisle and Richmond. Little else of specifics is known other than the details of business transactions which would not add much to our over-all understanding.

On the local front, his store was still one of the largest and most vigorous in its partnership (in hardware) with William Henry. In the civic area, the only new item was his signing a petition for the construction of a new road between Philadelphia and Strasburg in 1770.¹⁰⁶

The hardships placed upon the colonist and the colonist's reactions to them, started to affect business. The non-importation agreements made the purchase of goods for resale difficult and more expensive. The providing of silver goods was still a big business for Simon. In December of 1770, he sent to Ephraim Blaine in Cumberland County a quantity of silver truck. In 1776, George Morgan informed governmental agencies that Simon could supply "a good assortment" of silver work "at short notice." Simon and Levy offered to pay "the highest price for skins and furs."¹⁰⁷

Jews — Patriots Or Loyalists? ¹⁰⁸

With the impending revolt against the mother country, Simon, like everyone else, had to take a stand and place his loyalty. Jews were divided. They realized they had it pretty good in America. Certainly, they couldn't vote or hold office, and many colonial laws that should have restricted them or even forbidden them to live within their bounds, were luckily ignored or not enforced. They were left alone, had religious freedom and owned land. Many felt that, in time, England would grant additional freedom to the Jews. Some felt they owed loyalty to the Crown for the freedom they already had.

Others took the other approach. They saw in the promises of the founders of the new country complete freedom for the Jew. They wanted to gain that freedom now. They didn't want to wait for the political process and the King to give it to them. Secondly, most Jews were not born in England and thus felt no loyalty to the King.

So, each Jew took his stand, Tory or Patriot. The patriot who was

young enough or so inclined, joined the armies of the young republic. It has been documented by others that many Jews performed heroics and rose to be officers of quality. The patriotic Jews, when their cities were about to be occupied by the British as in New York, Newport, Charleston, Savannah and Philadelphia, either had to flee and risk losing everything of value or stay and try to impress the occupiers of their neutrality. Most fled to safer towns of which Lancaster was a major one to which many a Jew came.

Since Lancaster, during the war period had a population composed of Jews fleeing British occupied towns, it would be logical to assume that they were Whigs or at worst neutral. Indeed, I have not found one reference to a Tory Jew in Lancaster. Its permanent residents Simon, Levy and the Solomon brothers, were most definitely Whigs.

The Fifth Series, Volume VII of the Pennsylvania Archives lists the muster roles or list of the local Militia. In 1776 Levy Andrew Levy is listed as standing guard under Captain Christopher Crawford's detachment of the 1st Battalion. Under the command of Colonel James Ross and Captain Hubley's 3rd Company in 1781 were Levy Andrew Levy, Isaac, Levy and Myer Solomon and Joshua Isaac. This one Company, composed of citizens of Lancaster, contained just about every eligible Jewish resident of fighting age. The roster for this same Company in 1782 included only brothers Levy and Myer Solomon. Levy Andrew Levy is listed with a notation that he "enlisted (sic) a man for the Continental Army agreeable to Law." This could mean that he obtained a substitute. It is recorded that Aaron Levy, then about 39, furnished a substitute for the muster roll of the 8th Battalion of Lancaster in 1781.

Sgt. Isaac Solomon served as Sgt. of the Guard for Lancaster on January 2 and February 1 of 1776. It appears that he was the only Lancaster Jew who strived or was allowed to have rank higher than private. Dr. Jacob Marcus suggests that Lancaster's Isaac Solomon may have been the Solomon Isaac "who participated in the Canadian invasion and was captured at Three Rivers in June 1776."¹⁰⁸ Isaac's name is missing from the 1777 to 1780 tax lists, but he is back in Lancaster in 1781 as noted above. Dr. Marcus could be correct.

For the most part, the Lancaster Jew stood guard. As Lancaster never endured hostile action, it is unlikely that any Jew was in combat. There is no record of a local Jew serving under George Washington or his generals.

In 1774, Simon was a leading donor to a fund for the relief of Boston citizens who were suffering under restriction imposed by the British after their "Tea Party." Immediately after word of Lexington and Concord reached Lancaster, a call was put out for all lead and powder. Simon and Levy, from the stock in their store, provided two quarter kegs of powder and 200 pounds of lead. In 1777, Simon provided money to pay for a messenger service between Lancaster and the armies of George Washington.¹⁰⁹

It is well documented that many Jews served in the active armies of Washington and local militias that saw action. In proportion to the total Jewish population in America (about 1/10th of one percent of the total population), a great number of Jews were heroes, officers and brave soldiers on the front lines. Yet the greatest contribution to the War effort was on the economic front.

The armies had to be supplied. Some of the needed goods could be produced in America itself. Others had to be imported from overseas. From the domestic end, the Jewish merchants would purchase, from the citizens, the blankets, shoes, guns, etc. that were badly needed and sell them to the Army. Contrary to what one may think, very few merchants, Jew or gentile, made money or profited from the War. Often they would purchase the goods with pounds, sterling or paper money only to receive, after considerable delay, from the young government, notes whose value had depreciated far below the cost of the goods.

Goods that could not or were not manufactured in America had to be imported. Prior to the hostilities, the British Empire was the major source of these materials. Of course, they ceased to be a source once War started. Therefore the family ties that the American Jew had in Europe, were vital for getting shipments from France, Holland or Spain. Without these ties, it is hard to imagine if the goods could have been obtained. Additionally, the American Jewish merchant was knowledgeable in supplying troops as many Jews did just that for the British during the conflicts with the French in the 1700's.

Once the goods were on shipboard, they had to evade the British blockade of American ports. Indeed some Jewish merchants lost ships and cargoes when they were accosted or sunk by British gunboats. Likewise, Jews participated in the highly risky, but sometime profitable, adventure of outfitting their ships with cannons and military hardware. They would roam the ocean seeking British ships loaded with war material for British troops. The objective, of course, was to capture the goods for the American cause.

Supplying The Prisoner

The Franks family had long and strong business ties to the British government. David married Margret Evans of gentile, high, Tory Philadelphia society. It was not surprising, therefore, that David Franks, a longtime partner of Simon, was considered to be a Tory. There is no evidence to indicate that he acted against the Patriots, but he kept his strong connections with London. Franks' sister Philadelphia was married to the British General Oliver De. Lancey, and his daughter Rebecca, after being the "belle" of occupied Philadelphia, would after the War, marry General Sir Henry Johnson.¹¹⁰ Daughter Abigail married Andrew Hamilton.

Yet David Franks served a useful role for the Continental Congress. He was appointed as the supplier for the British prisoners of war held by the Americans. That is, he would be given funds by the British command in New York with which he would purchase the blankets, food and other items required for the British prisoners held in various colonial towns.

It was only natural that Joseph Simon would be one of Franks' agents in this business. Simon cared for men in Frederick(town) and Winchester, Virginia, and in Lancaster, Easton and Reading, Pennsylvania. In November of 1778, for example, Simon provided wood, straw, tobacco, soap, candles and other items for some 285 men of which at least 40 were in Lancaster.¹¹¹ Lancaster, during the War, was untouched and was heavily populated with British prisoners of war.

Among the prisoners in Lancaster was a young Hessian soldier captured in the Battle of Trenton in 1776. This soldier, Henry Seybert, was the great-great-great-grandfather of the wife of your author.¹¹²

The *Journal of the Continental Congress* makes several references to Simon. \$426 was paid for blankets delivered to Lancastrian General Edward Hand for use in a hospital he ran in Pittsburgh; \$302 was paid for arms supplied in 1778 to the Thirteenth Virginia Regiment and on November 2, 1775, a debt of \$2,300 was paid for various items.

Some wartime business correspondence has survived. In a letter dated June 7, 1776, Levy Andrew Levy wrote to Major Ephraim Blaine about blankets:

"I received your favor. I am sorry that I cannot supply you with neither shoes nor blankets. If I had known that the country-made blankets, which are thin and light, would have done, I might have got a few; others not to be had. As I told you when you was here, a collection had been made in this town for blankets for the Continental troops. I cannot get any quantity of good shoes, and those the tanners have are very ordinary. I am, Sir, Your Very Humble Servant, L. Andrew Levy." ¹¹³

On April 4, 1777, Simon writes to Barnard Gratz in Philadelphia asking him to help sell some rifles he has for sale. Notice that the letter indicates a financial problem for Simon; yet he wants raisins at any price:

Colonel Antle? bespoke rifles from me for two companies when Colonel Telonier was here. He said they must not be delivered until further orders. I have about 120 new rifles by me which I want to sell. The price is L6:10 each. The Council of Safety (Lancaster's revolutionary militia) paid me the same. I will be much obliged to you if you will speak to Mr. Peters or to some of the Delegates (of the States meeting in Philadelphia) and acquaint them of the number of rifles I have to dispose of, as I want the money for a particular purpose. I wrote Mr. Rice by Mr. Ziegler to find me some money, as I want to pay off the butchers and bakers. I owe them a good deal and must have some money up.....Perhaps the Virginia delegates will buy my rifles. I want a few pounds of good raisins. Do try to get them for me and send them up this week,—three or four pounds. I don't care what they cost." ¹¹⁴

Simon had to rely on Franks for payment of the goods he supplied. Franks, in turn, had to collect from the British. The Continental Congress demanded that the British and therefore Franks and Simon, pay all bills in pound specie rather than notes. By 1776, the Continental Congress was having doubts as to the neutrality of Franks and his ability to separate conducting business dealings from passing information to the enemy. His movements were therefore curtailed and he was restricted from traveling to New York to obtain payment from the British command. By 1777, he was thousands of pounds behind in paying Simon and his other agents.

Simon wrote in January 1778 to fellow Jew Elijah Etting of York:

"You'd please to speak to some of the gentlemen members of Congress to know if we may continue as usual. Till I hear from Mr. Franks, it is not in my power to make payments. I have to this day some thousands of pounds due me from Mr. Franks." 115

Simon wanted Etting to get approval from Congress, that was sitting in York, to pay his suppliers in currency rather than specie. While awaiting the answer, he used the forbidden, dubious currency. For this on April 6, 1778, he received a summons from Major General Horatio Gates, President of the Board of War:

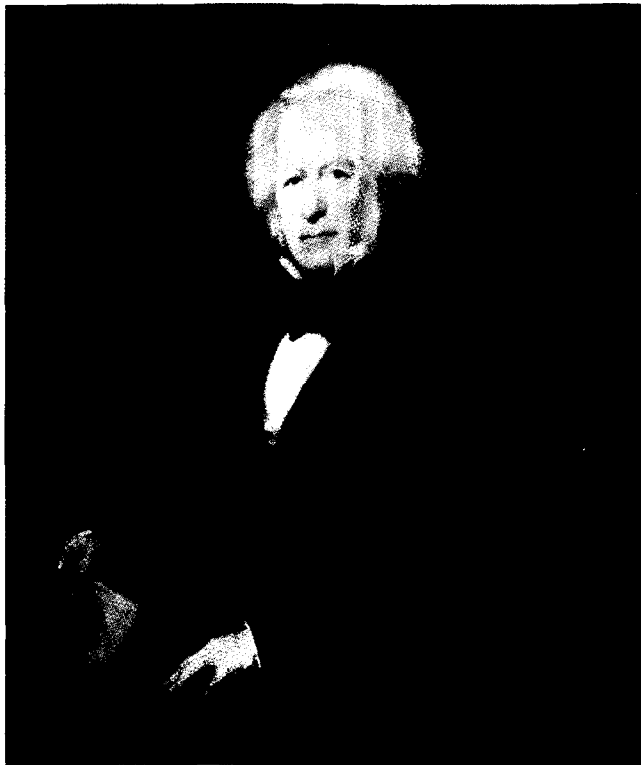
"Sir: Mr. Boudinot, Commissioner General of Prisoners, has made to this Board a charge against you as Deputy Commissioner of British Prisoners. You are therefore required to come to York(town) without a moment's delay to explain to the Board such parts of your conduct as appear to be exceptionable." 116

Simon wrote to David Franks, whose lack of specie was the cause of his problem, on April 9.

"I accordingly went to Yorktown yesterday and waited on the Board. I am blamed for receiving Continental money from you. I promised to acquaint you immediately on my return, that I may have your answer to say there from before the Board of War. This goes under cover to Elias Boudinot, Esq., and I beg that you'll immediately send me an answer, that I may know what I have to do. If it don't suit you to furnish me with specie, I shall be obliged to decline acting as Commissary for the Prisoners." 117

Having received no answer from Franks, Simon wrote again on May 12, 1778:

".....I waited on the Board of War and acquainted them with the inconveniences I labor under. I have often troubled them and prolonged time still, expecting to hear from you, that you would have answered my letters before this time, respecting my department, how I shall act. I am blamed greatly for not adhering to the resolves of Congress (to pay specie) and the honorable Board of War still indulged me till the first of June.....that I may have early instructions from you how I shall act. I shall prepare my account of imbursements for the prisoners in this and the State of Maryland by the first of June, for settlement, as I must then positively give up my department, respecting the victualling and furnishing the prisoners with necessaries, if not furnished with specie to pay for the same, agreeable to the late Resolves of Congress. And I shall be very sorry and fear the prisoners will be neglected and not supplied with the usual necessaries they received from me. I do assure you, the



Hyman Gratz (1776-1858) grandson of Joseph Simon; brother of Rebecca Gratz and son of Miriam Simon and Michael Gratz. Philadelphia civic and religious leader who founded Gratz College. Attended first class of Franklin (later Franklin & Marshall) College in 1787, his sister Richea also attended that year.

gentlemen of the Honorable Board of War have not only given me great indulgence, but have acted in regard to the prisoners with a tenderness and feeling greatly to their honor. They also told me that if provisions should be sent out for the prisoners, they will not make it inconvenient or expensive to transport the provisions to the different places, but will receive them at any of the ports of the army of the United States and order their commissary to replace the same quantity at any of the places where the prisoners reside...

I suppose that about 1200 prisoners will be removed (from Lancaster) to Fort Frederick in the State of Maryland. The prisoners are entirely destitute of clothing, of shirts and shoes in particular. Colonel Boudinot ordered the Commissary I employ at Reading to receive no other money from me than specie which I have not.

I have taken the liberty to trouble his Excellency, General Washington to forward it (this letter) to you..... I am now in advance upwards of L15,000 and have been obliged to borrow money." 118

Finally, in November of 1778, Franks was relieved of his duties. His loyalty and ability to remain neutral were questioned. Hindsight tells us that he did nothing to harm the war effort. He was arrested for

treason but found innocent and released. Franks was ordered out of the Country, but returned to America from London after the War. Simon wrote to the Board of War after learning of Franks' dismissal:

"I beg leave to inform your Honorable Board that Mr. David Franks, who is the present British Commissary of Prisoners, has directed me, as his agent, to stop issuing provisions, etc., to said prisoners on the 10th inst., agreeable to a resolve of Congress for discontinuing his acting in said office. I would in consequence thereof, in the meantime, beg of the Honorable Board some information respecting the further supply of said prisoners with provisions, wood, straw, tobacco, soap, candles, etc., their present number being: At Fort Frederick, 140 odd men; at Fredericktown, 50; at Winchester, about 30; Lancaster, about 40; and at Easton, about 25. If your Honors please to appoint me to said business at those different places, I am well convinced of my being able to give satisfaction and on as good terms as any other person whatever."¹¹⁹ It appears that Simon did not get the job.

Post War Depression

Simon took a financial beating during the War years. Correspondence read indicates that his problems were wide spread, and for the first time, he became delinquent with his creditors. Often he asked for additional time, and out of respect, it was granted. Even his aged sister Mary, in London, as related in her 1789 letter, knew of Simon's financial reverses.

Another letter encouraged his daughter Shinah, who was in Philadelphia with her husband, not to come to Lancaster for a prolonged stay, as Simon was having trouble supporting his own family. The cause of his problems is unclear. Perhaps it falls into two areas. Certainly his difficulties with David Franks and Franks' failure to supply specie, may have cost him a great deal of his personal assets. Franks may have left for England without paying all that he owed Simon. Simon may have been paid in Continental notes that were worth far less than the funds he used to purchase goods.

The value of the lands he obtained from the Indian grants of 1768 and others proved to be quite worthless. Simon may have been land rich and cash poor. Generally business in Lancaster was just not good and the businessmen in general suffered. Lancaster was no longer the important inland city it once was. Fort Pitt, now Pittsburgh, served that role and Lancaster lost much of its traffic in people heading to the West.

In 1780, Levy wrote to Michael Gratz that French goods (which replaced the unavailable English goods) were "not so saleable as English merchandise."¹²⁰ Simon joined other local business men to protest, by means of petition, the Pennsylvania assembly's authorization of 200,000 bills of credit which were to be used as legal tender. The petition stated that this money depreciated as fast as the then famous "Continentials" and thus "many honest creditors" were cheated when they were paid in paper money, "widows and orphans whose property consisted of outstanding debts, have been greatly injured,"

and those wishing to defraud were rushing to pay off their debts with these depreciated bills of credit.¹²¹

Levy Andrew Levy

Levy Andrew Levy, at the outbreak of hostilities, left Fort Pitt and returned to Lancaster in 1775. He continued as Simon's active partner until 1785 when he left for Maryland. The question that arises is why did he leave? There is that oft-quoted letter of his, referred to earlier, in which he longs for a Society of Jews in which he could raise his children. This, in the final analysis, is not the real reason. A close study of his correspondence with Michael Gratz in the Gratz-Joseph papers,¹ clearly indicates that he was in debt, perhaps broke.

These same letters are strange in one respect. Levy left Lancaster in 1785, and these letters continued until almost 1800, yet Levy never once speaks fondly of Simon, never asks Gratz questions about the Simon family and in general ignores Simon completely. Likewise, Simon's will of 1799 is strangely void of anything substantial for his partner of some 40 years. Simon merely forgives him of any debts owed him personally and leaves him \$500. It appears that Simon may have had to pay off some of Levy's debts after Levy left town. It might not be unfair to state that their parting was not friendly and Simon may have been the force that caused him to leave.

Until very recently, Levy Andrew Levy was just a name to the American Jewish historian. It was sort of like Abbott and Costello and Martin and Lewis. When you mentioned the first name, the partner's name was sure to follow. Thus it was with Levy. He was Simon's partner, his nephew (but not a son-in-law) and right hand man for 40 years. There was no attempt to study him on his own merits until the 1970's. As we will see, he was a most interesting figure in his own right.

Ira Rosenwaike is a historian of Baltimore Jewry. Levy Andrew Levy moved to Baltimore and died there in 1829. Mr. Rosenwaike in his "Simon M. Levy" and "The Jews of Baltimore to 1810", is the first one to let Levy stand on his own merits. With the help and encouragement of Mr. Rosenwaike, the story of Levy Andrew Levy can now be told.

It was brought out earlier, that Levy was born in Oxford, England the son of Mary Simon Levy and a father who remains unknown. Another confirmation of Levy's English birth is the fact that he was never Naturalized, and then there is the oft-quoted letter of Simon and Levy to Michael and Barnard Gratz in which they discuss two criminals. These criminals had swindled Lancastrians and Philadelphians alike by claiming to have been cousins of Levy. "He (the criminal) told us that he had been brought up with Levy in the same street in Oxford and that his Uncle was married to Levy's mother."¹²² (If Mary Simon Levy remarried this is the only reference to that fact.)

Levy, in 1746, after his mother had been widowed or deserted, came to America to live with and clerk for Simon.¹²⁴ It was only natural that this would turn into a full partnership and Levy, with his youth, could do many of the physical aspects of trading that Simon no longer wanted to do. Simon had no competent son or male heir, and most certainly Levy indirectly filled this void.

It doesn't appear that Levy did much on his own or out of the sphere of the partnership. The only exception would be in his land ownings, which he bought and sold independently of Simon. Indeed, his hope was to sell his vast land ownings as a way to get out of debt in the 1780's.

Levy's failure to appear on the Lancaster tax roles from 1759 to 1774 indicates that his home may have been in the Fort Pitt area during those years. Few records of that area are available so a more definite idea of his business and personal life is lacking. He was an active fur trader and roamed from Fort Pitt to Detroit and perhaps even to the Mississippi in search of pelts. When fur trade was still cut off during the French and Indian War, he was known to have traveled far down into Virginia looking for Indians with furs. In 1759, he made his way to Winchester, Virginia, where, Dr. Jacob Marcus tells us, he refused to eat bacon.¹²⁵

He may have married out there. His wife was named Susannah, but absolutely nothing is known about her. Their first son, Levy or Lev, was not circumcised until April 1764 when Jacobs did it in Heidelberg.¹²⁶ The child was two years old at the time. It can be speculated that the child was born in Fort Pitt, and on the family's first trip back to Lancaster with the child, the ritual was performed. Other firm evidence of Levy's being in that area was his capture and subsequent release from the hands of renegade chief Pontiac in 1763. The papers of Colonel Henry Bouquet from 1761 to 1763 contain many references to Levy being at Fort Pitt; Carlisle; Niagara, N.Y. and New York City. On June 30, 1761 he was listed as a member of the Fort Pitt militia.^{126A}

Levy Children ¹²⁷

Levy and his wife Susannah had eight children that we know of. Lev or Levy was born in 1762, Simon 1774-1807, Nathan, born 1777, Joseph 1779-1813, Maria 1772-1819, Benjamin 1782-1783, Elizabeth 1783-1857 and Susan 1785-1863.

Nothing is known about Nathan except that his birth was recorded in Jacob's record. Benjamin, born in 1782, may have been the baby that died in 1783 according to an April 28, 1783, letter of Levy to Michael Gratz in which he tells of his wife's grief over the loss of her baby. Other than the Jacob's entry for Lev, all we know is that twice Levy asked Gratz for information about his son who apparently was in Philadelphia. In a letter of April 22, 1789, he asked if his son was married yet. This could only be Lev, as all the other children would have

been too young. Joseph, as related in the appendix, was most likely retarded, although he was apprenticed out in 1799 for a term of ten months and 17 days to George Smith, a gilder and carver.

Elizabeth married Perigrine Falconer (a non-Jew) in 1808 and had three sons, one of whom was retarded. Sister Susan married David Oldden (business partner of Falconer) in 1803, but he died two years later in 1805. They had one son who, too, may have been retarded. All of the Levy children married non-Jews and their children were all raised as Christians. Susan, particularly became a devoted Christian after her remarriage to Dr. Solomon Brickhead, a prominent Baltimore citizen.

Son Simon, as Ira Rosenwaik relates in his article, was a member of the first graduating class of West Point in 1802. The purpose of his article was to prove that Simon M. Levy was the son of Levy Andrew Levy and not Benjamin Levy. Benjamin Levy was a better known and documented Jew of New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore. It was this article in 1971 which exposed Levy Andrew Levy, on his own merits, to the Jewish historian.

Simon Levy joined the army in 1793 and was a sergeant in Captain Lockwood's infantry unit. His performance got him appointed to West Point in 1801. After graduation he was stationed in Georgia, resigned from the army in 1805 and was dead by 1807.

Religious Irony

There is irony in Levy Andrew Levy's life. He was quite religious. His letters are over-done in their reference to the "Almighty" and Levy's thanks to the "Almighty" for the material things that he had. We have the letter he wrote in 1784 concerning his desire to live in a Jewish Society. His disdain for Benjamin Nathan's lack of religious feelings, his attempts to keep kosher even in Winchester, VA., his circumcision of son Lev at the age of two, having traveled from Fort Pitt to have it done, and a letter to Michael Gratz to remind the "shool" (synagogue) to bill him for services rendered is evidence of his religious convictions.

Yet, all his daughters married Christians, and their children were Christians. His moves after leaving Pennsylvania were to Hagerstown, Maryland, and Elizabeth(town), West Virginia (where there was no Jewish society), and only finally to Baltimore (where there was a sizable Jewish Community, but no Congregation). According to St. Paul's Episcopal Church records, of June 8, 1827 "Levy Andrew Levy, A. Jew, a very aged man, was BAPTIZED."¹²⁸ Of course, his devoted Christian daughter Susan may have had something to do with it, and in 1827 Levy was 93 and most likely senile.

Levy had a family burial plot at St. Paul's. This was not uncommon, and other Jews such as Benjamin Levy are buried there too. In the plot are buried his wife Susannah in 1807, son Joseph in 1813, Levy himself in 1829 and Christiana Magruder who died in 1813.

One asks who is Christiana Magruder. It really should not matter except that Simon Levy, the West Pointer, had a middle name "Magruder." Was she a relative?

The answer appears to be no. The *Federal Gazette and Baltimore Daily Advertiser* ran this obituary on her March 15, 1813 "Departed this life yesterday morning, Miss Christiana Magruder of this city in the 81st year of her age."

In the *Pennsylvania Packet* of October 27, 1778, the Philadelphia newspaper ran the following notice placed by Levy Andrew Levy. He was trying to locate his "deranged" odd-job helper Blizzard McGruder who had run off. Unlike many ads for runaways, this ad asked that whoever should find him was "not to treat him with harshness or severity." Furthermore Levy's description of his helper's clothing seems to indicate that he was well cared for. This Blizzard McGruder may have been Christiana's father or brother.¹²⁹

Christiana surfaces again in a letter from Levy to Michael Gratz on January 9, 1780 in which "Miss Magruder is now satisfied and thanks you for your kindness."¹³⁰ Obviously the Magruders were longtime employees of Levy far above the slave or servant status. The 1790 census lists six females in Levy's family. Susannah and three daughters are four of them and Christiana one of the other two. Simon Levy, now a military officer, may have felt that a middle name was in order and merely selected Magruder. At least that is my theory.

In 1785 on May 25, Levy sold his home to longtime friend Alexander Lowrey for 557 pounds and cut his ties with Simon and Lancaster.¹ His first stop seems to have been Hagerstown, Maryland. In 1793, he was on the Hagerstown Board of Health (perhaps due to his knowledge of Jewish dietary laws) and, in 1795, was listed as a conveyancer (writer of deeds). A letter of Levy's dated February of 1793 was mailed from Hagerstown.

An earlier letter of April 1789 is headed with an Elizabethtown location. Elizabeth(town) could have been Elizabeth, New Jersey or more likely Elizabeth, West Virginia. The latter is logical as he owned lands in that area. The letter tells of his continued poverty and how his family is not with him. The family may have been in Hagerstown or perhaps Baltimore. He tells how his wife is sewing for money and his two daughters working. (This is a little odd since Maria, born in 1772 would have been old enough, but Elizabeth and Susan, born 1783 and 1785, would have been too young.)

By 1799, he was in Baltimore where he apprenticed son Joseph. Indications are that he ran a boarding house at 95 Baltimore Street and later at 39 Hanover Street. Sister Maria first, and after her death in 1819, sister Susan were listed as having a dry goods store and dress shop in support of the family. Levy died in 1829 at the age of 95. Longevity was the rule of this blood line. Uncle Joseph Simon died at the age of 92 and Levy's mother Mary was still alive in 1789 at the age of 91.

It was in the 1780's that Simon and Michael Gratz became joint owners of vast tracks of land west of the Susquehanna. When we tell of the problems in settling Simon's estate, we will go into greater detail about these land transactions. What is important now is that Simon bought and sold these lands in his own name. He then was to turn over to Gratz his share of all sales or rentals. By the time of Simon's writing of his will in 1799, Simon and his longtime son-in-law partner were very much in disagreement as to Michael's share of these transactions. Even during Simon's lifetime, court judgments would go against him in favor of Michael. His bitterness was such that he completely wrote out of his will Miriam, and hence, her husband Michael Gratz.

Simon's Last Years

After the departure of Levy, Simon continued along as best he could. He was still in debt and may have never worked his way completely out of debt. His new partners were his sons-in-law Solomon Myers-Cohen, (who lived in New York), Solomon Etting (until the death of Rachel Simon Etting in 1791) and Levy Phillips (from his marriage to Leah Simon in 1785 until Simon's death in 1804). In those years he sold off his Pittsburgh properties and other lands of value in the West. His will was written in such a way as to facilitate the disposal of remaining properties.

In the early 1790's, until about 1795, grandsons Hyman and Simon Gratz lived with and were apprenticed to their grandfather. Rosa Bunn Simon died in 1796. Simon was never alone, however. In addition to his servants and slaves, he had retarded sons Myer and Moses and daughter Hester, who, by 1795 was about 25. After the death of husband Solomon Myers-Cohen in 1796, daughter Belah and family lived with Simon. Levy Phillips and wife Leah lived off and on in both Lancaster and Philadelphia. Rebecca Gratz, a granddaughter, was a frequent visitor and house guest. Simon did not let old age slow him down. In 1788, he visited Aaron Levy at Aaronsburg, Pa. and, in 1794, he is known to have gone to Carlisle.

What happened to Lancaster? Why, according to the 1790 census there were only three Jewish households: Simon, Solomon Etting (who left in 1791) and Myer Solomon (who left by 1793)? The answer is fairly obvious. New Jewish immigrants, who trickled in (there was no mass immigration at this time) did not settle in Lancaster. Rather they would choose the bigger cities or the still growing cities to the West.

Most important Lancaster lacked sons of fathers. That is, Simon left no competent male heir to carry on. Levy, Isaac and Myer Solomon left for Baltimore, the first going about 1782 and the last in 1793. They became successful merchants in that larger city. The tailor Levy Marks' son Solomon, also a tailor, was gone by 1782. Lancaster had simply lost

its Jewish roots. It had always lacked for stable Jewish families and by 1800 only had Simon left.

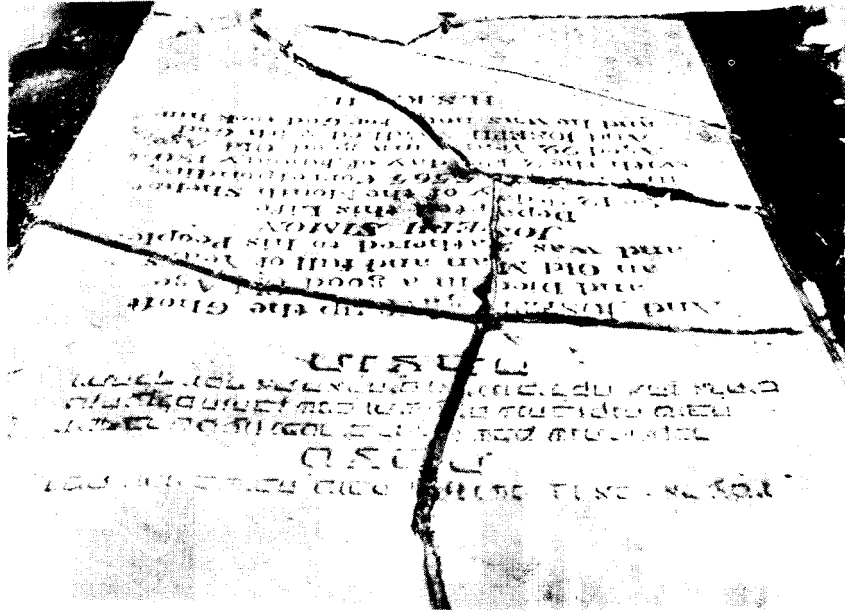
It is no exaggeration that Joseph Simon in 1740 was the first Jew in Lancaster and at his death in 1804 his family were the last Jews in Lancaster. He was both the beginning and the end of the first Jewish Community in Lancaster.

Obituary

From the *Lancaster Intelligencer and Weekly Advertiser of January 31, 1804*: "On the night of Tuesday last, Mr. Joseph Simon after a short indisposition (died) at the very advanced age of 92 years. He was 63 years a respectable inhabitant of this Borough; during which period, he uniformly supported the dignity of an honest and benevolent citizen. To say more of one, so deservedly esteemed, by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance, would lend only to lessen the veneration due to the merit of the deceased. Suffice it to say, that, he was a sincere friend, an affectionate parent and an obliging neighbor, he had the happiness of living beloved, and dying regretted. Though called a Jew, he professed, in an eminent degree, the Christian virtues of Charity and Brotherly Kindness."

Joseph Simon Family plot as it appeared about 1925. Left to right, Hiam Simon, infant son, 1753 or 1759, Rachel Simon Etting 1764-1790, Rosa Bunn Simon -1796. Upper right corner, just right of Rosa Simon's stone, appears Joseph Simon's flat ground level stone.





Tombstone of Joseph Simon (1712-1804) in Shaarai Shomayim Cemetery on East Liberty Street in Lancaster. This Hebrew Burial Ground, deeded in 1747 by Simon "in trust for the Society of Jews settled in and about Lancaster", is the fourth oldest Jewish Cemetery in North America.

INSCRIPTION:

And Joseph gave up the ghost and died in a good old age and was gathered to his people.

JOSEPH SIMON

Departed this life on the 12th day of the month Shebot in the year 5565 (January 24, 1804) aged 92 years, in a good old age.

"And Joseph walked with God, and he was not, for God took him."

Post Simon Era

The Lancaster census of 1820 fails to list one Jewish household. Lancaster newspapers from 1804 to 1840 do not list one local Jewish birth, obituary or business advertisement. Certainly, a Jew may have

been in Lancaster, but it was a very well kept secret. It would not be until the 1840's that a new Jewish community would grow in Lancaster as part of the mass immigration of Jews to America in the 1840's, a community whose strength was such that congregation Shaarai Shomayim would be informally organized in 1845. *The Occident*, a Philadelphia Jewish publication, reported in April 1845 and again in 1850 that informal worship services were being held in Lancaster. In 1849 the first known burial in the Henriques-Simon cemetery was made. Finally in 1856, congregation Shaarai Shomayim would be chartered.

The Children of Joseph Simon - The Second Generation

Joseph Simon was 35 when he married Rosa who was 20. He started late in life, but still managed to father ten children. Rosa bore children in 1749, 1751, 1753, 1755, 1757, 1762, 1763, 1764, 1767? and 1772? when Joseph Simon was 60. Notice she gave birth every two or three years like clockwork, missing in 1759 for which she made amends by having three, one each in 1762, 1763 and 1764.

Simon was a success in most everything he did, except in providing a male heir. He had three sons and, as we will see, none could carry on his business or name. Of his seven daughters, five married, four to Jewish spouses. It is interesting that he married his daughters off by order of birth, and the youngest was the one that never married. Let us start with the sons of Joseph Simon.

Hiam Simon

Hiam is sheer speculation. His existence was not known until what appears to be the oldest stone in the cemetery was deciphered by the learned members of Shaarai Shomayim. Enlargements of an old photograph were the key that unlocked the mystery. The inscription on the gravestone tells us that "here lieth Hiam an infant son of Joseph."

The second oldest stone in the Simon plot was 1790. Hence, the birth and death of this infant could have been anywhere from 1749 to 1790. Other births of children were confirmed for 1749, 1751, 1755, 1757, 1762, 1763, 1764, 1767? and 1772? The age of the stone would most likely rule out a birth after 1764. Prior to 1764, the only open years are 1753 and 1759. If the child lived for eight days he would have been circumcised. The Jacob Mohel record begun in 1757 and does not list a Simon child in 1759. But if the child died before the eighth day, he could have been born in either 1753 or 1759. It is almost a toss-up, but I have chosen 1753 as the date.

Moses and Myer Simon

Moses Simon was born in 1751 and his brother Myer in 1757. Both were described as "imbeciles" by Markens in his 1888 history of the American Jews. Today, we would call them retarded or weak-minded. The Jacob Mohel record lists Myer as being born in 1757.¹³⁶ Mikveh Israel cemetery records list his burial on December 11, 1825, at the age of 68. Nothing else is known about him. There is no Lancaster or Philadelphia obituary for Myer.

Moses is only slightly better documented. His birth date was determined from a Lancaster obituary (he was born prior to the 1757 Mohel record). In the *Lancaster Journal* of March 7, 1816, appeared the first notice of his death. A second, and paid for obituary, appeared in the March 20th paper. "Mr. Moses Simon whose death we announced some days ago was in his 65th year of his age. He will be long remembered by the inhabitants of Lancaster, on account of the ECCENTRICITY of his character and the goodness of his heart." This second obituary is significant when we remember that there were no Jews in Lancaster in 1816. Even though he was retarded, he was apparently loved and well known. Moses died on February 24, 1816, and is also buried in Philadelphia.

Both Myer and Moses (as well as sister Hester) were left by Simon's will in the care of Levy Phillips, his son-in-law. Phillips lived in Philadelphia and was very active in Mikveh Israel which explains why the two sons were buried there and not in Lancaster. There is no evidence that either Moses or Myer was capable of being involved with his father in the business. Their names do not appear on deeds or any other records. Not once were they ever mentioned in family or business correspondence.

Sarah and Hester Simon

Sarah Simon's only claim to existence is a letter written by Levy Andrew Levy on December 24, 1771 to Michael Gratz. "I am sorry to acquaint you that my Uncle's youngest daughter Sarah was yesterday buried. She was sick about eight days— often had fits." There is room between Hiam's 1753 tombstone and Rachel's 1790 stone, for a 1771 burial. Her date of birth is speculative and is directly tied in with what facts we know about Hester Simon.

Hester Simon, according to the Philadelphia Board of Health, was "about 50" when she died in 1820. Her place of burial is unknown, but, in all probability was Mikveh Israel Cemetery.

The birthdates of Sarah and Hester hinge on each other. Sarah died in December 1771 as Simon's *youngest* daughter. This means that either Sarah was born and died before Hester was born (hence Hester was born not earlier than 1772) or that Hester was born before Sarah (between 1765 and 1771).

Levy, in the letter, calls Sarah the youngest daughter and not a baby. One might assume from this that Sarah was not an infant; perhaps at least two or three. Of course she may have been much older. However, the other confirmed Simon births do not really leave room for a birth prior to 1764. Since it is I who must draw a conclusion, I have chosen 1767 as Sarah's birth and Hester's as 1772. Both of course are (un)educated guesses.

There is conflicting evidence regarding Hester's mental capabilities. Simon in his will included her with Moses and Myer in the trust and in the care of Levy Phillips. As Hester was close to 30 in 1799, one would think that she was unable to care for herself and thus included in the trust. However, Simon made contingencies in case she married (which she never did). This indicates that she was capable of being a housewife.

Shinah Simon Schuyler mentions Hester in a letter to her niece Richea Hays (married daughter of Miriam Simon Gratz), written from Lansingburgh, New York, on April 6, 1795. Keep in mind that Hester would be about 23.

"So Hetty (Hester) is with you. I hope her conduct may be such as to render (you) all happy. My love to her. Tell her my happiness will depend on her good conduct. Oh, let her be virtuous— and she must make us all happy. Poor girl. I think she has been cruelly neglected— let her sisters and you my Richea watch over her. She deserves our compassion."¹³⁷

Shinah's description makes one feel that Hester, too, was weakminded and childish. The need to ask her to be good to make a sister happy is a tactic often used with children.

Rebecca Gratz, niece of Hester, confirms her date of death and provides us with another description of Hester. She writes in a letter of December 31, 1820:

"Aunt Hetty (Hester) was buried this morning, she had been ill for five weeks- she suffered patiently and was resigned to the will of providence- to regret the departure of one, whose life was brighten'd by few joys and blest with little usefulness would be vain- for in fulfilling the lot assigned her, she had many opportunities for conferring benefits- but she was humble & affectionate & departed in peace."¹³⁹

It is curious that Rebecca Gratz, whose correspondence started before the death of Moses in 1816, never once mentions her uncles Moses and Myer. She chooses even to ignore their deaths. This fact and her description of Hester, seem to indicate that Hester was far more normal than her brothers.

Shinah Simon Schuyler

Shinah, born in 1762, was quite normal. Her date of death has been determined as June 12, 1815.¹⁴⁰ Again, Rebecca Gratz does not mention her death in her correspondence. Shinah married on August



Shinah Simon Schuyler (1762-1815), only daughter of Joseph Simon to marry a non-Jew, Doctor Nicholas Schuyler.

13, 1782, Dr. Nicholas Schuyler (6/13/1755 - 11/9/1824). The wedding was performed by Rev. Henry Ernest Muhlenberg, Lutheran Pastor of Trinity Church in Lancaster.

Nicholas was a physician and during the Revolutionary War served in Colonel Moses Hazen's regiment. For his services during the War, he was granted four lots of 500 acres each in New York State. When the New York County of Rensselaer was organized, he was appointed its first clerk on February 18, 1791. He moved to Troy, New York, where he served as clerk for 15 years until 1806. In 1807, he wrote a letter to the Gratzes feeling them out as to the possibility of his going into practice in Philadelphia or opening an apothecary shop.¹⁴² Apparently, the reply was not optimistic, as they never moved to Philadelphia.

Shinah was the only Simon daughter to marry a non-Jew. Their marriage caused quite a stir in both Philadelphia and Albany. To say the least, Simon was upset and did not approve of the match. Indeed,

his will excludes her from the bulk of his estate, but she was left 400 pounds and significantly, if she died, it would go to her husband. They never had any children, although they raised Henrietta (1796-1875), youngest daughter of Nicholas's brother John. She would marry Phillip Van Rensselaer whose son Gratz Van Rensselaer would write a biography of Rebecca Gratz.¹⁴³

Legend has it that Joseph Simon ignored Shinah for most of his life. It is told that during Simon's last illness, Rebecca who nursed him and was in demand in the sick room by Simon, was asked by Joseph, "My dear child, what can I do for you?" Rebecca, with tears in her eyes, replied "Grandfather, forgive Aunt Shinah." The old man sought her hand, pressed it and after a pause said "Send for her." In due course, Shinah came and Simon gave her his blessing and died in her arms.¹⁴³

Shinah was very fond of her two nieces (daughters of Michael and Miriam Gratz) Richea and Frances. In 1791 she wrote them a letter giving advice on finding the right man and telling them to have patience. Richea was 17 and her sister 20 at the time. She also commented on her own situation. She asked "How are my dear Manny's eyes? I hope both my dear parents enjoy their health." This tends to indicate that she did not correspond directly with her parents. The letter continued, "I once lived in the same town with my dear (sister) Bell (Mrs. Solomon Myers-Cohen), tho' I was deprived of her society (ignored due to her gentile husband). I think if she had not a heart of stone she would have stole to see me when there, tho' I forgive her."¹⁴⁴

Belah Simon Myers-Cohen

Belah, or Bell, was born in 1756 and married right. She married Solomon Myers-Cohen. Solomon was the first cousin of Belah's mother Rosa, but 17 years her junior. They married on February 10, 1779, and their wedding Ketubah has survived.¹⁴⁵ The signatures of Joseph Simon and Michael Gratz appear as witnesses. Belah was 23 and Solomon was 35.

Solomon was a merchant in both New York and Philadelphia. In 1773 he was President of Shearith Israel and in 1781 fled to Philadelphia to avoid the British. Once there he joined the Upper Delaware Fifth Battalion. The tax lists of 1778 showed that he was worth 30,000 pounds. He became involved with Mikveh Israel and served on their board. He and Barnard Gratz handled the purchase of the lot for the new temple in 1782. After New York was again in American hands, he returned there and died in 1796.¹⁴⁶ However, the census of 1790, indicated that they and their four children were living with Joseph Simon in Lancaster. In all, they had eight children, none of whom married.

Belah was active in Jewish affairs too. She was second Directress of the Philadelphia Female Hebrew Benevolent Society. She died January 28, 1833, and shortly before her death, Rebecca Gratz wrote "she is



Solomon Etting (1764-1847) husband of Rachel Simon (1764-1790). Partner of Joseph Simon from 1783 to 1790. Grandson of Joseph Solomon. Later remarried to Rachel Gratz, daughter of Barnard Gratz. Moved to Baltimore where he helped lead the battle for Jewish civil rights.

very feeble and infirm, but cheerful, and tries to persuade herself that she shall be stronger—she has trod a rugged path, in the long years of widowhood and poverty—except the constant attention of affectionate children, she has no outward signs of comfort to love this world for—. ¹⁴⁷ And to console a mourner, Rebecca said that how it was good to die while physically strong before “her eyes become dim- or her excellent mind decayed- when I think of poor Aunt Bell, and the change that a year, a dying year made in her well being- how trembling the cup of life was held to her lips till she had drained the last drop, I cannot but marvel that her children still mourn— still appear unreconciled to the dispensation which freed her spirit from its worn out tenement.” ¹⁴⁸

Rachel Simon Etting

Rachel was born in 1764. She married Solomon Etting. (Etting later married Rachel Gratz, daughter of Barnard Gratz). Solomon Etting (1764-1847) was the son of Elijah Etting, the only Jew in York. Elijah Etting was the husband of Shinah Solomon Etting, daughter of

Joseph Solomon. They married in 1783 when both were nineteen. Rachel, however, died January 14, 1790 at the very young age of 26. She did bear four children in those seven years of marriage.

Solomon Etting, from 1787 to 1790 was a partner of Simon. After his second marriage, he moved to Baltimore and there he became a Jewish civil rights leader. The Maryland constitution did not give Jews the right to hold office. Solomon's brother Reuben was appointed in 1801 as a United States marshal.¹⁴⁹ A Maryland Jew thus could hold Federal office, but not State office. It took many, many years, but, finally, in 1825 the "Jew Bill" was signed into law. Solomon was then elected to Baltimore City Council and later became its president.

Leah Simon Phillips

Leah, who was born in 1763, married Levy Phillips (1754-1832) in 1785. Levy Phillips, at Simon's death, was his favorite son-in-law, with Michael Gratz out of favor and Dr. Nicholas Schuyler, a gentile, living in Troy, New York. In Leah and Levy's care was left Myer, Moses, and Hester. Simon also left to Phillips his Torahs and other religious articles.

Levy, from about 1790 to 1804, was a partner of Simon, although he lived mostly in Philadelphia. Phillips was in the third layer of Philadelphia society; that is, he was listed as a "gentlemen and merchant." He was extremely active in Mikveh Israel and served as President in 1788, 1793, 1819-1821. During a period in which Mikveh Israel had no Hazzan, Phillips conducted the wedding of Rachel Seixas to Joseph Jonas. He was the only member of Sephardic Mikveh Israel to also donate money to the German Rodolph Sholom congregation when it was formed. To discourage inter-marriage he proposed a By-law (which was defeated) which would have deprived synagogal honors to "a Jew or Jewess who marries a Christian and the son of a Jewess who is not made a Jew according the Law of Moses."¹⁵⁰

Again, we call upon Rebecca Gratz. She wrote in 1832 "Levy Phillips death has left his poor blind wife entirely destitute, indeed he was so impoverished as to be supported by his nephews for several years previous to his death."¹⁵¹ Leah, who died August 21, 1842 and Levy Phillips had no children.

Miriam Simon Gratz

Miriam, the first born, married Michael Gratz. Miriam was born in 1749 and Michael in 1740. Their marriage on June 20, 1769 was the social event of the year in Philadelphia. Young Gershom Seixas was brought in from New York to perform the ceremony.

Even though Miriam was the mother of Rebecca Gratz, her death in 1808 came too early to be a part of Rebecca's correspondence. However, Sarah Ann Hays (1805-1894), niece of Rebecca, wrote about her



Miriam Simon (1749-1808), first child of Joseph Simon. Married Michael Gratz, Joseph Simon's business associate, on June 20, 1769. Mother of Rebecca Gratz.

impression of her grandmother Miriam from a portrait she admired, "The sweet placidity of my grandmother (Miriam Gratz) with her folded white hands in her lap, her brilliant black eyes and intelligent face, mingled with sweetness, and a ladylike composure over the whole, which convinces you she was a sweet, quiet, gentle lady."¹⁵²

Miriam was one of the incorporators in Philadelphia of the Female Association for the Relief of Women and Children in Reduced Circumstances which was founded in 1801.

Entire books and many articles have been written on the brothers Michael and Barnard Gratz. For our purposes let us say that they were the leading Jewish Merchants in Philadelphia, at that time, and from the early 1760's were associated with Joseph Simon in many joint ventures. However, by the late 1790's, there was a falling out between the Gratzes and Simon. After the retirement from active management of Michael (who died in 1811) and Barnard (who died in 1801) in about

1795, the bad feelings continued with the sons Simon and Hyman Gratz who traded as S. and H. Gratz.

These were the sons, daughters and sons-in-law of Joseph and Rosa Simon. Let us list them again:

- Miriam (1749-1808) married Michael Gratz (1740-1811);
- Moses (1751-1816) retarded, never married;
- Hiam (1753?-1753?) son who died as an infant;
- Belah (1755-1832) married Solomon Myers-Cohen (1744-1796);
- Myer (1757-1825) retarded, never married;
- Shinah (1762-1815) married Dr. Nicholas Schuyler (1755-1824);
- Leah (1763-1842) married Levy Phillips (1754-1832);
- Rachel (1764-1790) married Solomon Etting (1764-1847);
- Sarah (1767?-1771) died as a child;
- Hester (1772?-1820) never married.

Now we can turn our attention to the next generation, the grandchildren.

The Grandchildren of Joseph Simon-The Third Generation

Leah and Levy Phillips had no children.

Shinah and Dr. Nicholas Schuyler had no children.

Rachel and Solomon Etting had four children. Bilah died as an infant, year unknown. Elijah (1784-1854) never married. Joseph (1788-1856) was unmarried. Miriam Etting (1787-1808) married Jacob Myers on July 31, 1806. They had two sons, both of whom Solomon Etting Myers (1807-1844) and Horatio Gratz Myers (1808-1834) remained unmarried.¹⁵³ In all probability after the death of Rachel Simon Etting and the marriage of Solomon to Rachel Gratz, these children went to live with their remarried father. Nevertheless, this blood line ended with the great-grandchildren (the 4th generation).

Belah and Solomon Myers-Cohen had eight children, none of whom married. They were Sarah (1779-1840), Rachel (1783-1850), Elkah (1785-1875), Abraham (1787-1859), Samuel (1789-1863), Eleazar (1793-1873), Joseph Simon (1791-1858), and Rebecca (1782-1840). We should note that this third generation was "Cohen" rather than "Myers-Cohen."

Joseph Simon Cohen, named for his grandfather, attended the University of Pennsylvania and graduated in 1813 with a law degree. He was admitted to the Bar and his name is listed among Lancaster's lawyers. In 1829, he lost when he ran for Philadelphia City Assembly. In 1840, he was appointed prothonotary of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and served until 1853. While he was in office, his brother Abraham was bail commissioner and Brother Eleazar was search clerk for the court.¹⁵⁴

Earlier, in 1809, brothers Abraham and Eleazar opened up an apothecary shop selling "a variety of basic pharmaceutical in quantity and a general assortment of Fresh Drugs and Medicines." In 1821, they helped form the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy. Abraham, also in 1800, opened the first Jewish pawn shop in Philadelphia.¹⁵⁴

Since none of the children married, Belah and Solomon's blood line ended with grandchildren, the third generation.

Miriam and Michael Gratz had eleven children. Some of their descendants are alive today. However, none is Jewish. This family fathered by Michael Gratz, was very successful and famous. We shall try to briefly tell of them.

Solomon was born in 1770 and died in 1772.

Frances (1771-1852) married Reuben Etting (1762-1848). Reuben was the brother of Solomon Etting. He was a U.S. marshal having been appointed by Thomas Jefferson in 1801. They had nine children.

Simon (1773-1839) married a non-Jew Mary Smith. He and his brother took over from B. and M. Gratz and called their firm S. and H. Gratz. They had eight children, all non-Jews.

Richea (1774-1858) married Samuel Hays (1764-1839). They had ten children. Richea, in 1787, was in the first class of Franklin College (later Franklin and Marshall) and was the first Jewish woman so educated.

Hyman (1776-1857) never married. He and Simon were associated in the S. and H. Gratz business. He also was a member of that class in 1787 of Franklin College. He was involved in numerous civic and religious activities in Philadelphia. Before he died, he set up a trust fund which endowed and founded Gratz College. Hyman was treasurer of Mikveh Israel in 1824 and president of the Pennsylvania Company in 1837.

Sarah (1779-1817) was unmarried.

Rebecca (1781-1869) was unmarried and quite famous. Many articles have been written about Rebecca Gratz.

Rachel (1783-1823) married Solomon Moses (? -1857). They had nine children who were raised with the help of Rebecca Gratz.

Joseph (1785-1858) was unmarried. He fought in the War of 1812. Joseph joined brothers Simon and Hyman in business, now known as Simon Gratz and Company. He was a director of the Atlantic Insurance Company. Joseph served on the Board of the Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, and the Apprentices Library which served tradesmen and artisans.

Jacob (1789-1856) was unmarried. His will however listed a son Robert Henry Gratz. Apparently he had a mistress. He served in the War of 1812. In 1812, when Jacob and brother Benjamin were old enough, the firm of Simon Gratz and Company, became Simon Gratz and Brothers. He was involved with the Union Canal and became its

in 1834. He was also involved with the Orphan Society or Asylum, Pa. Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, Philadelphia Library and the Athenaeum. He was a Representative to the Pennsylvania House and elected to the Pennsylvania Senate in 1839.

Benjamin (1792-1884) had the honor of marrying twice, both times to non-Jews. He was sent by the brothers to look over their land holdings in Kentucky where he settled. He was a lawyer having been admitted to the Bar in 1817. He fought in the War of 1812 and became a 1st lieutenant. In 1819, Benjamin made the move to Kentucky and lived there the rest of his life. He married first, Maria Cecil Gist, in 1819, and then Ann Maria Boswell Shelby in 1843. Benjamin fathered six children one of which, Anna, married Thomas Hart Clay (grandson of Henry Clay) descendants of whom are alive today. It was Mrs. Thomas Hart Clay who turned over to Rabbi David Philipson in the 1920's many letters of Rebecca Gratz. The introduction to his book "*Letters of Rebecca Gratz*" Jewish Publication Society, 1929, tells about the lives of the children of Michael and Miriam Gratz and their grandchildren.¹⁵⁵

Joseph Simon's Will and Estate

On October 26, 1799, Joseph Simon wrote his will. As a man of 87, he thought the time had come to put some order into his affairs. His will is a masterpiece that would impress the highest priced lawyer. It is one of the longest and most complex recorded in the 18th or 19th centuries in Lancaster County. It had to be that way, for he had many contingencies to deal with.

Certain gifts he gave outright. To sons Myer and Moses he gave a bed and two blankets each. Myer (age 42) and Moses (age 58) were both retarded. To unmarried daughter Hester, in her 30's, he gave a bed and four blankets. The only reason one can give for Hester receiving four instead of two blankets was the possibility of her marrying someday.

Daughter Shinah, who married a non-Jew, was given 400 pounds outright. Because of her marriage, she may have been out of favor and excluded from the bulk of the residuary estate. Simon states very clearly that she is to receive only the money and his share of the Indiana Company and nothing more. The shares in the Indiana Company (land grants in the Ohio Valley which were never confirmed by the British or American governments) were worthless. However, Simon, at his death, still clung to a hope of some value. It is interesting, in view of his feelings toward the marriage, that if Shinah died first and if there were no children, then her husband Dr. Nicholas Schuyler would receive this bequest. He could have simply made it null and void.

Levy Phillips, his son-in-law, received his Torahs and other religious articles. He had the right to use them, but, eventually, they were to go to Congregation Mikveh Israel in Philadelphia.



Rachel Gratz (1783-1823) sister of Rebecca Gratz and daughter of Miriam Simon and Michael Gratz. After her death at the age of 40, unmarried Rebecca helped Rachel's husband Solomon Moses, care for her nine children.

In his December 3, 1802 codicil he gave \$500.00 outright to Levy Andrew Levy. It is most curious that he called Levy "a friend" and ignored the fact that he was Levy's uncle. Also, in 1802, he left to his two oldest male grandchildren, (still in favor) Abraham Cohen and Joseph Simon Cohen, five shares in the Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike and one share in the Susquehanna and Lancaster Turnpike. Until they became of age, they would receive the dividends of interest. If one should die, the other would get his share. If both should die, their children would receive the bequest. If there were no children, the brothers of Abraham Cohen and Joseph Simon Cohen would receive the bequest.

He released from all debts owed to him both Levy Andrew Levy and the estate of his late son-in-law Solomon M. Cohen.

He made a point to exclude from his estate the children born of Solomon Etting and his first wife, Simon's daughter Rachel. I suppose that after the death of Rachel, the children lived with their father who had remarried only a year after the death of Rachel. He married Rachel

Gratz, daughter of Barnard Gratz and Simon knew that these children were well taken care of.

Basically, the balance of his estate was divided into two portions. One was a trust and the second his residuary estate. The trust was to care for Myer, Moses and Hester.

His will states that Levy Phillips is to "faithfully take care of my sons Moses and Myer and my daughter (Hester) and to be to them an upright guardian and treat them tenderly and to keep them to reside with him and provide them sufficient diet and drink." Levy Phillips and Simon's daughter Leah Phillips along with her sister Belah Simon Myer-Cohen were executors of the estate.

This trust was to have a value of 6000 pounds or about \$15,000. It was to be so invested as to yield about 360 pounds yearly in support. As each died, his or her share of the trust would sink into the residuary estate. If Hester should ever marry, her share of the trust would sink into the residuary estate at the time of her marriage.

The trust was to be funded as follows: First, his personal property was to be sold. Second, his goods on hand and furniture in his store were to be sold. Levy Phillips, his partner in the store, had the first option to purchase these goods at Simon's cost. His 1802 codicil changed that to cost less 20%. He could spread the payment over three to five years, and for the first year he would have to pay no interest to the trust. Simon felt these two assets would cover the trust. However, if they should not, then the rents from his properties or the proceeds from their sale would be used.

By the process of elimination, Levy Phillips was his favorite and most trustworthy son-in-law. Simon had no competent sons. Son-in-law Dr. Nicholas Schuyler was in Troy, New York, and Michael Gratz, as we will see later, was out of favor. Levy Phillips had first right to purchase the Simon Real Estate. So there would be no valuation problem, Simon listed the value in his will. The home he lived in, his stables and garden, and Simon's adjacent home, then rented by a Mr. Barton, were valued at 900 pounds. The store was valued at 600 pounds. His five acres of land in Manheim Township, adjoining property of Adam Weaver and William Bausman on the road to Binkley's Bridge, with its buildings, was valued at 400 pounds. Simon even went so far as to subdivide between his two homes on the southwest corner, the 19 pounds of ground rent he had to pay yearly to the Hamilton Estate.

The residuary estate would be everything left after the outright gifts (\$500 to Levy, 400 pounds to Shinah, stock to the Cohen children and the Trust). This was to be divided among his living daughters. It is interesting that, at first, during the lifetime of the daughters, they would receive the interest (which was a product of an investment to yield at least 6%). However, they would never receive the principal. Each daughter's share would go to her children, if any. If there were no children, each daughter's share would go to the eight children of Belah Simon Myer-Cohen. This was changed in his codicils. In his 1802

codicil, Leah received her share outright. In his 1803 codicil, Levy Phillips was given the option to give widowed Belah all or part of her share outright.

Simon had five daughters who could have been eligible to share in this residuary trust. Leah Simon Phillips and Belah Simon Myer-Cohen had full rights with no conditions. Shinah Simon Schuyler, as we related above, was cut out completely. Hester, would be included if she ever married. Miriam Simon Gratz would share under certain conditions.

Apparently prior to the writing of the will, a judgment in a law suit instigated by Gratz was granted against Simon and in favor of Michael Gratz in the amount of 1,075 pounds. Simon resented this judgment and, prior to writing the will, paid half of it off. He stated that if the balance was forgiven, then Miriam would share in the residuary trust. However, in the 1802 codicil, Simon paid off the second half and writes "and whereas I have received many hardships from son-in-law Gratz and his sons (Hyman and Simon) and in the settlement of our accounts they have taken unfair advantage of me, by reason thereof they have, in an indirect way, received a full portion of my estate. . . . I order my executors. . . .to pay to my said daughter Miriam 100 pounds specie. . . .at the same time declaring that I do so from a sense of justice, having no dislike to her personally, still retaining all my love and affection to my dear daughter Miriam."

Simon had another cute clause. If any heir filed suit against this will, then all costs to fight the suit would be deducted from his or her share of the estate.

This is the "gist" of his will. It is apparent that he was as fair and as thorough in death as he was in life.

After his death in 1804, his executors Leah and Levy Phillips and Belah Myers-Cohen followed the wishes of Simon as expressed in his Will. How much was Simon worth when he died? The inventory of his personal property and notes and debts due him have survived and is the property of the Lancaster County Historical Society. The value of the items was listed as 3,176 pounds. His executors sold his home and another property with a house on it for \$12,700. His store on Penn Square was sold for \$6,500. A small lot near the square was sold for 175 pounds. Three houses on Chestnut Street sold for \$700. Five acres in Manheim Township was sold for 500 pounds.¹⁵⁷ Converting everything to pounds his *minimum* estate value was 12,000 pounds or \$30,000. He was a very wealthy man for those days. We, of course, don't know of other assets he had that may have escaped us. My guess is that he was worth more than that.

Estate of Joseph Simon In The Courts

Before the Simon estate could be settled, legal actions would be taken which would conclude with a decision of the Pennsylvania Su-

preme Court in 1830 and the United States Supreme Court in 1850. The former case was Gratz vs Phillips and the latter Gratz vs Cohen. Both cases go back to the partnership of Simon, Levy Andrew Levy, David Franks and William Trent, in Pittsburgh in 1760. They involve mortgages, deeds, and transfers which took place over the next 60 years. Although both cases dealt with the Simon estate, they were actually two separate actions with different charges and counter charges.

SIMON GRATZ, JOSEPH GRATZ AND JACOB GRATZ, administrators of MICHAEL GRATZ, deceased, against LEVY PHILLIPS, LEAH PHILLIPS AND BELAH COHEN.

This court action is very, very complicated and your author suggests that those interested refer directly to the Report of the Case by William Rawle, Charles Penrose and Frederick Watts in their Volume 1 no. 2 of "Reports of Cases adjudged in the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania" May Term 1830. Additionally, reference can be made to court actions leading up to this one as listed in the above report.

The partnership of Simon, Levy, Franks and Trent, formed in 1760, ceased to operate in 1763 after the Indian raids on their storehouses which placed them in debt. By 1769, William Trent still owed Simon and Franks 8,164 pounds. To secure that debt, Trent gave, to Simon and Franks a mortgage on 7,500 acres in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania.

Additionally, and this will be important later, Trent gave to Simon, to secure a private debt owed to Simon alone, lands which were to be known as the "Proctor Lands."

By the end of 1769, Simon and Franks held a mortgage on 7,500 acres of land to secure Trent's debt. As we have learned, the War came and went, and Franks was exiled to London. While in London, Franks became indebted to Amos Hayton. As payment of this debt, Franks conveyed *his* interest in the Trent mortgage to Tench Coxe and Issac Hazelhurst in 1786.

Franks later returned to America. Either due to old age or dishonesty, Franks conveyed this *very same interest* in the Trent mortgage to Barnard and Michael Gratz on May 18, 1790.

Several days thereafter, Simon, not knowing about either of these two transfers, foreclosed on the Trent mortgage and bought at sheriff sale 12 tracts of lands (of 15) that were part of the mortgage. Simon was advised of the Franks to Gratz transfer (but not the London transfer) and executed a declaration of trust dated August 2, 1790, in which he promised to pay to Gratz one-half of all proceeds from sales of these lands or rentals.

Over the years, various tracts of these lands were sold and Simon made payments to Michael Gratz. Apparently, Gratz felt that Simon had not paid him enough and brought suits to that effect. Prior to Simon's writing of his will, a judgment must have been made to Michael Gratz. Simon in his Will, as we will recall, wrote out Miriam and

Michael Gratz, due to Simon's having to pay this judgment which he felt was unfair.

In May of 1802, Thomas Billington, who had become agent for the Londoners Coxe and Hazelhurst, contacted Simon concerning the Franks transfer in 1786. Simon, through son-in-law Levy Phillips (who was his agent), got Simon Gratz, who acted for his father Michael Gratz, to indemnify Simon against any claims of the London group. Simon died in 1804.

It is at this point that conflicts arise. Trent had transferred to Simon the "Proctor Lands." Simon, who could neither read nor write, throughout his life assumed incorrectly that his "George's Valley" lands were the "Proctor Lands." Simon's books, which were kept for several years by Simon Gratz (a party to the suit), accounted for these "George's Valley" lands on his own account and all other lands as part of the Simon and Franks (Gratz) arrangement. After Simon died, the Gratz estate tried to collect proceeds from Simon's sale of the "George Valley" lands. They had previously been paid for the sale of other lands which Simon thought to be the "Proctor Lands." That is, Gratz tried to collect twice due to the Simon error; first on the supposed "Proctor Lands" on which they were paid in error and second, on the "George's Valley" lands to which they were entitled. The Simon heirs wanted a financial off-set on this double payment.

The Simon heirs also tried to make a case that the transfer from Franks to Gratz was invalid due to the previous transfer to the London group. This was disallowed since the London group transferred their interest to a George Davis in 1793 who later sold it to the Gratz people for \$600 in 1806. This, in effect, made Gratz the holder of both transfers.

The lower court ruled in favor of the Gratz heirs and ordered Levy Phillips, who had been receiving cash from sales of Simon property, to pay to Gratz heirs their share. The Simon heirs then appealed the ruling.

The Gratz heirs then added another facet to the case. They came upon a document signed by Levy Andrew Levy which would have made null and void the deed of transfer from Trent to Simon of the "Proctor Lands." If Simon alone did not own these lands in the first place, they would have been part of the original Simon and Franks mortgage. The argument of the Simon heirs was that Levy Andrew Levy did not have the power to act for his uncle. Therefore, this document of Levy's is not acceptable. From the opinion of Justice Huston:

By the evidence he (Levy) had no authority: he (Levy) says (in a disposition) "I never executed any other deed of defeasance than the one in question. I frequently wrote letters, signed receipts and other papers of consequence for him, by which he at all times considered himself (Simon) bound. I kept all his books of accounts, for upwards of thirty years; never had a written power of attorney"

Now to me this presents the idea of a clerk in a store, or acting partner, and not an attorney in law or fact as to lands. He (Levy) does not say (in the disposition) any of those important papers related to lands, or that he had authority to execute this, or that Joseph Simon knew of it. (The disposition was taken in 1816 on another court matter and Levy, who died in 1829, was not available as a witness in this case).

Another part of the case was that only Levy Phillips received monies from the sale of lands. Therefore, Leah Phillips and Belah Cohen should not be held responsible to pay the Gratz heirs. The case listed both Phillips and Belah as *individuals* and not as *executors* of Simon's estate. The court ruled that they were accountable, particularly Leah Phillips as wife of Levy Phillips. The final decision of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court was to order a new trial to determine what, if anything, was owed by Levy Phillips to the Gratz Estate. As we will see, the new trial never took place.

Simon Gratz's Executors And Others, Appellants, v.
Samuel M. Cohen And Eleazer L. Cohen

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES DECEMBER TERM 1850

"Where a deed was executed by an aged women, the sole surviving executrix of her father, with power under the will to sell, with a view to put an end to a long family litigation in which some judgments had been obtained, and other suits were then existing, and who owned the whole or nearly the whole of the residuary interest of the estate; and the settlement was made with deliberation, and, under advice of business friends, and the consideration of the deed was a sum of money in hand, with a stipulation on the part of the grantee, that he would pay over any surplus which the lands might yield after paying all reasonable expenses and legal claims,— this deed cannot be set aside on the ground of fraud"

The decision of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in 1830, let stand until a new trial, awards to the estate of Michael Gratz from the estate of Joseph Simon. Although legal appeals were still under way, as of 1832, the Simon estate still owed the Gratz estate \$7,916 from one judgment and \$2,967 from another judgment.

Levy Phillips died in 1832 leaving only Leah Phillips and Belah Myers-Cohen as living executors of the Simon estate. During the year between the death of Levy Phillips and Belah Cohen, Leah made overtures to Simon Gratz (administrator of the estate of his father Michael Gratz) to settle these debts and court actions still pending. Her motivation seemed to be a desire to settle, once and for all, the estate of Joseph Simon. Belah was dying and Leah, infirm and almost blind, wanted to terminate her role as executor. The estate of Simon still owned lands which she was incapable of managing or selling. Furthermore she was destitute.

During the year in which Belah was dying, and without Belah's knowledge or that of her eight children, Leah met several times with Simon Gratz both at his counting house and at her home. Simon Gratz

made her a proposition to settle the litigation and estates and advised Leah to seek the counsel of gentlemen friends. She sought their advice and agreed to terms as set forth by Simon Gratz.

They waited until Belah died on January 28, 1833. Then Leah, as sole executrix, could act on her own. On February 15, 1833, only 17 days after Belah's death, the agreement was consummated. In exchange for dropping all legal actions in opposition to the awarded debts of the Simon estate to the Gratz estate for \$7,916 and \$2,967, and for \$1,500 in cash payable to Leah, Leah conveyed title to 17 tracts of land still in the estate of Simon. In addition, Simon Gratz, after he sold these plots, would turn over to the Simon estate any profits (over and above \$7,916 + \$2,967 + \$1,500) that he might realize. This transaction settled and closed the estate of Joseph Simon.

When Joseph Simon Cohen, representing the children of Belah, found out on June 13, 1833, about the deal, he became enraged. It was this group's feeling that Leah "sold out" their late mother's, and hence their interest, in the Simon estate too cheaply. However, it was not until 1839 that they filed suit. The reason for that was that they waited for the five years to pass which made null and void the \$7,916 award. This claim was not pressed due to the agreement (verbal only) between Gratz and Phillips. They, likewise, just beat the deadline for suit in their case. Their case was based on the fact that negotiation took place while Belah was alive and without her knowledge, Leah and Simon Gratz had conspired to defraud Belah, and hence, her children, from her share of the Simon estate. Simply put, the lands, in their opinion, were worth more than the \$12,483 in value received by Leah Phillips.

The first court to hear the case was the Circuit Court of Appeal for the Eastern District in 1848. The court sided with the Cohens and ordered that the value of the lands be ascertained as of 1833 (the date of the agreement). This was done and \$9,415.29 plus interest from October 14, 1843 was awarded to the Cohens. The Gratz heirs then appealed to the Supreme Court.

Simon Gratz had died in 1839 and Leah Phillips in 1842. Hence, both the Circuit Court and the Supreme Court had to hear the case without the benefit of the only two people who knew the whole story. Each, however, had given dispositions in early 1839 after the suit was filed by the Cohen's.

The Supreme Court reversed the decision of the lower court. They made several points. The first was that Leah, as sole executrix in February of 1833, had every legal right to sell or transfer the Simon lands. The second was that Belah Cohen, from as early as 1812, had been advanced approximately \$6,500 by Levy Phillips from her share of the Simon estate. Therefore, she received what, in the final accounting, was far more than her fair share. The third point made was that in settling family litigation, different values must be put on transactions than would be put on those of complete strangers.

Mr. Justice Woodbury delivered the opinion of the court:

“—Some time prior to 1804 Joseph Simon and Michael Gratz purchased in partnership large tracts of land in Pennsylvania, the title deeds running to the former alone, under an agreement to account to the latter for half the proceeds. As sale of them were made from time to time, difficulties and litigation arose between them as to proceeds. . . all of which appear to have been decided against Simon.

He complained much that Gratz had obtained from him more than he was entitled to. Accordingly, when Simon made his will and died in 1804, he forbade by the last codicil, any portion of his estate going to Michael Gratz or his wife Miriam, who was the daughter of Simon. . . .

By the death of Mr. Phillips in 1832, and of Mrs. Cohen in January 1833, Mrs. Phillips had become the sole surviving executrix, and she in February 1833, proposed to Simon Gratz, executor of Michael Gratz, to make final settlement of the claims on his part against the estate of Joseph Simon. At that time, Simon Gratz held unsatisfied a judgment against Levy Phillips and Mrs. Cohen, which had been recovered in 1831 for \$7,916.73.

There was another action pending, which was brought by Gratz's Executors against Simon Executors, in which an award had been made to Gratz for \$2,967, but exceptions had been taken to it, not yet acted on.

At that time, too, Mrs. Cohen had received from Simon's estate, as early as 1812, \$1,008, which, with interest to 1833, amounted to near \$6,500, and none of it had ever been refunded by her. . . .

Now the \$1,500 in money, and the \$10,000 in the two judgments, with interest, were probably very near the value of the lands as situated in 1833. But to remove all doubts as to the fairness and fulness of the consideration Simon Gratz further agreed to pay over to Mrs. Phillips any surplus the lands might yield after paying all reasonable expenses and legal claims. . . .

It is next said (by the Cohens) in support of the alleged fraud, that Mrs. Phillips was an aged female (69), little accustomed to business, and likely to be over reached by so shrewd and capable a man as Simon Gratz. But Mrs. Phillips though aged, is proved to have been intelligent and capable. She applied to him (Gratz) rather than he to her to make the settlement, and he suggested the advice and aid of her business friends rather than attempting a secret and sudden settlement. Full time was given to make inquiries and calculations, rather than using haste. Though Mrs. Phillips did not confer with the plaintiffs, she was not bound to consult the Cohen heirs more than others; and the contract by Simon Gratz to pay over any surplus secured and eventual interest of theirs as fully as they themselves could have done, and wisely put an end to a protracted family litigation, as expensive and ruinous as it was derogatory.

He (Simon Gratz), too, could manage it better than any female, and instead of taking advantage of her, or any body she represented, he became liable to account for any surplus, if any should occur. . . .

In fine, we are at a loss to see any strong indications of fraud in any part of this transaction, either by S. Gratz or Mrs. Phillips; and most of what appears, at first, in some degree objectionable, seems reconciled with perfect integrity when we advert to the legal presumptions in favor of those charged with misbehavior, and to the family connections between the parties and the preponderating equities of the case.

But in the family settlement it is proper to look to equitable circumstances, and not to expect all such technical formalities as prevail between strangers. The consideration actually paid in money was \$1,500, and though Mrs. Phillips may have regarded it as for her rather than the estate of Simon,

yet it made little difference, as she was the only residuary devisee of Simon surviving; and if Mrs. Cohen had been already paid more than her share, as seems probable, this sum would virtually go to Mrs. Phillips alone, as it would first in or belong to the estate, and then to her as devisee. It was in fact also paid to her for matters connected with the estate, and while she was executrix of the estate, instead of being, as argued (by Cohens), a personal bribe to her."

Thus, in 1850, Joseph Simon could finally rest in peace.

APPENDIX

- I EARLY JEWISH SETTLEMENT IN HEIDELBERG (Schaefferstown)
- II FAMILY TREES
 - 1 Myer ha-Cohen
 - 2 Simon - Bunn
 - 3 Solomon - Etting
 - Solomon - Marks
 - 4 Levy Andrew Levy
- III LANCASTER'S JEWISH RESIDENTS
- IV SIMON'S MARRIAGE DATE AND SUSANNAH LEVY NOT A SIMON
- V JOSEPH SIMON RELATIONSHIPS
- VI HEREDITY INSANITY
- VII BIBLIOGRAPHY
- VIII NOTES

I Appendix

Early Jewish Settlement in Heidelberg (Schaefferstown) —
Fact or Fiction

A thorny debate for local historians, has been the early "Jewish" community in Heidelberg. Heidelberg, now known as Schaefferstown, was originally in Lancaster County, but is now part of Lebanon County.

The question is: Was there one or two colonial Jewish communities in Heidelberg? I shall attempt to present both points of view with-

out taking sides.

There is no dispute concerning a Jewish community that began about 1759. In that year Barnard Jacobs, the mohel, settled "on the Millcreek Road, five miles above Conrad Weiser's Tavern." Others known to be in town about that time were Isaac Levy, Nathan Wolf and Jacob Levy.¹⁵⁸ We recall, that until 1773, Joseph Simon and Benjamin Nathan were partners in a general store as well.

The Earlier Community?

Earlier by 1723, Conrad Weiser is said to have led a sizable number of German families from the upper Susquehanna River in New York, down to the area in question. They called it Heidelberg, because of its "resemblance to that German community." Either as part of this group, or on their own, a few Sephardic Portuguese Jewish traders settled among these Germans.

Among these Germans were religious exotics and eccentrics or Pietists. Julius Friedrich Sachse tells of them:¹⁵⁹

"Jewish Indian-traders, whose headquarters were near Schaefferstown from 1720 on, made themselves potently felt among the Pennsylvania Germans. In their wanderings from community to community in search of peltry, they soon became acquainted with isolated religious groups, each one intent on fanning the flames of its own fanaticism. These German settlers' whose reason was almost dethroned with religious excitement and vagaries', on coming in contact with Jewish traders were deeply influenced by their beliefs . . . Jewish religious practices seem to have been widely imitated. Circumcision was practiced. Dietary laws were strictly observed."

"Several German families not content with a partial following of the Mosaic code 'returned to the old dispensation, and with these accessions quite a Jewish community was formed in Lancaster County.'"

"They built a log house of worship on an old Indian trail 'the first synagogue in the American desert'. They employed a Hazzan, whose home adjoined the synagogue. Nearby they buried their dead. To what extent these practices actually made Jews of these theologically confused Christians, we are not in a position to say."¹⁶⁰

Julius Sachse, the first to report on these "Jewish Christians" wrote on them in the 1890's. In 1908, Mr. Peter Borry, then 99, told of the existence of an old log building called "The School." In this building he took singing lessons as a child. This building, could have been the old synagogue. Mr. Borry also recalled a building called the "Jew House." He was uncertain if this was the same as "The School."

There also exists a statement of Elizabeth Rex who was born in 1776. She declared that an old limestone building, at the corner of Sheetz's Alley, was the Jewish House of Worship. Two of these three buildings, could be the same building and one could be the synagogue and the other the home of the Hazzan.¹⁶¹

Additionally, as late as 1886, limestone walls still stood around what is supposed to be the old Jewish Burial Ground. The cemetery

was clearly indicated on an 1875 map of Schaefferstown as being 185 feet to the east of Market Street near the Landis Cemetery. Mr. Samuel Clark of Lebanon, who has devoted a lifetime to the study of the Jews of Heidelberg, excavated part of this cemetery in May of 1955 with Sam S. Farver an archaeologist. They discovered five graves— four children and one adult. However the coffins and state of the bodies, indicated a burial no earlier than 1820. It should be pointed out that this was only part of the supposed Jewish cemetery and further excavations were not made.¹⁶²

What have we said? There seems no doubt, that by tradition, there was an early community of people who practiced Jewish religious traits. In all probability, they worshiped in a separate building and may have had a residence for their leader. No doubt too, they buried their dead in a small cemetery. Indeed some citizens of this town, even today, do not mix milk and meat. This habit handed down through the generations, is part of the Jewish dietary laws.

What is important is this. If these early settlers were to be considered as true Jews, then Schaefferstown, as Heidelberg, would have a Jewish community older than Lancaster and more sophisticated than Philadelphia in the 1720's.

One fact is clear. The community we discussed, is not the few Jewish traders. We are talking about former Christians, who on their own, returned to Judaism. That is the key: Were they true converts, were they Jews? Some theologians argue that they could be considered Jews. However, most leading American Jewish historians (many of which are Rabbis) do not consider them as Jews.

Rabbi Dr. Jacob Marcus states:

"To be sure there were Jews in Heidelberg during the decade of the 1750's. Barnard Jacobs, for instance, lived in the neighborhood at a time when the Judaizers (self-converted Christians) were flourishing. Jacobs, moreover, functioned as a Rabbi of sorts for the Jews throughout the area, but his circumcision book, which is still existant, makes no mention of the circumcision of a single proselyte. Some recollections of Jacobs probably lingers on in the Schaefferstown story; late traditions have in all likelihood merged into one to make him out the Rabbi of the Judaizing Sabbatarians and to recast his home as the synagogue or shul. If there ever was a Jewish cemetery. . . it was probably a private burying ground for the two or three Jewish families who lived in the town and in its immediate environs. The Schaefferstown Jewish community never existed outside the inventions of American folklore"¹⁶³

That is one learned man's opinion. What is yours?

The creation and sub-dividing of Lancaster County is as follows:

Lancaster from Chester County 1729

York from Lancaster County 1749

Cumberland from Lancaster County 1750

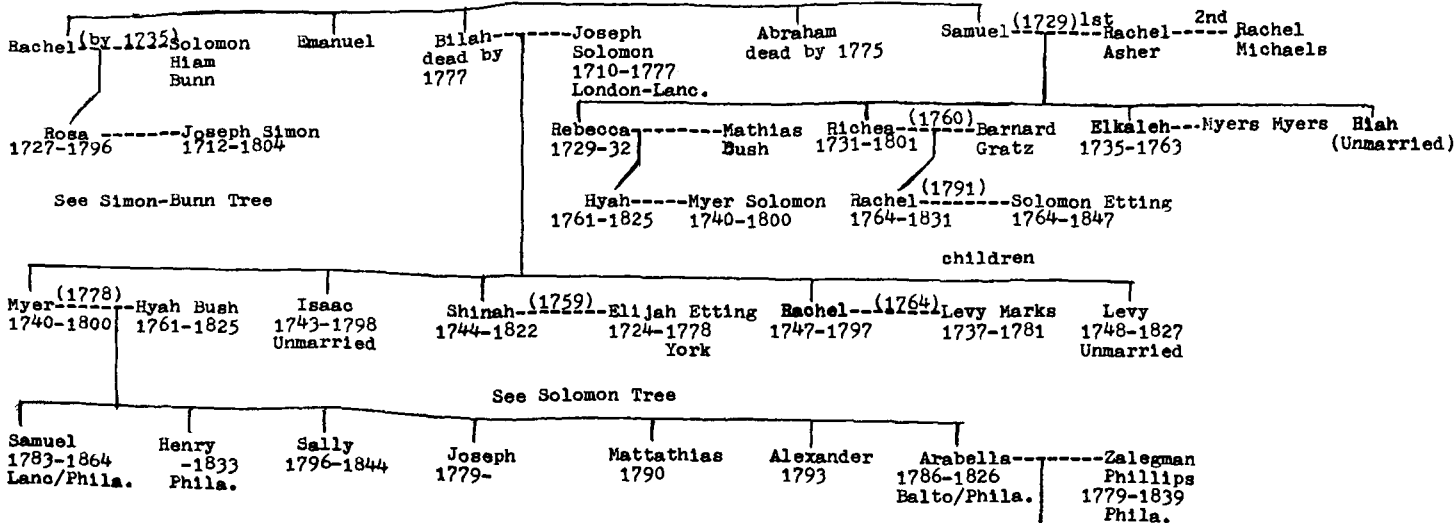
Berks from Philadelphia, Chester and Lancaster Counties 1752

Dauphin from Lancaster County 1789

Adams from York County 1800

Lebanon from Dauphin and Berks 1813

MYER HA-COHN

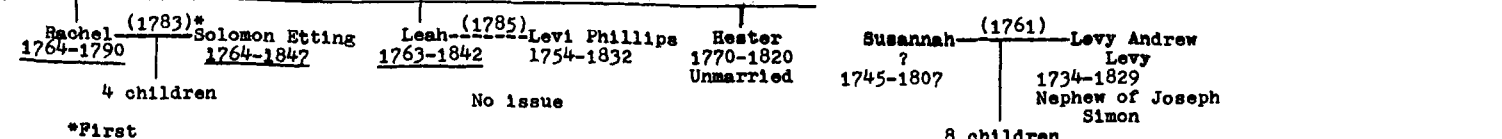
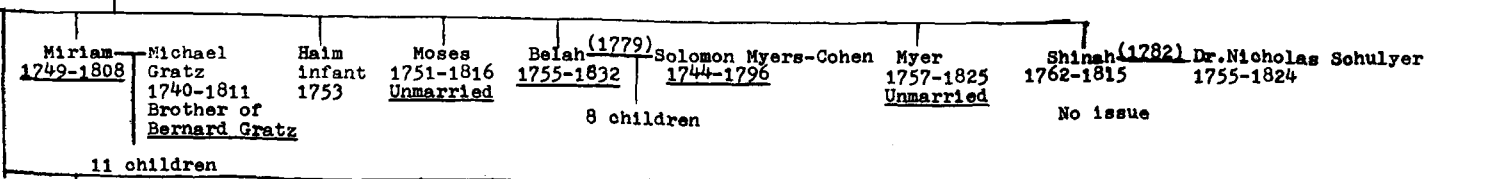
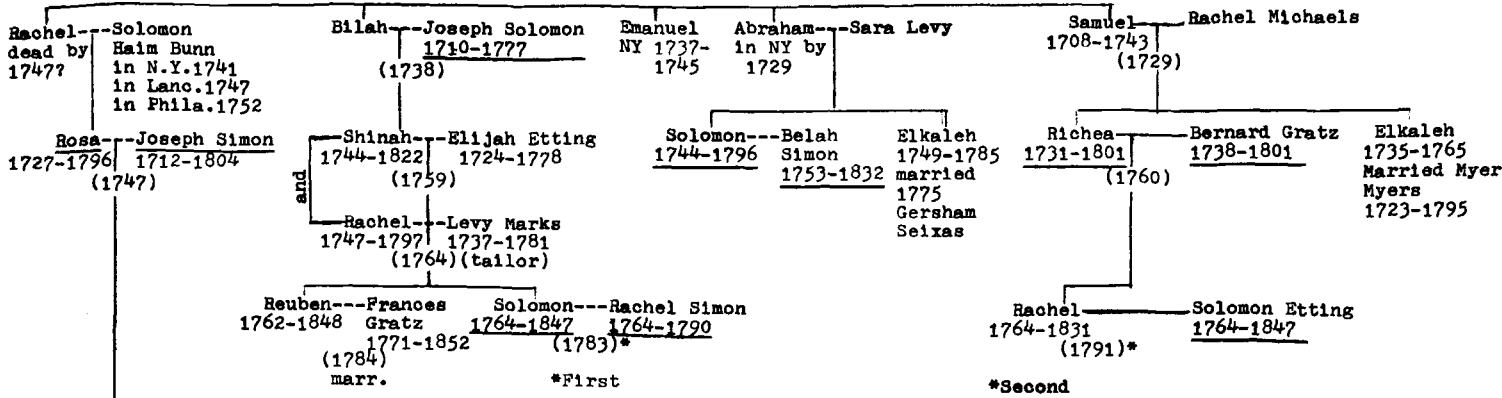


11 children

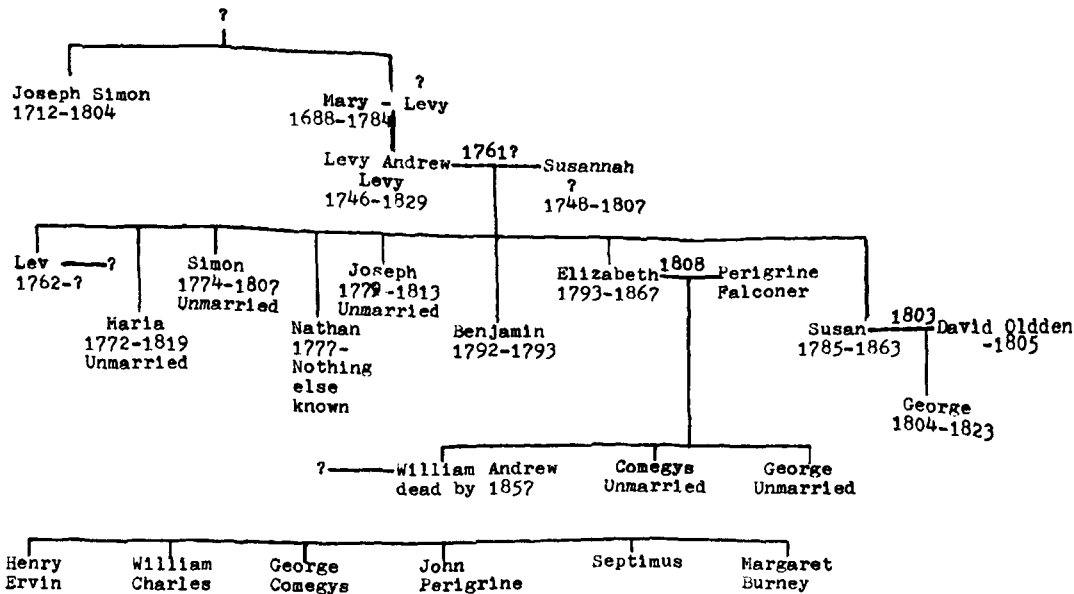
ROSA SIMON BUNN RELATIONSHIPS

MYER COHEN

Next generation became Myer-Cohen



LEVY ANDREW LEVY



All near Fort Smith, Arkansas in 1857

NAME, BIRTH, DEATH, COMMENTS

IN LANCASTER
FIRST LAST

PERIODS IN WHICH THEY WERE IN LANCASTER

			1740 to 1749	1750 to 1759	1760 to 1769	1770 to 1775	1776 to 1783	1784 to 1790	1791 to 1793	1794 to 1804
SOLOMON HIAM BUNN— father-in-law ? - in Phila. 1752. Father of Rosa Simon	1746	?	X							
JOSEPH SIMON— father, husband, uncle 1712 Europe— 1804 Lancaster	1740	1804	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
ROSA BUNN SIMON— wife, mother 1717 Europe— 1796 Lancaster	1746	1796	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MIRIAM SIMON GRATZ— daughter 1749 Lancaster— 1808 Philadelphia married Michael Gratz in 1769 lived in Lancaster during War	1749	1769 1783		X	X		X			
MICHAEL GRATZ— son-in-law 1740 Europe— 1811 Philadelphia lived in Lancaster during War							X			
MOSES SIMON— son- retarded 1751 Lancaster— 1816 Philadelphia	1751	1804		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
BELAH SIMON MYERS-COHEN— daughter 1755 Lancaster— 1833 Philadelphia married Solomon Myers-Coheh 1779	1755	1780 1790's		X	X	X	X		X	
SOLOMON MYERS-COHEN— son-in-law 1744 NY— 1796 NY sometime partner of Simon who lived in Lanc., Phila. and NY.							X			
MYER SIMON— son- retarded 1757 Lancaster— 1825 Philadelphia	1757	1804		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
SHINAH SIMON SCHUYLER— daughter 1762 Lancaster— 1815 Troy, NY. married Dr. Nicholas Schuyler 1782	1762	1782			X	X	X			
RACHEL SIMON ETTING— daughter 1764 Lancaster— 1790 Lancaster married Solomon Etting 1783 his first	1764	1790			X	X	X	X		

NAME, BIRTH, DEATH, COMMENTS

IN LANCASTER
FIRST LAST

PERIODS IN WHICH THEY WERE IN LANCASTER

1740 to 1749	1750 to 1759	1760 to 1769	1770 to 1775	1776 ^o to 1783	1784 to 1790	1791 to 1793	1794 to 1804
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SOLOMON ETTING— son-in-law
1764 York, Pa.— 1847 Baltimore
partner of Simon 1784-1790

LEAH SIMON PHILLIPS— daughter
1763 Lancaster— 1842 Philadelphia
married Levy Phillips 1785

LEVY PHILLIPS— son-in-law
1754 ? - 1832 Philadelphia
partner of Simon from 1790 to Simon's
death in 1804. lived in Lanc. and Phila.

HESTER SIMON— daughter, unmarried
1772? Lancaster— 1820 Philadelphia

HYMAN GRATZ— grandson
1776—1857 Philadelphia Apprentice to Simon

SIMON GRATZ— grandson
1773 Phila.-1839 Phila. apprentice to Simon

LEVY ANDREW LEVY— nephew (of Simon) father
1734 London— 1829 Baltimore
clerk and partner of Simon

SUSANNAH (?) LEVY— wife
1745 ?- 1807 Baltimore
married Levy Andrew Levy about 1761

ELEAZAR LYONS
1729 Holland— 1816 Philadelphia
wrote letters for Simon, his clerk?

ABRAHAM DeLYON
Savannah in 1733, then NY, then Lanc. 1743

				X	X		
1763	1790's		X	X	X	X	
					X	X	X
1770?	1804			X	X	X	X
						X	
						X	
1746	1785	X	X	X	X	X	
1761?	1785			X	X	X	
1770	1779			X	X		
1743	?	X					

NAME, BIRTH, DEATH, COMMENTS

IN LANCASTER
FIRST LAST

PERIODS IN WHICH THEY WERE IN LANCASTER

	FIRST	LAST	1740	1750	1760	1770	1776	1784	1791	1794
			to 1749	to 1759	to 1769	to 1775	to 1783	to 1790	to 1793	to 1804
ISAAC NUNES HENRIQ' ES → Shohet ??-1767 Philadelphia Savannah in 1730s, then NY, then Lanc. co-deeded Lanc. cemetery with Simon 1747	1740's	1756	X	X						
JOSEPH MYERS— silversmith 1764 NY— 1827 Richmond son of Myer Myers of NY fame	1769	1781			X	X	X			
DANIEL MENDES Da CASTRO ?? - ?? left Lancaster for Curacao	1740's	1740's	X							
BARNARD JACOBS— ritual circumciser ? - 1790's Baltimore ran store in Heidelberg, Lanc. County	1759	1783			X	X	X			
AARON LEVY 1742 Amsterdam— 1815 Philadelphia refugee during War	1778	1782					X			
SAMPSON LAZARUS— father - 1788 NY in Maryland in 1770's	1750	1760's 1783		X	X		X			
JOSHUA ISAAC— son-in-law 1744 ? - 1810 married Brandy Lazarus 1781 in Lancaster	1770's	1785				X	X	X		
JOSEPH SOLOMON— father 1710 Europe— 1777 Lancaster Uncle of Rosa Bunn Simon, storekeeper and sometime Lancaster Shohet for Simon	1746	1777	X	X	X	X	X			
BILAH MYERS-COHEN SOLOMON— mother ? ? — died between 1748-1777 married Joseph Solomon in London 1738	1746	?	X	X	?	?				

NAME, BIRTH, DEATH, COMMENTS

IN LANCASTER
FIRST LAST

PERIODS IN WHICH THEY WERE IN LANCASTER

	1740 to 1749	1750 to 1759	1760 to 1769	1770 to 1775	1776 to 1783	1784 to 1790	1791 to 1793	1794 to 1804
MYER SOLOMON— son 1740 London— 1800 Baltimore shopkeeper with and after Joseph Solomon	1746	1793	X	X	X	X	X	X
ISAAC SOLOMON— son 1742 NY— 1798 Baltimore shopkeeper with and after Joseph Solomon	1746	1782	X	X	X	X		
RACHEL SOLOMON MARKS— daughter 1747 Lancaster— 1797 married Levy Marks in 1764	1747	1782	X	X	X	X		
LEVY MARKS— son-in-law, tailor 1737 Europe— 1781 Philadelphia shops in Lancaster and Philadelphia	1764	1781		X	X	X		
SOLOMON MARKS— grandson, tailor 1766 Lancaster— 1824 Richmond tailor in Lancaster tax list 1782	1766	1782		X	X	X		
SHINAH SOLOMON ETTING— daughter 1744 NY— 1822 Baltimore married Elijah Etting of York 1759	1746	1759	X	X				
SOLOMON ETTING— grandson 1764 York, Pa. — 1847 Baltimore married Rachel Simon 1783 his first then Rachel Gratz in 1791					X	X		
LEVY SOLOMON— son 1748 Lancaster— 1827 Baltimore shopkeeper with and after Joseph Solomon	1748	1783						

If my conclusion is to be accepted, I must correct an existing assumption and head off a potential observation. Since 1898, Levy Andrew Levy has been referred to as both a nephew and a son-in-law of Joseph Simon. According to Samuel Evans in his "Sketch of Joseph Simon" which appeared in the Papers Read Before the Lancaster County Historical Society, Volume III, 1898, Levy Andrew Levy was married to Susannah Simon.

This statement of Evans has never been documented and, unfortunately, has been repeated by almost all American Jewish historians since that time. Part of my research was to determine the birthdate of all Simon children. Susannah's had previously never been determined. The Jacob's Mohel records list a birth to the Levy-Susannah union in 1762. If we assume that Susannah was no younger than 15, then her date of birth could have been as late as 1747. That date is a little too close to the Simon-Bunn marriage date of 1747-1748. Ira Rosenwaike, a historian of Baltimore Jews (where Susannah died), found an obituary for her in a Boston paper (Baltimore papers had none). It indicated that she was about 62 when she died in 1807. This would demand a 1745 birth which is definitely too soon for the Simon-Bunn marriage.

I began to challenge the previous assumption that Susannah Levy was a Simon daughter. Her obituary did list a middle initial of "S" which could stand for Simon. There also was hereditary insanity in both the Simon and Levy families which could link Susannah to Simon. But this is the only evidence found to support the daughter theory.

In addition to her date of birth, there is other evidence to prove that she was not a Simon daughter. Joseph Simon in 1799 wrote a very long and complicated will. In it he mentions every living son, daughter and son-in-law and labels each as such. Susannah is not mentioned at all and Levy Andrew Levy is mentioned, forgiven of debts, left \$500 and called a friend. Anyone who reads this will, which mentions people favorably and unfavorably, can not fail to appreciate the importance of this omission.

Additionally, in the will, Simon lists all male grandchildren of age. He fails to mention Simon Levy, or Lev Levy the eldest sons of Levy Andrew Levy.

Simon's other daughters, Miriam and Shinah, were family correspondents as was his granddaughter Rebecca Gratz. Miriam and Rebecca lived in Philadelphia, Shinah in Troy, New York, and after 1785, Susannah Levy in Maryland. However not once was Susannah mentioned; yet most all the other sisters or aunts and uncles of Rebecca were.

Isaac Markens, in 1888, wrote his book, the first on American Jewish history, "*Hebrews in America*." He did *not* state that Levy Andrew Levy was a son-in-law of Simon. He did state, however, "Levy Andrew

Levy, was a partner in the store (with Simon) for many years AND Simon's sons-in-law etc. also at various periods, associated with him." He separates Levy from the confirmed sons-in-law.

Levy, in a sworn statement in 1816, described himself as "first a clerk and then a partner of Joseph Simon." He does not mention son-in-law but, in all fairness, does not mention his nephew status either. Simon raised Levy from the time he was 12 and it would be doubtful that he would have encouraged Levy to marry his own daughter or Levy's cousin.

The most conclusive evidence is found in Byar's book *B and M Gratz* published in 1916. In it, he repeats the statement of Evans that Levy married Susannah Simon. Yet, in the "Errata" section, after the index, he refers to that passage and states "Mordecai Papers (his source)- Joseph Simon had no daughter Susannah." Apparently, Byars found in those Mordecai Papers (which to date your author hasn't) evidence to disprove Evans' statement. These papers belonged to sisters; Laura and Miriam Gratz Hays Mordecai in 1916. The current depository of these papers is unknown.

All the above, when taken as a whole, leads to the conclusion that Susannah Levy, born about 1745, was not a Simon, and, hence, the marriage date of 1747 or 1748 is still valid.

Simon in *February* 1747 was one of two local Jews who purchased a cemetery for use by the "Society of Jews in and about Lancaster." One does not create a cemetery unless one has someone to bury. If Simon buried a child, then again a 1747 marriage date would be invalid. Yet the oldest stone still standing has been translated as "here lieth an infant son Hiam of Joseph." There is no date on the stone, and one could state that this is why the cemetery was purchased. But there was a co-deeder along with Simon, and his name appeared *first* in the deed. It was Isaac Nunes Henriques who came to Lancaster about 1746. Perhaps, since his name was listed first, it was he who had someone to bury and the stone has either long since vanished or was never there in the first place. We know Isaac had a wife and her date and place of death is unknown, or he could have buried a child of theirs. Also, if Simon was married, and if he was the motivation behind the cemetery, then why wasn't his wife Rosa, Hiam Solomon Bunn or Joseph Solomon co-deeders or at least witnesses? As related, I have estimated the date of the Simon child's death as 1753.

V Appendix — Joseph Simon Relationships

Often the blood and by-marriage relationships of the colonial American Jew were quite complicated. This was caused by there just not being enough Jewish families with suitable sons and daughters. Often cousins would marry or an uncle to a niece. Yet, it was these close family relationships and their extension into the business world, that gave the Jew their great economic strength.

The ties of Joseph Simon are very simple. His only blood relationships, that we know of, was his sister Mary Simon Levy in London and her son, Levy Andrew Levy, who was a clerk and later partner of Simon. When, however, he married Rosa Bunn, his web of relationships developed.

Rosa's Aunts and Uncles

Rosa's mother was *Rachel Myers-Cohen*. Her father was Hiam Solomon Bunn. Bunn had no relatives that we know of. Rachel had brothers and sisters.

Bilah Myers-Cohen, Rosa's aunt, married *Joseph Solomon*. Joseph Solomon came to Lancaster in 1746 and stayed until his death in 1777. Bilah's and Joseph's daughter *Shinah* married the leading Jew of York, *Elijah Etting*. Daughter *Rachel* married the tailor *Levy Marks*.

Solomon Etting was the son of *Shinah* and *Elijah Etting*. Solomon would in 1783 marry *Rachel Simon*, a daughter of Rosa and Joseph. This is a case of children of first cousins Rosa and *Shinah* marrying. Solomon Ettings brother *Reuben Etting* married *Frances Gratz* daughter of *Michael* and *Miriam Simon Gratz*. This meant that *Rachel Simon Ettings* niece married her brother-in-law.

Abraham Myers-Cohen was another uncle of Rosa Bunn Simon. Abraham's son was *Solomon Myers-Cohen*. Solomon married *Belah Simon*. Again children of first cousins were marrying. Solomon Myers-Cohen was an important New York businessman and this marriage provided a New York agent for Simon. Abraham's daughter *Elkaleh* married the Hazzan *Gershom Seixas* who married *Miriam Simon* and *Michael Gratz*. *Samuel Myers-Cohen* was another uncle of Rosa Bunn Simon. A daughter of his *Elkaleh* married the famous New York silversmith *Myer Myers*. Samuel's daughter *Richea* married *Barnard Gratz*. This meant that the Gratz brothers, *Michael* and *Barnard*, were related twice by marriage to Simon. *Barnard Gratz's* daughter *Rachel* would marry *Solomon Etting* after *Rachel Simon Etting* died. *Mathias Bush*, another important businessman, was brought into the family when he married *Rebecca Myers-Cohen*. *Rebecca* was another daughter of *Samuel Myers-Cohen*. That made *Barnard Gratz* and *Bush* both in-laws to *Samuel Myers-Cohen* who was Rosa's uncle. This yielded additional business strength for Joseph Simon.

Rebecca and *Mathias Bush* had a daughter *Hyah*. She married *Myer Solomon* who was the son of *Joseph Solomon*, Rosa's uncle by marriage. *Myer Solomon's* daughter *Arabella* married *Zalegman Phillips*, the first important Jewish lawyer in Philadelphia.

At this point everyone should be confused. The family trees in the appendix may help. But the point to be made is that everyone had a common relative. In other words, if you were a prominent colonial Jew and you met another prominent colonial Jew, the odds were excellent that you had a relative in common.

VI Appendix — Heredity Insanity

In the Joseph Simon family and in the Levy Andrew Levy family there is record of male insanity or retardation. This bad gene could be used to make a case of a blood relationship between Susannah Levy, often described as a Simon daughter and the six confirmed daughters of Joseph and Rosa Bunn Simon. (Excluding Sarah who died very young)

In brief, the defective gene in the mother is given to the children in the following manner. 50% of the males will be *affected* and 50% of the females will be *carriers*. No sons can be carriers and no daughters can be affected.

Joseph Simon's wife was Rosa Bunn who was a carrier. Simon and Rosa had three sons. One died at or near birth and the other two, Moses and Myer, are documented as being insane or retarded. However, they lived to be 68 and 65 respectively. This details the Simon-Bunn male offspring. 100% of the males that lived were affected or at worst 67% of all sons.

Simon and Rosa had six (or counting Susannah) seven daughters who lived to adulthood. Hester (1770-1820) never married. Her mental abilities were doubtful, too. She along with retarded Moses and Myer was included in a trust set up in Simon's Will of 1799. Yet, Simon made a provision in case she should marry.

Shinah (1762-1815) and Leah (1763-1842) were both quite normal, married but had no children. Therefore, we can not determine if they were carriers.

This leaves three or four (Susannah) other daughters. Miriam (1749-1808) both married and had normal offspring. Nor is there any evidence of insanity in the children of Miriam's children. Miriam had five sons (a sixth died at age two) and four daughters. Of the four daughters, two married and had normal children.

Belah (1756-1833) married and had four sons and four daughters. All four sons were normal and never married, and all four daughters were normal and never married. Thus, Miriam and Belah seem to have been non-carriers.

Rachel (1764-1790) married Solomon Etting in 1783. Before she died in 1790 she bore four children. Bilah died as an infant. Miriam (1787-1808) married and had sons who were healthy and commissioned officers in the armed forces. Sons Elijah (1785-1854) and Joseph (1788-1856) were retarded and never married. Their half-sister Frances (Solomon Etting was re-married to Rachel Gratz after Rachel Simon Etting died) left instructions and provisions in her will of 1847 for the care of Joseph and Elijah. Also note that Elijah and Joseph lived to be 69 and 68 just as Moses and Myer lived to old age.

Of the three or four (Susannah) Simon-Bunn daughters that married and had children, two (Miriam and Belah) were non-carriers and one (Rachel) was a carrier. If the 50% rule is assumed, and if Susannah

was a Simon daughter, then the odds are that she was a carrier.

It just so happens that the evidence indicates that she may have been a carrier. Susannah and Levy Andrew Levy had four sons and three daughters.

Of the sons, Levy and Nathan, all we know is their date of circumcised via the Jacobs' Mohel record. Perhaps they died at or near birth. In any event, we cannot determine their sanity. Son Simon, as we have learned, was a West Point graduate. Son Joseph, evidence indicates, may have been retarded. He never married, was never listed in Baltimore Directories and was not the bread winner of the family. His sisters, who ran dress shops, were. However Joseph, at the age of 20, was apprenticed out to George Smith, a gilder and carver. This would indicate his ability to perform a craft, but there is no evidence that he ever succeeded. He died in 1813 at the age of 34. If we assume that he was retarded, then 50% of the male Levy-Susannah children were retarded.

Of the three Levy daughters, one, Maria, never married but was quite normal. Elizabeth and Susan did marry. Susan had one son, George, who died at age 21 with this obituary "his whole life was once continued course of suffering and disease." His young age at death and the inference of physical problems could negate any mental problems, but we cannot be sure of that.

Elizabeth had three sons. Two seemed normal one having married. The third was definitely retarded as stated in Elizabeth's will "my beloved son Comegys Falconer, he being insane." Thus of the four Levy-Susannah grandchildren who were males, two were normal, one possibly retarded and one insane for a 25% or 50% outcome.

The evidence seems to indicate that Susannah was a carrier. The question is where did she get the bad gene? If, from Rosa Bunn Simon, then she was Joseph Simon's daughter and her birth in 1745 shatters my date of 1747 or 1748 for the Simon-Bunn marriage. Yet, she could have received the gene elsewhere. Such a gene was not uncommon. Her mother could have been completely unrelated to Rosa Bunn, and this is merely a strange and awkward coincidence. Or her mother could have received the gene from the same source as Rosa. That is, Susannah's mother could have been a sister of Rosa or a first cousin of Rosa. Perhaps someday we will know. But for now we can only wonder.

SOURCES: The information on the Simon family is the product of the author's own research and information supplied through correspondence with Rabbi Malcolm Stern and his articles referred to in the Bibliography. Information on the Levy Andrew Levy family comes from correspondence with Ira Rosenwaik of Baltimore and his articles as listed in the Bibliography.

VII Appendix — Bibliography

The following bibliography contains a listing of publications that I found useful and those to which the reader can turn for information.

Three books and two people were particularly valuable to me. I found that to be most useful, a book must be well footnoted. Such footnotes enabled me to go back to the source and pick up valuable information on Lancaster, which the author because of his subject, did not relate in his book. In this regard, Wolf and Whiteman's *History of the Jews of Philadelphia* and Dr. Jacob Marcus's (Director of the American Jewish Archives) *Colonial American Jew 1492 to 1776* in three volumes, were a gift from heaven. Indeed, it is these two books that I recommend as primary reading for anyone interested in American Jewish history.

As a ready source of Jewish colonial correspondence, Byars' *B and M Gratz* was superb. This book which traced the lives of Barnard and Michael Gratz through their letters, is an excellent source. Written in 1916, it does contain errors in the explanatory notes, but having the often difficult to read colonial letters "translated" saved time and effort.

Rabbi Malcolm Stern, Genealogist of the American Jewish Archives, and Ira Rosenwaik, an historian of Baltimore Jews, and your author exchanged correspondence and thoughts. I appreciated greatly their interest in my project and their willingness to provide me with information and to act as friendly adversaries to my many theories.

Now in his eighties and a legend in his own time, Dr. Jacob Marcus is the father of American Jewish history. I am grateful for his taking time to respond to my questions and the privilege of meeting him in person. The staff of his American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati was most helpful.

The American Jewish Historical Society in Waltham, Mass. and its staff also quickly responded to my requests for information. I am proud to be serving on their national Executive Council.

John W. W. Loose, Mrs. Charles Lundgren, and John Aungst of the Lancaster County Historical Society were most helpful in digging out those long forgotten and lost facts on colonial Lancaster Jews.

Special thanks goes to Mrs. Edith Weisberg for correcting my grammar and spelling while reading my manuscript.

Not to be overlooked are the historians and their efforts that preceded me in the study of Lancaster Jews. The honor of being first goes to a non-Jew Samuel Evans. In his *History of Lancaster County* published in 1883, appears a chapter on the Jews. He followed that with an article on Joseph Simon in Volume III of the *Papers Read Before the Lancaster County Historical Society* in 1898. Monroe Hirsh, a son of a founder of Congregation Shaarai Shomayim, in Volume V in 1901 expands Evans' work into a general Lancaster Jewish history.

Henry Necarsulmer in 1919 writes about Lancaster Jews in Volume IX of the American Jewish Historical Society Publications. These people were the last ones to "dig" into the colonial period. Their histories aroused my curiosity and stimulated me to refer to their sources. The seventy-five years of historical research that has passed since their efforts, have enabled me to expand and correct their stories.

H. M. J. Klein devotes a chapter to the Jews in his four volume *A History—Lancaster County Pennsylvania* published in 1924. His son Frederic Shriver Klein, in 1955 updates the work of his father and presents many new facts in "A History of the Jews of Lancaster" in commemoration of the tercentenary of the arrival of Jews in America in 1654.

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VIII APPENDIX— NOTES

A Word about Footnotes: Your author is not fond of footnoting. Indeed to properly footnote takes tremendous time and effort. Nor do I concur with the theory that you can judge the value of the work by the number of footnotes. However, while doing my research, I was extremely grateful when authors footnoted their original source. Whenever possible I went back to the source to confirm what I had read as well as to find new information, important to Lancaster, but not to other authors. The best footnoting I found was by Edwin Wolf 2nd, and Maxwell Whiteman in the "The History of the Jews of Philadelphia." Their references were invaluable.

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61. 70. Phillipson, op. cit., 245
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113. Byars, op. cit., 157
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124. Levy Andrew Levy to Michael Gratz, 1784, Gratz-Joseph Papers on microfilm at American Jewish Archives, "This place has been my first residence in America for nearly 38 years"
125. Marcus, op. cit., CAJ 997
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- 126A. Paper Colonel Henry Bouquet, Series 21645 p 265, 21648 p 64
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131. Rhodes, op. cit., 102
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154. Wolf 2nd, op. cit., see index page 506 for references
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157. Lancaster County Court House, Record of Deed Books 2 - 648-57, 5 - 531-36, 9 - 165-69, 6 - 2-4, H-6 - 353-55
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David A. Brener was born 31 years ago in Lancaster. While earning a B.S. in Paper Technology at Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo) in 1967 he met and married Kathleen Sherman. They have two children, Scott and Michael, who are, on the father's side, sixth generation Lancaster Jews, dating from the arrival of Rebecca Levy in 1871. On their mother's side they are eighth generation descendants from Henry Seybert, a captured Hessian soldier, who became a farmer at Sporting Hill near Manheim after the American Revolution.

The history of the Jews of Lancaster is a hobby for Mr. Brener, who is associated with the United Twine and Paper Company of Lancaster. The author currently serves on the National Executive Council of the American Jewish Historical Society, and as Secretary of Congregation Shaarai Shomayim in Lancaster. He also serves on the board of the Lancaster Jewish Community Center, and as Treasurer of the Jewish Community Council.

Appearing this month will be a book written by Mr. Brener, and published by Congregation Shaarai Shomayim entitled, *Lancaster's Gates of Heaven, Portals to the Past*. This 136-page book continues the history begun in the above article throughout the nineteenth century Jewish Community and Congregation Shaarai Shomayim from 1856 to 1976.