THE STORY OF THE JEWS OF NEWPORT

TWO AND A HALF CENTURIES OF JUDAISM

1658 – 1908

BY

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With kindest greetings
Morris A. Gutstein

Introduction By

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THE STORY OF THE JEWS OF NEWPORT

To My Mother
SARAH GUTSTEIN

DAUGHTER OF

Rabbi Isaac Issachar Taubes

Grandson of Rabbi Aaron Moses Taubes

Author of the Talmudic Commentary "Karnei R'eim"

and

A Lineal Descendant in the Eighth Generation from

Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface
Introducton

Chapter *Page*

I The Dim Beginnings 19
II Dawn 28
III Progress 48
IV From Inquisition to Freedom 58
V The Synagogue 79
VI A Glimpse at Jewish Life 111
VII Visitors 146
VIII The Jew in the Community 157
IX Uproar, Dispersion and Decline 173
X Evacuation and Revival 191
XI The Close of a Colorful Chapter 214
XII Noble Memories 228
XIII Reconsecration 256
XIV Adjustment 268
XV Immortality 281

Appendices 291

A The Will of Abraham Touro
B Bequests of Judah Touro
C The Inscriptions on the Tombstones in the old Jewish Cemetery of Newport with an Introduction
D Extract from Will of Jacob Rodrigues Rivera
E Extract from Will of Moses Levy
F Deed of Trust of Ann Lopez and other descendants of the early Jewish settlers of Newport conveying the Trust of the Newport Synagogue to the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York City
G Extract from Will of Moses Seixas
H List of Rabbis, Cantors and Shochetim
I List of Presidents and other Officers of the Congregation Jeshuat Israel since 1893
J The Congregation Jeshuat Israel Community Center
K The Touro Funds

Notes 339
Glossary 377
Bibliography 383
Index 387

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Interior of the Old Synagogue in Newport ..... Frontpiece

Facing Page

Map of 1712-13 Showing Jew's Street 18

Old Houses in Newport 26

The Old Scroll of the Old Synagogue in Newport said to have been brought here by the first 15 Jewish families, who according to tradition came here in 1658 30

Facsimile of the last part of the Deed of Purchase of the Old Jewish Cemetery in 1677 34

Facsimile of the Court Record of the Lawsuit against the Jews of Newport, known as the Dyre Suit, which took place in 1685 42

Picture of the Exterior of the Old Jewish Cemetery as it appears today 46

Picture of the Interior of the Old Jewish Cemetery 47

Aaron Lopez 66

Jacob Rodrigues Rivera 74

Exterior of the old Synagogue in Newport 78

Facsimile of the Deed of Purchase of the Land for the Synagogue 82

Facsimile of the Signatures to the Letter sent by the Congregation Yeshuat Israel of Newport to the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York soliciting financial assistance, written in 1759 90

Interior of Synagogue showing the Reading Desk in the Center and the Ark in the East 94

The Ten Commandments with an old Spanish translation, a replica of which is found in the Synagogue 98

The Large Candelabrum of the Synagogue with Four Human Figures in the Center, still in use and said to be a relic from a Spanish monastery dating from the time of the Inquisition 106

List of Illustrations

Facing Page

Rabbi Haym Isaac Carregal 110

Title Page of Sermon Preached by Rabbi Carregal 126

Contemporary Scene of a Rosh Hashanah Service in the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam Holland, dating from 1776, and after which building probably the Newport Synagogue was modeled 130

Silver ornaments and other ritual objects of the Synagogue, dating from pre-Revolutionary times 138

Old Matzo Board, preserved at the Synagogue, used for the preparation of the dough for the Matzos 142

Facsimile of a Page of the Shipping Book of Aaron Lopez 158

Abraham Touro as a child during the Revolution 174

Moses Michael Hays 190

Facsimile of Address to George Washington by Moses Seixas in the Name of the Congregation of Newport 210

Facsimile of Address sent by George Washington to the Newport Congregation 212

Facsimile of Title Page of "A Lunar Calendar", calculated by Moses Lopez in 1806 218

Captain Mordecai M. Myers 222

Abraham Touro 238

Judah Touro 242

Redwood Library and Old Stone Mill, both in Newport 250

Touro Park, Newport 251

Rabbi Abraham Pereira Mendes 258

Order of the Service at the Reconsecration of the Synagogue 266

Tablet to the Memory of the Reverend Isaac Touro, the Reverend Abraham Pereira Mendes, Judah and Abraham Touro, erected in the Synagogue in 1908 286

Sketch of the Old Cemetery as it appears today, with an outline of the Graves and Gravestones 302

PREFACE

Many attempts have been made in the past to write the history of the Jews of Newport. Some fine monographs have been produced by various writers; but these give neither a comprehensive nor a complete picture of the Jew of Newport in his colonial environment. In most cases the desire for brevity necessitated the elimination of vital facts.

The addition of this volume to the already numerous collection of books and pamphlets on the history of the Jews in America in general and, in particular the history of the Jews in various localities where they settled at an early date, is not therefore superfluous and, I believe it will be welcomed. This is the first attempt to give a complete and comprehensive study of the Jew of Newport, picturing from the religious, economic, social and political point of view the entire colonial background with which the Jew identified himself. The task of making this study has not been easy nor could it be quickly accomplished. It required much time and patience, yet the reward of the labor has been great, and the toil was fully compensated by the interest the subject evoked.

Preface

This volume undertakes to portray the story of two and a half centuries of Jewish life in the city of Newport. While necessity involves references to other Jewish settlements in North America, these have been used only in so far as they are relevant to Newport. Inasmuch as Jewish life during this period included many phases of community life, I added the subtitle "Two And a Half Centuries of Judaism", using the term Judaism as significant of a comprehensive culture. The period covered is from 1658 to 1908, a period which constitutes an integrated unit.

As far as possible I have made use of contemporary manuscripts and other original sources as the basis for the facts in the book. Wherever a dispute exists amongst writers on the subject, references to the dispute are given in the notes. In such cases I have stated in the text my own conclusions in the matter, relegating polemics to the notes.

The contemporary manuscript material on the subject is very scarce. Whatever is available has had to be searchingly and critically examined in order to derive from it every bit of relevant material. Unfortunately, the manuscript archives of the American Jewish Historical Society were not accessible to me. According to information given to me by the Librarian of that Society, whatever material on Newport the Society possesses has been published in the "Publications" of the Society of which of course, I have made extensive and grateful use.

I have been enabled to study at first hand the manu-

script material in the archives of the Newport Historical Society, and the Rhode Island Historical Society in Providence. Wherever facts not readily traceable are mentioned, the sources are given in the notes following the text.

To complete the survey, I have added as appendices to the book the Will of Abraham Touro, the list of the bequests of Judah Touro, as well as other excerpts from Wills of some of the early Jewish residents of Newport which bear on the subject of the book. In the appendix, also, is a complete list of the original inscriptions on the tombstones of the old Jewish cemetery in Newport with an introduction and drawing of what seems to have been the original area of the burial ground. A work of this nature would be incomplete without illustrations, and I have therefore enriched the volume by plates, most of which have never appeared in print before. At the end of the book I have added a Glossary, in which are explained all non-English words that occur in the text.

I wish here to record my acknowledgement and sincere gratitude to the Reverend Doctor David De Sola Pool, the spiritual leader of the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue in New York, for his kind assistance in reading the manuscript and offering many constructive suggestions, and for writing the Introduction; to Albert L. Greenberg, Esq., for his most friendly encouragement which stimulated me to write the book; to Captain N. Taylor Phillips, the president of the Spanish Portuguese Synagogue in New York, for giving me

access to the old records and archives of the Congregation which were of material assistance in reconstructing the period of the reconsecration of the Newport Synagogue; and to Mr. Eric O'D. Taylor of Newport, who read the manuscript and made some helpful suggestions.

I earnestly hope that the reading of this book will leave with the reader the impression of noble and aspirant Judaism so deeply felt by the author while working on it and collecting material for it.

Morris A. Gutstein

Newport, R. I., August 1936.

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INTRODUCTION

Rhode Island's fair city of Newport is a town of unique beauty and charm. These qualities are no Jonah's gourd grown up overnight. They have the mellowness and the deep roots of New England's finest cultural tradition. In Newport's quiet streets one breathes freely and deeply of the air that nourished the spirit of Roger Williams.

The Jew walks through Touro Street in Newport quietly conscious of inheriting a tradition both of American political and religious liberty and of Jewish idealism and religious faith. The synagogue, which has stood for one and three quarter centuries and which has withstood the alarms of war and the fatalities of swiftly changing time, is a witness of Newport's liberality of spirit and reverence for the ancient Bible, and Israel's loyalty to the teachings which it has borne on its centuried pilgrimage to the four corners of the earth. The quiet God's acre in which lies the dust of Newport's Jews of Colonial days speaks of the identification of the Jew with American life for well nigh three centuries since sturdy Jewish pioneers threw in their lot with their fellow Americans in wresting from the wilderness a

settlement of security and refuge for those of all denominations and races seeking ampler living. The Jewish Community Center opposite the Synagogue symbolizes the vigor of the new-old Jewish life which has taken up the broken thread, and is continuing to weave on the American background the ancient pattern of the Jewish spirit.

This is the story which Rabbi Gutstein sets out to tell. It is one that is well worth the telling. It is a brilliant tale in which we meet dignified hidalgos bearing such sun-warmed names as Rodrigues Rivera, Lopez or Touro, working, playing and praying harmoniusly with their brethren from bleaker climes who bear such names as Pollock, Myers or Hart. It is a record which recalls to life the victims of medieval persecution, and the romance of their martyred faith hidden in the untouchable recesses of their soul until in Rhode Island's freedom the cherished faith could again be avowed in light and liberty. It is a story through the pages of which move the intellectually avid and humanist scholar Ezra Stiles of Yale College, the exotic, gaudily clad Oriental Rabbi Carregal, honest merchant princes, and many another unusual and engaging figure. It is a recital which lifts the veil to give us many a charming glimpse of the quaint customs and alluring naivete of life in the Newport of Colonial days.

It is a story through which sweeps the tempest of the Revolution, while the synagogue stands quiet and untouched, even serving as the meeting place of the General Assembly of Rhode Island. In the telling of

the tale we meet with George Washington who, echoing words addressed to him by Moses Seixas, gives classic expression to America's ideal of a land in which no more is toleration "spoken of as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support".

Truly this is a story which needed to be told, so that Gentile and Jew alike should bear in unfading memory the consciousness of America's tradition of religious liberty and human brotherhood. This record needs the more to be recited at this time in mankind's history when in the Old World against which America rebelled, systems of nationalistic living are being set up which give to bigotry governmental sanction and to persecution governmental assistance. These twentieth century concepts of the State ruthlessly reject as excessively kindly and compromising even that toleration which George Washington rejected as insufficiently kindly and as incommensurate with the dignity of selfhood and the nobility of the human spirit. If we would preserve our American tradition from contamination by perverted nationalism, we must study such records of our past as this story of Newport in order to understand how strong and how lifegiving are the roots of American democracy and American liberty of the spirit.

Well may we be grateful to Rabbi Gutstein for the diligence and devotion which he has put into this valuable and fully documented tale of historic Newport Jewry.

D. de Sola Pool

THE STORY OF THE JEWS OF NEWPORT

CHAPTER I

THE DIM BEGINNINGS

The wandering of Israel throughout the world has given cause for admiration of the ever-living, indestructible and eternal people. Many have seen the "Finger of God", in the miraculous survival of the Jewish people in the face of so many disintergrating forces. And it is indeed so. The natural law of the survival of a people does not apply to the survival of the people of Israel. Without a land for peaceful habitation, without sovereignty of any nature, for millennia without freedom or protection, living constantly amid misunderstanding, persecution and threat of expulsion, speaking languages not of his own, and forced to adapt himself to ways of life not his own, the Jew, nevertheless, has defied all the forces which might have made for his annihilation.

What is it that kept and still keeps Israel together and ensures its existence despite the ever present shadow of gloom?

The Rabbis of old seemed to have sensed the answer in this beautiful comment: When God had forgiven Israel for the sin of the Golden Calf, Moses implored God saying, "I now feel convinced that Thou hast forgiven Israel, but I wish Thou wouldst show the nations

also, that Thou art reconciled with Israel". To this the Rabbis picture God as replying, "As truly as thou livest, I will let my *Shechinah* dwell among them, so that all may know that I have forgiven Israel. My sanctuary in their midst will be a testimony of My forgiveness of their sins, and hence it may well be called a Tabernacle of Testimony." [1]

The "Tabernacle of Testimony" in the Diaspora has been the Synagogue. The Synagogue has maintained the very soul of the life of the Jew in his sojournings ever since the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. Hither the Jew came to confide with God in days of joy and in days of sorrow. During the dark times of mediaevalism the Jew was a stranger in the world, but within his spiritual heritage in the Synagogue, in the presence of his God, he was at home.

The Synagogue, as a modern rabbi declares manifested "to Jewry its unitary character, and, weekly and daily renewed the spiritual ties which bind Israel into one fellowship. Where there has been no Synagogue to serve the wandering Jew as the rallying focus of his individual Jewish spirit and the physical nucleus of community life, centrifugal forces have rapidly swept him into the maelstrom of the Gentile world. But where a Synagogue has been established, thither Jews have come together centripetally from far and wide at stated intervals to reaffirm their basic unity, a unity of faith, religious life and tradition, a reflex of the unity of their God." [2]

It is in this spirit that we must approach the history

of the Jews of Newport, Rhode Island.

On a small street, that less than two centuries ago was barren land, in the outskirts of a growing and striving city then on the verge of becoming a metropolis, a street in Newport, that a century ago became known as "Touro Street", there stands a beautiful shrine, an old synagogue. No glamor or splendor of marble strikes the eye of him who beholds this sanctuary. No display of riches and wealth invites the attention of the passer-by. Yet awe-inspired and aware of a mighty past stand those who tread the "lone floors where reverent feet once trod". With admiration and reverence, one stands in this holy place before the mystery of Time and God, where the present vanishes, and the Past flashes before the mind in beautiful pictures, making an everlasting imprint on one's memory.

The history of this synagogue is the history of the Jews of Newport. It is the most fascinating chapter in the history of the Jews in America.

Nature has bestowed upon Newport great beauty of environment. It was not the insignificant price of Aquidneck Island - forty fathoms of white beads, ten coats and twenty hoes - which persuaded John Clarke, Anne Hutchinson, William Coddington and other refugees from Massachusetts' religious intolerance, to purchase the island. What persuaded them was the surrounding sea, the fine commodious harbor, the luxuriance of the foliage and the variety of the countryside of that pleasant spot. In 1639 the settlers of Newport were thankful to Roger Williams, the founder of

Providence for his advice to procure this land near his own town. Before long Providence and Rhode Island, were not only united in the physical and political sense, but also in the spirit of freedom and liberty.

It is not always that men oppressed and persecuted become liberal and tolerant. Only too often the oppressed becomes the oppressor. The Puritans of Massachusetts, who had themselves fled from persecution, found it not at all inconsistent to refuse others the right to differ from them in religious faith and practices.[3] But not such were the fugitives who settled Rhode Island and Providence nigh three hundred years ago. Roger Williams and John Clarke may indeed deservingly be crowned the founders of religious toleration in America. The code of laws, drawn up in 1647, concluded, "And otherwise than thus what is herein forbidden, all men may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his God. And let the saints of the Most High walk in this colony without molestation, in the name of the Eternal their God, forever and ever".[4]

A few years later, Roger Williams declared, "I desire not the liberty to myself which I would not freely and impartially weigh out to all the consciences of the world beside".[5]

Thus Rhode Island and Providence became a haven of refuge for many a weary wanderer and many an oppressed soul. To give still more assurance of welcome to those unwanted elsewhere, the colony of Rhode Island enacted in 1652 that, "all men of whatever nation soever they may be, that shall be received inhabitants of any of

the towns, shall have the same privileges as Englishmen any law to the contrary notwithstanding". This legal enactment was supplemented with the famous ship simile written by Roger Williams in January 1655, "there goes many a ship to sea with many hundreds souls on ship, whose weal and woe is common and is a true picture of a commonwealth as a human combination or society. It has fallen out sometimes, that both Papists and Protestants, Jews and Turks, may be embarked in one ship, upon which supposal, I affirm, that liberty of conscience that ever I pleaded for, turns upon these two hinges, that none of the Papists, Protestants, Jews or Turks, be forced to come to the ship's prayer or worship, or compelled from their own particular prayers or worship if they practice any. I further add that I never desired, that nothwithstanding this liberty, the commander of this ship ought to command the ship's course yea, also command that justice, peace and sobriety be kept and practiced both among the seamen and all the passengers". [6]

Such sentiments could have no other effect than to invite to the shores of Rhode Island all those who because of their religious convictions could find no resting place elsewhere. Among these were the Jews.

The coming of the Jews to Newport is antedated by a century and a half of woeful history for the Jewish people in the New World. Soon after the first white man, Luis de Torres, a Marrano, converted by the Inquisition in Spain, set foot on American soil, many of the exiles from Spain and later from Portugal, sought

refuge on these shores. In vain was their attempt to secure peace. The clutches of the Inquisition extended across the wide ocean. Before long, the fires of the auto-da-fe were raging in the market places of the New World, with equal terror as in the Old. The Holy Offices shed no blood, but it burnt alive the accused Judaizer. Mexico, Peru, Central America and the West Indies, were the scenes of these dreadful acts in the religious drama that began more than four centuries ago.

Not until the capture of Brazil by the Dutch in the first half of the seventeenth century did the Jews find in the New World, a haven of refuge from persecution. Not much time was needed after the Dutch conquest of Recife in 1631, before we find in this colony a large number of Jews forming a community, possessing considerable wealth, and engaging in commercial enterprises which yielded innumerable benefits to Holland as well as to themselves. As early as 1640 a traveler is quoted commenting: "Among the Free-Inhabitants of Brazil, the Jews are most considerable in number; they have a vast Traffic beyond the rest; they purchased Sugar Mills and bought stately Houses in Recife".[7]

The Jewish community of Recife was augmented, in 1642, by 600 Spanish and Portuguese Jews who came there from Holland. Among them were the Rabbis Isaac Aboab de Fonseca and Moses Raphael Aguilar, who became the spiritual leaders of the Congregation at Recife. Thus the community began to prosper spiritually as well as economically.

It was not destined, however, that this remnant of

Spanish-Portuguese Jewry should enjoy its happiness in the New World for a long period. After several attempts, in 1654, Portugal finally succeeded in subjugating Brazil to its rule. In January of that year the Dutch yielded to the Portuguese: Recife, Mauritestad Parayba, Itamarica, Seara and others of its possessions in America. With the conquest by the Portuguese came the destruction of the peace and happiness that their industrious labor had brought them in that part of the New World, and the end of a beautiful chapter of Israel in America.

With the Portuguese conquest came the Inquisition. The Jewish population was given the opportunity of leaving the country and escaping their new status as "relapsi". Over five thousand Jews left Recife itself. Most of them returned to their native land, Holland, where they were received very cordially. A number scattered through various other American Colonies. Others found their way to London. One contingent, after a perilous rescue from pirates on the high seas, sought shelter in New Amsterdam, now New York, which was then a Dutch possession. This group consisted of twenty-three *Sephardic* Jews.

This begins the history of the Jews in North America. Strange as it seems, New Amsterdam, which at present harbors nearly 2,000,000 Jews, the largest Jewish community in the world, was not ready at that time to welcome these few poor and downtrodden sons of Israel. For instance Domine Johannes Megapolensis wrote to the Classis of Amsterdam in 1655 concerning this hand-

ful of Jews: "We request your Reverences to obtain from Messers Directors, that those godless rascals, who are of no benefit to the country but look at everything from their own profit, may be sent away from here".[8] Peter Stuyvesant, the Governor, wrote at the same time to the Dutch West India Company: "The Jews who arrived, would nearly all like to remain here, but learning that they were very repugnant to the inferior magistrates . . . the deaconry also fearing that owing to their present indigence they might become a charge in the coming winter, for the benefit of this weak and newly developing place and the land in general, deemed it useful to require them in a friendly way to depart; praying also most seriously in this connection, for ourselves as also for the general community of your worships, that the deceitful race, be not allowed further to infect and trouble this new colony".[9] And so these few Jewish families were in constant anxiety awaiting the verdict of the Dutch West India Company. The verdict came in favor of the defendants.[10]

In the meantime, until the answer from Holland, granting the Jews the right to inhabit the New Netherlands with the same liberty as their religious brethren were enjoying in Holland, arrived the local government issued a decree ordering: "that the Jews who came last year from the West Indies and now from the Fatherland must prepare to depart forthwith".[11] This was not indeed a decree of expulsion which required their leaving instantly; yet it was sufficient to give impetus to some to seek a haven where they would be received in more

friendly fashion. This they found in Newport, Rhode Island.

Thus the coming of the Jews to Newport dates back to the time when the city was still in its infancy. Barely a decade after its settlement, Newport received in its harbor a few Jewish families, who, fleeing from Portuguese Inquisition in Brazil, were not altogether welcomed by the stern Calvinists of the New Netherlands and Governor Stuyvesant, in what is now New York. [12]

After a woeful history of a century and a half, a happy chapter of the Jew in the New World began. The first page of this chapter was destined to be written in Newport.

CHAPTER II

DAWN

The dim beginnings were not brightened at once with rays of sunshine. Many times the world was to swing through its orbit before the glory of success in economic and other endeavors made Newport a rival of New York. More than a century was needed for that. During this time Newport grew slowly and steadily. With it , but in a smaller proportion, grew the Jewish community.

In the spring of the year 1658, nineteen years after the settlement of the city, fifteen Jewish families of Spanish-Portuguese stock are said to have arrived here to make this their home. [1] Newport was but a small village at the time. The two hundred families that lived here two years after the city was first settled had increased only to about four thousand white people in the first hundred years. [2] Throughout the seventeenth century the town thus remained unimportant and small, one end within a stone-throw of the other.

The city was most easily accessible by water. Narragansett Bay with it's commodious harbor became the main highway leading to the settlement. This was the reason the few houses that constituted the town were centered around Thames Street section, nearest the river.

The houses were crude little dwelling places standing on allotments of four acres of land, the share of each family.[3] The wooden house of Governor William Coddington on Marlborough Street, had a few attic rooms in addition to the ground floor, and was the Mansion in town. The cattle that pastured in the present Mall of the town had to be protected from the wolves, for whose capture a reward was offered.[4]

The settlement was formally laid out by the Town Assembly, "by the seaside southward", and "on both sides of the Spring", whose strong currents propelled a Water Mill on the Street not far from the Governor's Mansion.[5] The town streets were few and narrow.

In accord with the spirit of the century, the pillory was erected within view from every point in the city. The size of the town, or perhaps the good behavior of it's inhabitants, did not make it necessary to have the General Assembly order the construction of the "House for a Prison" to be larger than twelve feet long and ten feet wide. It was located near the Water Mill and the Governor's mansion.[6]

Life was hard for both young and old. The monotony of the routine work was occasionally interrupted by fishing and hunting,for which no long distances had to be traveled. Home evenings and brief neighborly visits were not a virtue but a necessity in those sturdy pioneer days. Time was passed not with cards, but by reading the Bible, and chatting about happenings in the colonies, and about politics abroad.

In those days people took their religion seriously and

they were much happier. The meetings of the Baptists and the Quakers were well attended. No special attraction in preaching or preacher was required to have young and old devote a large part of one day a week for public worship and prayer. The services were not short, neither was the preaching. The theme of the preaching was regularly theological and doctrinal, never sensational. Freedom and liberty existed for all to do as they pleased in matters of religion. Yet, going to the meeting place for worship, whether it was in a private home as in the very early days, or, later, in the church-building, was a holiday.

Among these peaceful and religious inhabitants of Newport, with their prevailing spirit of liberty and tolerance, augmented by legislation which assured to all the right to "walk as their consciences persuade them", these fifteen Jewish families that arrived in 1658, must have found a hospitable and comfortable abode. Meeting no opposition, it is said they immediately set out to organize their public worship.[7] Accordingly, having a sufficient number for the required religious quorum, possessing a Scroll of the Law which they had brought with them,[8] and imbued with the spirit of Religion, they organized a *Kahal Kadosh*-Holy Congreation, to worship God according to the faith of their fathers.[9] Mordecai Campanal was the leader of this congregation.

Probably it was through his influence, that about this time several families from Speightstown, Barbados, came to live in Newport, amongst them Moses Israel Pachecho, Simon Mendez, Abraham Burgos, Jacob

Tinoco, and David Nassy, all of whom formed the nucleus of the Jewish Community.[10]

Mordecai Campanal together with Moses Pacheco occupied the principal positions in this infant Jewish community. As with the other settlers, the services of the Jewish congregation took place in private dwelling houses. By virtue of his position in the community, on most occasions Mordecai Companal offered his own home for this purpose.

The social and cultural life of these early Jewish founders was in one phase richer than that of the others. Upon arrival these early Jewish settlers are supposed to have introduced the craft of Masonry on this continent.[11] They are reported to have worked the degrees of Masonry in the home of Mordecai Campanal, where they gathered for social intercourse as well as for spiritual inspiration and cultural improvement.

These events are recorded in a unique contemporary document in the following words: "Th^{s} y^{e} (day and month obliterated) 165 (6 or 8, not certain which, as the place was stained and broken; the first three were plain) W^{ee} mett att y House off Mordecai Campunall and affter Synagog W^{ee} gave Ab^{m} Moses the degrees of Maconrie".[12]

Social recognition and religious freedom are but two of the factors which enable a people to live together harmoniously in a commonwealth. That "man does not live by bread alone", indeed implies that he needs bread; but with bread he also needs rights to acquire it, protection to keep it, and guidance how to use it. The

last is taken care of in every ethical code of each religious system. For the first two, some economic arrangement and definite political government is required.

The early Jewish pioneers of Newport had no difficulties in the first factors necessary for group living; religious freedom and social recognition. Religious freedom was theirs by virtue of the basic principles of this colony. Social recognition these early Jewish pioneers obtained because of their character, manners and actions. These early Jews in Newport came from *Sephardic* stock with its rich background of cultural, political, scientific and economic achievements, and strong religious fervor, which gave them prestige and recognition amongst all groups.

The problem, therefore, at this date was "bread", how to acquire it and how to protect it.

It is not historically correct that the colony of Rhode Island in the seventeenth century was without any commercial enterprises. Neither may we rightly assume that intercolonial trade as well as foreign trade "scarcely existed in those days".[13] Indeed, to a great extend the colony was self-sustaining. The country was very salubrious, fertile and fruitful. Farming, sheep and cattle-raising were the chief occupations of the day. These afford ample sustenance if natural events are not interrupted by drought or other acts of God. Yet people learn to need other things besides those they can obtain by their own toil. If they can not obtain them where they live, they seek them elsewhere.

As early as 1642, Newport made arrangements with

the Dutch of Manhattan to establish regular trade.[14] Soon horses were carried in sloops to Barbados to be exchanged for molasses, sugar and indigo.[15] The sloops as well as other craft were built right in town or in the neighboring town of Portsmouth. This became a thriving industry as early as 1646.[16]

The boats were not for exhibition. They were in constant use to send wheat, oats, rye, barley, flax, apples, honey, butter, cheese, cod, haddock, mackerel and other local products to the East Indies, and West Indies, and to other English colonies. East India, on the other hand, supplied this colony with cotton for weaving, England with hoes and guns, West India with sugar and indigo, and France with linen. Dutch Manhattan needed English hoes and guns from Newport, and they paid for them with rum and wine.[17] It was not without reason that the same year that the fifteen Jewish families came here, the General Assembly voted "That noe such person", be he inhabitant or stranger, "shall presume to deliver or bringe any such liquors or wine out of that vessell in which they bringe any liquors or wine into this colony until they have payed after the rate of five shillings for every anker of liquor, and after the rate of five shillings for every quarter casks of wine unto the towne treasury".[18]

To protect the growing trade, Newport was ordered to keep in its Magazine "three barrels of good powder, one thousand weight of leade, twelve pikes, and twentie foure muskets, all in good case, and fit for use".[19]

The Jewish pioneers thus found Newport fertile soil

for commercial activities. Uninterrupted, there can be no doubt that with their natural adaptibility for commerce these early Jewish settlers would have developed enterprises similar to those of a century later, which made both the Jews as well as Newport outstanding at the time. Unfortunately, however, this seems not to have been the case.

By an old principle of English law, the land that the American continent added to the English domain belonged to the crown. Being the King's land, it was subject to his disposal.[20] Accordingly, it was the Crown and not Parliament which created colonies in America, granted them charters, and gave them their forms of government. Through the Privy Council the King provided rules and regulations by which the various colonies governed themselves in a way compatible with their different charters.

However, in matters of trade, Parliament was supreme. And this supremacy was jealously guarded for the benefit of the British merchants.

Accordingly the colonies were able to establish a form of self-government, and maintain religious liberty and tolerance according to their individual desire and temperament. They were not given such a free hand in the control of commerce, especially if the commerce were intercolonial or extended to foreign ports. Under this restriction the Jews suffered as did all the colonists.

At this time the Newport settlers were classified in seven categories: 1) Proprietors - who were the original land-lords with full right. 2) Freemen - who had all

said Land shall Return Again to the said
Nathaniel Dickins his Heirs Executors Ad-
ministrators or Assigns for him or them to
Possess and Enjoy Again as fully as if no
such Sale had Been made and In Witness
of the Sale hereof the said Nathaniel Dickins
have hereunto Set his hand & Seal this -
28th day of February 1677.

in the presence of
George Hammond
James Mulloy

Nathaniel Dickins
his N marking
and Seal

Entered On Record and Compared with the
original December 26th 1678.

Thomas Weld Town Clerk

Newport ss: The above and foregoing is a
true Copy as appears on Record in the Book
of Land Evidences of Newport No. 3 Page 11.
Newport October 19th A.D. 1767.

Witness Wm Coddington Town Clerk

Facsimile of the last part of the Deed of Purchase of the Old Jewish Cemetery in 1677.

political rights; 3) Inhabitants - who were guaranteed protection but had no vote or office; 4) Resident Aliens - who were simply given permission to live in the settlement; 5) Bondservants - who were there for debts; 6) Slaves; 7) Indians.[21] According to this distinction made in the population of Newport the Jews were aliens or strangers.

The British Parliament began to restrict and control the commerce of the colonies at a very early date. They passed one Navigation Act after another. The original act of 1651 was followed by another in 1660, which prohibited foreigners or aliens "not made denizens" from trading in the colonies.[22]

The Navigation Act of 1660 was supplemented by another one in 1663 of similar nature, adding that importations into the colony must come from England. And when this act did not prove effective, a more stringent one was passed that required all colonial products should either be shipped first to England and from there to their respective destinations, or pay certain stipulated duties instead.

These acts inflicted hardships on all the colonists who engaged in any kind of foreign trade, export or import. But the greatest weight fell on the "alien" Jew. It may be for this reason that the first Jewish settlers left the town not a long time after their first arrival.[23]

When we hear of them again, it is in the year 1677.

In the meanwhile, discriminations of this sort did not pass unchallenged. To assure equality for all, irrespective of creed, John Clarke succeeded in obtaining a Charter

from King Charles II of England making freedom of worship and of conscience the basis of individual rights. This took place in 1663. There can hardly be a more liberal expression than the one that emanated from the English throne at that time. In simple words the monarch wrote: "That our royall will and pleasure is that noe person within the sayd colonye at any tyme hereafter shall bee in any way molested, punished or called in question for any differences in opinione in matters of religion, and doe not actually disturb the civill peace of our sayd collony; but that all and everye person or persons may from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter freelye and fullye have and enjoye his and theire owne judgements and consciences in matters of religious concernment".[24]

Whether it was this or a more liberal interpretation of the Navigation Acts that induced the Jews to return is hard to say. In 1677, we find a definitely organized Jewish community in Newport.

The increased numbers of the Jewish community, or perhaps some single fatality, occasioned the purchase of a plot of land for a *Beth Chayim* - Abode of Life, the traditional name of a Jewish cemetery. Where the famous Bellevue Avenue now begins, in the very center of the present town, there was barren land on the outskirts of Newport in those days. There was no objection on the part of any one - as there would most assuredly be today - to having a cemetery in this part of the island, where the Jewish community acquired a small piece of land about thirty feet long for the expressed purpose of a

"burial place".

The land for the *Beth Chayim* was purchased formally for the use of the "Jews and their Nation Society or Friends" by Mordecai Campanal and Moses Pacheco. The deed is a most interesting specimen of seventeenth century calligraphy worth quoting in full. The following is its content:

"This Witnesseth that I Nathaniel Dickens of Newport in Rhode Island Cooper have sold for a Valuable Consideration in hand Received unto Mordicay Campanall & Moses Pacheickoe Jews and to their Nation Society or Friends a Peice of Land for a burial Place being in D(e) mentions followeth, that is to Say Peise of Land thirty foot long, Butting South West upon the Highway that Leads Down from ye Stone Mill towards Benj^a^: Griffins Land and thirty foot upon John Eastons Land and thirty foot upon the Line North west butting upon a Slip of Land Which ye Said Nathaniel Dickens hath yet Remaining betwixt this Peise of Land now Sold and ye Land Now belonging unto Benjamin Griffin and ye Line Northeast Butting also upon ye Said Nathaniel Dickens his Land to be in Length fourty foot, which Said Passell of Land in Dimansions as aforesaid with the Fences thereto Pertaining. I have for my Self my heirs and Assigns or Successors for them to Possess, and Enjoy for the Use as abovesaid forever they from henceforth Making and Maintaining Substantialy Fences Round ye Said Land but if it Should So fall out that ye Jews Should all Depart the Island Again[25] So as that these shall be none

left to keep up & Maintain this Fences as aforesaid then the Said Land shall Return Again to the said Nathaniel Dickins his heirs Executors Administrators or Assigns for him or them to Possess and Enjoy Again as freely As if no such Sale had been Made and in Witness of this Sale hereof the Said Nathaniel Dickins hath hereunto set his hand and seal this 28th day of February 1677."

There can be no mistake as to the boundaries of the original *Beth Chayim,* which later on was enlarged, adding probably the piece of land which, "Said Nathaniel Dickins hath yet Remaining betwixt this Peise of Land now Sold and ye Land now belonging to Benjamin Giffin".[26] John Easton's land is identfied today by a house southeast of the Jewish cemetery called the Easton House. John Easton was the Governor of Rhode Island.

Because of the Jewish cemetery, the "Highway that Leads Down from ye Stone Mill toward Benjamin Griffins Land" came to be known as "Jew's Street". The street is so marked on all early maps.[27] If "ye Stone Mill" is identical with "my stone built Wind Mill" mentioned by Governor Benedict Arnold in his will,[28] it may well refer to the Old Stone Mill in Touro Park. "Griffin's land" was also honored with a street in his name which was the street northwest of Jew's Street destined, practically a century later, to be the site of the synagogue. It's name was changed ultimately to Touro Street.

Having obtained a burial ground, the Jewish people

had identified themselves with Newport forever. In compliance with the terms of the deed, as well as from their own desire to have the *Beth Chayim* enclosed, the Congregation erected around the lot a wooden fence which lasted over a century and a half.[29] Adjacent to the grounds, a small wooden house was erected which was used for the performance of the ritual in connection with the burying of the dead in accordance with Jewish tradition, as well as for occasional prayers.[30] All this having been completed, the proper religious ceremonies of consecration took place. The Jews of Newport thus planted the first non-eradicable testimony of their presence in that city.

At that time there lived in Newport, the families of Mordecai Campanal, Moses Pacheco, Moses Levi, Abraham Moses,[31] David Campanal, Daniel Campanal, Abraham Campanal, Saul Brown, David Brown, Abraham Burgos, Symon Mendez, Aron Verss.[32] Isaac Naphtaly,[33] Gutierezes,[34] Isaac Cohen de Laria[35] and others.

Isaac Naphtaly was the *Schochet* of this Jewish community.[36]

The problem how to acquire their bread was vital with the Jews even at this time. The charter of 1663 did not solve it, and neither did the resolution of the General Assembly, sanctioning the charter.[37]

Seven years passed. The Jewish community in Newport was gradually strengthened. As much as possible, the Jewish people engaged in trade, local as well as intercolonial and foreign.[38] Unmolested in their

daily morning and evening prayers they sang praises unto God for safeguarding them, giving them their daily bread and enabling them to live in peace and harmony with their fellow man and to serve God and man with uprightness.

But it seems that the Jew can never enjoy a full measure of undisturbed happiness. The peace of the Jewish community of Newport was interrupted by two events that turned out to be decisive and beneficial factors for their future.

This happened in 1684 and in 1685. The British Navigation Acts were in full swing. Evasion of their laws stimulated the British to adopt more stringent ways and means to enforce them. Goods were confiscated, duties levied, and numerous other hardships imposed by British agents on traders in the colonies. The Jew, having the additional disadvantage of being classified as an 'alien' or 'stranger', felt the blow first. Thus, whatever efforts the Jew had made to develop the commerce of the colony were checked, temporarily at least, in the eighties of the seventeenth century when Major William Dyre, Surveyor General of the Colony, seized the estates of certain Jews living in Newport, and brought their owners to trial. He did so by warrant from the Governor, and in the name of his Majesty the King of England, apparently for the violation of some clause of the Navigation Acts. Dyre's proceeding was probably the result of an act of the Assembly in 1682. This act promised England "to stand by you and assist you in the performance of the act of trade and naviga-

tion according to the oath imposed by his Majesty in said act".[39]

The case attracted the attention of the outstanding members of the colony residing in Newport. Certainly Gevernor William Coddington did not think of missing the opportunity to hear the case tried. Neither would Deputy Governor Walter Clarke think of missing the interesting scene. Other important persons present were John Easton, Caleb Carr, Major John Coggeshall and a host of other public officials, some of whom either before or after occupied the position of Governor.

On March 31st, 1685, the session "At the Gener[ll] Court of Tryalls Held in his Majesties Name at Newport" was in full operation. A number of cases had been called, settled and dismissed. The next litigation announced: "On an Action or Complaint of Major William Dyre as Surveyor Gen[l] against Mordecai Campanal, Saul Brown, Abraham Burgis, Rachel the Widow and Relict of Symon Mendez dec[d] and other Jews fforeigne borne-".[40]

Mordecai Campanal heads the list. Moses Pacheco is not mentioned at all. Saul Brown is second on the list. All this is not without significance as we shall see in the succeeding pages.

The people present must have indeed been anxiously awaiting the end of this trial for to all it was really a test case. All listened for the verdict, remembering what had happened nine months ago.

Some nine months before the trial, another very important incident in the history of religious freedom

and liberty had occured. After the Jews were molested and some of their goods actually seized by warrant of the Governor, they courageously presented to the General Assembly a petition for protection under the law. Simon Mendez and David Brown were the spokesmen. This was on June 24, 1684. The General Assembly acted on the petition the very same day. Without much hesitation and debate, for there was much important business to transact, the General Assembly: "Voted in answer to the petition of Simon Mendez, David Brown, associates being Jews, presenting to this Assembly bearing date June 24, 1684, we declare, they may expect as good protection here as any strangers being not of our nation residing amongst us, in his Majesty's colony, ought to have, being obedient to his Majesty's laws".[41]

This is the first time the Jews are mentioned in the official records of the colony. No wonder, for they were not freemen, nor had they had any litigation with any one. This mention would also not have occurred had they not needed to ask for protection. But it was for the best. For thus their position was made clear and they knew what they might expect.

This resolution of the General Assembly certainly gave the Jews courage to defend themselves fearlessly. The defendants all appeared in court. Major Dyre was not there. He sent his attorney, Mr. Edward Uster. "For want of a declaration in the office according to Law, the defendants enter a nonsuit". They were entitled to ask for a dismissal of the entire case, but they did not wish to do so. They were eager to hear a jury's verdict.

On an Action or Complaint of Major William Dyre as Surveyor Genl. against Mordica Campanell, Saul Brown, Abraham Burgis, Rachell the widow and Relict of Symon Mendes Deceased and others Jews Forreigne borne —

For want of a declaration in the office according to Law, the defendants enter a Nonsuit —.

The Case in Court called. the afore-named Major Dyre the Complainant did not appear Only Edward Usher as his Attorney appeared. the defendants appeared.

Whereas upon the Information of Major William Dyre to Our Hono.r Governo.r against Mordica Campanell David Daniell & Abraham Campanell, Saul Brown, Abraham Burges, Rachell the Widow and Relict of Symon Mendes decea.d. and Aron Berse Jews. Our said Governo.r granted a warrant to the General Serja.t to Seaze the said Jews goods or Estates to answer the said informer his Charge against them as Aliens at this Court. And whereas he hath not brought the matter in such forme as Our Law Requires; Yett for weighty Reasons moveing, This Court doe See Cause with the defendants Consent, that the Action shall come to a Tryall forthwith —.

The Case Pleaded and Comitted to the Jury.

Verdict We find for the defendants and that the Plantiff pay Cost of Court

The Court accept the Verdict and allow the bill of Cost fifteen Shillings Eight pence —.

Whereas Major William Dyre Esqr. Surveyor Genl. as informer hath Caused the Estates of

Facsimile of the Court Record of the Lawsuit against the Jews of Newport, known as the Dyre Suit, which took place in 1685.

And so the court proceeded:

"Whereas upon the information of Major William Dyre to our Honoed Governr against Mordecai Campanell, David, Daniell & Abraham Campanell, Saul Brown, Abraham Burges, Rachell the Widow and Relict of Symon Mendez Deceasd and Aron Verse, Jews, Our said Governr granted a warrant to the Generall Serjat to sease the said Jews goods or estates answer the said informer his charge against them as aliens at this Court. And whereas he hath not brought the matter in such forme as Our Law requires: Yett for weighty Reasons moveing, this Court doe see Cause with the defendants Consent that the Action shall Come to Tryall forthwith".[42]

The verdict was not a surprise. The 'Jurrors' reported "Verdict, Wee find for the defendants and that the Plaintiff pay Cost of Court". The court ordered unanimously that "the distraint upon the defendants goods be taken off and their Estates so seized be Restored by the General Serjt".[43]

This decision not only assured to the Jews the protection which had been given them by the General Assembly, but actually gave them an impetus to trade and to engage in the larger mercantile pursuits. This attracted many new Jewish settlers to the shores of Newport and paved the way for the successful commercial era of the eighteenth century.

It has not passed without notice that between the time the resolution of the General Assembly was passed in 1684 and the trial in 1685, Simon Mendez passed into

the world of eternity. So too about this time Moses Pacheco was laid to rest with his fathers.

The relationship between the Jewish and non-Jewish population grew closer. Upon the death of Moses Pacheco, Caleb Carr was appointed by the Superior Court as the administrator of his estates.[44] Apparently Pacheco and Carr were good friends. The latter, we find, made provision in his will "I give to my son Edward Carr . . . the Chest that stands in the hall, which I had of Moses Pacheco the Jew".[45]

The resolution of the General Assembly and the verdict of the court in the Dyre suit gave the Jews more privileges. They were permitted to hold property and become freemen. On the first Thursday in September 1688, we find Abraham Campanal among the "Persons Lycenced" as a freeman.[46]

Saul Brown left for New York, where he engaged in business and acted as the Minister of the Congregation *Shearith Israel.*[47] Other members of the Brown family likewise moved to New York.[48] We find in New York members of the Pacheco family in the early part of the next century, active in the affairs of the Congregation *Shearith Israel* and in the building of the Mill Street Synagogue in 1730.[49]

Some of the Campanals moved to Massachusetts. We find "David Campanal a Jew from Rhode Island" - no doubt the David Campanal in the Dyre suit - warned out of Boston on June 15, 1726.[50] He died in Ipswich, Massachusetts in 1732.[51] Another Campanal is also found in Ipswich at the same time.[52]

In the records of the Congregation *Shearith Israel* of New York, there are references to some members of the Campanal family. In 1713 one Valentine "Campanel" is referred to as the *Shamash* of that congregation.[53] Another, Asher Campanal, we find holding the same position in 1739.[54] A little later we also find in New York a Rachel Campanal.[55]

Isaac Naphtaly apparently also took up residence in New York. On August 29, 1695, he petitioned the authorities there for letters of denization.[56]

Other members of the Naphtaly family have been found among the first seat-holders of the Mill Street Synagogue.[57]

Thus we see a number of the Newport Jewish families scattered to different parts of the colonies. A sufficient number, however, remained here to continue the Congregation, care for the cemetery and carry on a trade that began to show signs of success.[58]

The Jewish families that lived scattered in the various parts of New England looked up to Newport as the mother Jewish community. In no place did they attempt to hide their identity as Jews.[59] They did not surrender their faith in the face of many adversaries and missionary attempts. At death some were taken to Newport for interment in the Jewish cemetery. One such interesting case is recorded in the early part of the eighteenth century in the Diary of Samuel Sewall; "Feb. 4, 1703/4 Joseph Frazon, the Jew, dyes at Mr. Mayors. Feb. 5, satterday, is carried in Simon's coach to Bristow, from thence by water to Newport where there is a Jew bury-

ing place".[60]

Unfortunately no trace can be found of the interments in the Cemetery that took place during the seventeenth century. Time has erased all marks of these early graves.

In the last decade of the century, before the new chapter for Newport and Newport Jewry began to be written, a large contingent of Jews coming from Curacao augmented the Jewish colony in Newport. In 1693, says a writer on the Jews of Curacao, a great number of Jewish inhabitants, about 90 in all, departed the settlement in the West Indies for Rhode Island. This body included the families of Touro, Gomez, Molina, De Meza, Casseres, Rodrigues da Costa, Cohen, Henriquez and Luis.[61]

According to some, among the Jews who lived in Newport at the end of the seventeenth century, in addition to those already mentioned, were the following: Samuel Isaac and Judah Moses, soap boilers; Moses and Jacob James, workers in brass; Isaac and Abraham Benjamin, Isaac Moses and Jacob Franc, merchants and traders; Jacob and Joseph Judah; Benjamin and Moses Myers; Naphtali Myers; Isaac and Nathan Lyons; David Solomon. Abraham Jacobs; Solomon Mendez; Solomon, Nathan, Aaron, and Isaac Cohen.[62]

The new contingent of Jews from Curacao together with the other members already in Newport formed the nucleus of the prosperous Jewish community of the new century.

While the Jews of Newport during the 17th century did not obtain such a distinguished position and did not

leave such a lasting impression as did those of the next century, they were the pioneers who paved the way, and it was they who suffered deprivation and discrimination, and who enabled their coreligionists later to live more freely.

CHAPTER III

PROGRESS

The blessing, which God gave Abraham, "And in thee shall be blessed all the families of the earth", may be applied to America in general and to Newport of the eighteenth century in particular. The eighteenth century ushered in to Newport cultural advancement, social progress, intellectual and religious growth, and more especially economic prosperity. The seventeenth century planted the seed; the eighteenth reaped the harvest. The success of the harvest was in no small degree due to the descendants of Abraham.

We noted in the last chapter that towards the end of the seventeenth century the Newport community was greatly increased by a large group of Jewish settlers who came from Curacao. These Jews, like their co-religionists already living in the city, were of Spanish-Portuguese origin. Previous to their settlement in Curacao, they had lived in Holland, whither they had escaped either from the Spanish or from the Portuguese Inquisition. It was their skill in commercial pursuits, as well as their natural diligence, that induced the Dutch Government to persuade them to aid in the settlement of Curacao in order to promote the commerce and wel-

fare of the island.[1] With this natural energy and ability, which they immediately set to good use, they brought new grace to Newport.

The growth of the Jewish community was characteristic of the growth of the city in general. As the city shared the profits of the enterprising Jew, so did the Jew share the profit of the progressive city. Newport was not only a beneficiary but also a benefactor in this case.

The Jews found the city of Newport in the very beginning of the century in its full bloom. Before the century was half passed, the city doubled its population.[2] In 1712, when John Mumford surveyed the streets of Newport and noted "Jew's Street" on his map, he remarked "The town had grown to be the admiration of all and was the metropolitan".[3] When Dean Berkeley was greeted by the people of all nationalities[4] upon his arrival in Newport in 1729, he is quoted as having said: "The town of Newport is the most thriving place in all America for bigness".[5]

Indeed it was. And the "bigness" was not solely in the economic and commercial pursuits of the island, but equally so, and perhaps more so, in religious, cultural and social enterprises. In view of our knowledge of the religious toleration that existed in this colony since its inception, we are not surprised, at the words of Callender in 1739, that "at this time" there were seven churches in town, besides the groups that had no regular places of worship. It was an index of the vitality of religion in the life of the people, at a time when they

enjoyed the abundance of plenty, to note in a town of but twenty-five small streets and about a half dozen lanes and wharfs, three Baptist, two Congregational, one Church of England, and one Friends' house of worship.[6]

At this time the Jewish Congregation still held its services in private homes.

As the seed of religion was sown "in the beginning" of the colony, so was the seed of culture and education. In 1640, one year after the settlement of Newport, the city had a school supported by taxes. The Reverend Robert Lenthal, who was appointed to keep the school "for the encouragement of the poorer sort, to train up their youth in learning", was granted besides four acres for his personal estate, one hundred acres of land for the support of the school.[7] The people of Newport liked learning, and they had books, when books were rare, to satisfy this love. Dr. John Clarke, a familiar figure in Newport bequeathed to a friend, "my Concordance and Lexicon to it belonging, written by myself, being the fruit of several years study; my Hebrew Bibles, Buxtorf's and Pastor's Lexicon, Cotton's Concordance and all the rest of my books".[8] Books were left as heirlooms by many an early settler.[9] Governor Benedict Arnold[10] willed in his last testament in 1678 a large tract of land concerning which he gave this instruction: "I desire my executors hereafter named to take care thereof and cause it to be disposed towards erecting and maintaining a free school in Newport".[11]

In the beginning of the eighteenth century, booksellers

flourished in Newport. As early as 1705 an attempt was made to establish a printing press in the city;[12] and, by 1727, there was a printing press here, owned and operated by James Franklin, a brother of the famous Benjamin. In the spirit of the day, the Newport printing press produced an abundance of religious discourses and sermons, together with a good share of secular material. In 1732, Newport had its first newspaper from the press and editorship of James Franklin, called "The Rhode Island Gazette".[13]

Dean Berkeley, upon coming to Newport, found it to be intellectually fruitful.[14] In fact Berkeley was partly drawn to Newport by the brilliant society already there.[15] A year after his arrival, he founded the Philosophical Society, for the "Promotion of Knowledge and Virtue, By Free Conversation". Berkeley found here fertile soil for this child of his mind, and a receptive audience for his discussions on, "Divinity, Philosophy, Morality and History".[16] Mason in his "Annals of the Redwood Library" remarks, "The Quaker, the Baptist, and the firm supporter of the Church of England maintained each his part; but the Quaker preacher and the Jewish Rabbi, alike tenacious of their rules of doctrine, listened respectfully to the preaching of Berkeley".[17]

The Philosophical Society was the intellectual forerunner of the Redwood Library, that living testimony of the "Culture" of Newport in the early part of the eighteenth century.

The Jew who had been known as the "Master of the

Book" before he was reputed to be the "Master of Business", played his part in this intellectual growth of the city. One of the associates of the Philosophical Society was Joseph Sylvester,[18] and when the Redwood Library was founded in the year 1747, Abraham Hart, Moses Lopez, and Jacob Rodrigues Rivera were amongst its first members.[19] Among the donors of money for the purchase of books for the library were James Rivera, Aaron Lopez, Isaac Hart, Naphtaly Hart Myers, Abraham Hart and others, all of whom were closely identified with the Jewish religious life of the city.[20]

A contemporary description by an outside observer reads: "To enjoy the refined and polished society of Newport, many families of fortune from the West Indies and Europe have taken up their permanent residence here; and among them many men of science and erudition, have from time to time made it their abode. This circumstance, I presume, in connection with a very extensive and well selected public library, given by an opulent individual, has rendered the whole mass of society much better informed in general literature, than any I have met with in any part of the world".[21]

This intellectual environment caused the writer to add concerning the Newport inhabitants, that they are "celebrated for their hospitality to strangers, and extremely genteel and courtly in their manners".[22] Education and knowledge tend to breed good character.

It is only our knowledge of the religious, cultural and social progress in the city in the eighteenth century, that

permits us to talk exultantly of the commercial prosperity that then prevailed. For the words of the prophet Zachariah, "Not by virtue of material strength nor political power, shall ye prevail; but by My spirit," may well apply here. None of the great material enterprises remain to witness to the commercial prowess of the peoples of pre-Revolutionary Newport. Yet there are to this day living and tangible testimonies that witness their spiritual and intellectual striving and achievement. In the life of man, however, material and political affairs must also receive their mead of man's praise.

As early as 1669, we hear of a Jew, Isaac Cohen de Lara, who had shipped goods from Rhode Island to New York, which were seized by a private vessel.[23] Judah Hays and Moses Levy while still merchants in New York had business relationships with Jewish and non-Jewish merchants of Newport.[24] It was Newport's commercial progress that attracted them to settle there. So was it too with Moses Levi, who after a successful business career in New York, engaged in extensive mercantile enterprises in Newport in the early part of the eighteenth century.[25] Similarly was it with a number of other Jewish families of New York.[26] At this period the Hart family figures prominently, as well as Israel Abraham and Nathan Nathan, who were established as partners.[27] Others in business during this time were Judah Israel and Abraham Judah.[28]

A little later Moses Levy displayed and advertised at his store on Long Wharf goods imported from

London. David Lopez who resided in the Point district in the house of Rivera was selling dry goods. Isaac Moses advertised his European and Indian goods for sale. Jacob Isaacs offered "to change any New York bills in his House next door to John Collins or in the store opposite Mr. Peter Harrison's". Naphtaly Hart and Company dealt in Lisbon Salt. Nathan Hart offered stone ware and glass from London. Moses Seixas, Moses Levy, Jacob Pollock, Abraham Sarzedas, Issachar Pollock, James Lucena and others all had their "Variety" shops, and reaped the benefits of advertising their goods. Even Jacob Rodrigues Rivera kept a shop and advertised "to sell goods just imported in the Sloop Fairy Lady". Auctions of land were also not strange events; and that Judah Hays should advertise that a number of silver utensils were stolen from his home on Broad Street, does not surprise us, for we know that Hays and Myers were successful silversmiths and merchants in pre-Revolutionary days.[29]

By the middle of the century, Jewish merchants in town owned seven vessels, which they used for inter-colonial and foreign trade, an index of their mercantile advancement.[30] At this time there were 439 warehouses in Newport.[31]

As active as were the Jews of Newport in business, just so active were they in manufacturing. As early as 1705, they had introduced the manufacture of soap into the colony.[32] They joined in the established foundries as workers of brass and iron.[33] They worked as silversmiths;[34] and several Jews were found also engaged in

tailoring and other occupations.[35]

In the seventeen-forties, the Riveras established the first spermaceti candle factory, in Rhode Island. The manufacture of spermaceti, within a short time, was destined to surpass other industries in the colony.[36] 1750 saw, "The Scotch Snuff Manfactory, Between Lopez Rivera & Cordoza in Com^y^.", doing business with, Isaac Gomez Junr. Hayman Levy, Jacob Malhado, Naphtaly Hart Myers, David Hart, Joseph Jacobs, Moses Benj^a^ Franks, Moses Gomez, Isaac Dias, Isaac Gomez, Benjamin Levy, David Jeshurun, besides Jacob Pinto of Albany, Jacob Turk of Esopus and Daniel Gomez of New York.[37] In 1753, the General Assembly granted a license to Moses Lopez for the manufacture of potash, because of the advantages to Great Britain and the colonies and because "the said Moses, by the assistance of a particular friend that is not in this country, hath made himself master of the true art and mystery of making potash, which is known to very few in the kingdom".[38]

In answer to a petition of James Lucena, "representing that he had acquired from the King's manfactory in Portugal, the true method of making soap of the same kind and quality as that made in Castile, Spain, and called "Castile Soap", and desiring to set up the manufactory thereof in the colony of Rhode Island", the General Assembly in 1761 voted that "the prayer of the said James Lucena be granted".[39] Thus the manufacture of Castile Soap was introduced to America, by the Jewish merchant James Lucena, who was

rewarded for his contribution by citizenship of the colony.

The community prospered in commerce and manufacture. It was aided to a great extent by the enterprises of the energetic Jewish "inhabitants". Between 1734 and 1768, one chronicler records that there were established in the colony of Rhode Island ten forges for making iron ore, two furnaces for turning the ore into pig iron and hollow ware, six spermaceti factories, twelve potash works, three rope-walks, and one paper mill.[40] Besides these, other industries of lesser importance flourished. The United Company of Spermaceti Chandlers, a Syndicate organized in 1761, was a natural outgrowth of the flourishing Newport industry. The Jewish membership in this syndicate was predominant.[41] Thus the promise, "And in thee shall be blessed all the families of the earth", was finding fulfillment in Newport.

Commercial occupations did not prevent the Jews from taking an active voluntary part in the political life of the colony, and even serving in its armed forces. Jacob Judah served in the French and Indian War in 1747.[42] Michael Isaacs volunteered in the campaign of 1755.[43] Isaac Moses, marched in the company of Captain J. Whiting, in 1757.[44] Moses Lopez was naturalized in 1750.[45] James Lucena became a citizen in 1761.[46]

Thus in Newport, the Jew and the non-Jew, though worshipping separately in different forms and languages, had the same aspirations, and met on equality in the street, in the home, in the club or society, at the

library, in the factory, on the vessel and in the store, in the army and in the assembly throughout the early part of the eighteenth century. This mutual friendship, understanding, and good relationship fostered at the time, were fruitful later of many noble consequences.

CHAPTER IV

FROM INQUISITION TO FREEDOM

In the middle of the eighteenth century, the fame of Newport attracted to its shores some important Jewish families that figure prominently in pre-Revolutionary and Revolutionary Days. These were the families of Lopez, Rivera, Touro, Seixas, Levy, Hays, Hart, Pollock, Isaacs, Elizer, and others of less fame. Peterson in his History of Rhode Island [1] refers to this migration as follows: "Between the years of 1750-60, many families of wealth and distinction came to this country from Spain and Portugal, and settled in Newport, which contributed largely to the intelligence and commercial prosperity of the town".

Who were these Spanish-Portuguese Jewish families? What in their lives still leaves a lasting impression of them on our memories?

Their fascinating story will now engage our attention.

The Jew had been subjected to many inhuman cruelties during the Dark and Medieval Ages. Expulsion, massacre and forced conversion were every day occurrences in those days when fanaticism reigned supreme. The innocent often suffered and were burned at the stake, while the guilty and cruel prospered.

Of all these sufferings none are imprinted so deeply in the heart of the Jew, and none have left such wounds in Israel as the persecution in Spain and Portugal.

The history of the Jew in the Iberian peninsula is a romantic chapter in the history of Israel. Long before Spain identified itself with Christianity, the daughter religion of Judaism, the Jew lived there. He called it Sepharad, a Biblical name[2] originally designating Sardis in Asia Minor.[3] Some Jewish families in the peninsula considered themselves descendants of King David. Others were content with a lesser pedigree, tracing their ancestry to noble families of Jerusalem who in the days of the Temple were associated with the sanctuary.

In Roman days the Jews of Spain enjoyed citizenship as did other Roman provincials. They owned land and plantations, they engaged in trade and commerce, they lived in amity with their neighbors, and they constituted a useful and progressive element of the population. Even when Spain became Christian, in the early days "ere we were plucked out in anger and in wrath, thrones were set for the Jews where they rose to be princes and counselors of the land".[4]

The Jewish people in Spain and Portugal produced men eminent in the field of scholarship and science. They helped to build the country. They served the princes and monarchs of all provinces. They were physicians to the nobles and to the masses. They were financiers in the royal treasuries, and advisors and ambassadors for kings. Yet when the Church became supreme in its influence, the Jew became the victim of the fanatical

rage of the recently Christianized populace. The Jew was tortured or burned alive; or driven from the country without mercy, refused the chance to live as a man and die as a man. Such things happened sporadically as early as the seventh century; but they became more common as time went on.

The only channel of escape which at first seemed safe though later it proved futile, was the acceptance of compulsory baptism. Some attempted to seek refuge in provinces where persecution was at the time unknown, only to fall prey to fanaticism at a later date. Before long, a very large number of the population of the Iberian peninsula consisted of Crypto-Jews, who had been forced into baptism by persecution. They were designated as Neo-Christians, or Marranos,[5] which denotes in Spanish "pig".

Some of the Marranos intermarried with families of the higher and lower nobility to such an extent that after a few generations very few families in Spain were without Jewish blood. They took part in all forms of political and social life. Economically they acquired wealth and at times were entrusted with the financial policies of the country. In the royal Court and Chancery, the Marranos occupied exalted positions in many capacities. They became high dignitaries in the Catholic Church, to the extent that at one time the rumor arose that a Marrano had reached the position of Pope.

There existed at all times a marked distinction between the general populace who were Christians and the Neo-Christians, or Marranos, who adopted Christianity

because of persecution. Many of the Marranos cherished their love for the Jewish faith in which they had been reared. As much as possible they secretly observed the traditions of their fathers in spite of the high positions they held. Some attended synagogue under the most dangerous circumstances. Others assembled in underground hiding places to carry out the tenets of Jewish religion, though openly they lived in beautiful homes religiously decorated according to the custom of the day, giving no cause for suspicion. They did not however voluntarily take their children to church for baptism. When obliged to do so, on returning home they washed away the baptismal oil. So far as possible they ate no meat forbidden by the Mosaic code; they observed the Jewish festival days and fast days as much as possible; and to escape suspicion in order to partake of *Matzos* on Passover some ate unleavened bread the entire year on the pretense that leavened bread was unhealthy for them. On *Rosh Hashanah* they went into secluded country places, among the mountains and valleys, to blow the *Shofar,* and keep the sound from reaching the city.

It is recorded that "In the city of Seville an Inquisitor said to the regent: 'My lord, if you wish to know how the Marranos keep the Sabbath, let us ascend the tower!' When they had reached the top, the former said to the latter: 'Lift up your eyes and look. That house is the home of a Marrano; there is one which belongs to another; and there are many more. You will not see smoke rising from any of them, in spite of the severe cold; for they have no fire because it is the Sabbath' ".[6]

The Marranos were always looked at with suspicion as to their strict adherence to the Church and its doctrines, and as to their sincerity in professing Christianity. This suspicion, though without reason in many cases, was justified in some; and the Marrano was not to blame, for he had not chosen baptism, he was forced into it. Yet, though, in principle, compulsory baptism was discountenanced, Church and Crown were determined that those Jews who had received baptism, no matter under what circumstances, were to stay Christians. "Backsliding entailed correction", according to the views of the higher clergy. The result was the Spanish Inquisition or the Sanctum Officium, the 'Holy Office'.

The Inquisition was introduced into the kingdom of Castile, Aragon, and Navarre by Ferdinand V and Isabella the Catholic. Its targets were the Marrano and the Jew. The victims were the thousands of Jewish families who had accepted baptism during the cruel persecution of 1391 in order to save their lives, but who secretly in face of all dangers preserved their love for Judaism, Jewish law, and Jewish custom.

The tribunals of the Holy Office were not erected in each province immediately; but not much time elapsed before they covered the peninsula. By 1480, all the provinces under the sovereignty of Ferdinand and Isabella were in the clutches of those tribunals, the object of fear and terror for almost three hundred years. On February 6, 1481, the first auto-da-fe was held at Seville, when six men and women were led in a solemn procession to be burned at the stake, amidst the Halle-

lujahs of the priest and the preaching of the pious Dominican. This was but the first of the many fires that, lit later, claimed the lives of thousands of Jews, yielding up their souls, with the martyr's exclamation, "Hear O Israel the Lord our God, the Lord is One".

But it was not only the souls of the victims that the Holy Office of the Inquisition desired to save with its unholy terrors. Too often another aim was to fill the royal coffers with the confiscated wealth of the victims. Not God but Gold was the object, for the first step of the Inquisitors was to confiscate the entire wealth of any one accused of Judaizing. Pope Sixtus IV, who urged that the Marranos be treated more humanely, hinted in a letter to Queen Isabella that the motive for the severity against the Marranos might have been "greed for earthly possessions, rather than zeal for the faith and true fear of God".[7] He was not wrong.

In the rage of revenge for the supposed crime that the Marranos were accused of committing by Judaizing, the Inquisitors paid little attention to testimony in defence of the suspects. A fair trial was out of the question. Misrepresentation, deceit, lying, all were justified to trap the victim and lead him to slaughter, or to the living hell of the dark and filthy dungeons.

The Spanish Inquisition used every means to trap the unhappy victims, and lure them to a false security before the Holy Office. The Inquisitors promised absolution to all Marranos guilty of observing Jewish customs, if they would appear before the tribunal and recant. Many fell victims to this snare, for no absolution

was granted them, unless under the seal of secrecy and under oath extracted by torture in the Inquisition chambers, they betrayed the name of others whom they knew to be Judaizers and who on their testimony would become prey for the flames.

When this was not successful, for the brave held out and the weaker, not trusting the torturer's promises, refused to inform against their brethren, other means were used. The Inquisition ordered that the slightest act showing Jewish origin was a reason for arrest. Amongst the specific acts enumerated were to observe Saturday by wearing a clean shirt or by spreading a clean tablecloth on the table, or by eating food cooked over night in the oven, or by abstaining from work and putting on a new suit. To fast on the Day of Atonement or to eat unleavened bread on Passover, or to circumcise a boy or give a child an Old Testament name, were taken as certain signs of adherence to Judaism. Much less however, was needed to cause one to be suspected and arrested.

When arrested, the victim was submitted to inhuman cruelties in order to make him confess. After his confession in the torture chamber, he might be condemned to death; but the less fortunate were condemned to life imprisonment, which was a lingering torture. In both cases the property went to the Holy Office and the royal treasury.

The prisons of the Inquisition with their torture chambers that can still be seen in some cities in Spain, had small, dark, damp and dirty underground little

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rooms with stone walls and iron bars. The prisoners' food was dry bread and water. Those condemned to die, if impenitent were chained to the stake and burned alive; if penitent, they were strangled first and then put on the pyre. Flight was equivalent to "guilt" and the accused was burned in effigy and his property confiscated. Even the dead might not rest in peace. Many a Marrano suspected of Judaizing, but who died before the Holy Office could hold him in its clutches, was exhumed and his bones put on the pyre.

All this happened when the New World was first discovered, when Raphael was painting his masterpieces of art, when Copernicus and Galileo were revolutionizing the world of science, when the world was entering into an era of progress in knowledge, art and literature. The world progressed. Yet in one part of the world, on the Iberian peninsula, part of the population lived in constant fear and dread, amid inhuman suffering and unbearable torture. Such was the fate of the Jew and Marrano of Spain and Portugal.

The "many families of wealth and distinction", that "came to this country from Spain and Portugal and settled in Newport" in the middle of the eighteenth century were Marrano families, who had been subjected to the Inquisition.

The place of origin of the Lopez family was Portugal. Here the Lopez's occupied an honored position in social and cultural life. Early in the seventeenth century, members of this family owned a printing establishment in Lisbon, justly considered a mark of

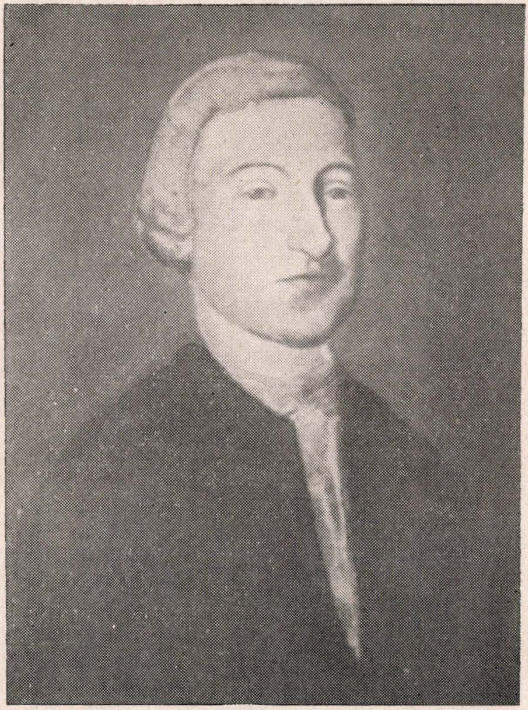
cultural distinction and achievement in those days when printing and books were rare. Duarte Lopez, a renowned physician, was condemned by the Inquisition in Lisbon in 1723, as an adherent to Judaism. Another member of the family of the same name and same profession, who later changed his name to Moses, escaped his native land, settled in Amsterdam, where he openly reverted to the religion of his fathers, and faithfully professed Judaism in the most minute traditional manner. The same good fortune befell Ezekiel Lopez, a renowned astronomer in the latter part of the seventeenth century.[8]

Those were the most fortunate who were able to escape from the fiery crucible of hate, and revert to the belief of their fathers, leading a peaceful life unmolested. Indeed many a Marrano forsook fortune and family and sought refuge in strange lands in order to be able to live in accordance with the dictates of his conscience.

Many of the Lopez family attained distinction in whatever haven of refuge they found. Elihu Lopez became the Rabbi of Barbados, West Indies, in the seventeenth century.[9] Isaac Lopez was Rabbi in Amsterdam in the next century.[10] Another Lopez, Isaac Henriquez, achieved the position of Rabbi in London at the same time.[11] Abraham, Moses, David and Aaron Lopez became distinguished as the most skillful and successful Jewish merchants in pre-Revolutionary days in Newport.

The story of Aaron Lopez holds our imagination.

Aaron Lopez was born in Lisbon, Portugal, in the early part of the eighteenth century. His father was



Aaron Lopez.

Dom Diego Jose Lopez, a "man much respected and esteemed in Portugal". Aaron was baptized according the Catholic rite and christened Edward. If we are to judge by the beautiful handwriting and the well written letters in Portuguese and English which Aaron wrote in his later days as a businessman in Newport, he must have received a good training and education when a youth. While still young, he married Anna, his close relative, according to the rites of the Church. She bore him a daughter, who was christened Catherine.

Upon the earliest opportunity, Edward, Anna and their daughter Catherine, made their way to North America. Here, having openly professed Judaism, Edward and Anna were remarried, with the traditional Jewish ceremony. His name was changed to Aaron, and hers to Abigail. Their daughter's name they changed to Sarah. They settled in Newport, where Aaron at first started a factory for Scotch snuff and later became one of the wealthiest merchants and shippers.[12]

The story of Abraham Lopez is not less interesting.

Abraham Lopez was an older half brother of Aaron. He was the son of Diego Jose and his first wife. His Christian name was Michael. In Portugal Michael married Joanna according to the Catholic rites. She bore him three sons, who were christened, Edward, Joseph and John respectively.

As soon as opportunity was presented the whole family, emigrated to America. In conformity with the prevailing custom, Michael and Joanna remarried according to the Jewish law. They changed their names to

Abraham and Abigail respectively. The names of their three sons, Edward, Joseph and John, were changed to Moses, Samuel and Jacob.[13] Their conversion involved no little sacrifice. Under the rule of the Inquisition in Portugal circumcision was equivalent to suicide. Any act suspicious of Jewish origin, or showing adherence to Judaism on the part of any Marrano, especially on the part of the Lopez's, who were very closely watched, because of the many martyrs that this family had offered upon the pyres of the auto-da-fe, would have immediately caused their arrest and condemnation before the tribunal for Judaizing.

Thus neither Michael nor his sons had been circumcised in their native land, and this rite had to be performed while they were here in the land of freedom. They lived at the time in Tiverton, R. I. Michael or Abraham was fifty-six years old, Edward or Moses his son was twenty-eight, Joseph or Samuel was twenty-four, and his youngest son John or, as he was here called, Jacob, only seventeen. On Tuesday, October 27, 1767, all four, the father and the three sons, subjected themselves to the rite of circumcision.[14]

They subsequently moved to Newport, and together with the others of the family were the most orthodox adherents to Judaism and Jewish traditions.

Both Aaron and Abraham Lopez had been preceded in this country by their brother Jose, the oldest son of Dom Diego. Jose when he became of age in Portugal was suspected by the Inquisition. Knowing what awaited him, and being in danger of imprisonment Jose managed

to escape to England, whence he came to New York. Here in compliance with the religious custom, Jose changed his name to Moses. He married Rebecca Rivera and removed to Newport.[15]

David Lopez, a brother, of Aaron, was also a Marrano born in Portugal. He was called there Gabriel, and arrived in America together with his brother. It is this David Lopez to whom Stiles refers: "Attended the funeral of Mr. David Lopez, who died yesterday morning at 61, and was this day at noon, buried in the Jews Burying Ground. He came from Portugal a few years ago, and with his two sons was circumcised, having been obliged to live secreted in Portugal".[16]

Thus the Marrano family of Lopez came to these shores, from the Inquisition to freedom, and settled in Newport, where they faithfully and ardently observed the tenets of the Jewish law, and prospered together with the community in mercantile pursuits.

However, so deep was the impression of the necessity of secrecy in the observance of the Jewish religion that out of habit, some of the Jewish women who came here from the Inquisition to freedom, as they walked the streets of Newport would tell their rosaries while they repeated their Hebrew prayers.[17] This habit had been acquired in Spain and Portugal, "for the purpose of lending the appearance of Catholic form should they be surprised at their devotion".[18]

Not all the members of the Lopez family emigrated to America. Some remained in Portugal. Some were killed in the Lisbon earthquake in the year 1755.

The place of origin of the Rivera family was Spain. They, like the Lopez family were Marranos, and subject to the same fate in Europe. It may be that this as well as the bonds of marriage united them while still abroad.

The Riveras flourished in Seville, Spain, for many centuries. At a very early date, some members of the family attempted to find a haven of refuge in Mexico, but in vain. As the clutches of the Inquisition reached over the ocean, we find that there too, in Mexico, they faced the same fate as their brethren in Spain The fires of the Holy Office burned in the New World as well, and amongst the victims, between 1642 and 1645 were Dona Blanca de Rivera, who was accused of Judaizing, and Diego Lopez Rivera, a native of Portugal.[19]

The first of this family to arrive in North America was Abraham Rodrigues Rivera, who came to New York in the early part of the eighteenth century.[20] He was born in Spain and married there, and had lived there in full accordance with the Catholic rites. Upon arrival in the New World, he too underwent all the religious rites required by Jewish tradition, changing his name to Abraham, his sons' names to Isaac and Jacob respectively, and his daughter's name to Rebecca. They were all born in Spain, and all had had Catholic names before.

Abraham Rodrigues Rivera occupied a prominent position in his new home. In 1726 he was enrolled as a freeman in New York City.[21] He was president of the Congregation *Shearith Israel* in 1729,[22] and was one of the contributors to the building of the first Mill Street Synagogue of the Congregation *Shearith Israel* in New

York in 1730.[23] In 1740 he became naturalized in accordance with the Naturalization Act passed by the British Government. Subsequently he removed to Newport, where he occupied an important position in the Jewish community.

Jacob Rodriques Rivera, the son of Abraham, at first emigrated from New York to Curacao, where he married and lived for a short while, returning later to New York. Here he was naturalized in 1746, but two years later he moved with his entire family to Newport where he introduced the manufacture of spermaceti candles, one of the most important sources of Newport's prosperity in the days that followed. Jacob identified himself prominently with the Jewish community of Newport. Next to Aaron Lopez he occupied the highest position in the commercial, social, and religious life of the growing and prospering Jewish community of Newport before the American Revolution.

More famous than all others was the Touro family.

The birthplace of the Touro family was Spain. The Touros constituted an old Spanish-Jewish family, who in their native land bore the name "Toro".[24] The Inquisition uprooted the Touros from the peninsula and dispersed them into many corners of the globe. Holland, Surinam, Curacao, Jamaica, all saw members of the Touro family at different times after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in the year of the discovery of America.

In the course of their itineraries, the Touros produced a number of eminent men. Amongst the Jewish families

that the Dutch Government persuaded to settle in Curacao in the middle of the seventeenth century for the "promotion of the commerce and welfare of the Island" were members of the Touro families.[25] Towards the end of the century in 1683 there flourished in Amsterdam a great Hebrew scholar and Bible exegete, Juda Touro.[26] In the beginning of the eighteenth century in 1732 there flourished in the same city Manuel Touro, a generous philanthropist, who expended his money freely on all charitable purposes.[27]

Some of the Touros found their way from Amsterdam to Surinam in the early part of the eighteenth century; others to Jamaica, British West Indies.[28]

Members of the Touro family, whose destiny records do not reveal, came to Newport in the last decade of the seventeenth century among the contingent of Jewish immigrants from Curacao.[29] The first member of this family which was destined to become a part of the "noblesse" of Spanish-Portuguese Jewry in America, and of whom records are not silent, was the Reverend Isaac de Abraham Touro.

The Reverend Isaac Touro came to Newport around 1759 from Amsterdam, through the West Indies. He was only twenty years old at the time. Having been educated for the Jewish ministry in the academies in Holland which at that time were famous, attracting students from many other countries. Isaac did not choose a mercantile career, but devoted his time to the service of God. Upon his arrival at Newport, the Reverend Isaac Touro at a compar-

atively young age became the minister of the Congregation *Yeshuat Israel.*[29] The famous Abraham and Judah Touro who immortalized the Touro name were his sons.

Of not less fame than the Touros was the Mendez Seixas family.

The native land of the Seixas family was Portugal. The first to escape the clutches of the Inquisition was Isaac Mendez Seixas who came from Lisbon to New York, through Barbados, in the year 1730. He was but twenty-two years old then and unmarried. In New York, Isaac Mendez Seixas followed a successful business career. In 1741 he married a daughter of Moses Levy and shortly thereafter removed to Newport.[31] The offspring of Isaac Mendez Seixas attained fame in America during and after the Revolution. In many a Jewish congregation in the colonies, a member of the Seixas family occupied a high office. Moses Mendez Seixas of Newport, Rabbi Gershom Mendez Seixas of New York and Philadelphia, Benjamin Mendez Seixas of Newport and New York, one of the founders of the New York Stock Exchange, were his sons. Rabbi Isaac B. Seixas was his grandson. In pre-Revolutionary days, as well as in Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary days, the Seixas family is identified with Newport.

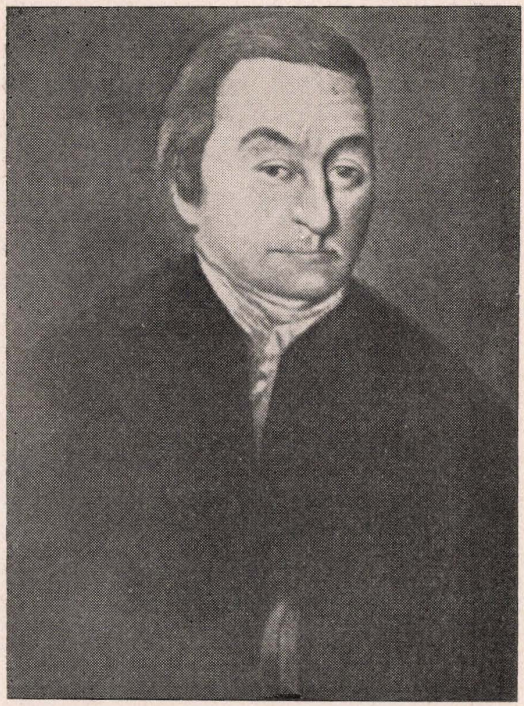
Because of the bond of marriage between the Seixas family and the Machado family later, the Machados deserve our attention.

It may well be that the Machados and the Seixas's were already related by marriage in their native lands.

Both families came from Lisbon, and both surnames were prefixed Mendez.

The Machados did not live in Newport. It is their escape from the Inquisition in Portugal that invites our description here. For a long time the Machados professed Christianity, though pursuing their Jewish religious devotions privately. When one of the family was discovered secretly following the tenets of Judaism, he was arraigned before the tribunal and given the choice of publicly recanting in the Cathedral of Lisbon, or suffering the fate of the others who were burned at the stake. For a while his courage failed him and he chose the first alternative. But, when he stood in the Cathedral on Christmas morning, "the character of determination peculiar to his people returned to him with such overwhelming force that he concluded to die rather than thus openly sacrifice his principles".[32] He expired in the flames, his lips proclaiming the "Hear O Israel" of all martyrs for the sanctification of the God of Israel.

The lives of all the Machados were in danger after that. The spies of the Inquisition were watching; and so one pleasant summer day when Dr. Samuel Nunez, an eminent physician in Lisbon, himself a Marrano suspected by the Inquisition, entertained the principal families of the city in his "elegant mansion on the banks of the Tagus", they planned escape. Among the guests was a captain of an English brigantine anchored in the river. While the guests were rejoicing in festivity, the captain by pre-arrangement invited the family of Dr. Nunez with some of the company, including David



Jacob Rodrigues Rivera.

Mendez Machado, to view the brigantine. When they were all on board, the captain set sail, and a favorable wind brought them to England. Dr. Nunez paid a thousand moidores for this stratagem. Everything was left behind, even the dinner cooked for the occasion, and all was subsequently confiscated by the Inquisition for the State. When the chimes rang at the next procession to the auto-da-fe, the refugees whose escape was equivalent to guilt, were burned on the pyre in effigy.

From England they repaired to Savannah, Georgia, on the same ship that carried General Oglethorpe there. They arrived at their destination in 1733. Not one was able to speak the English language. A year later, David Mendez Machado became the minister of the Spanish-Portuguese Congregation *Shearith Israel* in New York. It was David Mendez Machado, in his position as minister, who qualified many for the office of *Shochet* and *Bodek*. His grandchild married one of the Mendez Seixas family of Newport; another married one of the Levys.

Moses Levy came here from London, England, where he had engaged in foreign trade with Africa and prospered financially. New opportunities attracted him to the New World. He landed in New York in 1705, and immediately became associated with the Congregation *Shearith Israel* there. It was due largely to his efforts that the Congregation *Shearith Israel* built the Synagogue on Mill Street in 1730. For several years he was the president of the Congregation.[33]

It was his daughter Bilhah Abigail who married Isaac

Mendez Seixas and removed to Newport. Moses and Benjamin Levy, both prominent businessmen in Newport were his sons. Haym Levy was his grandson. All were closely associated with the commercial, social, and spiritual life of the Jewish community of Newport both before and after the Revolution.

N. Taylor Phillips, a lineal descendant of Rabbi David Mendez Machado and Isaac Mendez Seixas, in discussing the Seixas and Levy families has well summed up their station in life: "During the two centuries which they cover in American Jewish History no names are to be found more influental and important. Their descendants constitute three-fourths of the present Congregation *Shearith Israel* of New York, and the Congregation *Mickveh Israel* of Philadelphia has also at various times claimed them among its majority. They have seen the city of Newport almost begin, rise and decay as the commercial center of the present United States".[34]

Other distinguished familes that lived in Newport in those days, were the families of Hays, Hart and Pollock who were of *Ashkenazic* origin. Jacob Hays, who came to the New World from Holland, was naturalized in New York in 1723. Judah Hays, who at one time owned the 16-gun ship "Duke of Cumberland", was likewise naturalized in New York, in 1729. Judah did an extensive business with Newport in those days.[35] He was attracted to Newport quite early. Moses Michael Hays, the famous Mason, was his son. The Reverend Isaac Touro became his son-in-law.

The Hart family came here from England.[36] This

family claims some outstanding personalities. Aaron Hart was the first Chief Rabbi of the *Ashkenazic* Jews in England in the latter part of the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth century. In the New World, Moses Hart obtained burgher rights in 1713 in New York. Solomon Hart, Jr., took the oath of allegiance there under the act of 1746. Isaac Hart was one of the early residents of Newport, settling there about 1750.[37] He was a successful merchant, and one of the purchasers of the land for the Synagogue.

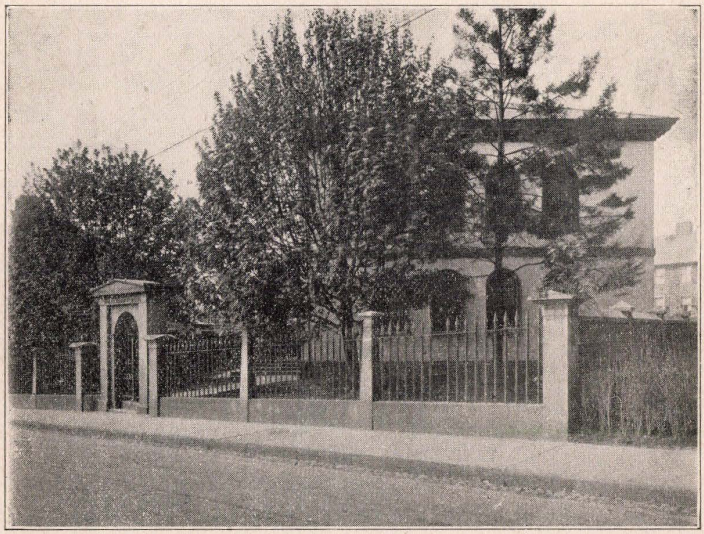
The Pollock family hailed from Poland. Members of this family also resided in Austria and Hungary. The annals of the Jewish past contain records of many members of this family, who attained distinction in Jewish scholarship.[38] In Newport there flourished at this time Zachary, Issachar, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob Pollock, all prominently identified with the synagogue life of the community. Zachary Pollock was amongst those whom the Reverend David Mendez Machado licensed to examine the cattle slaughtered in accord with the Jewish ritual.

Other families who lived at this time in Newport were those of Isaacs, Sarzedas, Alvares, Lucena, Myers, Elizer, Lyon, Pereira, Mendes, Phillips, Rophes, Benjamin, Judah, Israel, and others.[39]

These Jews were men of integrity, and business acumen, yet they knew well that "man does not live by bread alone". Religious fervor was kindled in their hearts. With zeal and enthusiasm they devoted their time to

the spiritual part of man. They were pious observers of Jewish law and customs.

The first thing they contemplated upon coming to Newport was the erection of a sanctuary dedicated to the God of Israel, a synagogue where they might freely chant the psalmodies, commune with the God of their fathers, and practice rites of which in the lands of their birth they had been deprived.



Exterior of the old Synagogue in Newport.

CHAPTER V

THE SYNAGOGUE

Nothing testifies more to the "finger of God" in human destiny than the miraculous survival of the Jewish people. The ancient world saw a number of mighty and powerful nations and empires on its map; but only too often has the map of the world merely changed its colors. One nation has subdued another; one king has conquered another; and kingdoms and empires have been erased from the panorama of civilization.

Attempts have been made both past and present to cause Israel to meet a like fate. "In every generation hath an adversary risen to destroy us". Yet nations have risen and fallen; peoples have come and gone; civilizations have evolved and declined; but Israel has remained witness to it all. "Age cometh and age goeth", but Israel "abideth forever".

The abiding force of Israel has been rooted in the Synagogue and the School, the two institutions created by Judaism for the education of the people in the principles and practices of its religion. When other nations were exiled from the land of their origin, they were not able to take their gods with them. Their gods, the gods of their land only, could have no rule in a

strange and foreign land. Not so was the God of Israel. When Israel was exiled, the *Shechinah* went with them, and they found their God everywhere. The prophetic teachings prepared the way for this. Thus when the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed and there were no more priests to lead and instruct the people in the service of God, nor Levites to sing with the people the beautiful psalmodies in His praise, there arose the Synagogue and the teacher to perpetuate Israel's belief in God.

This first happened half a millenium before the Christian era; and so identified became the Synagogue and the School with the vitality of Israel that we can hardly conceive a period without them in the subsequent history of Israel. So important and exalted a place did the Synagogue and School occupy in the life of the Jew that their antiquity was ascribed to Moses.[1]

The Synagogue and School in Israel though not always organically connected,[2] worked always in harmony to carry out a single plan. Both had for their aim the instruction of the people in the religion of Israel. In ancient days, indeed, as it should be today, the Synagogue was never used exclusively as a place where the congregation gathered to worship only, but also as a place whence definite religious instruction emanated. The Jewish people, even in exile flocked to the Synagogue to listen to the exhortations of prophet and preacher, and to the teachings of the rabbi in order to be able to walk humbly with the God of his fathers. Worship and instruction were integrated and both begot good fruit. Prophet and Synagogue, School and Rabbi saved Israel

from annihilation.

Rightly has one said, "To the Jews, the synagogue was a place for instruction in the truth and duties of revealed religion; and in imparting and receiving this divine instruction no less that in praise and in prayer they were doing honor to God - it was an act of worship. The consequence of the establishment of such a rational worship for the whole subsequent history of Judaism was immeasurable. Its persistent character, and, it is not too much to say, the very preservation of its existence through all the vicissitudes of its fortune, it owes more than anything else to the synagogue".[3]

Rabbi Simeon ben Yochai is quoted as having said, "If you see cities in the land of Israel that are destroyed to their very foundations, know that it is because they did not provide pay for teachers of the Bible and of tradition, as was declared by the prophet Jeremiah, 'because they abandoned my law' ".[4] No matter how small the Jewish community might be, the first determination of the people was to erect a synagogue and a school, provided they had a quorum for a *Minyan* and a few children to instruct.

It is not surprising that the Jews of Newport, heirs to the traditions of Judaism in belief and in practice, although few in numbers, began to contemplate the erection of a synagogue and school. The idea must have originated much earlier than 1759, for the realization of an ideal seldom follows immediately upon the conception of the idea, especially an idea relative to an institution. In 1755 there had been but fifteen to twenty Jewish

families in town,[5] nor were there many more, four years later.[6] By 1759, however, the Congreation *Yeshuat Israel* was ready to lay the foundation of its synagogue.

These few Jewish families in Newport did not possess the great wealth ascribed to them at a later date. They were new in the town, barely adjusted, and only beginning to thrive in their respective pursuits. Yet neither their small number nor their financial condition prevented them from carrying out the tradition of the Rabbis of old: to set out to organize the building of a house of worship and instruction and to instruct their children in the religion of Israel.

At this time services of the Congregation were still held in private homes. It may well be that for a little while the Congregation rented a temporary place in the "Point" district, where worship was held.[7] Services, until the arrival of the Reverend Isaac Touro, were temporarily conducted by Mr. Isaaks and Mr. Polak.[8] With the coming of the Reverend Mr. Touro, negotiations for the building of the synagogue and school began.

The first requirement was the acquisition of a place suitable for the purpose. In those days, patents of incorporation were not granted to religious institutions as such. Hence a religious institiution could not purchase nor hold real estate in its own name. The problem therefore of purchasing a suitable lot was one of serious consideration to the Congregation *Yeshuat Israel.* It was met, however, satisfactorily and without too much trouble.

The procedure was this: at a public meeting of the

To all People to whom these Presents shall come,

[illegible] Allen of [illegible] in the County of [illegible] and Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England

Send Greeting. Know Ye, That I the said [illegible] Allen

for and in consideration of the Sum of One Thousand five hundred Pounds in Bills of Credit to me [illegible] in Hand, before the Ensealing hereof, well and truly paid by

Jacob Rodriguez Rivera Abosh Levy and Isaac Hart all of Newport in the County of Newport and Colony of Rhode Island &c merchants

the Receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge, and myself therewith fully satisfied, contented and paid; and thereof, and of every Part and Parcel thereof, do exonerate, acquit and discharge they the said Jacob Rodriguez Rivera Abosh Levy and Isaac Hart their Heirs, Executors and Administrators, forever by these Presents, HAVE given, granted, bargained, sold, aliened, enfeoffed, conveyed and confirmed; and by these Presents do freely, fully and absolutely give, grant, bargain, sell, alien, enfeoffed, convey and confirm, unto them the said Jacob Rodriguez Abosh Levy & Isaac Hart their Heirs and Assigns forever,

One Certain Small Parcel or Lot of Land situate lying & being in the Township of Newport aforesaid containing in Estimation Twenty two feet in Front or Breadth and One hundred & six feet in Length or Depth the same Being Bounded & Bounded as follows (viz) Southerly on a Street called Griffin Street, Westerly on Land of Jacob Barney, Northerly on a Street remaining yet to be laid out and Easterly on Land now in the possession & improvement of Matthew Wozzens, be the same more or less within the said Bounds contained, Together with all Tenings, Improvements, ways, waters, Privileges & Appurtenances thereto belonging.

Facsimile of the Deed of Purchase of the Land for the Synagogue.

Congregation, or of all the Jews of the community, trusthworthy individuals were appointed to purchase whatever property might be necessary for building the synagogue and for whatever other use the Congregation might need. These members of the community thus became the trustees of the land, buildings and other property belonging to the Congregation. In reality the land and property belonged to the entire Jewish community; legally the title to the land and to everything with it, rested with the appointed trustees who purchased the plot as individuals. To prevent misunderstanding, the Congregation often entered into a written agreement with the respective trustees, relative to the ownership and use of the land, or the houses on the land, securing for the Congregation all the rights to the land and the buildings thereon, and prohibiting the trustees to sell all or any part of it at their own discretion. At times the trustees were even required to give bond for themselves and their heirs after them to carry out the understanding between the Congregation and the trustees.[9]

The Jewish community of Newport found these trustworthy individuals in three noteworthy and respectable members of the Congregation, Jacob Rodrigues Rivera, Moses Levy and Isaac Hart. They were not only appointed to purchase the land, but also as "trustees for building the Synagogue".[10]

The conditions and agreements of the trusteeship of Jacob Rodrigues Rivera, Moses Levy and Isaac Hart, were later clearly indicated in the last will and testament of the first, dated January 9, 1787. Rivera said in his

will, "I do hereby declare and make known unto all People that I have no exclusive right, title, of or to the Jewish Public Synagogue in Newport on account of the deed thereof, being made to myself, Moses Levy and Isaac Hart which Isaac Hart thereafter conveyed his one part thereof to me, but that the same was done, meant, and intended in trust only, to and for the sole use, benefit and behoof of the Jewish Society, to be for them reserved as a place of Public Worship forever. Therefore, I do myself and my heirs hereby remise, release and forever quit claim to all exclusive right, title or interest therein or thereto and to every part and parcel thereof, always saving and excepting such right as I have by being a single member of that Society".[11]

If a bond was exacted from the trustees—which does not seem likely—it was partly provided for in the last will and testament of Moses Levy, dated June 6, 1792, in which he stipulated, "I do hereby release and discharge all such balances as shall at the time of my decease be due and unpaid of monies by me heretofore advanced towards building the Synagogue in Newport".[12]

The lot bought for the erection of the synagogue was situated on Griffin Street, and was purchased early in the year 1759.[13]

Griffin Street was then very near the end of the town, yet within easy reach from all points in the city where the Jewish residents dwelt. Unobstructed by high edifices or many buildings, and somewhat at an elevation, the lot and later the synagogue on the land were visible

from many points in the city. The street continued directly from Jew's Street, beginning southerly at the Jewish cemetery. There was no street as yet west of the plot, nor was there a street on the eastern side. The street north of the land was still in the process of being laid out.

There were few houses in the vicinity. The street at the time was considered at a distance from the business district. The proximity of the land to the cemetery may have suggested the choice.[14]

The land on Griffin Street was purchased from Ebenezer Allen of Sandwich, Massachusetts. Though the land was apparently bought earlier,[15] the deed was dated "the Thirteenth day of June, in the Thirty Second Year of His Majesty's Reign, George the Second, King of Great Britain &c., Anno ye Domi: 1759", and a day later it was attested by a Justice of the Peace. The dimensions of the land are described in the deed as follows: "One Certain Small parcel or lot of Land Situate Lying and Being in the Township of Newport aforesaid, containing per Estimation Ninety two feet in Front or Breadth and One hundred and six feet in Length or Depth the same Being Butted and Bounded as follows (viz) Southerly on a Street called Griffin Street, Westerly on Land of Jacob Barney, Northerly on a Street remaining yet to be laid out and Easterly on Land now in the possesion and improvement of Matthew Cozzens, be the same more or less within the said Bounds".[16] The land was bought, "Together with

all fencings, Improvements, ways, waters, Privileges and Appertenances thereto belonging".

The price of the land was "One Thousand five hundred Pounds in Bills of credit of the Colony aforesaid (Old Tenor)", which in present day currency would amount to $187.50.[17] Jacob Rodrigues Rivera, Moses Levy and Isaac Hart, are described in the deed as "all of Newport in the County of Newport and Colony of of Rhode Island &c., Merchants".

To complete the purchase and secure the absolute unchallengeable title to the land, this provision was added to the deed, "And Sussana Allen, wife of him the said Ebenezer Allen, for and in consideration of the Sum of Five Pounds in Bills of Credit as above expressed, Do by these Presents freely and willingly give, yield up and Surrender all her Right of Dower and power of Thirds, of in and to the above granted and bargained premises, unto them the said Jacob Rodrigues Rivera, Moses Levy and Isaac Hart, their Heirs and Assign forever".

The deed was recorded in the Book of Land Evidence of Newport, No. 14, Pages 412 and 433, on July 19, A. D. 1760, by William Coddington, the Town Clerk. After the American Revolution when many of the official records were lost or destroyed, the deed was once again recorded, on June 7, 1827, in Volume 15, Page 376 of those Records of Land Evidence that began to be kept after the British troops evacuated the city of Newport.

Though possessing a plot, the Congregation's task was only partly accomplished. The more difficult matter in

hand was still to come. The undertaking to build a synagogue required additional funds which they did not find it easy to raise in full. The community, having been taxed for the purchase of the land, was unable to respond freely immediately after. Thus the members of the Congregation found their "Abilities not equal" to their wishes.

The ambition of the Newport Jews was not long thwarted by the lack of financial means. At no time did they abandon or postpone their wish. Perhaps if their intention had been to erect but a small unattractive building, their problem would not have been so grave; but as it was their desire to build a synagogue that should equal in grandeur any other contemporary Colonial structure, they found their task a bit more difficult.

The Sephardic Jews felt a very close kinship with one another. From the earliest time of their settlement in North America, they communicated with one another from every part of the continent and from whatever colony they resided. It was not below the dignity of any organized community to seek the assistance of a sister community in a different colony, or even in foreign lands or colonies belonging to nations other than their own. In 1729, when the New York Congregation *Shearith Israel* contemplated the erection of their synagogue on Mill Street, they craved the assistance of the "kindred Sephardic Congregations in Central and South America and Europe".[18] This is but one of many examples.[19] Thus it was only natural that, thirty years later, the Newport Congregation should have followed

suit. The request was sure to bear fruit.

The Newport Congregation had very sound reasons for its appeal. It was not so much the fact that most of its members were Marranos recently converted openly to the Jewish faith, as it was their desire, "to Instruct Children, in the Path of Vertuous Religion", which they pleaded in asking aid. After raising locally a small 'Fund' by 'Subscription', nine of the most outstanding gentlemen of the Newport community addressed a letter of appeal for money to assist in building the synagogue to a number of congregations in other parts of the country. These gentlemen were Jacob Rodrigues Rivera, Jacob Isaacs, Isaac Hart, Aaron Lopez, Abraham Rodrigues Rivera, Isaac Pollock, Moses Lopez, Isaac Elizer, and Moses Levy. Among the Congregations appealed to were *Shearith Israel* in New York, *Shaar Hashamayin* in Jamaica, B. W. I., *Mikveh Israel* in Curacao, *Nevay Shalom* in Paramaribo, Surinam, and the Congregation *Shaar Hashamayim* in London, England.[20] They all responded favorably.

From the correspondence still extant between the Congregation *Yeshuat Israel* of Newport and the Congregation *Shearith Israel* of New York, we can see the nature of the appeal and the response. On March 21, 1759, the Newport Congregation wrote to New York, "The Pious Intentions of a Congregation yet in its Infancy, we desire may plead a sufficient excuse, for this Address: sincerely desirous to establish a regular Congregation in this Town we therefore, have Lately purchased a suitable Lot of Land, whereon we design

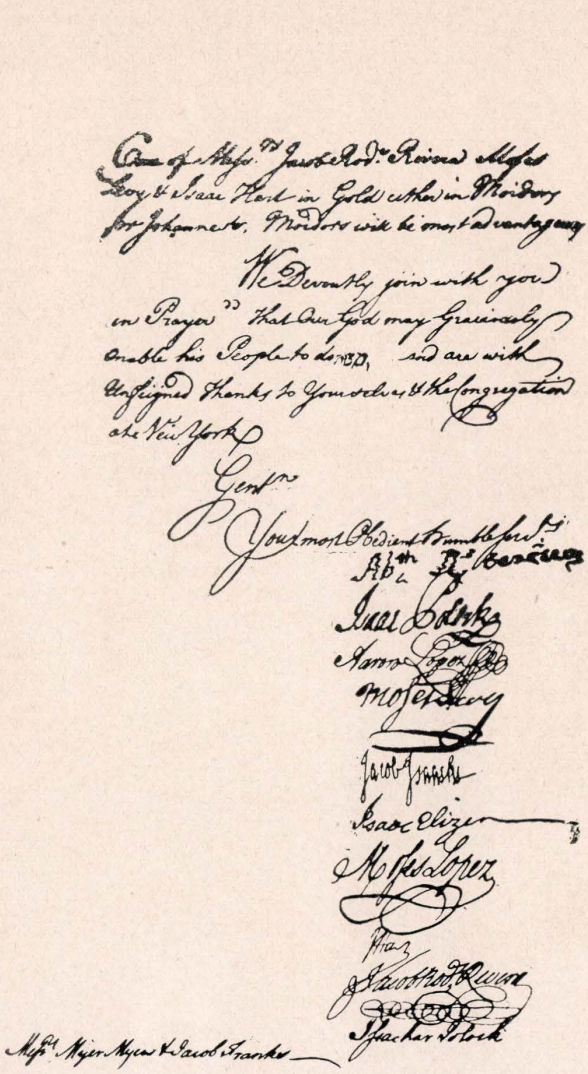
to Build a Synagogue; and for furthering our said Intentions, we have Likewise by Subscription raised a small Fund, wherewith to Begin, and carry on the Work and which in due Time, we hope to see fully completed. At present finding our Abilities not equal to our wishes, for finishing the Work, in so short a Time as we desire, we have resolved to crave the Assistance of the several Congregations in America, and as the Feast of the Passover is near at Hand, a Time when there will be the greatest opportunity to acquaint you with our proceedings, and intentions, relative thereto; Intreating you to commmunicate the same, to the Congregation at New York, and to supplicate for us, their charitable assistance towards carrying on this work; either by a offering in the Synagogue; or Subscription, or any way which may be agreeable to you".[21]

In their request the Newport Jews did not fail to point out in most appealing words the real purpose of their desire to build a synagogue. The letter continued, "When we reflect on how much it is our Duty to Instruct children in the Path of Vertuous Religion; and how unhappy the portions must be, of the children and their Parents, who are through necessity educated in a place where they must remain almost Totally uninstructed in our most Holy and Divine Law, our Rites and Ceremonies; and from which place, they may perhaps never have it in their power to depart; when we farther reflect on how much it is our Duty to assist the Distressed; and when we consider the extensive Usefulness of a Charity like this for which we now supplicate assistance;

we can entertain no Doubt of your Zeal, to promote this good Work".[22]

Such an appeal could not pass unheeded. The heart-rending situation of the children of Marranos "in a place where they must remain almost Totally uninstructed in our most Holy and Divine Law", and the reference to "our Duty to assist the Distressed" called forth a warm response. The three pillars of the world, *Torah*-Education, *Avodah*-Religion, and *Gmilus Chasodim*-Beneficence, have always appealed to the finer senses of the Jew. The response of the New York Congregation was very generous considering the times.

The Congregation *Shearith Israel* of New York, in response to the appeal in the letter, reserved the seventh day of Passover to appeal for contributions for the building of the Newport synagogue. It is gratifying to know in how brotherly a fashion the Congregations cooperated in those days of pioneer Judaism in America. When the appeal was made, one hundred and forty nine pounds and six pence was raised for the cause. The Congregation *Shearith Israel* wrote to Newport a few days after Passover, "Conformable to your desire a *Nedaba* was made in our Synagogue the Seventh Day of *Pessach* when a contribution of 149:6^{d} was offered towards building at Newport a place of worship to Almighty God. Your pious design was a sufficient inducement to promote the Success of your request, we heartily wish our mite may enable you to go on with the Holy building, and that you may be a Religious and prosperous Congregation".[23]



Facsimile of the Signatures to the Letter sent by the Congregation Yeshuat Israel of Newport to the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York soliciting financial assistance, written in 1759.

This response together with the answers from the other congregations was very encouraging, and well-merited letters of appreciation were duly forwarded by the Newport Congregation.

The letter to the New York Congregation is worth quoting at length. It was written on May 28, 1759, and it reads in part as follows:

"It affords us great satisfaction to find your letter of the 3rd day of *Iyar* that our design for building a public place of Worship to God Almighty has not only met with approbation but hath Likewise been Zealously supported by our Brethren at New York as appears by the generous Freewill offerings made for that purpose in your Synagogue on the 7th day of *Pessach* last-

"It is our Inclination and we are truly sensible it is our Duty to return the Congregation at New York our most sincere and public Thanks for this Instance of their Generous Benevolence towards us and we Intreat You Gentlemen to do this good office on our Behalf in such manner, place and Time as shall seem to you most agreeable.

"Your Hearty Wishes for the prosperity of Our Congregation and your sincere wishes for our Success contribute greatly to incite in us an Ardent desire to Complete the Work which we have undertaken".[24]

This letter was signed by Isaachar Pollock in addition to the nine gentlemen who had signed the original letter of appeal. In conclusion the Newporters asked, "We intreat you to remit the Monies which yau have Collected for this Use to the care of Messrs. Jacob Rods. Rivera,

Moses Levy and Isaac Hart in Gold either in *Moidors* or *Johanne's*, *Moidors* will be most advantageous".

When Naphtali Hart visited New York in July next, he obtained the money as instructed by the Newport Congregation for which he issued a receipt: "Recd. of Myer Myers One Hundred and Forty nine Pounds and six pence which at my arrival at Newport, Rhode Island, I promise to deliver to Messrs. Jacob Rivera, Moses Levy and Isaac Hart, trustees for building the Synagogue".[25]

This money together with that received from other congregations and that raised by subscription in town was sufficient to start the actual work and to engage the architect. On August 1, 1759, the ground for the synagogue and school was broken and the foundation and corner stones "of the holy buildings" were laid.[26] The occasion was one of rejoicing and solemnity. The entire Jewish community participated and a number of non-Jews were guests. Aaron Lopez, who later merited the attribute, "Merchant Prince of New England", laid the first corner stone. As the plans for the buildings called for a square edifice for the synagogue proper and a smaller side building for a school with sexton's quarters, adjacent and attached to the main synagogue, there were six corners to the entire structure, and six corner stones had to be laid. Lopez and Rivera having been honored with the laying of the first two, the honor for the remainder was extended to other leaders of the community. Naphtali Hart (bar Moshe) laid "the 3rd cornerstone of this Holy Building". Isaac Elizer, laid

the fourth. Isaac (bar Moshe) (perhaps Pollock) was honored with the laying of the fifth cornerstone, and Naphtali Hart Myers (bar Isaac) with the last cornerstone.[27] The names of all have been subsequently mentioned in the special Blessing recited by the Minister every *Yom Kippur* Eve.[28]

Peter Harrison, a pupil and associate of Sir Christopher Wren, was engaged as the architect. Peter Harrison had gained for himself by this time a considerable reputation as the builder of many notable edifices. The design made by Harrison called for a building in Colonial or Georgian style. Harrison had a special taste and genius for such architecture. The State House, the Theatre, the Redwood Library, all in Newport, and other buildings built by Peter Harrison in Boston and Cambridge, all display his remarkable talents.[29] In the synagogue, though well adapted in its plan and interior to the purpose of Jewish worship, the Georgian style of architecture was carried out by Harrison in the most minute detail, much more so even than in any other building of his design.[30]

The choice of the architect was wise. The results proved it. Harrison combined in the plan of the Newport synagogue, his particular artistic architectural style, which is "classic colonial", with the traditional Synagogue architecture of the Spanish-Portuguese Jews. The combination invites admiration. A glance at the contemporary print of the Spanish-Portuguese synagogue at Amsterdam or London, will at once reveal the close similarity between those synagogues and the one in

Newport. This is not an accident, nor is it due to the uniformity of the Synagogue-architecture of the Spanish-Portuguese Jews. The similarity between the Newport and the Amsterdam synagogue must have been planned. The Reverend Isaac Touro, the spiritual leader of the Newport Community, probably was responsible for this, for he was educated for the ministry in Amsterdam, Holland.[31]

During the course of the construction, during the year 1760, a traveler passing through Newport, and viewing the growing structure, wrote: "It will be extremely elegant within, when completed, but the outside is totally spoilt by a school which the Jews would have annexed to it for the education of their children!"[32] He was a false prophet. The adjacent building did not detract one iota from the beauty of the exterior or interior.

Before the year was over, Jacob Rodrigues Rivera was elected by the Congregation as its *Parnas* or President. Rivera applied to the Congregation *Shearith Israel* of New York for the loan of a Scroll of the Law. This was gladly granted. The New Yorkers entered the transaction in their minutes, under date *Tebeth* 22nd, 5520, in the following words: "At a meeting of the Elders it was agreed to lend the *Sepher Torah* belonging to the *Kaal* formerly at Georgia to the *Kaal* at Newport agreeable to the request of Mr. Jacob Rods. Rivera, Presidente of Said Congregation, which was afterward sent to Said Mr. Jacob Rods. Rivera by the Sloop Hanover, Capt. Stephen Wanton, to be returned when

Interior of Synagogue showing the Reading Desk in the Center and the Ark in the East.

demanded".[33] This was January 12, 1760.

The building, begun with the laying of the cornerstones, continued at a slow pace. The days of "rush" were still in the future. It was not easy to get building material. The bricks had to be imported from abroad. The 196,715 bricks that were to be used for the structure were paid for on August 25, 1760.[34]

After almost two years of building, the work had to be interrupted, not so much because of lack of building material, as for lack of funds. It was the year 1761. Naphtali Hart was elected by the Congregation as president for the year. As so often happens when an undertaking or a project is contemplated, the expenditures were understimated. When the building of the synagogue was contemplated, the Newport Congregation figured that, with the subscriptions raised in the home town and the offerings received from other Congregations and individuals outside of Newport, they would be able to put up an adequate edifice, where they might worship God and educate their children. It seems however, that neither the local subscriptions nor the donations from other Congregations, (which with the exception of the one from New York, do not seem to have been very generous) were sufficient. Therefore, on April 5, 1761, while the building was progressing, Naphtali Hart sent another appeal to the New York Congregation. In this letter, Hart writes: "It is a matter of much concern to the Congregation in this Town among whom I have the Honor to preside as *Parnas* for

the Current year that they are necessitated again to Supplicate the Charitable assistance of your Congregation who have already Cheerfully and Generously Contributed towards finishing our Synagogue--Greatly disappointed in their Expectations from the Charity of other Congregations and the Cost of Building too much more than it was Conceived, they now find themselves unable to Complete the Building--I do therefore, by their Request, intreat your good offices to obtain the farther assistance of your Congregation towards completing the Same, either by a freewill offering to be made in your Synagogue which to them Seems the most unexceptionable way or in any other method which you shall judge the most agreeable to Obtain the good purposes Intended".[35]

From the fact that the building of the synagogue went on, and by 1762, the structure was actually completed with only the furniture in the synagogue missing, we may infer that the New York Congregation replied favorably to this second appeal. When the edifice was completed, they had to face the problem of equipping the synagogue with the necessary furniture. It seems that even this, though comparatively a small matter, was a real difficulty one hundred and seventy five years ago. After obtaining all the possible subscriptions and donations for this purpose in Newport proper, the Newporters once again turned to New York. At this time, Moses Lopez was *Parnas*. The Congregation

Shearith Israel of New York, and the Congregation of Newport stood in very close relationship with one another and were in frequent communication. On July 25, 1762, the building having been finished except "the Porch and Capitals of the Pillars",[36] Moses Lopez wrote to "Messrs. Joseph Simson and Samuel Judah, *Parnasim* of the K. K. *Seherit Israel* of New York", acknowledging the receipt of a *Tamid*-perpetual Lamp from Samuel Judah, "Some Candlesticks for the *Hechal* and the *Tebah* from Mr. Samuel Hart", and "100 lb. Wax from Mr. Hayim Myers", at the same time asking them "As we have now contracted with Workmen, who are actually at Work, to complete the *Hechal, Tebah* and Benches of our Synagogue, and are in great hopes same will be finished by *Rosasanah*: We are getting ready such furniture and utensils as are needful, for which reason our *Mahamad* desires me to address this to you, Gentlemen, that you will be so kind as to make enquiry, who made any offerings of Furniture and Ornaments towards this pious undertaking, to receive and forward the same to us with convenient speed; that it may be here ready against the Time of Consecrating the holy Fabrick".[37]

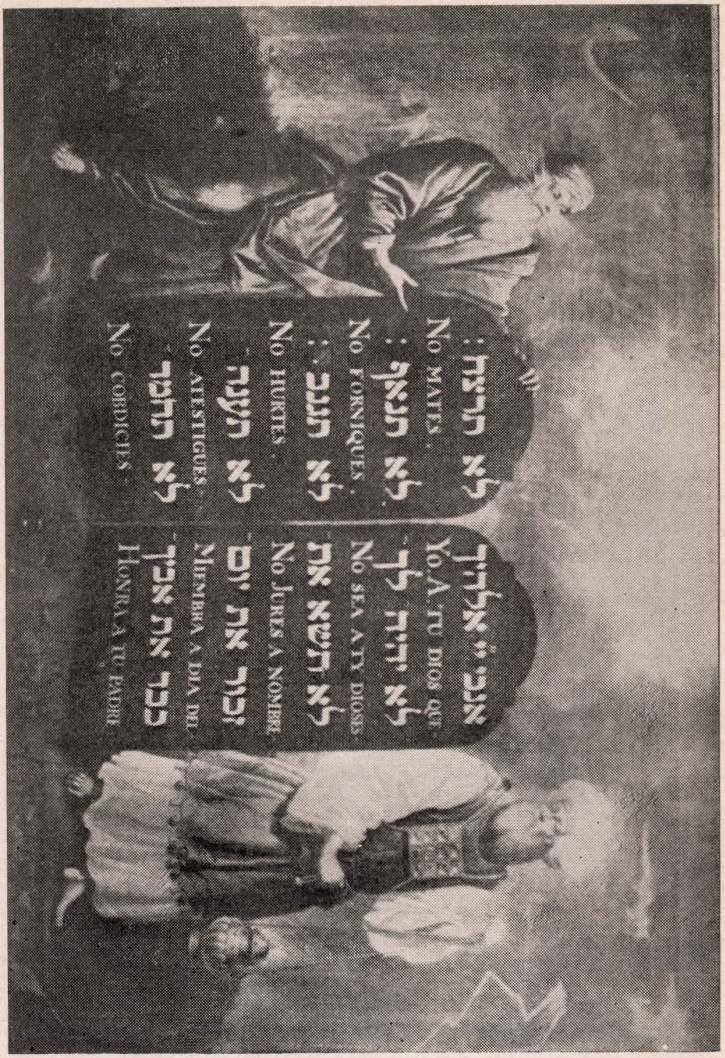
At this time they were looking forward to the dedication of the synagogue, although that event did not take place until more than a year later. What delayed it is hard to say. Whether services were conducted in the meanwhile at the synagogue is also hard to discover. Very likely not, for the synagogue was not yet consecrated. In the letter just quoted, Lopez adds "The

grateful sense we have of the Liberal assistance of your K. K. will put us in mind, of giving timely notice of the Dedication Day, that those Gentlemen who please to favor us with their Company may not be dissappointed".[38]

The dedication of the synagogue finally took place on December 2, 1763, which corresponded with the first day of *Chanuka* of the Jewish year 5523. It was on a Friday afternoon. The day was well chosen. It corresponded with the day when the Holy Temple in Jerusalem was reconsecrated and dedicated by Judas Maccabeus in the year 165 B. C. E. The ceremony of the dedication was calculated to bring out all the beauties of the synagogue and its service. The invited audience consisted of Jews and non-Jews, including a great number of notables of the city and guests from other localities.

In the true spirit of the traditions of the Spanish-Portuguese Jews, the ceremony of the dedication of the synagogue was solemnly performed.

Early in the afternoon the people began to gather in the synagogue, the men taking their places downstairs, the women seating themselves in the balcony. While waiting for the ceremonies to commence the people maintained absolute silence. At the appointed time, when the doors of the synagogue were closed and dead silence reigned within the walls of the holy edifice, three knocks were heard upon the closed door. The knocks came from without in accordance with the ancient ritual. After these three knocks, the voice of the Reverend



The Ten Commandments with an old Spanish Translation, a replica of which is found in the Synagogue.

Isaac Touro was plainly heard, chanting in Hebrew, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in". From within the synagogue came the response also in Hebrew, "who is the King of glory?" To which the voice of the Reverend Mr. Touro replied "The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of glory. *Selah.* Open for Me the gates of righteousness, I wish to enter them, I wish to praise the Lord". Whereupon a gentleman of the Congregation, designated for this purpose by the Congregation, threw open the doors of the synagogue, while at the same time another gentleman opened the doors of the ark, and the Reverend Isaac Touro, followed by a number of gentlemen, entered the synagogue in procession. All these carried Scrolls of the Law covered with beautiful mantles, some of which were embroidered with gold, and on the tops of the scrolls were silver bells and ornaments, which provided additional lustre. As they advanced to the reading desk in the center of the synagogue, the Congregation accompanied them with the chanting of selected portions from the Psalms.

All this time the entire Congregation remained standing, intent upon the order of the procession. While the gentlemen carrying the scrolls were standing near the reading desk, one of the leading members of the Congregation lit the perpetual lamp, hanging before the ark, and the Reverend Mr. Touro chanted the benediction in Hebrew, "Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, King of the Universe, who hast given us life, and sustainest us to attain this season".

TOURO COLLEGE LIBRARY

After this, seven circuits were made around the synagogue by different gentlemen carrying the Scrolls of the Law, changing each time the circuit was completed. This duty was considered a great honor and was accorded to various deserving members of the Congregation. The circuits were made from south to east, from east to north, from north to west, and then back to the reading desk. During the circuits the *Chazan* and the people chanted appropriate psalms. When the processions with the scrolls were over, the Reverend Mr. Touro recited a "Prayer for the Royal Family", after which the Congregation chanted in Hebrew, "The Lord shall reign forever, thy God, O Zion, unto all generations, Hallelujah", and the final procession from the reading desk to the ark took place to the chanting of Psalm twenty nine.

The dedication service made a deep impression on all present. When the Newport Mercury appeared December 5th, three days later, it expressed the sentiments of those present when it described the ceremonies in the following words: "In the afternoon was the dedication of the new synagogue in this Town. It began by a handsome procession in which were carried the Books of the Law to be deposited in the Ark. Several Portions of Scripture, and of their Service with a Prayer for the Royal Family were read and finely sung by the Priest and People. There were present many Gentlemen and Ladies. The Order and Decorum, the Harmony and Solemnity of the Music, together with a handsome Assembly of People, in an Edifice the most perfect of

the Temple kind perhaps in America, and splendidly illuminated, could not but raise in the Mind a faint Idea of the Majesty and Grandeur of the Ancient Jewish Worship mentioned in the Scripture. Dr. Isaac de Abraham Touro performed the Service".

Among the notables present was Dr. Ezra Stiles, who was the Minister of the Second Congregational Church in Newport at the time. When Dr. Stiles copied the item of the Newport Mercury about the dedication, he added in his own words a description of the synagogue which gives a contemporary view of the historic edifice as seen by an eye witness.

Dr. Stiles wrote: "The Synagogue is about perhaps forty foot long and 30 wide, of Brick on a Foundation of Free Stone; it was begun about two years ago, and is now finished except the Porch and the Capitals of the Pillars. The Front Representation of the holy of holies, or its Partition Veil, consists only of wainscotted Breast Work on the East End in the lower part of which four long Doors cover an upright Square Closet the depth of which is about a foot or the thickness of the Wall, and in this Apartment (vulgarly Called the Ark) were deposited three Copies and Rolls of the Pentateuch, written on Vellum or rather tanned Calf Skin: one of these Rolls I was told by Dr. Touro was presented from Amsterdam and is Two Hundred years old; the Letters have the Rabbinical Flourishes.

"A Gallery for the Women runs round the whole inside, except East End, supported by Columns of the Ionic order, over which are placed correspondent

Columns of the Corinthian order supporting the Ceiling of the Roof. The Depth of the Corinthian Pedestal is the height of the Balustrade which runs round the Gallery. The Pulpit for Reading the Law is a raised Pew with an extended front table; this placed about the center of the Synagogue or nearer the West End, being a Square balustrading Comporting with the Length of the indented Chancel before the end at the Foot of the Ark.

"On the middle of the North Side and affixed to the Wall is a raised Seat for the *Parnas* or Ruler, and for the Elders; the Breast and Back interlaid with Chinese Mosaic Work. A Wainscotted Seat runs round Sides of the Synagogue below, and another in the Gallery. There are no other Seats or Pews".[39] Stiles also informs us, that by this time the synagogue "has already cost Fifteen Hundred Pound Sterling".[40]

Though the building was beautifully illuminated during the dedication ceremonies, the candelabra were not there then. The plan called for five candelabra "pendant from a lofty Ceiling",[41] and these were subsequently installed.

As the synagogue structure has not been changed, we need add very little to this description, of one hundred and seventy years ago except to call attention to those few things which Dr. Stiles did not observe, or which were added shortly after.

Dr. Stiles did not note the fact that the synagogue was not built at a right angle with the street, but at an acute angle. This was purposely designed, so that the

Ark (Holy of Holies in Stiles' description) should face directly East. Of course he could not have readily observed the few small stairs that lead from the reading desk to the secret passage in the basement. This is said to have been a relic of the Marrano tradition of providing a hiding place or a passage of escape in case of danger. This tradition, the Newport Jews, who were Marranos in the majority of cases, remembering the dread of the Inquisition and the spies of the Holy Office, carried over into their land of freedom. It is noteworthy, however, that other seventeenth and eighteenth century Sephardic congregations in Europe do not have such secret passages and therefore various other suggestions have been made as to the purpose of this passage. It has been suggested that it led to an exit into the street, but, if so it has since been covered up so that it can not now be found.

Stiles wrote nothing about the school building adjacent to the northern outer wall of the synagogue, through which the stairs lead up to the Women's Gallery, and where were located the Sexton's quarters. Here was an oven to bake the unleavened bread-*Matzos* - for the Passover Festival.[42] It is surprising that Stiles did not note the wells and cistern in the court of the synagogue, which, according to tradition, were connected with the *Mikvah*.[43]

The five candelabra spoken of adorned the synagogue shortly after the dedication, blending harmoniously with the *Ner Tamid*-the Perpetual Lamp, illuminated with oil and burning constantly. The

Perpetual Lamp was the donation of Samuel Judah of New York and was inscribed: "Given by Samuel Judah of New York, Anno Mundi 5525".[44] Of the five candelabra made of brass, one was with twelve branches, two with eight, and two with six branches.

The chandelier with the twelve branches is surmounted in the center by four human figures, one on each side, and the branches reach out in semicircular curves, ornamented very simply. It was suspended from the domed ceiling in the center between the *Hechal* and the *Tebah*. This was the gift of Jacob Pollock, Anno Mundi 5529, 1769.[45]

The two smaller candelabra, one the donation of Naphtali Hart Myers, and the other of Aaron Lopez, were suspended from the ceiling on the south and the north side of the *Tebah* respectively. These were made, except for the human figures on them, to match the larger one in the center. They were inscribed "The gift of Naphtali Hart Myers Anno Mundi 5520",[46] and "The gift of Aaron Lopez Anno Mundi 5530".[47]

The two six-branched chandeliers were suspended from the ceiling near the *Hechal,* one on each side of the Perpetual Lamp. These were identical in style with the eight-branched ones. The donor of both of these Cadelabra was Abraham Rodrigues Rivera, a boy not quite thirteen years old.[48] He was the son of Jacob. The inscription on them reads "The gift of Abraham of Jacob Rods. Rivera, Anno Mundi 5525".[49]

The candelabra also blended harmoniously with the six brass candlesticks, two of which were placed on the

railing round the *Tebah,* and four on the railing in front of the *Hechal.* These were the donation of Enoch Lyon, and were inscribed on one side in Hebrew, with the name and date in English on the other. The Hebrew inscription may be translated: " The gift of the young man Enoch, son of Joseph, to the Synagogue of the Holy Congregation *Yeshuat Israel* in Newport, Rhode Island, in the year 5526". The English inscription simply reads, "Enoch Lyon, 1766".

The most venerable object of the synagogue is the Scroll of the Law. The Scroll, which is deposited in the Ark in the East contains the *Pentateuch,* i. e., the five books of Moses, written by hand by a scribe, professionally designated for this purpose. A synagogue is not considered complete until the Scrolls are in the Ark; and by 1769 there were six Scrolls of the Holy Law deposited in the Ark of the Newport synagogue.[50] The Scrolls were all adorned with tops and bells made of silver and washed with gold. Some of the Scrolls cost as much as forty pounds sterling.[51]

At the time the synagogue was dedicated there were three Scrolls deposited in the Ark.[52] One of these Scrolls was the gift of the congregation in Amsterdam, Holland. According to tradition, another of these Scrolls was the one brought over by the first fifteen Jewish families who arrived in Newport in 1658.[53] Aaron Lopez, generously gave the synagogue, in addition to his many other donations, a Holy Scroll with silver bells of great value.[54] At the same time, the Portuguese synagogue of London also presented a

Scroll of the Law, with silver Tops and Bells.[55] The trustees of the *Talmud Torah,* the religious school connected with the synagogue, were gracious in offering a Holy Scroll to the congregation and so was an individual member, who in the prayer of blessing on *Yom Kippur* Eve was identified as 'Eber Bar Shelomoh'.[56] In addition to the Scrolls owned by the synagogue, there were Scrolls loaned to the congregation. We have already alluded to the Scroll borrowed from *Shearith Israel* of New York.[57] Jacob Rodrigues Rivera ordered in his will, "I give and bequeath unto my son, Abraham Rodrigues Rivera, my five books of Moses wrote on parchment by me heretofore deposited in the Jewish Synagogue in Newport aforesaid together with the Silver Bells and other ornaments thereto belonging".[58]

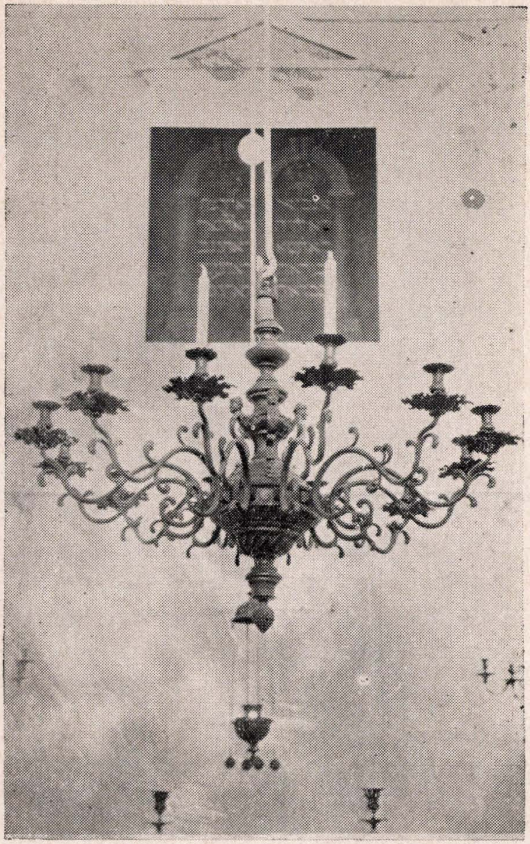
The generosity of the various benefactors to the synagogue is solemnly commemorated on the eve of every *Yom Kippur* in a melodious prayer of blessing chanted by the Minister. The record of the benefactors thus mentioned in praise was entered in Hebrew and Portuguese in the minutes of the Congregation to the following effect:

"Aaron Lopez, for having laid the 1st cornerstone of this holy building".

"Jacob Rodrigues Rivera, for having laid the 2nd cornerstone of this holy building".

"Naphtali Bar Moshe (Naphtali Hart), for having laid the 3rd cornerstone of this holy building".

"Isaac bar Elizer (Isaac Elizer), for having laid the



The Large Candelabrum of the Synagogue with Four Human Figures in the Center, still in use and said to be a relic from a Spanish monastery doting from the time of the Inquisition.

4th cornerstone of this holy building".

"Isaac bar Moshe (Isaac Pollock), for having laid the 5th cornerstone of this holy building".

"Abraham de Jacob Rodrigues Rivera (a lad less than thirteen years of age) for having presented 2 chandeliers for this holy building".

"Naphtali bar Isaac (Naphtali Hart Myers), for having laid the 6th cornerstone of this building".

"Shemoel bar Baruch (Samuel Judah), for having presented a perpetual lamp for this holy building".

"Eber bar Shelmo, for having presented a "Book of the Law" sacred to this building".

"The Gentlemen of the Mamad of the Talmud Torah, for having presented a "Book of the Law" sacred to this building".

"Daniel Gomez, for having always interested himself for the advantage of the Congregation".

"For the members of the Congregation *Shearith Israel* in New York".

"For the members of the Congregation *Shangar Hashamaim* in Jamaica".

"Trustees of Congregation in London for having made a present to this Congregation".

"For the members of the Congregation *Mikvey Israel* in Curacao".

"For the members of the Congregation *Nevay Shalem* in Paramaribo, Surinam".

Furthermore, the Newport Congregation offered on the eve of *Yom Kippur* a prayer, at that time in keeping with the Sephardic tradition still preserved in the

Sephardic prayer books:

"For all our brethren held by the Inquisition and who are captives".

"For our brethren who are at sea or on journeys".

"For all our sick brethren".[59]

The Scrolls were adorned with silver crowns and bells, washed with gold. Four pairs of these are still preserved and are now in use. They may be described as follows:

One pair, having crown and bells is decorated with closed acathus leaves, open flowers, strap ornaments, and heading. They were made by Myer Myers, freeman of New York, president of the Silversmith's Society, 1776.

Another pair, by the same maker are engraved and embellished with flowers and foliage. Gilt bells are suspended from brackets. They were probably the gift of members of the Hays and Myers family as the inscription indicates.

One pair - hexagonal in shape - have some bells in arches though six bells are attached to chains. The tops are open and embossed with flowers. They likewise are inscribed "Hays and Myers" on the stems, and are the gift of the same donors.

The last pair, ornamental with flowers and foliage on the upper parts, has its gilt bells suspended from brackets.

Each pair is fourteen inches high.[60]

To complete the picture of the synagogue, we must mention the beautiful oil painting of the two tablets of the Law containing the Ten Commandments affixed to

the eastern wall directly above the Ark. The tablets are surmounted by three crowns, bearing the Hebrew abbreviations for "Crown of Priesthood, Crown of Royalty, and Crown of Law". These no doubt were to signify that the crowns must have, spiritual essence, and must emanate from the basis of spiritual life, the Ten Commandments.

Another painting of the Ten Commandments with old Spanish underneath each commandment and the imaginary likenesses of Moses and Aaron on each side was hung in another part of the building.[61]

Two semicircular mahogany boxes were affixed to the columns in the west, each bearing the inscription "Charity Box", and a clock, the gift of "Judah Jacobs, London, Anno Mundi, 5529",[62] was hung on the western side of the balcony.

The whole interior of the building, with the exception of the domed ceiling which was blue, was painted white.

In due time "the Porch and the Capitals of the Pillars", alluded to by Stiles in 1763 as not finished, were completed; a stove for heating the building was installed; the oven to bake unleavened bread was built; and a table made, on which to knead the dough for the unleavened bread. The entire structure with all the necessities and conveniences of a house of worship and study was thus finished. When all was done and the disbursements for the building were added up, it was found that the expense had been no less than two thousand pounds sterling,[63] a substantial sum of money in those days. The expense had indeed been greater

than expected, but it was worth it. The synagogue was admirable. Jewish and non-Jewish eyes looked upon it with admiration and awe.

After vicissitudes of the strangest sorts, a few Marranos, having escaped the clutches of the holy Inquisition, were at last able to walk freely in a beautiful temple of God, a miniature of the temple of Jerusalem.

"The weary ones, the sad, the suffering,
All found their comfort in the Holy Place
And children's gladness and men's gratitude
Took voice and mingled in the chant of praise."

Rabbi Haym Isaac Carregal.

CHAPTER VI

A GLIMPSE AT JEWISH LIFE

Eighteenth century Newport, more especially in the pre-Revolutionary period, was favorable to fervent religious life. Churches of all denominations sprang up over night. By 1771 there were nine houses of worship besides the synagogue in Newport.[1] Services were well attended. Theology was a subject of conversation in the street and library. The shelves in the bookstores were filled with volumes on religious subjects. In the school the child began and ended his studies with prayers to God, and the Bible was the primer. To keep debate on dogmatic religion out of the Philosophic Society and to prevent discussion of church and synagogue affairs at other organizations, special provisions in the by-laws had to be made.[2]

As an example of the permeation of all life with the thought of God, we may quote the customary shipping form of the day:—

"Shipped by the Grace of GOD in good order and well conditioned by (. . . . . .) in and upon the good (sloop) Called the (. . . . . .) whereof is Master, under God, for the present Voyage, (. . . . . .) and now riding at anchor in the (Harbour of Newport)

and by GOD'S Grace bound for (.....) "And so GOD send the good (sloop) to her desired Port in Safety Amen."

Everyone walked with his God, and the Jews walked in the ways of their God.

The religious life of the Jewish community was centered around the synagogue. The synagogue was not only the nucleus, but it was the vital organ of Jewish communal living. The synagogue formed an indispensible part of the life of each individual Jew. Thither he sent his children to be educated in the lore of his ancestors, as well as in the knowledge of the three R's. Thither he came daily in the morning and in the evening; and on every Sabbath and Festival, Holy Day and day of Fast, joyful or sad occasion, he gathered with his brethren to pray there to his God. Here, too, came the needy from near and far, and they were well cared for in a dignified manner. The three things upon which the world is based, according to the dictum of the Rabbis, namely, *Torah,* Service and Charity, were the pillars of the beautiful synagogue in Newport of which the entire community, Jew and non-Jew, was proud. The synagogue was the educational center, the house of worship and the house of charity; and it served other Jewish communal needs as well, as time occasioned.[3]

How large a congregation did the synagogue house at this time? How large a community did the synagogue serve?

When the synagogue was dedicated in 1763, there were no seats or pews there except: "A wainscotted

Seat", running, "round Side of the Synagogue below, & another in the Gallery".[4] The seating capacity was seventy nine.[5] There were no other seats or pews permanently installed until a much later date and in our own era, except for some movable wooden benches after the Revolution for the use of the General Assembly. It is apparent therefore that the synagogue, though extremely spacious, was not built for a large congregation.

The size of the Jewish community of Newport in the eighteenth century has been grossly exaggerated by its admirers. In spite of the continuous influx of Jews into Newport which had begun at the end of the seventeenth century, the population of the city by the middle of the eighteenth century and later, on the eve of the American Revolution, remained comparatively small. According to some, a ship that sailed from Portugal to Virginia carrying a contingent of Marranos who escaped from their native land after the earthquake in Lisbon, sought refuge in Narragansett Bay from bad winds and its passengers settled in Newport in 1755.[6] Others claim that Aaron Lopez wrote to Jeremiah Osborne who was in charge of a ship going from London to Lisbon and then back to the colonies, "Should any of my friends in Lisbon incline to come with you, I need not recommend you to use them with the same tenderness that I might expect myself from you".[7] This was taken as evidence that Lopez induced forty Jewish families to settle in Newport.[8] All are unanimous that by the time of the dedication of the synagogue there were from sixty to

seventy Jewish families in the city.[9] A decade later, some claim Newport harbored 1175 Jews of the 2000 in all the colonies, and that there were 300 worshippers at the synagogue at this time.[10] Yet an observer of the dedication noted: "There may be Eighty Souls of Jews or 15 families now in town".[11] This number seems to have been the same in 1755.[12] The increase was gradual and slow. In 1764 Stiles wrote to London: "We have 15 or 20 Families of Jews here, almost the only ones in New England".[13] In 1769 he noted. "There are now in Town about Twenty-five Families of Jews".[14] And in 1770, in recording the various religious societies in Newport, Stiles gives the Jewish population as consisting of 30 families.[15] Another contemporary in 1771 recorded the "number of Jews of all ages and sexes, 121".[16] According to the official census taken by the order of the General Assembly on June 1, 1774, there appear to have been at that time in Newport about twenty-five families that can be identified as Jewish, a total number of 158 people. Of these, 46 were males over 16 years of age, 21 males under 16, 52 female persons over 16, and 39 under 16.[17] This census, however, is not all inclusive. A number of Jewish people did not desire to submit to counting due to religious reasons. Hence, a number of Jewish families, who lived in Newport at the time, are omitted. We may note especially the Rivera family.

The principal families in town prior to the American Revolution were the families of Touro, Hart, Levy, Sarzedas, Lopez, Isaacs, Elizer, Pollock, Alvares,

Lucena,[18] Hays, Seixas, Myers, Jacobs, , Simpson, Francks, Phillips, Mendes,[19] Hendricks,[20] Cordoza,[21] Mark, Lyon,[22] Benjamin, Moses[23] and Rivera.[24]

The majority of the Jewish population in the city were of *Sephardic* origin, but a considerable number taking an active interest in the affairs of the Jewish community were of *Ashkenazic* stock. The *Ashkenazic* element came principally from Germany, though we noted that the Harts came from England, the Pollocks from Poland, while the Myers came from Austria and Hungary.

In affairs of the synagogue, the *Sephardic* element dominated because of their greater number and importance. The *Ashkenazic* members cooperated fully, so that harmony and accord existed at all times. The synagogue was deeded to Jacob Rodrigues Rivera the *Sephardi* and Isaac Hart the *Ashkenazi.* While Moses Lopez, a *Sephardi,* was President of the Congregation one year, Naphtaly Hart, an *Ashkenazi,* occupied the position another year. Beside the candelabrum of Aaron Lopez was hung that of Naphtaly Hart Myers, and beside those of Abraham Rodrigues Rivera, that of Jacob Pollock.

The ritual of the Synagogue, however, was completely *Sephardic.*[25]

The spiritual affairs of the community were in the hands of two members of the same family, Isaac and Abner Touro.[26] The records are silent about Abner Touro. Nothing save the name has come down to posterity. The Reverend Isaac Touro was more fortu-

nate. As we noted before, he came to Newport around 1759, at the age of twenty. He was very energetic in his leadership. Upon his arrival in Newport, the life of the Jewish community increased in spiritual vitality. It was to no small degree due to his efforts that the synagogue was built, and it was he who at the age of twenty-five dedicated the synagogue.

The Reverend Mr. Touro was very popular in the community. He was active in many organizations. He was a fine singer and had an extremely good character, giving hospitality to all that passed through the city as wayfarers. Amongst his friends he numbered many non-Jews as well as Jews, the most noted of whom was Dr. Ezra Stiles, who was later president of Yale University.

Touro and Stiles were on intimate terms with one another. They visited each other's homes, promenaded together in the streets of the city and discussed various scholarly topics such as theology, Biblical exegesis, religious doctrines and prophecies as well as current events.[27] The only time Stiles dined with a Jew was in the house of Touro in the company of a visiting Rabbi.[28] It was the Reverend Isaac Touro who taught Stiles the rudiments of the Hebrew language.[29]

Touro was the *Chazan* of the Synagogue. He chanted and conducted the services, read from the holy Scroll, and supervised the education of the youth. He was not a preacher.[30] Touro is referred to by Stiles in his writings as a "*Chuzzan* from Amsterdam", "Jew Priest", "*Chazan*", "*Huzan*", "*Hazen*", or just "Mr.". Only

once in an early note when copying the item from the Newport Mercury referring to the dedication of the synagogue does he refer to him as "Dr.". He never calls him "Rabbi", or *"Hacham"*, the *Sephardic* title of the Rabbi.[31] On the memorial stone erected to the memory of the Reverend Mr. Touro by his son Abraham in the old Jewish Cemetery in Newport, he is referred to as "Rev'd, the able and faithful Minister of the Congregation *Yeshuat Israel"*. As the synagogue had no parsonage for its Minister, the Reverend Mr. Touro lived in a house of six rooms rented from George Buckmaster on High Street, now Division Street.[32] Touro lived with the other members of his family. In 1773, he married Reyna Hays, a daughter of Judah Hays and a sister of the prominent mason, Moses Michael Hays.[33]

The principal objective in erecting a synagogue was to "Instruct the Children in the Path of Virtuous Religion".[34] This was successfully undertaken under the leadership of the Reverend Mr. Touro, who supervised the *Talmud Torah,* and guided the children in their Hebrew education. The *Talmud Torah* of the community was organically as well as spiritually connected with the synagogue and it became an active and important factor in the life of the Jews. The administrative affairs of the *Talmud Torah* were in the hands of a special standing committee, or body of trustees.[35] This committee was very active in synagogue affairs as well. One of the Scrolls of the Law, deposited in the Holy Ark of the synagogue, was a gift of the members of

this body.[36] Educational matters were entirely in Mr. Touro's hands.

Judging from the results, the fruits of Touro's teaching were very satisfactory. Stiles, who has saved many a fact about the synagogue and the life of the Jews in Newport from passing into oblivion by noting them in his diary, makes an interesting observation on January 12, 1770, "Went to the Synagogue this Evening and heard a Son of Mr. Lopez deceased, Aet 13, read the Evening Service".[37] Stiles was of course surprised at this, more especially because "Mr. Tauro the *Chuzzan* present". His curiosity must have been apeased, however, after inquiry, for he continues to remark "It is the Custom in the foreign Synagogues to initiate Boys Aet. 13, thus to read publicly. This is the first Instance of the Synagogue at Newport". For a boy of 13 to read the Evening Service was then as it would be today, a praiseworthy achievement. It shows the result of good training.

Another instance is even more interesting. For this, too, we are indebted to the pen of Dr. Stiles. On May 28, 1773, the first day of *Shavuoth,* Dr. Stiles upon visiting the synagogue observed, "After the Sermon, two Rolls of the Law were brought forward with great solemnity, and after Elevation, the *Parasang* including the XXth Chapter of Genesis (Exodus) was read as usual: at reading X Commandments the whole Congregation rose up and stood. After which Mr. Rivera's little son 8 or 9 aet. read the first Chapter of Ezekiel".[38] He has reference to the *Haphtorah.* That the *Maftir*

and *Haphtorah* Reading should be given to a lad under thirteen years of age is within the law on the Sabbath and is not surprising by itself. It is not, however, customary to do so on a festival when the *Maftir* is from a special selection of the Pentateuch, and more especially on *Shavuoth* when the *Haphtorah,* the Prophetic Reading, forms the first chapter of Ezekiel, which according to Jewish tradition has a mystic connotation and is the basis of the study of *Kabbalah* and Jewish Metaphysics. Besides, the reading of the first chapter of Ezekiel in Hebrew is a task even for an adult in our own times. To have a lad of nine read the *Haphtorah* on *Shavuoth* was indeed as surprising as interesting. Even if Stiles were mistaken about the age of Rivera's son, who was probably older than eight or nine - for it is hardly credible that they should have permitted a minor to be called to the *Torah* for the *Maftir* on *Shavuoth* - it is still an index of the fruitfulness of the Hebrew education of the Newport *Talmud Torah* under the leadership of the Reverend Isaac Touro.

We cannot resist the temptation to cite one more observation of this non-Jewish clergyman. This also bears on the religious instruction of the children at the time. On February 8, the diarist writes, "At the Synagogue, whereupon asking a little Jew Boy the use of the strings at the Corner of the White Surplices worn by all Jews in their Worship:—he said, they kissed the strings three times at the Reception of the great *'Shemak',* or Hear o Israel the Ld. our God is one Lord".[39] That "a little Jew Boy" can explain the use

of the strings of the *Talith* is of significance. A child may often wear *Tzitzis* because his religious mother has dressed him in it, but he may not be able to explain it. If he does know something about it, especially its use in the synagogue, it shows that the child has been educated religiously. That he joined his older coreligionists in prayer at the synagogue, also shows that his Hebrew knowledge was not failing. This again points to the efficiency of the Hebrew education at the time.

The *Talmud Torah* also took care of the secular education of the Jewish children. The teachers were generally required to be competent to teach not only Hebrew, but also English, Dutch and Spanish.[40] A German officer during the occupation of the British, was surprised to find, "In Newport are 2 Reformed, 1 German Evangelical and 1 Catholic church. Besides the Quakers have two meting houses, the Herrnhuter 1 meeting house, the Pietists 1 prayer house and the Jews a temple and even a school".[41] The teacher of Rivera's boy is referred to as a "Dutch Master".[41] The *Talmud Torahs* of the Jews in the colonies were the first Hebrew Parochial Schools in America.

The services at the synagogue, which followed the *Sephardic* ritual, were conducted solely in Hebrew, and in the *Sephardic* pronunciation.[43] Services were held daily, mornings and evenings. They were well attended by young and old, and on the Sabbaths, Festivals and Holy Days, women constituted a large part of the congregation. Even when services were held in the dark hour before dawn, during the forty days of *Selichoth*

before the Day of Atonement, worshipers were not wanting in the synagogue.

In the synagogue, the Reverend Isaac Touro was seated on the seat in front of the *Tebah* in the Center. Stiles tells us that Rabbi Carregal sat in the upper end in the East. The elders of the synagogue as well as the president were seated in the elevated enclosed *Banca*, adjacent to the middle of the northern wall. Visitors of high station that honored the synagogue with their presence were also seated in the *Banca*.. The men of the congregation either stood or sat on the south and north parts of the synagogue under the balcony, while the gallery running round the synagogue on the south, west and north was reserved for female worshipers.

The movements and motions during the services called out this interesting comment from a non-Jewish observer, "How often have I stood just within the door, and seen the Israelites shuffling about with their hats on, and the Rabbi reading the Evening Service all being in motion, I suppose in imitation of the forty years' travel to Canaan".[44]

Several of the services and customs at the synagogue observed and recorded by the Congregational divine Ezra Stiles, are worth quoting at length: "Pentecost. Went to the synagogue at IX h.A.M. At reading of the Law the Rabbi was desired and read the Ten Commandments. But before reading the Law and the Prophets the Rabbi went to the Desk or *Taubauh* and preached a Sermon 47 minutes long in Spanish. It was interspersed with Hebrew. His Oratory, Elocution and

Gestures were fine and oriental. It was very animated". After alluding to some of the contents of the sermon, the diarist continues, "After the Sermon, two Rolls of the Law were brought forward with great solemnity, and after Elevation the *parasang* including the XXth Chapter of Genesis (Exodus) was read as usual: at reading the X Commandments the whole Congregation rose up and stood. After which Mr. Rivera's little son 8 or 9 aet. read the first Chapter of Ezekiel — then Prayers for all Nations, for the Jews, for the King and Royal Family, for the Magistrates of Rhode Island. The Law was then returned in solemn procession singing the usual Psalm: then Alms Prayers and Singing concluding the Whole. The Synagogue was decorated with flowers &c. The whole service ended a quarter after twelve.".[45]

A service on *Shavouth,* three and a quarter hours long, is not unusual today, nor perhaps, is a sermon three quarters of an hour in length. Considering the fact, however, that sermons two and three hours in duration were customary in those days and that the people endured them patiently, the Newport Jewish Congregation was not asked to listen to a tiresomely long exhortation.

The account of the services on *Tisha B'av* from the same pen is even more interesting. "Went to the Synagogue, it being the Anniversary Fast for the Destruction of the Temple both by Nebuchadnezzar and Titus. They began VII and held till noon. The place of the ark was covered with a black curtain, and the lamp

was put out. A table covered with black, stood before the *Tabauh,* and on a low bench sat the *Parnass* and *Huzzan.* The prayers were exceedingly melancholy, particularly when the *Huzzan* rose up, and went to the place of the holy of holies or the ark and mercy seat; where he wrapped himself up in the black curtain, and slowly mourned out a most solemn weeping and doleful lamentation, for the absence of the *Debir* and *Shechinah,* for the cessation of the oracle, and for the destruction of the holy of holies. The roll of the law was brought out, without any ceremony covered in black and read at the foot of the *Tabauh;* the portion was from Deuteronomy. Then the fourth chapter of Jeremiah was read and three or four other chapters; then the book of Lamentations; then the beginning and end of Job".[46]

The synagogue was supported not only by membership dues but also by voluntary contributions made by the worshipers when called to the reading of the *Torah.* Offerings were made in the traditonal manner after the portion of the Scriptures had been read and the prayer of blessing recited for the particular worshiper. These offerings were announced in Hebrew, not in Portuguese as was customary in the New York synagogue. The amount was sometimes given in an Hebrew expression that may be translated into English as 'life'.[47] Though the amount was given in Hebrew, the denomination of the money was given in Livres. The offerings seem to have been very generous. During a single service on a Passover, they amounted to forty dollars. While prayers of blessing were offered for the living who had

received the honor to ascend the reading desk to read a portion of the Scriptures, memorial prayers for the dead were often offered at the same time, the Minister announcing in the prayer the name of the deceased. A contemporary description of these ceremonies in the synagogue is given by Stiles, April 18, 1772: "A. M. I went to the Synagogue, it being *Shabos Pesach* (In Hebrew), Sabbath of the Passover. They read in the Law the passages which give an Account of the Exodus and Institution of the passover; and also a passage about Vth of Joshua concerning Circumcision and rolling away the Reproach of Egypt. Several mentioned the names of their dead friends, for whom prayers were immediately made. Large offerings of alms were made to probably fourty dollars as one of the Jews estimated, and I believe true; for sundry offered *Chai Livre* i. e. £16 or two Dollars - and I judge Mr. Aaron Lopez offered ten or a dozen of these Chai".[48]

There is something amusing in this last remark of the diarist. Apparently, he did not know the word *'Chai'* represented the Hebrew word 'life' as well as the combination of two Hebrew letters that has the numerical value of 18. This number was adopted especially for the purpose of announcing offerings at the reading of the *Torah* because of its symbolic meaning. Whether or not it was as tradition holds because charity and offerings are productive of life is irrelevant. Stiles, as is obvious from his remark, took *'Chai'* to be the name of a certain denomination of money. To expect Aaron Lopez to offer "ten or a dozen of these *Chai*" was natural,

because of his wealth and position in the community at this time. In fairness to Dr. Stiles, it should be said that in the traditional synagogues it is the custom to this day to announce the offering in terms of "Chai", as "twice Chai", or "three times Chai".[49]

The reading of the weekly Biblical portion was done by the Reverend Isaac Touro. Rabbi Garregal during his stay in Newport read only the portion in Exodus containing the Ten Commandments. Otherwise, when called to the *Torah,* he pronounced only the benedictions to the reading of Touro. However, Rabbi Carregal always performed the Rabbinic duty of elevating the Scroll before the reading of the portion.[50]

During the afternoon Service on Passover, the reading of the Biblical book, "The Song of Songs", took place. The Newport Jews used texts with Spanish translations, though they did not read the translation in the synagogue.[51]

The only vernacular portion of the synagogue service was the sermon. We have already alluded to the preaching of Rabbi Carregal in Spanish, that of Rabbi Tobiah Ben Yehudah in Dutch, and of Rabbi Cohen also, probably, in Spanish or Portuguese.

Good fortune has preserved a Sermon that was preached by Rabbi Carregal in the Newport Synagogue on *Shavuoth* of the year 1773. Rabbi Carregal preached originally in Spanish. The Sermon was later translated into English by Abraham Lopez, who published it in Newport under the following title:[52] "A Sermon preached at the Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island,

called 'The Salvation of Israel', on the day of Pentecost, or Feast of Weeks, the 6th day of the month *Sivan,* the year of the Creation 5533, or May 28th, 1773; being the Anniversary of the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai by the Venerable *Hocham,* the learned Rabbi, Haijm Isaac Karigal of the city of Hebron, near Jerusalem, in the Holy Land"[53].

A very modern note is sounded by the words of this honorable "wise man".

The Rabbi took for his text the verses of Psalm LXVIII "O God when Thou wentest forth before Thy people; when Thou didst march through the wilderness. The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God; Even yon Sinai trembled at the presence of God, the God of Israel".

After commenting upon the text by quoting the Rabbis of the Talmud in the fifth chapter of the tractate Succah, the preacher continued:

"Most noble and kind auditors! The greatest toil, which divine wisdom was pleased to apoint unto man, when he formed him, was the necessity of earning a subsistence. Cast your eyes through all the world, and you will perceive that the chief care of every individual is to seek after bread. . . . . ."

The preacher then establishes his thesis that just as there is need of physical bread so is there need for spiritual bread. Whereupon he continues: "Nothing is more advantageous and beneficial towards our being established and fixed in the true belief, than the frequentation of the sacred colleges and synagogues,

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

SYNAGOGUE,

In NEWPORT *Rhode-Island*,

CALLED

"The SALVATION of ISRAEL:"

On the Day of PENTECOST,

Or FEAST of WEEKS,

The 6th day of the Month *Sivan*,
The year of the Creation, 5533:
Or, *May* 28, 1773.

Being the ANNIVERSARY
Of giving the LAW at *Mount Sinai*:

BY THE VENERABLE HOCHAM,
THE LEARNED RABBI,
HAIJM ISAAC KARIGAL,
Of the City of HEBRON, near JERUSALEM,
In the HOLY LAND

NEWPORT, Rhode-Island: Printed and Sold by
S. SOUTHWICK, in Queen-Street, 1773.

Title Page of Sermon Preached by Rabbi Carregal.

where we daily hear the word of the Lord. But the true intent of this frequentation must be directed to the sole purpose of penetrating and observing the divine precepts, and acquiring the fear of the Lord."

After many Biblical and Rabbinic quotations, Rabbi Carregal analyzes the various attitudes of the people of his day. They seem to have been not much different from what we observe in our own time.

"There are many that think themselves fit to be legislators, and, looking upon tradition with contempt, invent such laws and religion as suit them best"

"There are others who, forgetting they have from their infancy heard from their parents or masters the results of some disputes, fancy that if they comprehend some part of one single mystery, it is owing to their great capacity, and that the whole proceeds from their refined sense. and very erroneously conceive that tradition is entirely superfluous and unnecessary; and that their vast understanding and singular ingenuity are sufficient to penetrate the most concealed mysteries of the divine writings; forgetting that the little they know is only a feeble emanation of the tradition they censure, which they learned in their youth.

"Other critics there are that are still worse and more prejudicial enemies, who being concealed adversaries, make other people believe they are very religious, and firm believers of traditions, and under a cloak of the greatest sanctity, defile the fundamental principals of the law."

Then the preacher complains of still another group,

in words that have a modern sound. "Some people claim", he goes on to say: "There having been such great alterations of age, climates, situations, and other circumstances, it is to be supposed that the original reasons of some precepts may have ceased; and consequently the obligation of conforming ourselves to such institutions (tho originally divine) must naturally cease".

To all the critics, the Rabbi categorically replies: "Those precepts in respect to the Deity and morality are entirely out of the present question; it being indubitable that neither of them can be subject to the least change or alteration in any time or place".

"There have been some authors", he argues, "who, touched with a vehement desire of finding out new methods of commenting upon sacred scriptures, instead of illustrating them, have involved them in obscurity by expositions, and expressions so excessive high and refined, that they cannot leave the least impression."

The precepts of the Law have to be taught in a manner so as to invest with Divine fear; to rejoice the heart; and to enlighten the eyes. He therefore throws the responsibility not so much on the people as on the preachers, teachers and spiritual leaders. "Upon this subject", he concludes, "all preachers ought to employ their time and to this matter all instructors of congregations ought to conform themselves. But there have been professors, who instead of teaching their auditors and disciples the essential points of religion and morality, have employed their time in doctrines and discourses,

(or at least in amusements and vanities) and subjects that are entirely out of our reach, and beyond human comprehension".[54]

After the services were over at the synagogue, the fathers blessed the children by laying their hands on the children's heads.[55] Some parents blessed their children immediately upon coming home. This ceremony was reserved usually for Friday evenings, and for the eves of the festivals and holy days.[56] The traditional blessing for boys was worded "The Lord make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh". The blessing for the girls was "The Lord make thee as Sarah, Rebeccah, Rachel and Leah".[57]

The services at the Synagogue were attended by many non-Jews. Some of the visitors were of high station in social and political life. Among the visitors to the synagogue were the governor, several of the judges and many other high officials of the state.

On *Shavuoth,* Rabbi Carregal was scheduled to speak: "About the Time the Rabbi began the sermon which was a few minutes before X o'clock, three of the Commissioners came in, viz. Gov. Wanton & Judge Oliver and afterwards Judge Auchumty".[58] They were, of course, accorded the honor of being seated in the seat of the *Parnass* or president of the synagogue, who at this time happened to be Aaron Lopez.[59]

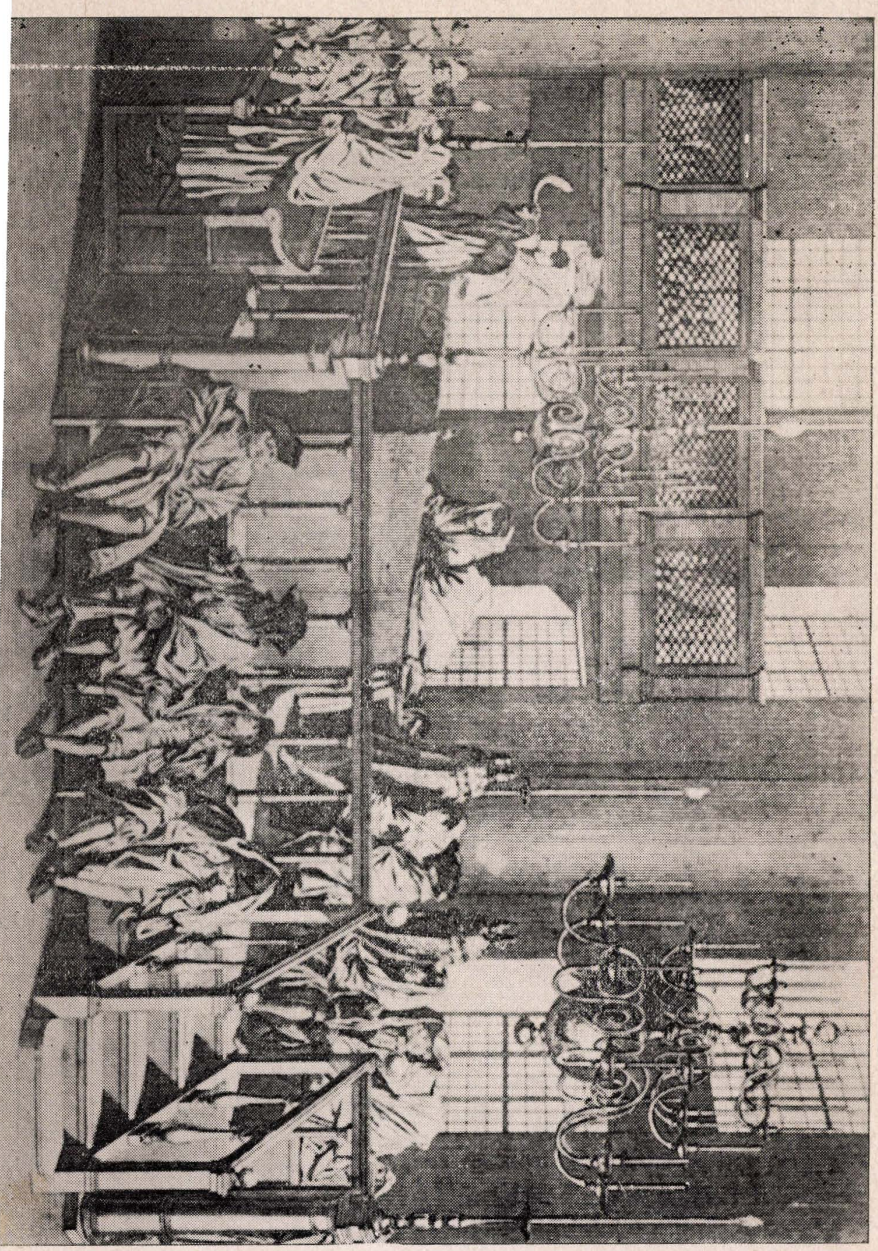
The frequent visits of the Reverend Dr. Stiles to the synagogue were reciprocated on the part of Rabbi Carregal by a visit to Stiles' Church. Rabbi Carregal was accompanied by two Jews. Reverend Stiles had his own son wait on the honored visitors and they were

seated in Dr. Stiles' own pew. The sermon by Doctor Stiles at this Service lasted an hour and a quarter. The notes for this sermon, as preserved in his Diary, are worth quoting. They reveal the attitude of this Clergyman towards Jewry, and the attitude he desired Christendom to adopt towards Jewry of the World.

Dr. Stiles took for his text the verse in Psalms, "Remember me, O Lord, when Thou Favourest Thy people; O think of me at Thy salvation; That I may behold the prosperity of Thy chosen, That I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation, That I may glory with Thine inheritance".[60]

This text he elaborated, "The Seed of Jacob are a chosen and favorite people of the most High, and the subjects of the peculiar Care of Heaven, and of most marvellous Dispensations. That not withstanding God's Chastisements of their Iniquity & Imperfection in Calamities, Captivities and Dispersions; yet God hath not forgotten his Covenant with Abraham and his posterity, but intends them great Happiness and will fulfill his promise in making them a very glorious Nation and a Blessing to the World in the latter Day Glory of the Messiahs Kingdom. It should be the Desire of Christians and of all Nations, to partake hereafter with Israel in their future glorious state, that we may share & rejoyce in the Gladness of God's people & the Glory of his Inheritance."

Stiles, according to his notes, continued "1, Hence how highly privileged was Israel in being chosen &c.? 2, Hence learn the Design of Providence in still pre-



Contemporary Scene of a Rosh Hashanah Service in the Spanish Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam, Holland. dating from 1776, and after which building probably the Newport Synagogue was modeled.

serving a Remnant of this people, that of this seed he may make a glorious Nation hereafter. 3, Hence learn the Dignity and Glorious Character of the Messiah. He is worthy of all Honor and Obedience and Love and Praise from all Nations on Earth, yea from all Worlds. 4, Live so holily here, that we may all come together united in one glorious Body before the Throne of God; and joys in the endless Hallelujahs of the Eternal World".[61]

The preacher corroborated his exposition in the sermon with the words of Jeremiah "But fear not thou, O Jacob My Servant, Neither be dismayed, O Israel; for Lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall again be quiet and at ease, And none shall make him afraid. Fear not thou, O Jacob My servant, saith the Lord, For I am with thee: For I will make a full end of all the nations whither, I have driven thee, But I will not make a full end of thee; And I will correct thee in measure, But will not utterly destroy thee".[62]

Discounting the fact that a Rabbi was present during the preaching of this sermon, and allowing also for the current theology, this address was a courageous expression in a church at this time, of friendliness toward Israel. Rabbi Carregal, because of his imperfect knowledge of English, understood but half of the discourse.[63]

Outside of the synagogue, the Jew of Newport in the eighteenth century carried out the laws and customs of the Jewish people to the minutest detail. Not having a *Mohel* of their own until later in the seventies, when

Moses Seixas undertook this function,[64] Abraham I. Abrahams from New York was invited to perform this ritual on the newly born Jewish male children. So scrupulous were they in the observance of this law that, later, when Moses Seixas did not perform the rite of circumcision, Samuel and Judith Lopez took their five months old child in a sloop to New York to have this rite performed.[65]

The shops and factories of the Jews were closed on the Sabbath and on Jewish Festivals. Where the Jew was employed in a non-Jewish place of business, he abstained from going to work on the Jewish holidays and on Saturdays. Observant of their own laws and customs, they were also mindful and respectful of the observance of the customs of others.

The testimonies of contemporaries on this score are interesting and enlightening. During the Revolution, when some of the Newport Jews sought refuge in Massachusetts, one writer remarked: "Though without a place of assemblying for worship here, they rigidly observed the rites and requirements of their own laws, keeping Saturday as holy time; but out of regard to the sentiments of the people among whom they were settled, carefully keeping their stores closed from Friday evening until Monday morning of each week".[66]

Upon an examination of the shipping books of Aaron Lopez for a period of three years from the year 1771 to 1773, we find that none of his ships left port on a Saturday.[67] During this time, George Channing recorded a few interesting items of like purport in his

"Recollections of Newport". In speaking about Joseph Lopez, kinsman of Moses and Aaron Lopez who was the chief clerk in the counting-house of Gibbs and Channing, he remarks:

"He felt conscientiously bound to observe the 'times and seasons' peculiar to the Mosaic ritual. On Friday afternoons, he left the counting room about 3 P. M. in winter and at 5 in the summer, in order to prepare for the due observance of the sabbath on the morrow.

"Passover Week, and on the great day of Atonement, my friend would absent himself from business for two or three consecutive days.

"He was equally conscientious in making up to his employers for his absence on these holy days".[68]

Channing adds another recollection which is of interest, and worth quoting:

"Besides the family of Lopez (whose residence was on the north side of the Parade) I was acquainted with Mr. Moses Seixas, cashier of the Bank of Rhode Island, whose family occupied the bank building on the south side of the Parade. He and his son Benjamin, who was the teller, were in stature short.[69]

"One set of the bank keys at the close of bank hours, was regularly left at our store for safe keeping by the teller. On the Jewish sabbath (Saturday), I was expected to take the keys to the bank, when a Christian officer would be in attendance; for this service I always received some token, usually in the shape of Passover bread and bonbons resembling ears, in memory of those cropped from Haman, when hung for his intended

cruelty to Mordecai".[70]

Speaking about the Jews of Newport, another observer remarks, "The Jews are a highly respectable class, some of the most opulent and respectable merchants are the followers and exact observers of the laws of Moses".[71]

In 1764 the Colonial Legislature recognized the validity of Jewish marriages, exception to English restrictions being especially made in favor of "any persons possessing the Jewish religion who may be joined in marriage, according to their own usages and rites".[72]

Social relations among the Jews were close. Their religious bonds and marriages brought them even closer. Jewish marriages were often consecrated in the town. Marriages of close kin were common, though marriages of Newport Jews with Jews from the other colonies were not rare. Frequently the bonds of marriage were preceded by romance and correspondence. The correspondence was not between bride and groom. The parents are found to have been actively interested and often did the writing, discussing the qualifications of either the groom or the bride-to-be.

An interesting specimen of a love-letter of the time is the following: "It is at the request of my son, Ben. Seixas, that I presume to trouble you with this, to acquaint you that he has informed his mother and myself that he has a very great regard for your daugher, Miss Zipporah Levy, and should think myself very happy if he could obtain your consent and approbation as well as your amiable spouse's, and all others connected with the

young lady, in permitting him soon to be joined to her in the sacred bond of matrimony. We have no manner of objection thereto, and most sincerely wish it may meet with your parental approbation, and that it may prove a source of joy and happiness to all our families".[73]

This letter was written by Isaac M. Seixas from Stratford, Nov. 13, 1778. He had lived in Newport before the Revolution and came back afterwards. The letter concerns his son Benjamin, a brother of Moses Seixas. He was one of the founders of the New York Stock Exchange.

Another letter dealing with courtship and marriage is the letter of Isaac Pereira Mendes from Kingston, Jamaica, February 15, 1767, to Aaron Lopez in Newport: "The choise of my Brother Abraham to your daughter Miss Sally, for his Consort, has merited much our Aprobation, as also that of my honored Mother. The Ameableness of your daughter, the Bright Carrecter and honour of yours and familys, as much in Portugal, cannot butt give us in generall the greatest satisfaction, that my Brother has united himself with, (which is doeing honour to the Memory of our Worthy and Honourd Father) From my Brother's repeated Expressions of their reciprocal Love, must make them happy, and pleasing to you, and beg leave to return my congratulating you and all your good family, on this joyful Occasion, wishing them all the Happiness they can wish for, and pray the Almighty may crown them with his Blessings and make you a happy Father, and my tender Embraces to the Young Lady, with that of

my spouse and family. I make no doubt, you have found in my Brother, such Bright Qualitys, which few of his age are endowed with, particular from the Education of Youths, in these parts, as has those of nature so strongly, I am sure with Cultivating in your good advice must make him a Bright Man".[74]

The Newport Jews had many children. Moses Lopez had eight children.[75] Aaron Lopez by his first wife had seven children, and by his second, ten children.[76] Isaac Mendes Seixas had seven children.[77] Moses Seixas, his son, had 8 children.[78] Isaac Judah had nine children.[79] Abraham Lopez also had nine children.[80]

The Jews did not live in one particular section in town, though a great number of them lived in the Point district. The Reverend Mr. Touro lived on High Street. Jacob Hart rented a house from Metcalfe Bawler on Jew's Street, which is now the famous Bellevue Avenue. Moses Levy owned a house on East Griffin Street, now Elizabeth Street. Hyman Levy and Moses Seixas lived on Griffin Street now Touro Street. and the Hays family lived on Broad Street.[81] The Rivera, the Hart and the Pollock families lived on Bridge Street. At the corner of Washington and Chestnut Streets stood the residence of Nathaniel Hart. Jacob Rodrigues Rivera lived on Washington Street at the corner of Elm. Meyer Pollock lived on the corner of Third and Chestnut Streets. On Third Street at the corner of Cherry lived Jacob Pollock. Aaron Lopez, the wealthiest Jewish merchant in town, lived at 131-133 Thames Street. He also had his business there. The warehouse had three floors; the

first floor was used as a store-house; on the second floor, Mr. Lopez had his office; and the third floor he used as his sail loft. This loft was about 200 feet long. On Thames Street at the foot of Farewell Street lived the Judah family; and on Marlborough Street, north of the former Baptist Church, lived the Myers family. Mordecai Myers, who distinguished himself nobly in the War of 1812, and held important offices in the national government, was born in the Marlborough Street house.[82] Some of the houses were of large size. A British officer, during the occupation of Newport, calculated that he could station "200 men at Lopez house on the East Side".[83]

In many instances the Jews had their business places or factories adjoining or actually in their dwelling-places. This was a common practice of the colonial merchants, whether Jews or Christians.[84]

In appearance and apparel the Newport Jews were not different from the other residents of colonial Newport. The wealthier Jews wore aristocratic dress with the usual white wig, as appears from some of the portraits that have come down to us. Very few of the men grew beards. A German officer was surprised to find the Jews of Newport, "not like ours known by their beards and clothes but dressed like other men, and their women are in the same French style as the women of other religions".[85]

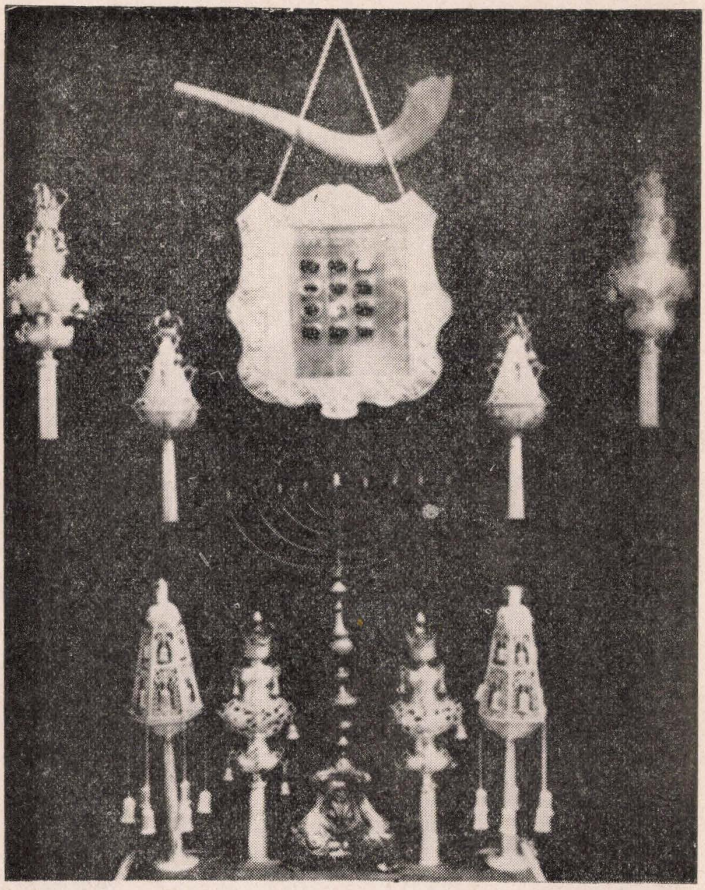
During this time, there were a number of conversions of Christians to Judaism. Stiles speaks of such conversions, and the manner in which they were performed,

namely by circumcision and ritual bath - *Mikvah.*[86]

The wells and large cistern still preserved in the courtyard of the synagogue are testimony to the existence of a public ritual bath in that vicinity. Stiles describes the *Mikvah* - ritual bath - as a "Bagnio (bath) where there are Stairs to the Bottom where one stands to his neck in Water".[87]

The ritual bath was not used only for proselytes. "More strict Jews", adds the diarist, "baptize religiously by trine Immersion three Times a year, at Passover, & I think Pentecost, & Day of Atonement; that is, it is a religious Purification with them"; but, he adds, "such strictness is not exacted".[88]

For the last two thousand years, Israel has been hoping and praying for the Messiah. The Messianic idea has become so fixed in Jewish life that its belief was incorporated in the thirteen creeds of the Jew compiled by the great Jewish philosopher Maimonides. The Jews of Newport, as traditional Jews, believed and hoped in the Advent of the Messiah in their own time. This belief had been inculcated in them during their sufferings in Spain and Portugal, and was aroused especially at this time by some contemporary calculations and computations, communicated to them through New York by Jewish travelers. The Jews of New York expected the Advent of the Messiah in the year 1768, and they were greatly disappointed when he did not come as they had expected. Their belief was based on some computations of prophetic numbers by contemporary rabbis, which had been brought to New



Silver ornaments and other ritual objects of the Synagogue, dating from pre-Revolutionary times.

York by two traveling Jews who came there from Constantinople.[89].

Speculations as to the date of the coming of the Messiah went on in Newport as well. Stiles, who was interested in this speculation, though from another point of view, wrote on August 10, 1769: "This day one of the Jews showed me a computation of one of the present Rabbins of Germany: wherein he makes "Time, Times, and half" to denote the space from the last Destructn. of the Temple to its Restorn. and Return of XII Tribes. Times he calls "Seventy Semitots", or 490 years, Times 980, half 245, total 1715 years, ending he says, A. D. 1783, when the Messias is expected".[90]

Here he adds an interesting note of Jewish custom in Newport.

"The Jews are wont in Thunder Storms to set open all their Doors and Windows for the coming of the Messias.

"Last Hail Storm, 31 July, when Thunder, Rain and Hail were amazingly violent, the Jews in Newport threw open Doors, Windows, and employed themselves in Singing and repeating Prayers, etc. for meeting Messias".[91]

Many Jews were also at this time interested in finding the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel,[92] whom many believed to be the Indians, or who at least were thought to have come to America.

The Jews of Newport were often recipients of letters from abroad, asking for financial assistants. They were especially interested in their suffering brethren in

Palestine from where they received emissaries as well as communications at different times. Stiles in his diary under date March 26, 1771, alludes to one such letter received by Isaac Hart from Hebron. This letter, signed by four people, was dated at Hebron in the year 5523, corresponding to 1763, and recounted the sufferings of the Jews in the Holy Land, and the heavy taxation they were subjected to. In the letter it was also stated that in order to meet the heavy tax of "25,000 Pieces of Eight", which was put on them, they had "send forth two Brethren to collect it by Contributions".[93]

One of these emissaries might have been the Rabbi Samuel A. Cohen, who spent considerable time in Newport in the interest of his Palestinian brethren. A contemporary account records that: "Samuel A. Cohen, *saliah* of Hebron, on his way to America was accorded leave, *Nissan* 25, 5533, (1773) by the *mahamad* of Amsterdam, to print a manifesto which he intended to publish on his arrival in the New World".[94]

We have reason to believe that the response of the Newport Jews to the appeal from the Holy Land was generous. A record surviving from that time in the ledger of Daniel Gomez bears out this belief. Under date October 3, 1770, this ledger records that 25 pounds and 12 shillings were received from "Road" Island for "the Holley Congregation of Hebron".[95] Other instances of the interest in Newport with regard to Palestine are not failing.[96]

Some of the Newport Jews were also recipients of letters from Europe soliciting financial assistance.

Among these were Aaron Lopez and Jacob Rodrigues Rivera who received letters from Cadiz, Spain.[97]

Nor should the assistance given to Jewish projects in other colonies be forgotten. Amongst the contributors towards the building of the Mikveh Israel Synagogue in Philadelphia (1782) were Moses Seixas sen., Moses Seixas, the Lopez and Rivera families, Joseph Jacobs and many more, all of Newport. Hayim Solomon's contribution excepted, the Newport Jews seemed to have contributed the most.[98]

The following is a letter sent from Newport to Congregation *Shearith Israel* of New York, to introduce two poor men Abraham and M. Cohen and it shows the charitable customs then prevailing among the Jewish communities:

Newport, Rhode Island, 26th May, 1761

Gentlemen

The Bearrers Messrs Abraham and Mathias Cohen Arrived here Last week in Capt Cuzzins from Savanah Lamar in the Island of Jamaica, and were recommended to us by the *Gabay* of that Congregation as objects of Charity, and as Such I take the Liberty to recommend 'em to you & your Congregation - They have with them their Credentials from the Several Congregats to the Same Effect, We on our parts have Contrebuted as much as the Nature of our affairs would admit of at this time and Considering we Our Selves Are petitioners, hope their Successes in this Undertaking May Answer their Expectation - wch is the Sincear wishes of

Gentlemen your Most Obedient & humble Servts
Naph Hart Parnas [99]

But charity always begins at home. One of the functions of the colonial congregations and synagogues was to act as Federation of Charity. The Newport Congregation had a well managed Charity Fund, which was dispensed with generosity to the needy of the community as well as to many tired wayfarers who found their way to Newport. In the business ledger of Daniel Gomez, alluded to above, there is an entry which reads "Newport en Rodisland La Santa Sedaca De", and dates from 1756.[100] In the family Bible of Moses Seixas, there is found an entry, "Martha Lazarus alias Moravia, Died Thursday, 12 July 1787, 26th *Tamuz* 5547. She having been a pensioner of the *Sedaka* 6 years and 9 months and cost about 1500 dollars".[101] Jacob Rivera bequeathed in his last will a sum of money to be distributed among "the Poor of the Jewish Society in Newport".[102]

The Jewish community of Newport not only provided *Kosher* food for its own use but also for Jewish communities elsewhere on this continent. From Newport, *Kosher* food products were exported to Surinam, Barbados and Jamaica. The shipping books of Lopez, Rivera and others reveal shipments of "Jew Beef", to Barbados; "*Casher Fatt*", "*Casher* Tongues" and "*Casher* Cheeses" to Surinam,[103] Surinam also received beef and other meat products, and so did Jamaica.[104] When the products left Newport, they were certified as *Kosher* by the proper Jewish authorities in

Old Matzo Board, preserved at the Synagogue, used for the preparation of the dough for the Matzos.

the town, and the certification was done within the walls of the synagogue. Such a certification has been preserved for us. It was written originally in Spanish, and it reads: "I, the undersigned, certify that the 40 kegs of beef and two geeze pickled that are shipped by Mr. David Lopez on Board of the brigantine called Hannah, Captain William Howland, from this port for Surinan marked over the covers with the mark stamped *Kosher* M. B. and inside with four pieces of tape with the mark *Kosher* on each cover, are *Casser,* and that any Jew may without the least scruple eat of them; as they are prepared according to our holy law, and that is true I sign this with my hand in Newport, Rhode Island on the 23rd of Elul of the year 5547 in the Holy Congregation Jeshuat Israel" [105]

The Certificate of *Kashruth* was, as a rule, signed by the Minister of the Congregation, or the Shochet. In a letter to Isaac Pereira Mendes in Withywood, Jamaica, under date February 13, 1767, Aaron Lopez writes: "I have the pleasure to direct per Capt. James Potter bound for St. Ann's in a brig of mine. He will forward you the same with the few small articles as per inclosed Invo. which I have taken the Liberty to trouble you with by way of Tryall; should it happen the Meat etc. is approved of & sells to any advantage I can supply larger Quantities. Annexed You'll find our *Hazan's* certificate of their being duly put up". [106]

The Unleavened Bread - *Matzo* - for Passover was likewise prepared under the supervision of the Minster within the walls of the synagogue. The side building

of the synagogue was provided with an oven for the specific purpose of baking *Matzoth* for Passover.[107]

The kneading board has been preserved to this day in the side room of the synagogue, and is testimony to this traditional communal custom. Tradition has it that the Jews gathered at the synagogue for a communal *Seder,* symbolic of the communal offering of the Pascal Lamb. This gathering was a relic of the days of the Inquisition, when the Marranos were forced to assemble secretly, in hidden underground places, to celebrate the Seder together.

The Marrano traditions appear in the inscriptions on some of the tombstones of this period. Of the ten tombstones between 1761 and 1767, two bear inscriptions in Spanish, one in Portuguese and there is even one in Latin, besides the usual Hebrew and English. Some of these inscriptions are interesting enough to be repeated.

The Spanish epitaph on the tombstone of Mrs. Rachel Rodrigues Rivera may be put into English to the following effect:

> "Here lieth the very honored and virtuous Mrs. Rachel Rodrigues Rivera, who died on Sabbath, 3d of Veadar 5521, which corresponds to the 14th March, 1761. May her blessed soul enjoy Divine glory. Amen".[108]

The age of the deceased on this stone is expressed in Latin, "AEtatis sui 77"

The tombstone of Abigail Lopez bears a Latin inscription as follows:

"Whatever remains after death of Abigail Lopez is here. She was distinguished for virtue and lively charity, A faithful wife and companion. The tenderest of parents, Died 21st *Iyar* in the year of the world 5522, Which is, the 14th of May 1762 of the Vulgar era".

The Hebrew inscription on the tomb of Abraham Rodrigues Rivera, after giving the name of the deceased and the day and date of his demise, reads as follows:

"Reposing here in peace beneath this sod of humble earth
Lies one, who wise of head and just, possessed exalted worth
Till old and full of years he lived, esteemed, beloved by all
Because his way was perfect and he heeded duty's call
Beneficent as Abraham, he constantly relieved
The woes of poor and needy, afflicted and bereaved;
He shines now with effulgent light a denizen above
In realms reserved for all who here revere a God of Love".[109]

So they lived and so they died these Jewish Pioneers of America who lived in Newport prior to the American Revolution. They lived honorable lives and they were lovingly remembered when they passed into the world of Eternity. They lived not only for themselves but also for posterity. What they built, we have inherited. The heritage we have received, spells their immortality.

CHAPTER VII

VISITORS

Eighteenth Century Newport attracted to its shores many notable Jewish personalities, most of whom left an impression on the spiritual life of the community, Between the time the foundation of the synagogue was laid and shortly before the American Revolution, Dr. Ezra Stiles met at least six visiting rabbis. Of these at least three preached at the synagogue and one Rabbi Carregal seems to have occupied for a short while the position of rabbi of the Congregation.[1]

The first rabbi of Stiles' acquaintance was Rabbi Moses Malki. He came to Newport from New York in 1759.[2] Rabbi Malki was born in Safed, Palestine and there he was educated. He was an emissary from the Palestine Jews and came to America to gather funds.

In the minutes of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York, there is a record of another rabbi who visited Newport as a transient on his way to Surinam. This was in 1765. The reference reads: "4th *Kisleu* 5526 at a meeting of the *Parnasim* & Assistance the following was Agreed to & resolved - That after Rabbi Joseph Israel has preached his Sermon he is to be dispatcht by first oppty. to Newport in order to take

passage for Surinam".[3]

Stiles makes no mention of Rabbi Joseph Israel. The second rabbi of his acquaintance was Rabbi Moses Bar David whom Dr. Stiles describes as an "*Ashkenazi aet.* 52".[4] Rabbi Moses Bar David visited Newport in 1772. The Christian divine, who was always visited by the rabbis, paid his respects to Rabbi Moses by visiting him first. He describes this visit himself and speaks of this rabbi with great awe. The first reference to Rabbi Moses in the diary occurs under the date November 9, 1772, and reads "This Forenoon I visited a learned Jew in Town and on his Travels. He is really a Rabbi. His title is: The Doctor our Doctor the great Rabbi, Moses the Son of David, an *Ashcanazim* of little Poland, of the holy Synagogue at Apta."

Rabbi Moses as appears from the scrupulously kept records of Dr. Stiles, might have been a *Chassidic* rabbi. Stiles' translation of his title is familiar to us in Hebrew as *'Moreh Moreinu, Harav Hagon',* which is the title given both to a renowned rabbi, and to a *Chassidic* rabbi.[5]

Rabbi Moses returned Stiles' visit the same day, coming in the company of the Reverend Mr. Touro. Stiles and the visiting divine spoke about the latter's travels; and they discussed the Talmud and Rabbinic literature. When Stiles showed Rabbi Moses the *Zohar,* the latter was much delighted and spoke of it "with raptures of the Sublimity and Mysteries of its Contents". According to Stiles, Rabbi Moses thought of the *Zohar* as containing the greatest philosophy in the world.[6]

The Zohar is often spoken of as the Bible of

Chassidism in its purest sense. It contains the very essence of *Kabbalah.* In form it is a commentary on the Pentateuch, written in Aramaic. It is ascribed to Rabbi Simeon Bar Yochai, though it is actually of much later authorship.[7] Stiles was satisfied with the traditional assignment of the work to Rabbi Simeon Bar Yochai. Chassidism was very much interested in the study of *Kabbalah,* and more particulary in the study of the *Zohar* which contains the heart of *Chassidic* ideology and teaching.

During his visit in Newport, Rabbi Moses amongst other things instructed the Christian divine in the *Zohar.* They also discussed the Messiah, angels, and general subjects that would be of mutual concern to mystics. The Polish Rabbi did not remain long in Newport. After staying about five weeks, he sailed for the West Indies, December 14, 1772.

Visitors from Poland were not uncommon. Many are familiar, of course, with the great Revolutionary Jewish patriot and financier of the Colonial Armies, Haym Solomon, a Polish Jew from Lissa. His contribution to the establishment of the United States is recorded in the annals of Philadelphia, where he lived. It may be of interest to note that Newport, too, was honored by a visitor from Solomon's home town, Lissa, Poland. Stiles records meeting a Jew from Lissa by the name of "Abraham Levi, Aet. 44", who visited Newport, and, of course, made Stiles' acquaintance. Abraham Levi is described as very pious and learned and a man with whom Stiles naturally discussed religious matters.[8]

In 1773, there came to Newport another rabbi who occupies a notable exalted position in colonial American Jewish History, Rabbi Isaac Hayim Carregal. Rabbi Carregal spent the greater part of the year in Newport, and he probably occupied the official position of Rabbi and Preacher of the Congregation Yeshuat Israel. He is spoken of by Stiles in that fashion.

From the pen of Stiles we have a minute description of Rabbi Carregal, even as to his wearing apparel and personal appearance. "He is a large man, neat and well dressed in Turkish habit", remarks the diarist. "He had a long black Beard, the upper lip partly shaven, his Head shaved all over",[9] recalls the diarist at a later date. Of his wearing apparel and dress he has the following to say: "Common English Shoes, black Leather, Silver flowered Buckles, White Stockings. A green Silk Vest or long under Garment reaching down more than half the legs or within 3 inches of the Ankles, the ends of the Sleeves of this Vest appeared on the Wrists in a foliage Turn-up of 3 inches, & the Opening little longer that the hand might pass freely. A Girdle of Sash of different Colors red and green girt the Vest around his body. It appeared not to be open at the bottom but to come down like a petticoat; and no Breeches could be discovered. This Vest however had an opening above the Girdle - and he put in his Handkerchief, and Snuff-box, and Watch. Under this was an inner Vest of Calico, besides other Jewish Talismans. Upon the Vest first mentioned was a scarlet outer Garment of Cloth, one side of it was Blue, the outside scarlet: it reached down about

an Inch lower than the Vest, or near the Ankles. It was open before, no range of Buttons &c. along the Edge, but like a Scholars Gown in the Body but plain and without many gatherings in the Neck, the sleeves strait or narrow and slit open 4 or 5 inches at the End, and turned up with a blue silk Quarter Cuff, higher up than at the End of the sleeve of the Vest. When he came into the Synagogue he put over all the usual Alb or white Surplice, which was like that of other Jews, except that its Edge was striped with Blue straiks, and had more Fringe. He had a white cravat round his Neck. On his Head a high fur (Sable) Cap, exactly like a Woman's Muff, and about 9 or 10 Inches high, the Aperture atop was closed with green cloth".[10]

The appearance of this rabbi is described as, "ingenious and sensible", his conduct, "modest and reverent".

Judging from the picture, one writer speaks about the physiognomy of Carregal as follows: "It is an expressive, intelligent face; the forehead broad and receding; the ears large, the eyes somewhat dreamy and lustreless; the beard apparently well trimmed and tapering to a point. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of all is his hand, whose delicately shaped fingers are almost like a woman's".[11]

Stiles admired the scholarship of Carregal, who spoke Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Chaldaic and Spanish. He also possessed a sufficient knowledge of many European tongues, especially English.

The friendship between Stiles and Carregal was very

brotherly. They spent hours together in conversation and study. Carregal even visited the former's church. Stiles was very much delighted with Carregal's society. Together they discussed the pronunciation of Hebrew words, the meaning of ambiguous expressions in the Hebrew scriptures, "the *Gemara;* the 2 Talmuds (of which he preferred the Babylonish) ; the Changes of the Hebrew Language in different Ages"; the Greek translation of the Bible; the Hebrew calendar; chronology of Jewish History; Semitic languages and customs; and scores of other subjects of religious or cultural substance and value.

Rabbi Carregal was a Palestinian born in Hebron, the fifteenth of October 1733. His father was Rabbi Moses Abraham Carregal, a prolific author who flourished in Palestine at the beginning of the 18th century. He began his Hebrew studies at the age of seven,[12] under learned masters; and, in 1750, at the age of seventeen, he was ordained *Chacham* or rabbi by the "Rabbins of Hebron".[13] By that time, he was well acquainted with half of the Talmud, which he had read and studied. He also had begun to preach.[14]

At the age of twenty, Rabbi Carregal began his travels, visiting Egypt, Turkey, Damascus, Aleppo, Bagdad, Italy, Austria, Bohemia, Germany, Holland, England, France, and other countries in Europe, Asia, and Africa. After a stay of two years in Curacao, where he occupied the position of rabbi "in room of one gone to Holland to finish his Studies", he returned to Europe and went back to the Holy Land. Later he went to

London, through France, where he tarried for four months in Paris. He arrived in London in 1768 and stayed there two and a half years, while teaching at the Beth Hamidrash for the annual salary of a hundred pounds sterling,[15] a notable sum at the time. From London he came again to America, first stopping in Jamaica for the summer of 1772, and then coming to New York where he remained five and a half months arriving in Newport on March 3, 1773. Upon his arrival in Newport, Rabbi Carregal was thirty nine years old.[16]

Rabbi Carregal was highly esteemed by the Jewish community. He was constantly in the company of the Reverend Isaac Touro and of Aaron Lopez. In the synagogue he occupied the seat at the upper end in the east. He enjoyed great authority, and during his stay in Newport, he was the guiding spirit of the Jewish community. The first Jewish sermon to be published in America was preached by Rabbi Carregal in the Newport Synagogue on *Shavuoth* in the year 1773.[17]

Another rabbi who made the acquaintance of Dr. Stiles was Rabbi Tobiah ben Jehudah. Rabbi Tobiah was in Newport in the latter part of 1773. He came from a city near Cracow in Poland. His age upon arrival was forty-eight. He was introduced to Dr. Stiles as "a New Rabbi from Polland". Rabbi Tobiah was the guest of Chazan Touro. He visited Dr. Stiles but did not find him home. Stiles promptly returned the visit, at which occasion, he partook of a meal at the home of the Reverend Mr. Touro. in the company of the

visiting rabbi. Stiles observed that "Just before they sat down to supper water was bro't by the Maid in a white earthern Bottle which stood in a Vase or Bason: they two washed their hands, taking up the bottle and pouring the Water on the hand". (He took this to correspond with Baptist's partial immersions)

After the meal, Stiles observed, that "each in a whispering Voice said Grace for himself."[18]

Rabbi Tobiah was a great Cabbalist and philosopher. He preferred these two studies to the study of the *Talmud.* At the age of eight, he went to Amsterdam, where he spent twenty-six years in pursuing his Hebrew studies.[19] Rabbi Tobiah informed Stiles that he "was of the Family and Ninth Descendent of Selomoh Ishaaci the celebrated Commentator, who died A. D. 1180".[20]

Rabbi Tobiah preached in the synagogue, on November 20th and 27th, and again on December 4th.[21] The last sermon, which took 56 minutes, was heard by Stiles, According to Stiles, Rabbi Tobiah preached in the Dutch language.[22]

Another rabbi who visited Newport was Rabbi Bosquilla. He came here from Smyrna in the Levant where he was born and educated.[23] For a time he resided in London and there he was ordained for the Rabbinate. He engaged in business at first, not practicing rabbinics at all. Rabbi Bosquilla was in Newport in 1774.

In 1775, a rabbi by the name Samuel Cohen visited Newport. He had come from Jerusalem, according to Stiles, three and a half years ago,[24] yet the acquaintance with Stiles dates from June 29, 1775. Rabbi Cohen

came to the town on behalf of the Jews in Hebron who were seeking assistance from their more fortunate brethren in America. Stiles refers to him as "aet. 34, was born & educated in the Holy Land & came from Hebron about 3 years ago. He is a priest, being of the family of Aaron. Very agreeable. His learning rather general than profound".[25]

Rabbi Samuel Cohen preached in the synagogue on the occasion of the Continental Fast ordered by Congress in Philadelphia and appointed by proclamation by the General Assembly of the Colony, July 20, 1775.[26] Rabbi Cohen seems also to have officiated at or after funerals in the mortuary chapel which was erected at the "offset of a hemproom of a ropewalk adjoining the burying-ground on the Western Side".[27]

Of Rabbi Cohen's departure from Newport there are interesting records, consisting of the communications between the Newport and New York Congregations which shared his expenses as to provisions and passage to London. The minutes of the New York Congregation preserve the following record: "The *Parnas* Presented a Letter he had recivd from Moses Levy, *Parnas* of the K. K. of Newport, Inclosing Severall Papers, from Hebron together with a Letter from the Revd. H. H. Samuel Cohen, requesting the Assistance of this congregation to relieve our distresd brethern of Hebron, and Mr. Moses Levy requesting Our Assistance in dispatching the Said H. H. Samuel Cohen to London as it would prevent their Sending the said *Haham* to this place, and the same being taken in Consideration,

Resolved That we will bear an Eaquall part with the Congregation of Newport in all the Expences toward maintaining and Dispatching the said H. H. to London and the *Parnas* is hereby Impowered to pay the Same".[28]

Moses Levy acknowledged with satisfaction the resolution of the New York Congregation. Accordingly Rabbi Cohen was able to sail drectly from Newport to London, the expense on the part of each Congregation being 31 pounds 8 shillings and 6 pence.[29]

This sharing of the expense of a traveling coreligionist does not seem to be an isolated case. The Minutes of the Shearith Israel Congregation reveal another instance of similar nature:

"*Ros Hades Tebeth* Anno 5535 (December 4, 1774).

"After the Yehidim were withdrawn, it was Resolved by the *Parnasim* and ajuntos then assembled, that a half Joe. be allowed Mr. Jacob Rods Rivera of Newport, Rhode Island web: be advanced towards the passage of Mr. Abm Solomons Blog from said place to Surinam".[30]

The Newport synagogue was also honored with a visit from the minister of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York, the Reverend Gershom Mendes Seixas. The Reverend Mr. Seixas was born in New York, Jan. 14, 1745.[31] His father was Isaac Mendes Seixas of Newport, to whom allusion has been made before.

The Reverend Mr. Seixas visited Newport in 1770 and officiated in the synagogue that year on August 27, and again on September 1st.[32] At the age of twenty-three he had been installed as *Chazan* of the New York

synagogue. He is often referred to as the "Patriot Rabbi". At the outbreak of the Revolution, he espoused the cause of the colonists, closing the synagogue in New York and removing the Scrolls first to Stamford, Connecticut, and then to Philadelphia where he officiated at the Congregation Mikveh Israel. He served as Trustee of Columbia College. Together with thirteen other clergymen, he participated in the Inauguration of George Washington as the first president of the United States of America. He served in the ministry of Israel over half a century and he was on excellent terms with the ministers of the other denominations, whose pulpits he occupied on various occasions.

The visits of so many spiritual leaders were of mutual benefit to Newport and the clergymen. The fame of Newport as an economic and cultural center attracted such visitors; and in their sojourn here, the visitors enriched Newport by their instruction, their learning, and their refinement.

CHAPTER VIII

THE JEW IN THE COMMUNITY

After the synagogue was built and dedicated, a period of great economic prosperity set in for Newport. This period has often been described as the "Golden Era of Newport". A contemporary has left us the following description of the city at this time: "Newport is a rich and pleasing sea and manufacturing city; it is large in circuit and the number of its houses runs close to two thousand. It has a beautiful and very long main street from which roofs one can see well the ships passing on the sea. It is a principle inlet to America since one can come to it on the sea as well as from all neighborhoods. One reckons Newport also among the richest cities in America".[1] The Jews contributed to a great extend and shared in this economic prosperity.

The spermaceti industry was planted in the colony by Jacob Rodrigues Rivera; the manufacure of potash was introduced by Moses Lopez; and that of Castile soap by James Lucena. All these were productive of much commercial activity, bringing about export and import with foreign ports, and extensive intercolonial trade. Fourteen years after Lopez settled in Newport, the city boasted 150 vessels, all engaged in foreign trade.[2] Of

these Aaron Lopez is said to have owned thirty vessels.[2] That Newport was the commercial rival of New York and Boston and other ports is attested by the statement: "he was thought a bold prophet who said then, that New York might one day equal Newport".[4] It may sound curious today, but from this time we have a letter addressed to "New York near Newport, Rhode Island".[5]

By 1770, the town of Newport contained about a thousand dwelling houses.[6] The manufacture of spermaceti candles boasted seventeen plants.[7] There were twenty-two distilleries, four sugar refineries, five ropewalks, and a number of furniture factories.[8]

The Jews identified their interests with those of the community. They often invited the other merchants and manufacturers to join in their projects of organization and combinations of Jews and non-Jews were numerous and successful. On November 5, 1761, for instance the Newport manufacturers entered into a "Spermaceti Candle Agreement", among whose signatories were Naph. Hart & Co. which included Samuel, Abraham and Isaac Hart; Aaron Lopez & Co.; and Collins & Rivera.[9]

The order of events is here interrupted by an unhappy incident, which has been the cause of much misunderstanding and misinterpretation.

The Jews of Newport desired to identify themselves with the city of Newport and the colony of Rhode Island not only in commercial enterprises but also in the duties and privileges of citizenship. To become a freeman or to be naturalized was the first aim of those

who had come to these shores. Moses Lopez and James Lucena are but two of many examples.

"At that time", says one chronicler, "there was no statute in Rhode Island requiring one to profess Christianity before he could have the privileges of a freeman".[10] In 1723, the British Parliament enacted that whenever any of His Majesty's subjects professing the Jewish religion should present themselves to take the oath of abjuration, the words "on the faith of a Christian", were to be omitted.[11] The Naturalization Act of 1740, as far as the Jews were concerned, provided, "Whereas the following Words are contained in the latter part of the Oath of Abjuration, videlicet, "upon the true Faith of a Christian", And whereas the people professing the Jewish Religion may thereby be prevented from receiving the Benefit of this Act, Be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That whenever any Person professing the Jewish Religion shall present himself to take said Oath of Abjuration in observance of this Act the Said Words 'upon the true faith of a Christian' shall be omitted out of the Said Oath in administering the same to such Person".[12]

Yet, when Aaron Lopez and Isaac Elizer, two of the foremost Jewish merchants of Newport applied for naturalizaion in 1762, though they based their application on the Act of Parliament in 1740, they were refused citizenship. At first the Superior Court referred the matter to the General Assembly. They in turn sent it back to the Court, which acted unfavorably on the application.[13] This action of the Court was altogether

contrary to the spirit of the colony and the laws governing it.

The decision of the Superior Court read:

"The petition of Messrs. Aaron Lopez and Isaac Elizer, persons professing the Jewish religion, praying that they may be naturalized on an act of Parliament, made in the 13th year of his late Majesty's reign, George II, having been duly considered, and also the act of Parliament therein referred to; this Court are unanimously of opinion that the said act of Parliament was wisely designed for increasing the number of the inhabitants in the plantations, but this colony, being already so full of people that many of His Majesty's good subjects, born within the same have removed and settled in Nova Scotia and other places, cannot come within the intention of said act. Further, by the charter granted to this colony, it appears that the free and quiet enjoyment of the Christian religion and a desire of propagating the same were the principal views with which this colony was settled, and by a law made and passed in the year 1663, no person who does not profess the Christian religion can be admitted free of this colony. This court, therefore, unanimously dismiss this petition as wholly inconsistent with the first principles upon which the colony was founded and a law of the same now in force".[14]

According to the Act of Parliament, these two petitioners had full right to naturalization. It can be observed that the court construed the Act of Parliament to suit their own purpose. If the colony was founded

as this court claimed for the sole "enjoyment of the Christian Religion", why was Abraham Campanal made a freeman in 1688? Why were Moses Lopez and James Lucena naturalized without question in 1753 and 1761, respectively? They too were Jews and confessed the Jewish faith openly. Besides, it is not probable that the colony of Rhode Island increased in numbers to such an extent within the year after 1761, when James Lucena was naturalized, that it could not accommodate any new citizens. Both Aaron Lopez and Isaac Elizer were already living in Newport as it was, and their naturalization would not have increased the population, even as the refusal of their application did not decrease the population.

This court decision drew criticism even from contemporaries. Ezra Stiles who was present in court and was very much disturbed by this action wrote:

"The Court previous to handling the Naturalization matter, had sentenced criminals to gallows and pillary.

"And then the Jews were called up to hear their almost equally mortifying sentence of Judgement which dismissed their Petition for Naturalization. Whether this was designedly, or accidental in proceeding upon the Business of Court, I dont learn. But this I remark, that Providence seems to make everything to work for the mortification to the Jews to prevent their incorporating into any Nation; that thus they may continue a distinct people".[15]

We note at once, in Stiles, the attitude of the clergyman. The real reason for this unhappy incident,

which seems to mar the beautiful picture of religious liberty and equality in Rhode Island since its inception, is best given by another historian of the colony.

Arnold in his History of the State of Rhode Island claims, probably correctly, "We know of but one cause that can explain all this, in a single word, party spirit". He ascribes it to the factional discord that existed between the Chief Justice and the Governor. Arnold continues his remarks by saying: "The charter of Rhode Island guaranteed, and the action of the colony uniformly secured, to all people perfect religious freedom". Because of this, he rightly condemns the decision of the Court, saying, "It subverts an act of Parliament, violates the spirit of the charter, enunciates principles never acted upon in the colony, and finally dismisses the case on a false issue".[16] It has also been described elsewhere as simply "bad law".[17]

Aaron Lopez was not discouraged by this action. He continued his trade in Newport, benefiting the city with his enterprises as heretofore. To obtain his citizenship he removed temporarily to Massachusetts. There he was naturalized, October 15, 1762, in the Superior Court of Judicature of Taunton, as a resident from Swansea and Newport.[18]

Upon his return from Swansea as a naturalized citizen, Aaron Lopez continued his shipping business to practically all the colonies and to numerous foreign ports. On April 13, 1763, he, together with other Jews, again joined in a Spermaceti Candle Agreement like that made in 1761.[19]

Newport's commercial and industrial prosperity grew daily. One can obtain the best view of the contribution of the Jews to this prosperity by an inspection of the shipping books of Aaron Lopez. Not all of the vessels set sail at the sole risk of Mr. Lopez. Many of his boats were sent to sea in partnership with other merchants, Jewish and non-Jewish. Upon examination we find that the vessels of Lopez left Newport for Newfoundland, Baltimore, New York, Dartmouth, Surinam, Norwich, West India Islands, Jamaica, Philadelphia, North Carolina, Boston, Madeira, Lisbon, Gibraltar, The Jerseys, Savanna la mar, Gaspee, Cape Nicholas, the Coast of Africa, Georgia, Cape Francois, Amsterdam, and Curacao.[20]

The names of some of the vessals are interesting: *Ship Jacob, Sloop Abigail, Brig Hannah,* and other names like, *Active, Cleopatra, Friendship, Betsey, Providence, Polly, Henry, Neptune, Cupid, Ann, Peace & Plenty, Sally, Eagle, Venus, Hope,* and *Humbird.*[21]

Among the goods shipped to various colonies were: "New England rum, cordials, wheat, peas, oats, smoked salmon, boards, broad cloth, bearskin, rateen, sheeting, frying-pans, powder, nails, earthenware, pepper, coffee, tea, flax, hard soap, hats, plates, pewter basons, wood-axes, snuff, looking glasses, wine, mahogany, potatoes, different currencies, hay, sugar, cheese", and numerous other commodities from needles to riding carriages.[22]

It is interesting to note that Newport exported to the West Indies: Live geese, horses and turkeys, codfish,

white and red oak staves, water casks, besides various spermaceti oils, candles and soaps.

Great Britain received from Newport: Pig iron, copper, white oak mahogany, logwood, white, yellow and brown spermaceti oil.

Surinam, Curacao and Jamaica received: strained oil, casher fat, live sheep, smoked beef, onions, shad, canes, penknives, broad-cloth, thimbles, silver buckles, codfish, bass, mackerel, herring, staves and shingles, salt, tar, lamp oil, flax seed, spermaceti candles and other items too numerous to be repeated.[23]

Madeira, Lisbon, and Gibraltar were furnished from Newport with codfish, cocoa, bees-wax, pipe staves, oak-hoops, mahogany, logwood, Indian corn, rye, barley, oats, hay, tar, and spermaceti candles.[24]

Africa received: New England rum, Lisbon wine, Madeira wine, cordials, loaf sugar, brown sugar, molasses, vinegar, flour, peas, tar, pitch, turpentine, tobacco, coffee, chocolate, pork, beef, bread, potatoes, hard soap, tallow and powder.[25]

It is obvious that much of the exports of Newport had been brought to Newport from foreign shores. The ships that sailed to Europe, Africa, South America and the West Indies, brought back many kinds of merchandise which were sold either in the home colony or in the other English colonies in North America. Newport served as an export and an import clearing-house, and many of the Jews were its agents.

Among the imports to Newport by the Jewish merchants, seldom if ever were there slaves. We have

met with no instances where the Jews of Newport traded in black slaves.

Newporters in general did not make extensive use of slave labor. Governor Cranston wrote to the British Board of Trade in England: "The inclination of our people in general is to employ white servants before Negroes".[26] In the numerous advertisements in the contemporary newspapers, the offer to buy or sell slaves occurs rarely. The decline in the number of slaves was noticed early in the eighteenth century.[27] and it is remarkable to note that during the census of 1774, at the time the community had reached the peak of its financial prosperity, among the entire Jewish population which included some of the wealthiest citizens in town, there were but 30 servants recorded, and among these many white ones.[28] Many of the Jewish people specifically stipulated that after their death their servants (slaves) were to be set free. In some instances bequests of money were made to these servants so as to enable them to fend for themselves.[29]

The extent of Lopez's commercial enterprises may be estimated from the fact that among the 445 letters, sailing orders, invoices, bills of lading and trading agreements pertaining to Rhode Island commerce between 1726 and 1774, published by the Massachusetts Hitorical Society, 225 relate directly to Aaron Lopez.

In their business dealings, the Jewish merchants and manufacturers were exact and punctilious. This secured the high regard and respect for the Jew from his Christian neighbors.

In a eulogy on the death of Mrs. Rivera, "A Christian" in a Newport newspaper, referring to Mr. Rivera wrote: "Jacob Rodrigues Rivera of the Jewish Religion, was an eminent merchant in Newport, Rhode Island, and long and very much respected for his integrity and benevolence. In course of events he failed in business, and took the benefit of the insolvent, or bankrupt act, and obtained the customary certificate from his creditors. He again entered into business, and in the course of years, became once more a man of property, but could not remain easy until he paid all his former creditors the utmost farthing".[30]

The story goes that, after Jacob Rodrigues Rivera had regained some of his wealth, he arranged a banquet to which he invited all his former creditors. When all were seated at the banquet table and had removed the napkins from the plates, they found a check for the amount of their debts, together with interest on the money for the entire time.

It was this and other incidents of like character that called forth the remark of another observer, "The Jews and Christians who lived here side by side cultivated the most friendly relations, and prospered and grew rich together".[31] The Christian eulogist alluded to above continues: "It is to the honor of our country that a zealous and conscientious Jew, and an equally conscientious Christian should retain for each other a boundless confidence and mutual respect". He concludes: "Reflecting on the excellent character and benevolent conduct of these worthy gentlemen of the Hebrew

may we not be allowed to use the words of that Divine Jew, who said to his followers, 'Go and do so likewise' ".[32]

The Jews of Newport, well as they served the colony in its trade and manufactures, contributed also to the developement of its art. The City of Newport and all America are indebted to the Jewish pioneers of pre-Revolutionary days for their encouragement of Gilbert Stuart, the celebrated painter. Stuart was born near Newport, December 3, 1755. He possessed the latent ability to paint and to paint well. This gift was early recognized by the Newport Jews, many of whom were patrons of art. The genius of Stuart was early exhibited in portraits of some of the eminent Jews of Newport, especially of the family of Lopez.[33]

The Jews participated in the social life of the community through various organizations, especially in the Masonic Lodge. Clubs and societies were much in vogue in eighteenth century Newport. We have followed the organization of the Philosophical Society and the Redwood Library. In 1752 Newport saw the formation of a new organization, "The Fellowship Club".[34] Other similar groups sprang up at the same time, but by far the most important was the Masonic Lodge.

The record relating to the Jews in Newport in 1658 speaks of granting "the degree of Maconrie", to Abraham Moses. It is now accepted amongst historians of the Masonic Order that the craft and rites of Masonry were introduced in America by the fifteen Jewish families who arrived in Newport in 1658.[35] Just as

religious services were held in private homes in those days, so the degrees of Masonry were worked in private houses. Often the performance of one followed that of the other.[36] Yet the craft in general was not widespread until the middle of the eighteenth century.

Freemasonry, as a regularly established institution in the colonies through duly constituted lodges deriving their authority from the Grand Lodge of England, dates back to 1727.[37] Newport saw the organization of a regularly constituted lodge in 1749. This was St. John's Lodge.[38] It may well be that this lodge had been constituted somewhat earlier, perhaps in 1747.[39] It was only natural that the Jews, who had an ancestral connection with the introduction of Masonry in America, should flock to the newly organized Masonic Lodge. Thus among the earliest members of the Lodge in Newport, we find several outstanding Jewish citizens of the community.

On the list of the earliest members of St. John's Lodge are the following Jews: Moses Isaacs, Isaac Isaacs, Jacob Isaacs, David Lopez, Moses Lopez, Isaac Elizer, Eleazer Elizer, Moses M. Hays, David Lopez, Jr., Solomon Aaron Myers, Abraham P. Mendez, Moses Seixas, Jacob Jacobs and Barak Hays.[40]

Masonry was so popular in Newport that in 1780 another Lodge was constituted here, by the name "King David's Lodge". King David's Lodge was altogether of Jewish origin and was originally organized in New York in 1769 by Moses Michael Hays and later removed by him to Newport.[41]

The members of King David's Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in 1780 included: Moses Michael Hays, Moses Seixas, Solomon Aaron Myers, Joseph Jacobs, Eleazer Elizer, Moses Isaacs, Isaac Isaacks, Isaac Elizer, S. Simpson, Samuel Levy, Abm. Pollock, David Lopez, Jacob Francks, Moses Lopez, Nathaniel Phillips and Daniel Phillips.[42]

The Reverend Isaac Touro was himself a Mason.[43] Indeed in examining the names of the members of the Jewish community of Newport, it would be hard to find one who was not a Mason.

In the beginning, the outstanding Jewish member of the fraternity was undoubtedly Moses Michael Hays. The next in fame and popularity was Moses Seixas.

Moses Michael Hays is prominently identified with the introduction into the United States of the "Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite", of Masonry.[44] In 1768 he was appointed Deputy Inspector General of Masonry for North America by Henry Andrew Francken, who had been commissioned by Stephen Morin of Paris acting under the authority of Frederick II of Prussia who was the Grand Master of Masons of Europe and held jurisdiction over America.[45] Hays was granted the power to appoint another Deputy Inspector.[46] The grant of such extraordinary powers and distinction to a Jew was indeed at the time a great honor to the Jewish people in general and in particular to the Jewish community of Newport where Hays resided. When King David's Lodge was constituted in Newport, Moses Michael Hays was the Master; Moses Seixas, Senior

Warden; David Lopez, Junior Warden; and Solomon Aaron Myers, Deacon.[47] Mr. Hays held many other high offices in the Order in this and other states.

To complete the picture of the Jew in the community, it remains to be said that, closely associated as they were with the social, cultural, and economic life of their non-Jewish neighbors in the city, they also organized their own societies. In 1761 some of the leading Jews in town organized what may be considered the first Jewish Men's Club in America. This organization was solely for social purposes. The discussion of synagogue affairs at any of the gatherings of the club was prohibited and was actually punishable according to the rules and regulations of the by-laws. Though every member of it can be identified as having been amongst the first members and builders of the synagogue, the club had no express connection with the Congregation. Meeting nights were Wednesdays during the winter months beginning in the afternoon at five o'clock. The procedure at the meetings and social hours is revealed by a copy of the rules:

First. — The club is to be held every Wednesday evening during the winter season. The members to be nine in number; and by the majority of votes a chairman to be elected to serve one month only.

"Second. — After one month, or four club nights, a new chairman to be elected in the manner aforesaid.

"Third. — No person to be admitted as a member of said club without approbation of the members.

"Fourth. — Each of the members shall have liberty to invite his friends to the club, well understood, one at a time only.

"Fifth — The hours of the club to be from 5 to 10, in the manner following: From 5 to 8 each member is at liberty to divert

at cards, and in order to avoid the name of a gaming club, the following restrictions shall be strictly observed viz: That no member shall presume or offer to play for more than twenty shillings at whist, picquet or any other game besides his club; on proof of gaming for any more, the member or members so offending shall pay the value of four bottles good wines for the use and benefit of the ensuing club night.

"Sixth. — At eight of the clock the supper (if ready) to be brought in. At ten the club to be adjusted and paid, and no cards or any other game shall be allowed after supper.

"Seventh. — After supper if any of the members have any motion to make relating to the club he must wait till the chairman has just drank some loyal toast.

"Eighth. — That none of the members shall . . . . during . . . . . conversation relating to Synagogue affairs, on the forfeit of the value of four bottles good wine for the use as aforesaid.

"Ninth. — If any of the members should behave unruly, curse, swear or offer fight, the chairman shall levy such fine as he sees fit, not exceeding, for each offence, four bottles good wine for the use aforesaid.

"Tenth. — If any of the members happen to be sick or absent, by acquainting Mr. Myer with the same, shall be exempt from paying anything towards the club, but if no notice given as aforesaid, shall pay his quota of the supper only.

"Eleventh. — If any of the members does not meet at club nights, and can't offer sufficient reason for so doing, the chairman with the members shall determine if he or they are to pay the proportion of the whole club, or the quota of supper only.

"Twelfth. — If any of the members neglect coming to club three nights successively without being sick or absent, shall be deemed unwilling, consequently his name shall be erased from the list, not to be admitted during the season without the consent of the chairman and all the members.

"Thirteenth. — Every member after signing the articles, and not willing afterwards to conform to the same, his or their names

shall be erased out of the list, and no more to be admitted during the season.

"In witness whereof the members of said club have signed their respective names the day and year above written.

Moses Lopez	Moses Levy
Isaac Polock	Issacher Polock
Jacob Isaacs	Naph't Hart, Jr.
Abr'm Sarzedas	Jacob Rods. Rivera.
Nap't Hart.	

"Fourteenth. — At a club held the 16th day of December, 1761, it is resolved and agreed by the chairman and the majority of all the members that these articles be inserted amongst the rules of said club, viz:

"That in case the chairman is not at the club, the secretary, for the time being, shall take his place, and the same obedience shall be paid him as if the chairman was present, and to be invested with equal authority. As also the said secretary is hereby empowered to nominate with the concurrence of the members then present, a secretary to supply his place for the time being; and that every month a secretary shall be elected in the same manner and form as the chairman is elected".

In such manner lived the Jews of the eighteenth century community of Newport. Their lives were meaningful and not empty. They had identified themselves with important movements in town. Above all, they had devoted themselves to the cultivation of Jewish religious life which they esteemed highly and practiced fruitfully, while joining with their neighbors without prejudice or hindrance, always mindful of their special Jewish duties and privileges.

CHAPTER IX

UPROAR, DISPERSION AND DECLINE

The peace and serenity of Newport, and with it the city's economic prosperity, were interrupted by what proved to be the decisive event in the history of the colonies - - the American Revolution. The American Revolution was not a sudden occurrence. Its coming had been anticipated by many enactments of the British Parliament and of the Colonial Governments. The British Parliament as early as the 17th century passed Navigation Acts,[1] which attempted to control American commerce in its foreign as well as in its intercolonial aspects. "Taxation without Representation" was a phrase well-known long before the blood shed at Lexington was to free the colonies from the British yoke and ultimately lead to independence.

Yet all this did not prevent the city of Newport from becoming one of the most thriving cities of the time. On the eve of the Revolution, the prediction that Newport would become the metropolis of the New World was being realized. Beside the various oil and sugar refineries, candle and furniture factories, distilleries, breweries, ropewalks and other factories in the city, from five to six hundred vessels traded from this

port.[2] Of these about 200 engaged in foreign trade, riding the seven seas of the world and reaching ports in all known parts of the globe. Over 200 vessels were engaged in coastwise and intercolonial commerce. Newport was a clearing house of all products consumed in the colonies; and in many foreign countries Newport products were indispensable.

By 1770 six religious denominations in Newport claimed ten houses of worship, some of which were among the most beautiful buildings in the colony. The various religious institutions prospered spiritually and financially. A library, a newspaper, bookshops, and a number of fraternal, social and educational organizations were flourishing. The beauty of the surroundings caused Newport to be styled "the Garden of America", and attracted to its shores each summer numerous wealthy inhabitants of the Southern colonies and the West Indies. Extensive commerce invited visitors from abroad and caused many families from the West Indies and Europe to take up their permanent residence in the town. Amongst them were men of learning and refinement.

On the eve of the Revolution, the city boasted a population of 11,000, amongst whom were some of the most educated and refined people in the country, "celebrated for their hospitality to strangers, and extremely genteel and courtly in manners". A visitor was surprised to find "the whole mass of society much better informed in general literature, than any", he has, "met in any part of the world".[3]

Abraham Touro as a child during the Revolution.

It is therefore not surprising that, contemplating the loss through the aggressive policy of Great Britain of all the liberty and happiness they enjoyed in this colony, the people in their first impulse turned to God. In 1774 the General Assembly resolved, "Whereas the Supreme Being, upon account of our manifold sins, may have permitted the present invasions of American liberty, and every public evil with which we are threatened, it is therefore voted and resolved that Thursday, the thirtieth day of this instant June be set apart as a day of public fasting, prayer and supplication, throughout this colony, to beseech Almighty God to grant sincere repentance; to avert threatened judgement from us, and restore us to the full enjoyment of our rights and privileges".[4]

The Day of Public Fasting and Prayer was solemnly observed by all congregations in Newport, including the Congregation Yeshuat Israel. The congregation of the Church of England heard Mr. Bisset the minister preach a "high Tory Sermon inveighing (by allusions) against Boston and New England as a turbulent ungoverned people". All other congregations were heartily in favor of the cause of liberty.[5]

The General Assembly of Rhode Island was not content with lip service. The same Assembly that resolved that each and everyone should fast and pray for liberty also resolved at the same time "Whereas the inhabitants of America also generally engaged in the preservation of their own right and liberties, among which that of personal freedom must be considered as the greatest; as those who are desirous of enjoying all

the advantages of liberty themselves should be willing to extend personally liberty to others". This was the preamble to the resolution, which prohibited the importation and trade of Negroes into the colony, which was perhaps the first step towards the abolition of slavery in America.

At this time there were but six organized Jewish communities in North America, namely, those in Newport, New York, Philadelphia, Savannah, Richmond and Charleston. There were some Jews in other colonies, but they were not in sufficient numbers to organize congregations.[6] In Reading, Pennsylvania, there seems to have been, even at this time, a sufficient number to hold public services.[7] Yet, no permanent congregations were organized in any places except those mentioned. Of these, the Newport Jewish community was the largest and most prosperous; and the synagogue of the Newport Congregation was the most beautiful.[8]

With the exception of a few isolated individuals, the Jews in the colonies espoused the cause of American liberty. To do so was daring in view of the uncertain consequences of the war. The Jews living in the colonies were not all freemen or citizens. In fact they were not even allowed to reside in some of the colonies. In others they were considered aliens. Even in the most liberal, they held no office whatsoever in any of the governmental agencies. With Great Britain's superior strength and the very doubtful unity of the colonists; and with the early predictions of certain English victory, it was indeed a courageous act on the part of the Jews to

espouse the cause of the colonists against the mother country. A defeat of the colonists' cause would have spelled the ruin of the just planted North American Jewish community.

Yet the Jewish people staunchly advocated the cause of liberty, and were among the first to respond to the call to arms.

The struggle between the mother country and the colonies began much earlier than the battles of Lexington and Concord. War began as soon as Great Britian attempted to impose upon the colonies legislation which the Americans considered unjust. This war, however, was not a war of battles and arms, but what may be termed an economic war.

The first weapon of the economic war was the Non-Importation Agreement. In making this agreement the Jews played an important part. Amongst the signers of the Agreement, adopted in Philadelphia, October 25, 1765, there were no less than nine Jewish merchants. They were Benjamin Levy, Samson Levy, Joseph Jacobs, Hyman Levy, Jr., David Franks, Mathias Bush, Michael Gratz, and Moses Mordecai.[9] Thus the first battle against the tyranny of the mother country was fought with the aid of a proportionally great number of Jews.

The Jews of Colonial America not only put their signatures on patriotic papers, endangering their businesses, but they also took active part in the field carrying arms and fighting side by side with their fellow colonists. Financial aid to their adopted country was

not refused and there were times when Jewish money saved the American cause.[10]

The anticipation of conflict with Great Britain stirred the religious feeling of the General Congress at Philadelphia which body in July, 1755, ordered a Continental Fast Day throughout the United Colonies.[11] The General Assembly of Rhode Island joined in the prayers with the other colonists, and proclaimed the 20th of July, 1775, as a Public Fast Day. All the congregations in Newport, except the Church of England which held a short prayer meeting without sermon,[12] had special services during which time the ministers preached patriotic discourses. The Moravians held services throughout the day.[13]

The Congregation Yeshuat Israel joined their non-Jewish brethren in prayer and fasting on this solemn day, conducting a special patriotic service at the synagogue during which Rabbi Samuel Cohen of Jerusalem, a visitor in town from the Holy Land since the latter part of 1772, or early 1773, preached the sermon. He chose for his text the verses in Numbers, "Phineas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, hath turned My wrath away from the children of Israel, in that he was very jealous for My sake among them, so that I consumed not the Children of Israel in My jealousy. Wherefore say: Behold, I give unto him My covenant of peace".[14]

Would that the contents of the entire address had been preserved! It can only be inferred from the text of the sermon that the preacher uttered a strong and

hearty plea for peace, the time-honored message of the prophets of Israel, together with an urgent appeal for the preservation of the colonists who were often likened to the Children of Israel, as either being redeemed from Egypt, or in war with the Canaanites for the conquest of the land.[15]

The fasting and supplications only encouraged the colonies to be steadfast in the battle for freedom, and to uphold the cause of liberty. War was inevitable. The battle of Lexington had already taken place, and the Rhode Island General Assembly ordered an inventory to be taken of all the powder, arms and ammunition in the colony. Committees were appointed and ordered to collect all the saltpetre and brimstone they could lay their hands on. Every man capable of bearing arms was ordered to "equip himself completely with arms and ammunition", for the defence of the colony and the liberty of the colonists. Signal stations were established on high hills throughout the colony. The guns from Fort George were removed to Newport for immediate defence of the town; and no one at this time doubted the imminence of war. By October 1776 no less than 16 vessels, heavily armed and well manned, were sent out from Rhode Island to serve the cause of the American Revolution.[16]

The feeling for independence was so strong in Rhode Island that two months before the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed by the General Congress in Philadelphia the General Assembly of the colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations,

meeting in the Old State House in Providence, on May 4, 1776, passed a Declaration of Independence from the British Crown, thus making Rhode Island the oldest independent state in America. This act of Independence called forth the following comment. "The despondency and hesitation of the assembly of Pennsylvania was in marked contrast to the fortitude of Rhode Island, whose general assembly, on the fourth day of May 1776, passed an act, discharging the inhabitants of that colony from allegiance to the king of Great Britain..... The overturn was complete; the act was at once a declaration of independence and an organization of a self-constituted republic".[17] "Rhode Island, from that moment, became, and is at this day, the oldest sovereign and independent state in the western world".[18] Newport, it should be stated, had more officers and representatives at this meeting of the General Assembly than had any other town in the colony.

When the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed two months later on July 4, 1776, by General Congress in Philadelphia, the General Assembly of Rhode Island at its July session endorsed the Declaration and pledged the state to support the resolution of the General Congress "with our Lives and Fortune". The General Assembly then voted to call the state, "The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations", and also voted "That if any Person within this State, shall under Pretence of Preaching or praying, or in any other Way or manner whatever acknowledge

or declare the said King (of Great Britain) to be our rightful Lord and Sovereign or shall pray the Success of his Arms, or that he may Vanquish or overcome all his Enemies shall be deemed guilty of high Misdemeanor and shall therefore be presented by the G. Jury of the Co. where the Offence shall be Committed to the Sup. Court".[19]

The ministers of the Newport churches were held to account for this resolution of the Assembly. They were tested as to their sympathies with Great Britain. Mr. Bisset, the minister of the Church of England, not desiring to carry out the resolution because of his Tory sympathies, but fearing to violate it, held no services at all the following Sunday.[20] The services at the synagogue, however, were held as usual without interruption or interference. The Reverend Isaac Touro was the only minister in town not questioned nor molested in regard to this resolution. He was excused from this obligation because of being a foreigner.[21]

The fortitude of Rhode Island invited the anger of Great Britain. The Declaration of Independence by this colony was more than the English expected. It was the climax to the strife begun by the resistance to Acts of Parliament by the Non-Importation and Non-Exportation Agreements and by the "Tea Parties" in the several Colonies.

The conflict with Great Britain was a death blow to the prosperity of the city of Newport, and in particular to the Jewish community of the town. The factories gradually closed down; the extensive commerce and

foreign trade slowly died out; many people threatened by the impending invasion of the British left the city, and by December 8, 1776, when the City of Newport was actually occupied by the British, there was but a handful of people left in the town. Amongst these were very few Jews. Of the largest Jewish community in North America, of which Newport had boasted, there were left only Nathan Hart, Isaac Elizer, Isaac Hart, Moses Seixas, Hyman Levi, Moses Levy, and the Reverend Isaac Touro,[22] hardly enough to hold services at the synagogue. At this time the Harts lived on Jews Street (now Bellevue Avenue) in a house of five rooms rented from Metcalf Bowler. The Seixas and the Levy families lived on Griffin Street (now Touro Street) Reverend Isaac Touro lived on High Street.[23]

The Rabbis have always echoed the words of Jeremiah the Prophet in teaching their people to pray for the peace and welfare of the government under which they live. There is a definite rabbinic law which rules that, "the law of the country is the law".

The Jews of Newport in a spirit of patriotism joined the Colonial cause. Moses Isaacs, who later had the honor of entertaining General Washington in his home in Newport, joined the Revolutionary army.[24] Another Jew, probably of the same family, Abraham Isaacs,[25] followed suit. In his will, recorded in the probate records of this city, Abraham is described as a patriotic soldier of the Revolution.[26] Solomon Rophee,[27] joined the Revolutionary army in which he became an officer.[28] David Sarzedas, first lieutenant of Georgia's Brigade in the

Revolutionary war, was the grandson of Judah Hays and a nephew of Moses Michael Hays, both of Newport. Members of the Sarzedas family are recorded as Newport inhabitants in the official census of 1774, and are mentioned by Stiles as early as 1760. Abraham Seixas, a son of Isaac Mendes Seixas and a brother of Moses Seixas, both prominent in the annals of Newport, was also a patriot officer of the Revolutionary army. He figures in the military correspondence of the period. Samuel Benjamin of the 8th Massachusetts Regiment in which he served as First Lieutenant during the Revolution, was of the Benjamin family of Newport.[29]

In addition to active service in the army, the Jewish inhabitants of Newport contributed to the maintenance of the army and to the purchase of its ammunition. In 1776, the General Assembly of Rhode Island allowed Aaron Lopez the sum of 22 pounds for gunpowder and a whale boat, which he had contributed for the use of the colony.[30] Jacob Isaacs gave for the use of the colony in that same year "three-four pounders".[31] In 1780 though many non-Jewish residents refused to do so, Moses Levy and Moses Seixas put their signatures to the historic agreement that "We subscribers, Citizens, and inhabitants and Residents of the Town in Newport, Do hereby Associate and Agree with each other that We will to the utmost of Our Power and Ability Assist in the Defence of said Town against the King of Great Britain his Fleets and Armys in such a way and manner as we shall be called upon by the Commander in Chief within the Department and that We will submit

Ourselves to such Orders as We shall receive from said Commander in Chief and such other Officers as shall be appointed to command us".[32] Moses Levy stated that he had no gun, yet this did not prevent his signing.

It should be recalled that there were many Jews in the American Colonies who came from England or through England. Amongst them especially was the Hart family who came to Newport directly from England, where the family had resided for over a century. They settled. in Newport at an early date before the Revolution. Members of the family took an active part in the religious and social life of the Jewish community of Newport. They helped build the synagogue. They contributed generously to its upkeep. As old inhabitants of England, it was natural that they should have had Tory sympathies. Just as ardently as the majority of the Jews of Newport espoused the cause of the American Revolution, Isaac Hart espoused that of the King of Great Britain. He was as devoted to the King's cause as were the Jewish patriots to the American cause, which is much to his credit as a British citizen. His loyalty to the King cost Isaac Hart his life. It is recorded, "Mr. Isaac Hart, of Newport, R. I., formerly an eminent merchant and a very loyal subject, was unhumanly fired upon and bayoneted, wounded in fifteen parts of his body, and beat with their muskets in the most shocking manner in the very act of imploring quarter, and died of his wounds a few hours after, universally regretted by every true lover of his King and country".[33]

What happened to the other Jews of Newport, who had prospered here in great numbers? The principal Jewish families of Newport, either at the outbreak of the Revolution or immediately after the capture of the town by the British, left the city and dispersed to various other colonies where they were able to find shelter and peace. The families of Lopez and Rivera, together with the family of Mendes and other smaller families, went to Leicester, Massachusetts. Aaron Lopez had formed an establishment there as early as 1775.[34] His family together with the Mendes and Rivera families came in 1777. They made this town their new home, establishing themselves anew in business and living happily and contentedly. Together with their servants, they constituted about seventy people.[35] There, too, Jacob Rodrigues Rivera purchased an estate of 31 acres of land in September, 1777. This he farmed, partly for his own use and recreation. Aaron Lopez, who was but one of five Lopezes who went to Leicester, occupied the most esteemed position in this new haven of refuge.[36] He purchased an estate on February 1, 1777, upon which he erected a mansion, as well as a large store where he did a profitable trade. He also owned other real estate. Moses and Jacob Lopez were clerks in his new business establishment, as was his son Joseph. Jacob Rodrigues Rivera and Abraham Pereira Mendes, a son in law of Aaron Lopez, were in business for themselves.[37] All enjoyed the respect and esteem of their non-Jewish neighbors. They kept their stores closed on Saturday, the Jewish day of rest, and out of respect to their non-

Jewish neighbors, they also closed their shops on Sunday. The honesty with which these Newport Jews traded was generally praised. They followed scrupulously the tenents of the Jewish Law. They remained in Leicester until the ratification of Peace in 1783, "when with the exception of Mr. Lopez they returned to Newport, carrying with them the respect and kind regard of a community with which they had been intimately associated for six years".[38]

David Lopez, a brother of Aaron Lopez, removed to Boston where he established himself in business and remained there until his death. Moses Michael Hays removed temporarily to South Kingston.[39] Other Jewish families went to Connecticut, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Georgia, and other colonies where they joined their brethren in the congregations established there, and where they were able to live peacefully.[40] Some moved as far as the West Indies.[41]

The withdrawal of the Jews from Newport was not so much because of the fear of the enemy, as because of their zealous patriotism. This is clearly evidenced in the correspondence which has come down to us from the dispersed families. In one of the letters of Aaron Lopez, written to a Newport friend from Philadelphia where Aaron Lopez went from Leicester for a short stay in 1779, Lopez speaks about the "distressed Inhabitants of our once flourishing land". In the letter which gives us a view of the distressed condition of the inhabitants of Newport in general and the few Jews in particular who remained during the British

occupation of the town, we see expressed Aaron Lopez's attachment to the town of his adoption. The letter reads in part: "Since we left our place my Family, secure from sudden Alarms and the Cruel Ravages of an enraged Enemy; Such a one I have hitherto found in the small inland Township of Leicester in the Massachusetts Bay, where I pitched my Tent, erecting a proportionable one to the extend of my numerous Family on the Summit of a high healthy Hill, where we have experienced the civilities and hospitality of a kind Neighborhood; and moved in the same Sphere of Business I have been used to follow which altho much more contracted, it has fully answered my wishes, and you know my Friend, when that is the case, it never fails of constituting real happiness. Add to this the satisfaction of having for a next door neighbor your truly well wishing Friend, my Father in Law Mr. Rivera, who with his Family I left in good health, spending in peace the fruits of his last summers Labour on a small Farm, the Old Gentleman improves with much the same Farming Faculties, you tell me you cultivate yours: and can farther inform you that while his hands have been imployed that useful Art, his agitated Mind has uniformily accompanied yours to poor Newport. where I do still hope we shall soon have the pleasure of meeting each other again and re-enjoy those habitations we have so long been deprived of, with all satisfaction".[42]

Lopez then refers to a report he has received from a recent visitor, saying: "the poor Inhabitants of that

Town, have been very much distressed this Winter for the Want of Fuel and provisions, those Individuals of my Society in particular, who she said had not tasted any meat, but once in two months".[43]

We can see the sad condition in which the city of Newport found itself during the occupation of the British. The few Jews who did remain in town endured together with their neighbors the want and scarcity that existed at the time. In addition, they also suffered from the fact that they were not able to obtain any *Kosher* meat due to the lack of a *Shochet* in the community, and the difficulty of bringing such meat from the neighboring places.

When the Lopez's and Riveras left the town, Moses Seixas became the lay leader of the 'Remnant of Israel' in Newport, while the Reverend Isaac Touro continued his ministry. The Reverend Mr. Touro did not leave Newport until the year 1780. In 1779 he was a witness to the last testament of Mr. Myer Pollock.[44]

As it was impossible for the Reverend Mr. Touro to minister to so small a congregation, he finally decided to leave the city. He did not go at once to Kingston, Jamaica, as is commonly supposed. He went to New York, where for a while he acted as Minister of the Congregation *Shearith Israel* which at the time was almost as deserted as was the Newport synagogue, since its members, like those of the Newport community had followed the patriot cause and scattered to Philadelphia and to other centers. In such conditions, it is not surprising that after a short stay in New York, the

Reverend Mr. Touro, whose health was now failing went to Kingston, Jamaica, where he died January 8, 1784.[45]

The city of Newport for over a year remained without a Jewish spiritual leader of any kind. Moses Seixas, who, by this time, had come to occupy an important place in the community at large, was the warden of the synagogue, and carried out the functions that had been previously vested in Jacob Rodrigues Rivera and Aaron Lopez. These two, however, retained lay control of the edifice. The services at the synagogue were conducted by the lay members of the Congregation capable of doing so.

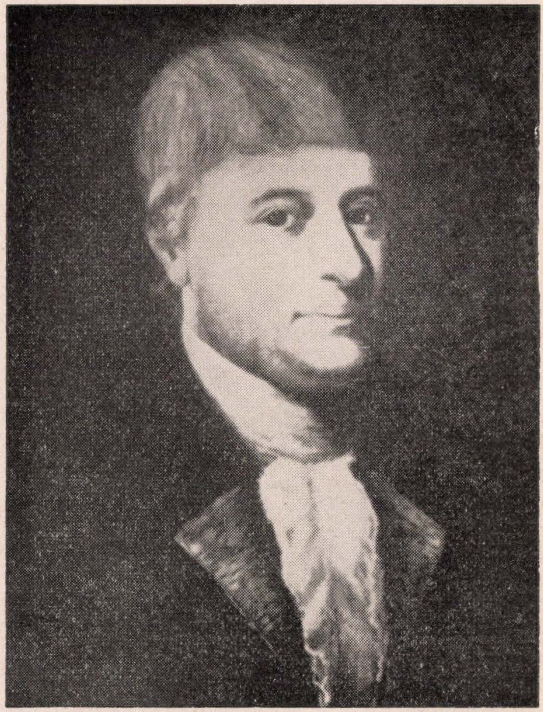
Moses Seixas was the older son of Mr. Isaac Mendez Seixas, who settled in Newport before the American Revolution. Moses was born on the 28th of March, 1744, in New York. When his parents moved to Newport, Moses was still a lad.[46] Having inherited characteristics of his father, Moses proved to be a very successful business man and in general a man of high regard in the community. He became well known as a Mason and also as the warden of the synagogue in 1790 during President Washington's visit to Newport.

Moses Seixas married Jochebed Levy of Newport in 1770. Jochebed was the daughter of Benjamin and Judith Levy. The Levy and Seixas families were already related by ties of marriage; and many other marriages between the fmilies took place later. The marriage between Moses Seixas and Jochebed Levy was solemnized by the Reverend Isaac Touro.

Moses Seixas had eight children. Not all of them remained in Newport when they grew up. Some moved to the other colonies. One of his daughters Judith married a son of Jonas Phillips and Rebecca Mendez Machado, thus uniting two of the oldest of the Spanish-Portuguese Jewish families.

During the occupation of the British it was very difficult to obtain *Kosher* meat. When possible such meat was brought from the neighboring places through Providence. David Lopez Junior, who found a haven of refuge in Providence during the British occupation of Newport, wrote to Aaron Lopez in Leicester, who apparently was supplied with *Kosher* meat in abundance, "Mr. Mendes promissed to forward Goods from Tafts Tavern for old Mr. Trevett which with the Wine and a bbl. of *Casher* Beef he engaged to send us may probably make a load sufficient to induce a Teamster to come down".[47]

Newport's trade continued to decline. Merchants could no longer trade freely with England as before the Revolution. Newport, however was not ready to give up its struggle for existence as a commercial center. On the first opportunity after the British evacuation, the city entered once more into the various phases of economic life. In this the Jewish community bore its part.



Moses Michael Hays.

CHAPTER X

EVACUATION AND REVIVAL

The British evacuated Newport late in October, 1779 leaving the town in a sorry plight. The 8000 foreign troops quartered in the city during the British occupation are said to have ransacked many of the dwelling places, and a great number of the public buildings as well. Long Wharf was completely devastated. The Colony House had been used for Barracks; the Churches for Hospitals. In one case, a house of worship was actually used by the British as an Officers' Riding Academy.[1] The estimate of property damage reported to the General Assembly in 1782 was no less than $415,994.[2]

Newport was depressed in spirit. Before the war the city was verily called, "The Garden of North America". In beauty and in commerce it had few rivals. It had been the center of an advanced cultural life, with a growing library, flourishing schools and bookshops. Now it was a barren city, with shattered houses, a pillaged library, books burned, and commerce practically at a standstill. The Jewish merchants who had formed the nucleus of the extensive export and import trade, were gone and the city declared itself to be in a state of

abject poverty.

In 1780 when the General Assembly of Rhode Island desired a place for its Newport meeting, they could find no other location than the synagogue.[3] The State House was in no condition to accommodate them. The assembly met in the synagogue on several other occasions also. On March 13, 1781, the last day of General George Washington's visit here (He was entertained at the home of Mr. Moses Isaacs)[4] a Town Meeting was held at the synagogue.[5]

During this time, also, the Congregational Church which during the occupation had been made unfit for services desired the use of the synagogue. Mr. Channing on behalf of his congregation applied to Moses Seixas on several occasions for permission to use the synagogue. Mr. Seixas, who at that time was the custodian of the building, would have granted Mr. Channing's request had it not been for Dr. Stiles' intervention to the contrary and his interpretation of the Jewish law in the matter.

Though Moses Seixas was in charge of the synagogue the legal control of the building was still vested in Aaron Lopez and Jacob Rodrigues Rivera. On October 5, 1780 practically a year after the British had left the town Moses Seixas addressed a letter to Aaron Lopez in Leicester, Massachusetts, writing as follows: "Mr. Channing again applied for the use of the synagogue. I availed myself of the impropriety of letting him have it, whilst I had not Mr. Rivera and your sense on the occasion and which had been requested by his and Mr.

Merchants desire. Since then Doct'r Stiles is come here on a Visit, and I made it my business to converse with him on the matter. He express'd much concern and amazement at the application, assur'd me it wou'd not have been made had he been here, that he was well convinc'd we cou'd not acceed to it, without violating our religious principles...not-withstanding all which think it highly necessary that both you and Mr. Rivera furnish me with your Opinion respecting the matter".[6] Not having the answer of Mr. Lopez in the matter, the outcome is unknown. From the tone of Mr. Seixas' letter it may well be that permission was finally granted Mr. Channing to use the synagogue for his congregation until he was able to put his own church in order.

As conditions quieted down, the severe winter of 1779-80, when the Narragansett Bay was frozen from shore to shore, passed away, and summer clothed the city with beautiful foliage. The depressed spirit gradually vanished, and many of those who had exiled themselves at the outbreak of the Revolution or on the eve of the British invasion of the town, returned to their beloved city. Amongst them were many Jews.

In 1780, Moses Michael Hays, who, during the British occupation of Newport, had removed temporarily to South Kingston, caused the King David's Lodge of the Masonic Order which was originally organized in New York, to be removed to Newport.[7] Hays, once back in Newport, became the Master of the Lodge. Moses Seixas was the Senior Warden, David Lopez was elected Junior Warden, and Solomon A.

Myers, Deacon.[8]

Moses Seixas in communicating with Aaron Lopez, now in Leicester, Massachusetts, continually informs him of the return of various Jewish residents to Newport.[9] The synagogue took on new vitality. The services in Newport were attended by more worshipers. Once more Jewish life in Newport began to thrive.

The revived Jewish community soon obtained a *Shochet* in the person of Hillel Judah who provided the community with *Kosher* meat, some of which was also sent to other places. Thus, on July 9, 1781, Moses Seixas informs Aaron Lopez amongst other things, "My dear Mrs. Lopez may depend on having a reinforcement of *Casher* fat as soon as possible, but Mr. Judah's commendable conscience and superlative knowledge of *Bedika* has prevented our having any chance as yet to make a beginning in procuring some for her".[10] On September 6, 1787, *Kosher* Beef was sent from Newport to *Surinam,* certified in the synagogue for its *Kashruth.*

Just as *Kosher* beef and fat were sent from Newport, so also was *"Casher Tallow"* for making candles.[11]

The city gradually regained commerce and shipping; but it was not destined that Newport should again compete for the commercial supremacy it had held prior to the Revolution. It would have had a better chance had not fate been cruel to Aaron Lopez, the leading commercial figure of Newport in the days prior to the Revolution. Lopez had found refuge in the small town of Leicester, Massachusetts during the British invasion of Newport. When things settled down after the British departure,

Lopez was once again ready to take up his residence in his beloved city. On May 28, 1782 Mr. Lopez and his family started out from Leicester towards Providence in carriages, he himself riding in a gig drawn by one horse. In passing Scott's Pond, in Smithfield, he drove the horse to the pond to be watered, and was accidentally drowned, while his unhappy family looked on and were unable to come to his rescue. Stiles recorded this fatality very pathetically. "On the 28th of May died that amiable, benevolent, most hospitable and very respectable Gentleman Mr. Aaron Lopez . . . He was a Merchant of the first Eminence; for honor & Extent of Commerce probably surpassed by no Mrcht in America. He did Business with the greatest Ease & Clearness - always carried about a Sweetness of Behaviour a calm Urbanity an agreeable & unaffected Politeness of manners. Without a single Enemy & the most universally beloved by an extensive Acquaintanc of any man I ever Knew. His Beneficence to his Famy. Connexions, to his Nation, and to the World is almost without a Parallel".[12] Stiles also describes the fatal accident. "Mr. Lopez was journying with his Wife & some of his famy. on a Visit to Newport, and within five Miles of Providence at Scotts pond as he was watering his Horse, the Horse plunged beyond his depth with the Sulky, when Mr. Lopez leaped into Water; & tho his servt. attempted to save him he was lost. His corps was carried to Newport & there interred in the Jew Burying Ground - the Demonstration of universal Sorrow attended the Funeral".[13] The Funeral took place May

30th.[14]

Stiles' tribute to Aaron Lopez reveals the high esteem in which all had held this Jewish pioneer, who escaped the clutches of the Inquisition to come to this free State to be able to practice freely the faith of his fathers. Thus died the man who laid the first corner-stone of the synagogue in Newport. The estate of Aaron Lopez in Leicester was converted into a scholastic institution, known to this day as the Leicester Academy. His wealth, which was estimated at the time to amount to over $100,000, was dissipated among his heirs. By his death the Jewish community of Newport lost one of its most influential members, and the city of Newport one of its most beneficent citizens.

The local newspaper lamented the death of Aaron Lopez in the following obituary: "That there is a Kind of Veneration which may be stiled natural due to the character of those most exalted for the practice of Virtue, appears from hence, that in all ages and in all Countries this Honour has prevailed - - It is a Ray of Caelestial Origin, coeval with Society, and of so laudable a Nature, as to be sanctified to us by examples of the best and wisest Nations. A Tribute justly due to the Memory of that Man, whose aggregate Services exhibit in one Point of View the most amiable Perfections and Cardinal Virtues that can adorn the human Soul. That this is not inapplicable to the well known Character of this most invaluable Man, the Feelings of Hundreds of different Families will readily witness, to whose Munificence, Generosity, Benevolence, and Humanity

they were very recently indebted".[15]

The family caused a memorial stone to be erected on his grave, bearing an inscription, in Hebrew and in English, to this effect:

(In Hebrew)

"A good name is better than precious ointment,
and the day of death is better than the day of one's birth"
"Hear the voice of Aaron"
The Monument
of the burial place of the honored Mr. Aaron Lopez
who was liberated for paradise on the 14th of the Month *Sevan*,
in the year 5542
May his soul be bound up in the bands of life.

(In English)

In Memory of Mr. Aaron Lopez
who was drawn from this Transitory existence
to Eternal rest, the 14th of *Sivan* A. M. 5542.
Corresponding to May 28th, 1782.
Aetatis 51
He was a Merchant of Eminence
of Polite & amiable manners
Hospitality, Liberality and
Benevolence were his true
Characteristicks an ornament
and valuable Pillar to the Jewish
Society of which he was a
Member. his knowledge in
Commerce was unbounded
and his integrity irreproachable
thus he lived & Died much
regretted, esteemed & loved by all.

The Hebrew phrase "The memory of the just is blessed", concludes the inscription.

There was no one to take the place of Aaron Lopez. In 1783 after peace was finally signed between the United States and Great Britain, the families of Rivera and Mendes returned from Leicester.[16] Others came later, and, by 1790, Moses Seixas' accounts of receipts and payments of the Congregation contained the contributions of Jacob Rodrigues Rivera, Moses Levy, Raphael Jacobs, Isaac Elizer, Eliezer Elizer, Jacob Isaacs, David Lopez, Sr., Moses Lopez, Jacob Lopez, Joseph Lopez, Abraham Lopez, Aaron Lopez, Hillel Judah, Jacob Phillips, Joseph De Pass, Moses M. Hays, Moses Gomez, Jr., Emanuel Aquilar, Elias Hart, Isaac Dazevado, Moses Seixas, Isaac Pollock, Simon Nathan, Manuel Myers, Isaac Gomez, Joseph Jacobs, Henry Marks, Sol Levy, Uriah Hendricks, Nathaniel Hendricks, and two French gentlemen.[17] Amongst the disbursements are the salaries for the *Shochet,* Mr. Hillel Judah, and for the minister, Rabbi Calveres.[18] When the official census was taken in 1790, Newport again boasted a score of Jewish families, consisting of over a hundred persons.[19]

The revived Jewish community did not compare with the old one in wealth and in commercial importance. Some members of the community attempted to emulate Aaron by engaging in shipping, but business never approximated its former magnitude. In 1785 Joseph Lopez and Jacob Rodrigues Rivera owned two brigs and a sloop, which were sent to London and to Curacao,[20] to

the latter port with spermaceti candles. In 1788 Moses Seixas sent a brig to the West Indies.[21] In 1783 Jacob Isaacs attempted the construction of vessels in Newport.[22] In 1782 when the Philadelphia Congregation Mikveh Israel in building its first synagogue found their "wishes not equal to their abilities", they appealed to the Newport Jewish community for help which was graciously extended. In the response of the Newporters, the Lopez and Rivera families were the largest contributors, and in the list of contributions there occurs many a Newport name besides these.[23]

For a while the Newport Congregation occupied once more a conspicuous place among the Hebrew congregations in North America. During the services, use was made of the "Prayer for the Government", written specially for the dedication of the Philadelphia synagogue by the Reverend Gershom Mendes Seixas, - - the Minister of the Shearith Israel Congregation in New York, and of the Mikveh Israel Congregation of Philadelphia. In this prayer the Grace of God was invoked upon "his Excellency the President and the Delegates of the United States in Congress assembled; on his Excellency George Washington, Captain-General and Commander-in-chief of the Federal army of these States, on his Excellency the President and the honorable members of the General Assembly of this Commonwealth, and all kings and potentates in alliance with North America".[24]

Jacob Rodrigues Rivera upon his return from Leicester resumed the presidency of the Congregation,

but his increasing age and declining strength made it impossible for him to be very active. On February 18, 1789, he, too, was gathered to his fathers, thus liberating from this transitory existence another of the strong pillars of Israel, who had been benefactors to the city at large. The man who had laid the second corner stone of the 'Holy Building' was laid to rest, and there was none to take up his work. To commemorate the last resting-place of this man who had been an example of kindness and honesty to Jew and non-Jew alike, his family consecrated an appropriate memorial stone, with a well-merited inscription, part of which reads in English:

"If to profess and patronize the principles of Judaism
to observe the strictest integrity in extensive commerce
and to exhibit unbounded benevolence
for all mankind, can secure
to the spontaneous and invariable practicer
of these virtues, eternal bliss,
Jacob Rods Rivera,
whose mortal frame is deposited beneath this marble,
must, consonant to the ardent hopes of all who knew him,
be in full possession of that superlative
happiness.
He lived beloved and died lamented".

As had been the death of Aaron Lopez, so the death of Jacob Rodrigues Rivera was mourned and lamented by Jew and Christian. The local newspaper paid the following tribute to him:

"O eloquent, Just and mighty Death, It is thou alone

puts wisdom in the human heart and suddenly makes man to know himself.

"Whom none could advise thou has persuaded; what none have dared thou hast done; and whom all the world has esteemed thou hast cast out - - Thou hast drawn together all the greatness of man; all the charme of virtue and covered it over with these two narrow words, Hic Jacet.

"Thursday last departed this life after a lingering illness, Mr. Jacob Rodrigues Rivera, merchant, in the 72d year of his age; "an Israelite indeed". He was exemplary in his observance of the Jewish Ritual, intelligent and upright in commerce, and an ornament to all the social virtue".[25]

Two years before Benjamin Levy died, Moses Levy had died. And so one by one the old generation was removed from this earthly existence. The young generation moved to other cities, and the Jewish community of Newport towards the year 1790, again showed signs of decline.

It was destined, however, that the fame of the Newport Hebrew Congregation should not pass from memory. An event responsible for the immortalization of the Newport Congregation took place in 1790. At this time, Moses Seixas became the Warden of the synagogue. He was also master of the King David's Lodge of the Masonic Order, and one of the leading citizens in the city of Newport.

The general impression seems to be that religious liberty existed by this time throughout the colonies, and

was taken for granted in the new form of government that appeared after the Revolution. This was not the fact. Indeed, religious liberty existed in the majority of the colonies by the time the War of Independence was over, yet, on the statute books, members of the Jewish faith were still deprived of many privileges. At the Constitutional Convention, convened in 1787, there was serious discussion of an established religion. This would have deprived the Jewish citizens of the United States of the privilege of participating in any part of the government administration. The mood of the convention can well be imagined from a letter by Jonas Phillips who had fought heroically on the side of the colonists during the Revolution, a fact which no doubt, gave his words additional force.

Phillips wrote to the Constitutional Convention:

"I the subscriber one of the people called Jews of the City of Philadelphia, a people scattered & dispersed among all nations do behold with Concern that among the laws in the Constitution of Pennsylvania, there is a Clause Sect 10 to viz - I do believe in one God the Creatur and governor of the universe and Rewarder of the good & the punisher of the wicked - and I do acknowledge the Scriptures of the old & New testiment to be given by divine inspiration - to swear & believe that the new testiment was given by divine inspiration is absolutely against the Religious principle of a Jew, and is against his Conscience to take any such oath - By the above law a Jew is deprived of holding any publick office or place of Government which is a Contridictory

to the bill of Right Sect. 2 viz:

"That all men have a natural & unalienable Right to worship almighty God according to the dictates of their own Conscience etc".

After quoting the Bill of Rights in full, the correspondent continues:

"It is well known among all the Citizens of the 13 states that the Jews have been true and faithful whigs, & during the Contest with England they have been foremost in aiding and assisting the states with their lifes & fortunes, they have supported the cause, have bravely fought and bled for liberty which they can not Enjoy".

The Jews, having deserved by their patriotism to be granted privileges equal to those enjoyed by the other citizens, the writer then makes this plea: "Therefore if the honourable Convention shall in their wisdom think fit and alter the said oath & leave out the words to viz - and I do acknowledge the scripture of the new testiment to be given by divine inspiration, - then the Israelites will think themselves happy to live under a government where all Religious societys are on an Equal footing - I solicit this favor for myself my children & posterity, & for the benefit of all the Israelites through the 13 united states of America".[26]

The Constitution finally did recognize the absolute equality of all citizens, and refused to accept the principle of an established religion. This was due to the pressure exerted by such memoranda as that of Phillips and the views of the liberal representatives, but, more especially, the unwavering influence of the illustrious

George Washington. When George Washington was honored by election as First President of the United States, the Jewish Congregations throughout the Colonies wished to send to the national hero a joint address of congratulation and felicitation. In accord with this desire, the Congregation Yeshuat Israel of Newport, on June 20, 1790, received a letter from the New York Congregation *Shearith Israel* addressed to Moses Seixas saying: "It was agreed that the following circular Letter be wrote to our Brethren of the different Congregations in the United States - -

"Gentlemen:

"We are desirous of addressing the president of the United States in one general address, comprehending all the Congregations professing our Holy Religion in America, as we are led to understand that mode will be less irksome to the president than troubling him to reply to every individual address.

"We should have given a previous invitation had not our local situation, for this some time past prevented us - That obsticle being removed, We are therefore authorized in behalf of this Congregation & others who may unite with us for this purpose - to request you'll join, by giving us permission to Include you in the Address -

"We will be thankful if you'l transmit us a draft in what manner you would be desirous of having the address worded, that thereby we may collect the different Ideas of the Congregations, in whose behalf we may address - " [27]

Moses Seixas immediately presented the letter to a meeting of the members of the Congregation Yeshuat Israel, who were not at all inclined to accept the invitation of the New York Congregation to address the President. The reasons for the refusal are clearly expressed in the reply of Moses Seixas to "The *parnassim* & *Adjuntoes* of the Kaal Kadosh Seerit Israel" of New York, which is interesting enough to be quoted at length, The reply is dated at "New Port July 2d 1790".[28]

"I have admitted its being perused by the Members thereof in general. & they have requested my replying thereto, which I shall now attempt to do, in as concise a manner as possible, after premiseing that when I make use of We it means the *Kaal Kadosh Yeshuat Israel* of this place, Who are of opinion, that as we are so small in number, it would be treating the Legislature & other large Bodies in this State, with a great degree of indelicacy, for us to address the President of the United States, previous to any of them, & therefore from motives of diffidence, & ardent desire to avoid giving umbrage, would wish to decline it at present. We much regret that those Congregations, which would with propriety have addressed him, at an early period, should have delayed it thus long, much more Yours, which from its Location ought to have been second to any other Religious Society whatsoever, and what plea you can now make to him for your apparent neglect, which almost amounts to disrespect, We cannot conceive, unless it is - - That you waited in full confidence of this

state acceeding to the Federal Constitution so as you might be join'd by us in the address - - If this should be the only reason which you can assign, & which we think is the only plausible one that can be offer'd we do not wish to debar you thereof, & therefore if our suggestions are properly founded, consent to your connecting us in the address, not withstanding our reluctance of becoming the primary addressers from this state - - We deem it unnecessary to transmit you a draught of an address, because we are sensible it can be well composed at your place, & because we firmly rely on your being critically attentive that your sentiments will be properly express'd & unequivocally, relative to the Enfranchisement which is secured to us Jews by the Federal Constitution - - However we should be glad to be favor'd with a Copy thereof, previous to its being presented, promising to give you our opinion thereon in a few hours after we have perused it - - "[29]

The President of the United States was finally addressed by the Hebrew Congregations of New York, Philadelphia, Richmond and Charleston. President Washington cordially replied to these Congregations in very beautiful language, and in very impressive manner.

"Gentlemen: - - The liberality of Sentiment toward each other, which marks every political and religious denomination of men in this country, stands unparalleled in the history of nations.

"The affection of such a people is a treasure beyond the reach of calculation, and the repeated proofs which my fellow-citizens have given of their attachment to me

and approbation of my doings from the purest source of my temporal felicity.

"The affectionate expressions of your address again excite my gratitude and receive my warmest acknowledgement.

"The power of goodness of the Almighty so strongly manifested in the events of our late glorious revolution, and His kind interposition in our behalf, have been no less visible in the establishment of our present equal government. It was He who directed the sword, and in peace He has ruled in our councils. My agency in both has been guided by the best intentions and a sense of duty I owe to my country.

"And as my exertions have hitherto been amply rewarded by the approbation of my fellow-citizens, I shall endeavor to deserve a continuance of it by my future conduct.

"May the same temporal and eternal blessing which you implore for me, rest upon your congregations.

G. Washington".[30]

The Newport Congregation was not included in this address.

At the time, Newport was expecting the honor of having the president of the United States as a visitor to the city. The expectations were well founded and were not disappointing. On the 17th of August, the illustrious patriot and statesman on his arrival at Newport was saluted by 13 guns fired from the fort honored with the hero's name. He was received by a committee from the town together with the clergy, among whom was Moses

Seixas. In a triumphant procession, he was escorted to his lodgings on Thames Street near Mary Street.[31]

Washington was not a stranger in Newport. This was his third visit to the town. The city of Newport had had the pleasure of welcoming George Washington as a young Virginia Colonel in the service of His Majesty George III in 1756. On March 6, 1781, a little over a year after the British left the city, General Washington was a visitor to Newport for a second time. He came to honor personally, General Count de Rochambeau, who was leading the French troops that were quartered in Newport. In 1790 it was Washington, the President of the United States, that Newport acclaimed.

After a short rest, the President took a morning walk, "Around the town and the heights above it".[32] He was accompanied by "the gentlemen of the party and a large number of gentlemen of Newport". In his walk "he surveyed the various beautiful prospects from the commons above the town". He also walked in several parts of the town in the afternoon. It may well be that during these walks, Moses Seixas accompanied him to view the beautiful synagogue, which was the only building that retained its full splendor through the hard times after the evacuation.

Washington spent but a day in Newport, the greater part of which was occupied with official greetings at the State House and an elegant dinner which began at 5 o'clock in the afternoon in the Representatives' Chamber.

The next morning, the 18th, shortly before the President prepared to leave, and immediately after breakfast, deputations from the town and the churches as well as from the Masonic fraternity appeared at his quarters, to present the visitor with formal addresses, expressions of devotion to their leader. Moses Seixas represented two institutions, King David's Lodge, and the Hebrew Congregation. From both he carried to the President warm greetings, and messages of love and felicitations, which he presented in the name of the respective institutions.

For the Hebrew Congregation, Moses Seixas greeted the President in words that have been quoted in School textbooks, as a specimen of English style of Biblical character. The address read:

"To the President of the United States of America

"Sir:

"Permit the children of the stock of Abraham to approach you with the most cordial affection and esteem for your person and merits, and to join with our fellow citizens in welcoming you to Newport.

"With pleasure we reflect on those days, those days of difficulty and danger, when the God of Israel, who delivered David from the peril of the sword—shielded your head in the day of battle—and we rejoice to think that the same Spirit who rested in the bosom of the greatly beloved Daniel, enabling him to preside over the provinces of the Babylonish Empire, rests, and ever will rest, upon you, enabling you to discharge the arduous duties of Chief Magistrate in these states.

"Deprived as we heretofore have been of the invaluable rights of free citizens, we now (with a deep sense of gratitude to the Almighty Dispenser of all Events) behold a Government erected by the majesty of the people, a Government which gives to bigotry no sanction to persecution no assistance; but generously affording to all liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship, deeming everyone, of whatever nation, tongue, or language, equal parts of the great Government machine. This so ample and extensive Federal Union whose basis is philanthropy, mutual confidence and public virtue, we cannot but acknowledge to be the work of the Great God who ruleth in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, doing whatever seemeth Him good.

"For all these blessings of civil and religious liberty, which we enjoy under an equal benign administration, we desire to send up our thanks to the ancient of days, the Great Preserver of Man, beseeching Him that the Angel who conducted our forefathers through the wilderness into the promised land, may graciously conduct you through all the difficulties and dangers of this mortal life, and when, like Joshua, full of days and full of honor, you are gathered to your fathers may you be admitted into the Heavenly Paradise to partake of the water of life and the tree of immortality.

"Done and signed by the order of the Hebrew congregation in Newport, R. I., August 17, 1790.

Moses Seixas,
Warden".[34]

To the President of the United States of America

Sir

Permit the children of the Stock of Abraham to approach you with the most cordial affection and esteem for your person & merits — and to join with our fellow citizens in welcoming you to New York

With pleasure we reflect on those days — those days of difficulty, & danger when the God of Israel, who delivered David from the peril of the sword, — shielded your head in the day of battle: — and we rejoice to think, that the same spirit, who rested in the Bosom of the greatly beloved Daniel enabling him to preside over the Provinces of the Babylonish Empire, rests and ever will rest upon you, enabling you to discharge the arduous duties of Chief Magistrate in these States.

Deprived as we heretofore have been of the invaluable rights of free citizens, we now funk a deep sense of gratitude to the Almighty disposer of all events) behold a Government, erected by the Majesty of the People — a Government, which to bigotry gives no sanction, to persecution no assistance — but generously affords to all liberty of conscience, and immunities of citizenship: — deeming every one, of whatever Nation, tongue, or language equal parts of the great governmental Machine. — This so ample and extensive Federal Union whose basis is Philanthropy, Mutual confidence and strict Virtue, we cannot but acknowledge to be the work of the Great God, who ruleth in the Armies of Heaven and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, doing whatsoever seemeth him good.

For all the Blessings of civil and religious liberty which we enjoy under an equal and benign administration, we desire to send up our thanks to the Ancient of Days, the great preserver of Men — beseeching him, that the Angel who conducted our forefathers through the wilderness into the promised land, may graciously conduct you through all the difficulties and dangers of this mortal life: — And, when like Joshua full of Days and full of honour, you are gathered to your Fathers, may you be admitted into the Heavenly Paradise to partake of the water of life, and the tree of immortality.

Done and Signed by Order of the Hebrew Congregation in Newport Rhode Island August 17th 1790.

Moses Seixas. Warden

Facsimile of Address to George Washington by Moses Seixas in the Name of the Congregation of Newport.

In the name of King David's Lodge, Moses Seixas' address was as follows:

"WE, the Master, Wardens and Brethren of King David's Lodge, in Newport, Rhode Island, joyfully embrace this opportunity, to greet you as a Brother, and to hail you welcome to Rhode Island.

"We exult in the thought, that as Masonry has always been patronized by the wise, the good, and the great, so hath it stood, and ever will stand, as its fixtures are on the immutable pillars of faith hope and charity.

"With unspeakable pleasure, we gratulate you as filling the Presidential Chair, with the applause of a numerous and enlightened people; whilst at the same time, we felicitate ourselves in the honour done the brotherhood, by your many exemplary virtues, and emanations of goodness proceeding from a heart worthy of possessing the ancient mysteries of our craft, being persuaded that the wisdom and grace, with which Heaven has endowed you, will eventually square all your thoughts, words and actions by the eternal laws of honour, equity and truth; so as to promote the advancement of all good works, your own happiness, and that of mankind. Permit, us then, illustrious Brother, cordially to salute you, with three times three, and to add our fervent supplications, that the Sovereign Architect of the Universe may always encompass you with his holy protection."[35]

In the reply of the President to the "Hebrew Congregation in Newport" we have the final confirmation of full and complete religious liberty to the Jews in the

United States. The importance of the address of Moses Seixas to the President and the latter's reply cannot be over-estimated. Moses Seixas' address to the President invited that reply of the founder of this Republic which has been and will be quoted by every generation in which religious liberty is cherished.

The President's answer to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport read:

"To the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island.

"Gentlemen.

"While I receive, with much satisfaction. your Address replete with expressions of affection and esteem, I rejoice in the opportunity of assuring you, that I shall always retain a grateful remembrance of the cordial welcome I experienced in my visit to Newport, from all classes of Citizens.

"The reflection on the days of difficulty and danger which are past is rendered the more sweet from a consciousness that they are succeeded by days of uncommon prosperity and security. If we have wisdom to make the best use of the advantages with which we are now favored, we cannot fail, under the just administration of a good Government, to become a great and a happy people.

"The Citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy: a policy worthy of imitation. All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no

To the Hebrew Congregation in Newport
Rhode Island

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The citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy: a policy worthy of imitation. All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights For happily

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the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection, should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.

It would be inconsistent with the frankness of my character not to avow that I am pleased with your favorable opinion of my administration, and fervent wishes for my felicity. May the children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while every one shall sit in safety under his own Vine and Fig tree, and there shall be none to make him afraid May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations useful here, and in his own due time and way everlastingly happy.

G. Washington

Facsimile of Address sent by George Washington to the Newport Congregation.

more that toleration is spoken of as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection, should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.

"It would be inconsistent with the frankness of my character not to avow that I am pleased with your favorable opinion of my Administration, and fervent wishes for my felicity. May the Children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants, while every one shall sit in safety under his own Vine and Figtree, and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations useful here, and in his own due time and way everlastingly happy.

Go. Washington

CHAPTER XI

THE CLOSE OF A COLORFUL CHAPTER

With the death of many members of the Jewish community, and with the emigration of others, the Jewish community of Newport again faced extinction. By the year 1790, this was deeply felt in the synagogue life. Mr. Judah, the *Shochet,* left the town, and the synagogue did not have a person to read the scroll of the Law on the Sabbaths and the Holidays. The situation became such that the Congregation did not even posses a *Shofar,* except a cracked one, which could be used only if it were mended. Yet, this was not so bad as not having anyone eligible or capable to blow the *Shofar* on *Rosh Hashanah*—the New Year.[1]

For a while Joseph Jacobs, who was a silversmith by trade, acted as the *Shochet* of the community;[2] but lack of spiritual guidance had an ill effect on the conduct of the services at the synagogue, which were severely criticised by visitors from New York.[3] The services gradually lost their traditional beauty and sanctity. Liberties were taken by many in the synagogue. Some advised incorrectly as to the carrying out of the laws relating to the worship.[4] The attendance dwindled. It began to be inconvenient to solicit offerings. The

Jewish community was a flock without a shepherd.

In an attempt to check the growing spiritual chaos, Moses Seixas, the warden of the synagogue, addressed a letter to Manuel Josephson, asking for some advice as to the conduct of the services. Mr. Joephson was the president of the Congregation *Mikveh Israel* in Philadelphia and was well versed in Jewish law. The letter was written the 3rd of December 1789.[5]

Little was Manuel Josephson able to help the Newport situation, except to corroborate by the law that the conduct of the services at the Newport synagogue was contrary to the best Jewish tradition of the Spanish-Portuguese Jews. After advising Mr. Seixas on the few matters he had asked about, Josephson censured the warden of the Newport synagogue in these words: "I can't avoid to say a word in justification of Mr. Uriah Hendricks not attending publick worship when last at your place..... On the score of a religious principle in the circumstances you conduct the service, I must coincide with him, and should have acted in a similar manner had I been in the same predicament".[6]

It may be well to note here, that during this spiritual crisis the Congregation was in no financial distress whatever. Moses Seixas wrote to Josephson that the services could be conveniently supported just by the subscriptions which the Congregation received, and he inquired whether he might abolish the custom of making offerings at the *Sefer* or *Hechal,* which is an age-old practice in every synagogue. The custom of making offerings during the service was abolished upon the

advice of Mr. Josephson; and certain improvements advised by Mr. Josephson were attempted; yet the fate of the synagogue was sealed. Not very long after 1790, the services ceased to be held, except on rare and special occasion when it was possible or necessary to gather a *Minyan.*

In 1792 there still were services at the synagogue, for, in that year, Moses Levy stipulated in his will that, "There shall be a Solemn Prayer said for me in said Synagogue yearly and every year on the evening or day Kippur or atonement".[7] One would harldy write that at a time when the synagogue was closed.

Not long after this date the services at the synagogue completely ceased, and were not to be revived until a half century later, and then only temporarily. The Scrolls of the Law were removed to New York to be deposited in the Ark of the Congregation Shearith Israel. After a little while, even Jewish marriages were no longer celebrated in Newport.[8]

Channing in his "Recollections", laments this fact. He observes: "I well knew a Mr. Levara. During his residence in Newport, there was occasional worship in the Synagogue. Gradually these impressive services subsided, and finally died out; and then the building was left to the bats and moles, and to the occasional invasion, through its porches and windows, of boys who took great pleasure in examining the furniture scattered about".[9]

When Moses Levy died in 1792, he left to Moses Seixas not only his elegant mansion on the parade which

later became the residence of Commodore Oliver H. Perry, the hero of Lake Erie, but also "the residue and remainder" of his real and personal estate which included partial ownership of the synagogue. The deed of the land of the synagogue was made out to Jacob Rodrigues Rivera, Isaac Hart and Moses Levy. This gave Moses Levy ownerhip of part of the synagogue and its grounds. Joint heirs to this bequest of Moses Levy were also Hiram and Simeon Levy, both closely related to Mr. Seixas. This legacy was to the heirs named and to their heirs forever.[10]

Thus the legal title to the synagogue passed in part to the families of Seixas and Levy, who, together with the families of Lopez and Rivera were the only Jewish families in Newport by the close of the eighteenth century. Jacob Rodrigues Rivera in his last testament devised his share of the title to the synagogue—which was two thirds, in virtue of the fact that Isaac Harte had before relinquished his right to him—"to and for the sole use, benefit and behoof of the Jewish Society of Newport, to be for them reserved as a place of Public Worship forever".[11] By 1800, the "Jewish Society" of Newport contained no one outside the families of Rivera and Seixas, and some of their relatives, Lopez and Levy respectively. The others had removed to various places in the United States. A great number went to New York.[12] where they became members of the Congregation Shearith Israel.

Moses Seixas continued to occupy an esteemed position in the life of the community. Together with

other merchants in town, he organized the Bank of Rhode Island, which conducted its business in his house until 1818. From 1795 until his death, Moses Seixas occupied the position of cashier in this bank. In 1791 he was elected Master of the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island Masons. In 1780, he became Deputy Grand Master of the Lodge; and in 1802 he attained the office of Grandmaster.[13] Moses Seixas was exalted to the Royal Arch Degree and, when the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Rhode Island was established in 1799, he was elected its first Grand High Priest.[14]

The high standing of Moses Seixas in the community gave him the honor of being amongst those who petitioned Abraham Redwood Ellery to deliver an "Oration on Independence Day", at the Baptist Meeting House on July 4, 1796.[15] In 1799, the Superior Court appointed him as one of the commissioners to settle a litigation.[16] In 1800, he was appointed referee in another lawsuit.[17]

Benjamin Seixas, a son of Moses Seixas, acted as *Shochet* in Newport at this time and supplied the small remnant of the Jewish community with *Kosher* meat. The account recording this fact is found in the Newport Mercury of March 19, 1881:

"Moses Seixas' son Benjamin", recalls an old gentleman, Oliver Read, "was the butcher of the Jews. The slaughter house of Simpson & Barker was the place where, on Fridays the time when, Benjamin acted as butcher. The helpers were S. Carr, Holder Almy, Caleb Cranston, and Benjamin Marsh, the last named now

A

Lunar Calendar,

OF THE

FESTIVALS, AND OTHER DAYS IN THE YEAR,

OBSERVED BY THE ISRAELITES,

COMMENCING ANNO MUNDI, 5566, AND ENDING IN 5619,

BEING A PERIOD OF 54 YEARS,

Which by the Solar Computation of Time, begins September 24th, 1805, and will End the 28th of the ſame Month, in the Year 1859,

Together with other Tables uſeful and convenient.

The Whole of which having been carefully examined and corrected, its utility has obtained the voluntary acknowledgment and approbation of the Rev. Mr. SEIXAS, the reſpectable Hazan of the K. K. Shearith Iſrael, in New-York.

By *MOSES LOPEZ*,

OF NEWPORT, RHODE-ISLAND.

(COPY-RIGHT SECURED.)

Printed at the Office of the Newport Mercury, 1806.

Facsimile of Title Page of "A Lunar Calendar", calculated by Moses Lopez in 1806.

living. They would throw a bullock on his back. Then Benjamin would take a long knife fifteen inches in length, and after drawing it across his thumb nail to find if the edge was keen, he would draw it across the bullock's throat. And if the knife touched a bone, the Jews would not eat the meat".

We note in this recollection a true description of *Shechita*— the Jewish process of slaughtering an animal according to the ritual. The last remark about the knife touching a bone and thus invalidating the meat for Jewish use is even more interesting, for it reveals the scrupulous observance of Benjamin Seixas as a *Shochet.*

Benjamin was otherwise regularly employed as a teller in the Bank of Rhode Island.

Moses Seixas was gathered to his fathers at the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century. He passed away in New York while on a visit to his son in law, Mr. Naphtali Phillips, on Wednesday, November 29, 1809.[18] His remains were brought to Newport and entombed in the family plot on the old Jewish cemetery on December 3d.[19] The funeral was solemnly conducted. A procession from the synagogue to the cemetery was attended by officials of the city and state. The officers of the St. John's Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Newport performed the Masonic funeral rites at the grave. Thus was laid to rest the last outstanding member of the Jewish community of pre-Revolutionary Newport, admidst the lamentation and tribute of the entire city.

The tribute paid Moses Seixas in the obituary note

in the Newport Mercury of December 2nd of that year expressed the esteem in which this man was held by all. "Mr. Seixas" wrote this newspaper, "has left behind him an unblemished reputation. He is deeply lamented, not only by his immediate family and friends, to whom his domestic virtues justly endeared him, but by the community at large, who highly respected him as a useful, honest and worthy man. Born a Jew, and strictly "taught according to the perfect manner of the law of his Fathers", he was, but without bigotry, zealous and uniform in the profession of his faith.

"As a Merchant, he united to an unimpeachable integrity, the valuable qualities of method, precision and punctuality in the transaction of business. These qualities fitted him for, and rendered him, peculiarly useful, in the Station of Cashier of the Bank of Rhode Island—a place which he held from the institution of that bank until his death.

"Liberal in his opinion, and compassionate in his feelings, he was an active member of the charitable society of "Freemasons", and was until his resignation a few months before his death, Master of St. John's Lodge in this town, and Grandmaster in the Grand Lodge of the State.

"We are anxious to avoid all excessive praise, and solicitous not to overdo with minuteness of panegyric, this sincere tribute to the memory of a respected fellow-citizen. In short, we have said nothing but what all who knew Mr. Seixas will warmly join in saying: That he was an honest man, an "accepted Mason" and an

'Israelite without guile'."

Although the Jewish community had dwindled until it consisted of no more than four families, namely, Seixas, Levy, Rivera and Lopez, some still took an interest in intellectual matters. In 1806, Moses Lopez wrote and published in Newport a Lunar Calendar of the Jewish Festivals "and other days of the year as observed by the Jews", which extended from 1805 to 1859. This Calendar was published with the approbation of the Reverend Gershom Mendes Seixas, the minister of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York. Abraham Rodrigues Rivera was a member of the Redwood Library, a right which he inherited in 1789 from his father Jacob, who had been one of the very first members. In 1808 Joseph Lopez and, in 1810 Samuel Lopez were still members of the library.[20] Some of the Lopez boys were attending Brown University in Providence at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[21]

Though the Jewish community was exceedingly small when the War of 1812 broke out, yet the Jews of Newport contributed their share as American patriots.

In 1790, Abraham Rodrigues Rivera was a member of the Newport Artillery Company, which membership he held until he left the city.[22] Benjamin Seixas, the son of Moses, enlisted voluntarily in 1811, and in that year he became clerk of the Newport Volunteers.[23] Abraham Massias served in the army in 1812. He was a member of the St. John's Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Newport.[24]

Many of the Jewish officers and soldiers who served

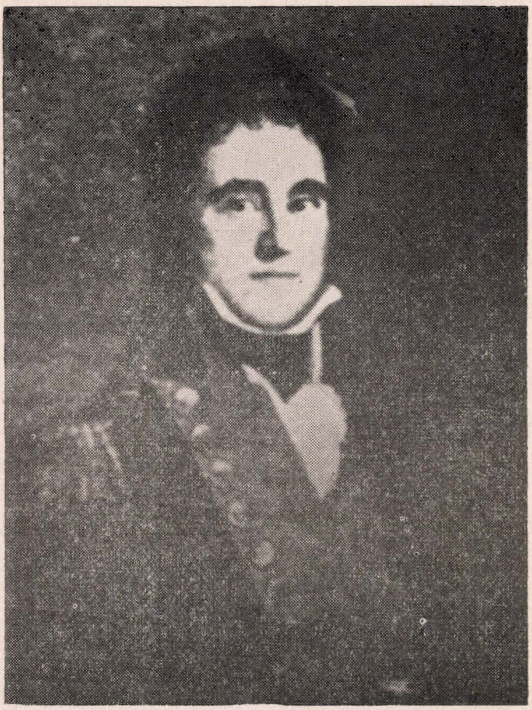
in the various regiments of the different States from which they enlisted, were either themselves Newport Jews by birth, or the children of Newport Jews, who had left the city, seeking adventure elsewhere.[25]

By far the most distinguished Newport Jews who participated in the War of 1812 were Mordecai Meyers and Judah Touro.

Mordecai Meyers was born in Newport, the very year the Declaration of Independence was signed. While he was still young, his parents moved to New York, where he spent most of his life. He lived to the ripe old age of ninety-five. He saw active service in 1812 as Captain in the 30th United States Infantry and was wounded in the battle of Chesterfield. Eventually he went to reside in Schenectady, New York, where he was twice elected to serve as mayor. He was also a member of the State Senate, Grand Master of the Masonic Order and Grand High Priest of the Royal Arch Masons of the State of New York.[26]

Judah Touro son of the Reverend Isaac Touro was born in Newport in 1775. At the time of the War of 1812 he was living in New Orleans, Louisiana. His patriotism is associated with the memorable defence of New Orleans by Andrew Jackson in 1814-15, and is recorded by a contemporary author.

Judah Touro enlisted as a common soldier, and performed all such severe labors as were required of him. On January 1, 1815, he volunteered his services to carry shot and shell from the magazine to Humphrey's battery, the center of defense of the city. He engaged



Captain Mordecai M. Myers.

in this humble and very dangerous task amidst a storm of iron missiles which flew around him, while many stout-hearted soldiers sought shelter in the embankment. The British cannonade was unable to stop Judah Touro from performing his duty; but, while engaged in this perilous duty, he was struck in the thigh by a twelve pound shot which tore out a large mass of his flesh, producing a dangerous wound and leaving him unconscious on the battlefield.

At the same time when Judah Touro enrolled in the army and was assigned to the regiment of the Louisiana Militia, a very intimate friend of his, Rezin D. Shepherd, followed suit, and was attached to Captain Ogden's Horse Troop. Touro and Shephard were devoted friends, and their intimacy was intense to the point of romance. They were both enterprising merchants in New Orleans, Shepherd having come there about the same time as Touro at the beginning of the century. They lived under the same roof, and were separated only by death.

Fortune had it that Shepherd became the aide of Commodore Patterson, and was assisting him to erect his battery on the right bank of the river in the defense of the city from that position. While engaged in this task, Shepherd crossed the river to procure two masons to do some work on the Commodore's battery. This was on January 1, 1815. The first person Mr. Shepherd saw on reaching the other side of the river was Reuben Kemper, who told him that Touro was dead. Upon this Shepherd forgot about his mission, and rushed to the

place where Touro was lying apparently in a dying condition. It was near a wall of an old building that had been demolished by the British in the rear of Jackson's quarters. Dr. Kerr, who was dressing the wounds shook his head, indicating that there was no hope for him. Shepherd not discouraged by the doctor's opinion, procured a cart and brought Touro to the city. While on the way, he kept him alive with brandy. He brought him to his house, and secured some devoted women who had volunteered their services to help Jackson's wounded, to take care of him. Thus Touro was nursed back to health. It was not until late in the day that Shepherd was able to leave Touro and perform the important duty confided to him. When he returned to Patterson's battery, the Commodore was filled with anger at Shepherd's neglect of his military duty, but was appeased when the latter frankly exclaimed, "Commodore, you can hang me or shoot me, and it will be alright; but my best Friend needed my assistance, and nothing on earth could have induced me to neglect him"[27] Commodore Patterson appreciated the feeling of Shepherd for his friend, and thought no more about the incident.

Judah Touro alluded to this event and his undying friendship for Shepherd in his will saying, "And as regards my other designated executor, say my dear, old and devoted friend, Rezin Davis Shepherd, to whom, under Divine Providence, I was greatly indebted for the preservation of my life when I was wounded on the 1st of January 1815".

The Newport Jewish community, however, could glory little in the heroes from afar. Those who had remained in the city such as Moses Lopez; the mother of Jacob Rodrigues Rivera; Abraham Rodrigues Rivera the son of Jacob, who was born in Newport the year the synagogue was dedicated; Sarah Lopez, the widow of Aaron; Jacob and Moses Lopez; some of the children of Moses Seixas; some of the relatives of Moses Levy, were reduced in circumstances and left Newport, settling in New York. What the War of Independence began, the War of 1812 finished. The War of 1812 was the last deathblow to the Jewish community of Newport.

On May 5, 1816, Stephen Gould entered in his Diary, "Widow Lopez and family, also Widow Rivera aged 96, sailed for New York".[28] In October of the same year, this diarist noted, "Moses and Jacob Lopez went to New York— This was probably a prospecting tour for the purpose of consultation as to the probabilities of bettering their condition".[29] On the eighteenth of March, 1822, Jacob Lopez died. On the 5th of October, 1822, "Moses Lopez", writes Gould, "the last Jew, left Newport for New York".[30] This completed the dispersion of the Jews from their beloved city of Newport, which had welcomed them with open arms for more than a century and a half, giving them shelter and protection from hatred, bigotry and persecution.

Moses Lopez left Newport in ill health, reduced in circumstances and heartbroken. He left whatever

property he had to the care of Stephen Gould, who was kind enough to take care of it and send the proceeds to him in New York. What grieved Moses Lopez most was leaving behind the beautiful shrine that his brethren and he had built and which they all had cherished so dearly.

When twelve years later the seats of the newly built Crosby Street Synagogue of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York were allotted, among their holders were the Seixas, the Levys, the Lopez and the Judah families together with many more names of old Newporters or their descendants.[31]

Newport the city which once had been flourishing and had many Jewish citizens; which had welcomed Jewish dignitaries from Palestine, from Poland, from Holland, from the West Indies, and from other parts of the Globe; the city which boasted of the most beautiful synagogue in America; the city where the once downtrodden and persecuted Marranos had returned to the faith of their fathers and became ardent observers of Jewish tradition and law; that city now remained without a single Jew who might guard and care for its two historic landmarks, the synagogue and the Jewish cemetery.

The empty synagogue and the neglected cemetery were the only testimony to the once flourishing Jewish community, and they remained desolate. The former was open to the invasion of "bats and moles", and the ransacking for sport of its scattered furniture by the boys who found entrance through the porches and

windows. The latter lay waste and unprotected from the intruders who found admittance through the broken wooden fences, "augmenting the ravages which time and neglect had already wrought".

CHAPTER XII

NOBLE MEMORIES

Destiny has not been altogether cruel to Newport's shrines of American Israel. The Jews who left Newport cherished an unfading love for the city of their nativity or adoption. We have seen how Aaron Lopez felt about Newport, the city in which he found refuge from the Portuguese Inquisition. Similar feeling was exhibited by all. The attachment to Newport was such, that if they were unable to spend their lives there, they at least wished to be laid to rest with their fathers in the Newport cemetery. David Lopez, a brother of Aaron, sought to better his circumstances in Boston after the Revolution. Before he died there, he expressed in his will the desire to be interred in the family plot in Newport.[1] His last wish was promptly carried out,[2] though time has erased the mark of his resting place in the cemetery.

The Hays family likewise settled in Boston after the Revolution, and later members went to Richmond, Virginia. They had the same affection for Newport, ordering in their last testaments to be interred in Newport. Whatever tombstones remain in the old cemetery, those that time and wear have not destroyed,

testify to many more of the old community, who though living far from Newport, sought to be united with their coreligionists, at least in their last resting place.

The Newport Jews never forgot their cemetery and their synagogue. This was especially true of the family of the Reverend Isaac Touro, their first minister. Around 1780, after the British had left Newport, he together with his family, left Newport for New York, where, for a while, he officiated as *Hazan* of the Congregation Shearith Israel in the absence of the Reverend Gershom Mendes Seixas, who at that time was in Philadelphia.[3] The Reverend Mr. Touro had two sons, Abraham and Judah, and a daughter, Rebecca, born to him in Newport. On January 1, 1781, another son whom they named Nathan was born in New York.[4] Shortly after this, Mr. Touro and his family again took up the wanderer's staff and moved to Kingston, Jamaica, where this "able and faithful Minister of the Congregation Yeshuat Israel", as the memorial stone in the old cemetery reads, died at the youthful age of 46 years. His son Nathan had passed away in the interim. The consort of the minister, Mrs. Reyna Touro, who was a sister of Moses Michael Hays then residing in Boston, not long after her husband's demise, sought shelter with her brother. Her three children, Abraham, Judah and Rebecca, accompanied her. Moses Michael Hays made the life of his widowed sister and her children very comfortable. When Reyna died at the age of 44, on September 28, 1787, her children were taken care of by their uncle, as if they had been his own.

Moses Michael Hays brought up both Abraham and Judah Touro for business careers. In 1801 after several successful business engagements one of which took him in a ship to the Mediterranean Sea where he took part in a battle with a French privateer and emerged successfully, Judah Touro left Boston for New Orleans where he established himself in business. There he amassed a considerable fortune. Abraham Touro, who never married, remained in business in Boston and likewise attained financial success. By the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century, both brothers were noted for their liberal contributions to charitable and religious institutions of various kinds.[5]

Abraham and Judah always remained faithful to the traditions of their father, and to their Jewish heritage which by their conduct they caused others to honor likewise. In 1816, Abraham Touro appeared before the Selectmen of the town of Boston requesting the Town Clerk publicly to set forth in the records that he was of the Jewish religion and that he belonged to a synagogue of Jews.[6] Judah throughout his life exemplified his Judaism of which he was proud.

The first to leave a permanent record of his affectionate memories of the old Jewish cemetery and the synagogue in Newport was Abraham Touro. When through God's grace he had the ability, he built a brick wall around this historic spot. This was during the summer of 1822. It took the place of the dilapidated wooden fence which was broken in many places and had permitted the grounds to go to ruin. This wall cost him a

thousand dollars.

In connection with the building of this brick wall, Abraham Touro wrote to Stephen Gould, who was in charge of the historic relics of the Jews, on the 22nd of June, 1822, "I hope by this time the work is completed, and done to please all, I mean you and myself, if it should turn out that it is not finished, I wish you would have it done soon, or let me know when it will be".[7] Abraham concludes his leter by saying: "If any friends call on thee for the keys to see the places, you will have the goodness to attend them, or let them have the keys with their promise to close all again and return them to you".

The synagogue and cemetery had already become objects for admiration rather than merely places where the Jewish ritual was performed. Stephen Gould, who promptly responded to this letter of Abraham Touro, received another communication from the latter only three weeks later. From this letter it is to be seen that the work was nearly finished by this time. It was probably the last thing Abraham Touro wrote: "Your esteemed favor, by friend Jones, was handed me, which contents please accept my thanks for your attention. I only have to remark as respects the covering the top of the wall, I shall leave it to you and better Judges, only don't take off the top stone, why will not a (blank) on the wall (blank) & it, which will answer all effect I think, but do what you think best, but have it done. I don't know but what I shall come to see it after you have it finished".[8]

In this last remark, little did Abraham Touro foresee

the future. He did not come to see the wall around the burial ground; before he was able to do so, he was gathered unto his fathers. Through the bolting of horses, he met with a tragic accident which ended in his death on Friday, October 18, 1822. His last wish was to be interred in the Jewish cemetery in Newport. Upon his deathbed he made a legacy for the repair and perpetual upkeep of the synagogue and the street leading up to the cemetery in Newport, the city of his birth and the city he loved.

In his will he specified: "Item : I give Ten thousand dollars to the Legislature of the State of Rhode Island, for the purpose of supporting the Jewish Synagogue in that State, in Special Trust to be appropriated to that object, in such maner as the said Legislature together with the Municipal Authority of the Town of Newport may from time to time direct and appoint.

"Item: I give to the Municipal authority of the town of Newport in Rhode Island the Sum of Five thousand dollars, in Special Trust and confidence that they will appropriate the same in such manner they may judge best, for repairing and preserving the Street from the Burying Ground in said Town to the Main Street".

In his last minutes, he remembered the holy shrine where his father had officiated. Thus it was destined that this edifice should be preserved for posterity as a monument of past virtues. Abraham Touro immortalized his family name together with the synagogue. He even saw to it that the street leading to the synagogue should be preserved and cared for.

He stipulated as the very first item in his will, "I

desire and direct that I may be buried at Newport, Rhode Island, in such manner, as I have expressed to my friends".

The last wish of Abraham Touro was carried out and, on Sunday, October 20, 1822, he was interred near his mother in the old Jewish cemetery. The funeral was not elaborate. He was buried in a simple and quiet manner, symbolic of the simple and quiet life he had led.

A few days later, when the Newport Mercury appeared on October 26, it contained the following news item:

"Died at Boston, on Friday, the 18th., inst., Abraham Touro, Esq., Merchant, aged 48 years, - - a gentlemen whose urbanity of manners, and hospitable disposition had secured him esteem and respect of all who were personally acquainted with him. His death was occasioned by an accident. While viewing the military parade at Boston on the 3d instant, in a chaise, his horse was frightened by firing of artillery, and became unmanageable, and in leaping from the carriage, fractured his leg so severely, that, not withstanding the best surgical aid, a mortification ensued which terminated his existence in this world. Mr. Touro was a native of this Town. - - Besides several gifts and remembrances to private individuals, amounting, it is said, to upwards of 10,000 dollars, he has bequeathed 80,000 Dollars to the followng institutions:

"Massachusetts General Hospital $10,000; Boston Female Asylum $5,000; Asylum for Indigent Boys $5,000; Humane Society $5,000; Synagogue of New

York $10,000; Synagogue - - this town $10,000.

"The remains of Mr. Touro were brought to this Town, and, on Sunday last, Oct. 20, was respectfully interred in the Jewish Cemetery".

At the time of his death the synagogue was closed. It was his earnest wish to see the revival of the Jewish religion in Newport, and the synagogue kept up for such a purpose. His hope was not realized until more than half a century later. But, had it not been for his foresight, one doubts whether the synagogue would have survived to the time when Jews again began to settle in Newport towards the end of the nineteenth century.

The grave of Abraham Touro was properly marked by a tombstonse having the following inscription:

Erected
To The Memory of
ABRAHAM TOURO
of Boston,
Son of Isaac and Reyna Touro;
Who Was Suddenly Taken From This Transitory
State in the 48th. year of a Happy and Useful Life
Deeply Lamented by His Afflicted Relatives
And Innumerable Friends
Distinguished and Esteemed in Those Virtues
And Good Qualities Which Exalt The
Character of Man.
He was Interred in this place by His Own Desire,
on the 20th., of October.
1822.

The Hebrew Inscription on the Monument may be translated as follows:

"Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, thine exceeding great reward"
Monument of the Burial Place
of the Worthy and Esteemed Abraham, son of
The Sweet Singer of Israel, Isaac Touro, of Blessed memory,
Liberated in good repute, in the City of Boston, for his eternal home
In the World reserved for the righteous;
In the forty-eighth year of his life, on the sixth day
In the month of Cheshvan of the year
"A good name is better than fragrant oil, and the day of death
is better than the day of one's birth!" (5583)
Minor Notations
May His Soul Be Bound in the Band of Life".

Titus Welles, the Boston executor of Abraham Touro's will informed the municipal authorities of Newport, as well as the Legislature of the State of Rhode Island, about the bequests for the synagogue and the street in Newport, quoting the will in full. The letter to Newport was presented at a "Meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Newport, on Monday, June 2nd, A. D. 1823". In this letter, in which he informs the authorities of both bequests and says that he has also written to the State Legislature and is awaiting to hear their response, Welles writes, "I hope to be able to pay over these sums in full in July, and at a proper time, it may be needful to confer on the subject of the meaning of the Donor, regarding these Legacies".[9] Whereupon the Council resolved at this meeting "that Nicholas Taylor and William Ennis, Esq., be a committee to consult and act with the Committee appointed by the General Assembly for the purpose of forming such an Act as may be deemed proper and necessary, for carry-

ing into effect the liberal Views and intentions of the deceased Mr. Touro".[10]

To the General Assembly, Welles, after quoting that part of the will relating to the synagogue, wrote: "It may be timely for me to remark on the subject of this Bequest regarding what I suppose to have been the intention of the Donor. From the decayed state of the Synagogue in Newport, and the want of any family or persons of the Jewish persuasion there, the deceased with some others seriously resolved to look into the situation of the property and devise some plan to revive the Jewish religion there; and in such way and manner as to induce some of that nation to settle and keep up a worship at least in such a degree that the building enclosures and the Institution itself should not go entirely to ruin and decay".

Welles, who was a close and intimate friend of Abraham Touro voiced the pious intentions of the donor.

The Legislature acted on the letter of Abraham Touro's executor, and duly appointed the Honorable William Hunter, Chairman of a Committee "To frame an act for carrying into effect the Donation of the said Abraham Touro deceased".[11]

In regard to the street leading from the burial ground to the main street for which Touro left $5,000 for repair, the Town Council met on July 9, 1823 and resolved that "William Ennis Esq., a member of this Council, be and is hereby appointed and authorized to receive the Money from the Said Titus Wells Esq.", and this was to be deposited properly in some Bank in the town,

"subject to future orders of this Council".[12]

The Council convened again two days later to consider the legacy for the synagogue; and, after due deliberation resolved, "that in the opinion of this Council, if the Honorable General Assembly shall accept of the trust expressed in said clause, it will be advisable that an act be passed empowering the General Treasurer to receive the Donation therein made from the Executor of said Will, to give proper discharge therefor, and to invest the same in any good Bank Stock or in the United States funds and that the certificates or evidences of such funded property or Stock be placed and remain in the Offices of the General Treasurer. - -

"It is also the opinion of this Council that in the act upon this subject the Town Council of this Town should be authorized from time to time, as occasion may require to appoint with the approbation of the General Assembly, a suitable person or persons to have the care and charge of said Synagogue, Buildings and Grounds, and to repair the same when necessary out of the proceeds or Interest of said Fund, under the directions of said Council, and to account to said Council for their doings, all accounts if approved by said Council to be laid before the General Assembly for their consideration".[13]

These resolutions were put into effect after the City Clerk had met with William Hunter, Chairman of the Committee of the General Assembly, as he was instructed to do by the Council. Accordingly, at the June session of the Assembly, an Act was passed to secure and

appropriate the "Touro Jewish Synagogue Fund" which provided that "the Town Council of the Town of Newport shall have authority" to appoint the proper agent to repair and keep up the synagogue properly, as well as "fix the compensation of said agent with the approbation of the General Assembly".

Not long after, the synagogue was repaired properly, and once again appeared as in the days before the Revolution. In due time, the building was painted; the grounds put in order and planted with grass; and the wooden fence put in shape.

As to the street on which the synagogue stood and for the repair of which Abraham Touro had left a special legacy, the Town Council of Newport invested the money, and at the meeting of April 17, 1824, appropriated $1300 from it for the street's repair. The work was soon started, and before long the street was the best paved in the city. At the Council Meeting of July 1824, the street, before this known as Griffin Street beginning at the old Jewish Burial Ground and extending as far as Spring Street, also Ann Street continuing from Griffiin Street and extending to Thames Street, were officially referred to as "Touro Street".[14] About this time also the old Jew's Street was re-named Bellevue Avenue. The earliest maps of Newport of the nineteenth century show this change.

Stephen Gould was in charge of the keys to the synagogue and the cemetery. He guarded both places as shrines of the highest sanctity although without compensation. It was only after the Touro Fund

Abraham Touro.

appropriated some money that he was partly repaid for his faithful services.

Through these gifts of Abraham Touro, the old Jewish cemetery, the synagogue and Touro Street were restored and improved. Before the century was half gone, these three landmarks became the most beautiful and best cared for spots in the city of Newport. Unfortunately, the dream of Abraham Touro to have the Jewish religion revived in Newport was not realized so soon. But, had it not been for him only sadness would accompany the thought as to what might have happened to both the venerated "Abode of Life" and the "Holy Synagogue".

The synagogue at this time passed into the ownership of the New York Congregation Shearith Israel of which the majority of the heirs of the original owners were members. On September 29, 1826, Moses Lopez in writing to his "Esteemed Friend Stephen Gould" about various matters concerning property which he left behind in Newport when he moved to New York, speaks about the repairs to the synagogue which were in charge of the Council, and adds "that building is now considered as own'd at present by the Hebrew Society in this city and I am doubtful whether the Trustees of it will tamely submit to the forced agency of the Council to repair their own property without their consent".[15]

These remarks were occasioned by the fact that Stephen Gould who was in charge of the keys by authority of the New York Congregation, was not given remuneration by the Council even after money was

available. In the same letter, Lopez writes that to avoid contention the New York trustees may consent to have the Newport Council repair the building, but, he adds: "I am determined to send for the keys and place them in their hands that they may do what they please with them, as you have obliged me long enough to wish your further services any longer for nothing in an affair where a whole Society is concerned".[16]

The serenity of the synagogue was unbroken except on the occasions, when members of the old Jewish community were brought to Newport to be reunited in death with their coreligionists according to their last requests. Thus the synagogue was opened for the funeral services of Moses Lopez, who died on April 1, 1830, at the great age of 86 in New York, and who was brought for interment in this city.

A year later, on December 23d, the synagogue was used for the funeral of Rebecca Lopez, the only daughter of the Reverend Isaac Touro. Two days later the Rhode Island Republican carried the news in the following words: "The Steamboat from New York, which arrived here on Sunday last, brought the body of Mrs. Lopez to be interred in the Jewish Cemetery in this town. The corpse was placed in the Synagogue until Monday morning, at ten o'clock, when the services were performed according to the Jewish Ceremony, by Reverend Isaac B. Seixas, in the presence of a large number of citizens, - - thence the body was conveyed to the cemetery and interred with additional ceremony at the grave".

The author of the brief article adds a very significant historic note: "This is the first time for the last forty years that the ceremony of the Jews has been performed in the Synagogue".

Rebecca had been married to Joshua Lopez, a son of Aaron Lopez of Newport. The marriage was consecrated by the Reverend Isaac Benjamin Seixas of New York. Joshua Lopez was then about 60 years old, while Rebecca was 10 years younger. It was not destined that they should enjoy married life for long. A little more than four and a half years after their marriage, Rebecca departed for the World of Eternity on December 19, 1853. Her last wish was to be interred in the cemetery of Newport. She left no children.

Two years later the synagogue was opened for the funeral of Judah Hays, the son of Moses Michael Hays. He died on May 1, 1832.

The synagogue was in use on October 19, 1836, on the occasion of the interment of Slowey Hays, a daughter of Moses Michael Hays, and a cousin of the Touro family. Thus, with the exception of funeral elegies and hymns, Longfellow spoke the truth when he wrote:

"Closed are the portals of their Synagogue,
No Psalms of David now the silence break,
No Rabbi reads the ancient Decalogue
In the grand dialect the Prophets spake".

The poet was right when he added

"Gone are the living, but the dead remain,
And not neglected; for a hand unseen,

Scattering the bounty, like a summer rain,
Still keeps their graves, and their
remembrance green".[17]

Affectionate memories of Newport were cherished by the other son of the Reverend Isaac Touro, Judah Touro. We have seen how Judah Touro, at the dawn of the nineteenth century, established his residence in the city of New Orleans. At the time he landed there, the town had from eight to ten thousand inhabitants, and its population was increasing by leaps and bounds. This proved a very fruitful field for the energetic Judah. He opened a small store on St. Louis Street, where he began a growing and profitable trade in soap, candles, codfish, and the other exports from New England. His demonstrated integrity secured him a large trade. The business was very prosperous and in a short time he accumulated money which he invested in real estate and ships, all of which advanced in price very rapidly. Before long he had amassed a great fortune.

As a rule, when one accumulates a fortune, he is tempted to change his mode of life, and lead a life of luxury. This was not the case with Judah Touro. He never indulged in wild speculation nor did he turn aside from his regular line of trade. He continued his business, which he enlarged, gradually, to accommodate the increase which came with the years. He conducted his mercantile enterprises with strict honesty, worked hard, and gained the confidence of all who dealt with him. This contributed not a little to his success.

A writer who knew Touro personally at New Orleans

Judah Touro.

gave a character sketch of the man, such as only an eye witness can give. Among other things, he said, "How little of the hero, or great man, was there in the simple, humble aspect of that timid, shrinking old man, who was wont to glide so silently and diffidently through the street, with his hands behind him, his eyes fixed on the pavement, and his homely old face, wrinkled with age, but replete with expression, of gentle kindness and benevolence".[18]

It seemed that the more he gave, the richer he became. But he made sure that no publicity should be given to the charitable gifts, which he distributed because of his love to his fellow man. As this writer put it, "He deprived himself of all other luxuries in order to enjoy, and gratify, with keener relish, and greater intensity, his single passion, and appetite, to do good to his fellow man. . . . His only art and stealth were displayed in the concealment of his benefactions".

The first sign of Judah Touro's memory of past days in Newport was displayed in connection with the cemetery. Abraham Touro had not provided in his will for the upkeep and preservation of the cemetery. The brick wall which he erected around it before his death protected the burial ground from further exposure to the damage to which it had been subject before, but it did not remove the destruction already wrought. Besides, after twenty years, though the brick wall was up, additional decay set in the stones and the wall was in poor repair. When a resident of Bellevue Avenue near the cemetery remarked to a friend of Touro, "That it

would be a commendable act on the part of Mr. Touro were he to enclose the burial ground with a noble wall of granite, as the then present brick wall was in a decayed state",[19] it was not very long after that before he built a beautiful granite wall to replace the old brick one, at a cost of $12,000.

It was in 1842 that Judah Touro resolved to restore and beautify the place of the sepulchre of his fathers. Accordingly, he commissioned a personal friend to have the cemetery put in perfect order, to repair and restore the monuments, to beautify the grounds and to oversee the construction of the Quincy granite bases and pillars to hold the iron railing which forms the enclosure around the old cemetery even to the present day. The entire work was executed under the direction of Isaiah Rogers, a noted architect of Boston.

This contribution of Judah Touro induced the Town Council to have a similar enclosure erected around the synagogue, for, on July 9, 1842, we read in the Newport Mercury: "We understand that the Town Council, under authority given by the General Assymbly, have contracted with Mr. Rogers of Boston, to enclose the Synagogue lot, with a substantial stone wall and Iron fence, similar to the one which he has just completed around the Hebrew Cemetery - The work will consist of an ornamental cast Iron fence with a basement of cut Quincy Granite on Touro and Barney Streets, and a substantial granite wall on the east and west sides of the lot. The Gateway will be on Touro Street and correspond with the Portico of the Synagogue".[20]

The enclosure around the synagogue cost $6,835 and was completed towards the end of the year.

In this manner, both the synagogue and the cemetery were surrounded with beautiful, substantial and lasting walls, protecting the historic relics from easy invasion.

There are no records of any Jewish families permanently settled in Newport during this time. Yet it seems that the city was visited often by transient Jews, and, occasionally, especially during the summer, a number of Jews spent their vacations in this town. This is evidenced from the fact that in August, 1850, according to the Newspaper of the day, the synagogue was opened for the first time "after an intermission of about sixty years" for regular worship. For several Saturdays the Reverend Doctor Morris J. Raphall, the spiritual leader of the Elm Street Synagogue of New York, conducted the services. He also delivered a series of six discourses on Wednesdays and Saturday evenings, on the "Poetry of the Hebrews". According to the same report: "The public worship in the Synagogue was well attended by the people of the Town who were gratified to have the opportunity of witnessing the forms and ceremonies of worship which was once attended in that House of Worship, by the Lopez's, the Riveras and other Jews who were among the inhabitants of Newport, previous to the Revolution".[21]

These services during the summer were but a foreshadowing of what was to come. They were not a revival of the old worship, but they were an indication of the beginning of a new Jewish community, though

more than a quarter of a century was still to pass before the nucleus of the new Jewish comunity in Newport was to be visible. In the meantime, on the 18th of January, 1854, the venerable philanthropist Judah Touro was gathered to his fathers, at the age of 79, to the sorrow of the entire population of New Orleans. The newspapers and the pulpits eulogized him and paid just tribute to his virtues, in words to which his modesty would have objected during his lifetime.

When his will was opened, it was found to contain as the first request, "I desire that my mortal remains be buried in the Jewish Cemetery in Newport, Rhode Island, as soon as practical after my decease". Among the many bequests to institutions of various creeds and colors, amounting to nearly half a million dollars, the will was found to contain "I give and bequeath ten thousand dollars for the purpose of paying the salary of a Reader or Minister to officiate in the Jewish Synagogue of Newport, Rhode Island, and to endow the Ministry of the same, as well as to keep in repair and embellish the Jewish Cemetery in Newport aforesaid; the said amount to be appropriated and paid, or invested for that purpose in such manner as my executors may determine concurrently with the corporation of Newport aforesaid, if necessary".[22]

According to his desire, his mortal remains were brought to Newport for interment. On June 6, of the same year, his body arrived in Newport on the steamer "Empire City", and was conveyed to the Synagogue, and placed before the reading desk, at which his father

had ministered more than eighty years before. By the coffin were placed two candles, which burned until the funeral service was over.

The best record of the funeral is found in the city documents of 1854 written by an eye witness:

"The funeral of the late Judah Touro was solemnized same afternoon; the procession was the longest which has been seen here for many years. The streets were crowded with people, the stores all closed, and the bells tolled. About one hundred and fifty Jews were present from various parts of the country.

"The City Council assembled at City Hall, and marched in procession to the Synagogue, the gallery of which was already densely crowded with ladies, and there were thousands on the street who could not gain admission. The coffin stood in front of the reading desk.

"Soon after the arrival of the city government, the Rabbis and other Jews came in procession, the former taking seats in the desk. As soon as the Synagogue was filled, the doors were closed, and thousands remained outside until the ceremonies were concluded.

"The services were conducted by the Rev. J. K. Gutheim, of New Orleans, in Hebrew and English. In his address, which was excellent, he paid a glowing and eloquent tribute to the memory of the departed.

"The following clergymen were present: Rev. Dr. Raphall, Rev. S. M. Isaacs, Rev. Ansel Leo, Rev. J. J. Lyons of New York, Rev. J. K. Gutheim of New Orleans, Rev. Joseph Sachs of Boston, Rev. Isaac Leeser of Philadelphia, and Rev. H. A. Henry of

Buffalo, — nearly all of whom were in their robes. Delegations of Jews were present from Boston, Hartford, New Haven, New York, Buffalo and Philadelphia, to all of which places Mr. Touro made bequests. At the conclusion of the services at the Synagogue, the procession was formed in the order:— Rabbis and Jews from abroad; City Marshall; Mayor; City Clerk. City Treasurer; Board of Aldermen; City Sargeant; President of Common Council; Clerk of Common Council; Common Council; Redwood Library Corporation; preceded by the President and Directors; Protective Company no. 5; Citizens and strangers.

"It moved through the streets as previously announced, to the Cemetery, where the remains were consigned to their native dust. The Rev. Mr. Leeser delivered a very appropriate and eloquent address. After the coffin was deposited in the grave, the Rev. Mr. Isaacs deposited upon it a quantity of earth which was brought from Jerusalem for the purpose, at the same time uttering a few appropriate remarks. Prayers were then offered at the graves of the members of the family.

"This closed these interesting and mournful ceremonies, and there was laid in the grave the last, we believe, of the Touro family".[23]

The last of the Touro family was laid in the grave with the decease of Judah Touro, but the name of Touro is still a living one and will long remain in the hearts of the citizens of Newport.

As to the bequest of Judah Touro for the synagogue, the following is the resolution adopted by the City

Council, on January 11, 1855. "It is voted and resolved, that the City Council of Newport, do hereby accept the said bequest of ten thousand dollars, for the purposes named in said Will, and the same be invested, as hereinafter provided; and it is further voted and resolved, that a sum not exceeding two hundred dollars be annually expended to keep in repair, and embellish the cemetery aforesaid, subject to the control of David J. Gould and Nathan H. Gould, aforesaid, in accordance with the desire expressed by the testator".[24]

The legacy of Judah Touro was well invested. Nothing was drawn from this fund which was entitled "The Judah Touro Ministerial and Cemetery Fund", except the $200 annually for the upkeep of the cemetery. It grew steadily with the accumulation of interest, so that in later years an adequate amount was available for the salary of the minister. When the synagogue was reconsecrated, the dearest purpose of Judah Touro was fulfilled.

During his lifetime, Judah Touro had been notably associated with the dedication of the Bunker Hill Monument. Reading in a newspaper one day that Mr. Amos Lawrence had pledged himself to give ten thousand dollars, providing any other person would give a like sum, to complete the monument on Bunker Hill, which had for a long time remained unfinished because of lack of funds, Judah Touro dispatched his check for ten thousand dollars to the committee with his compliments.

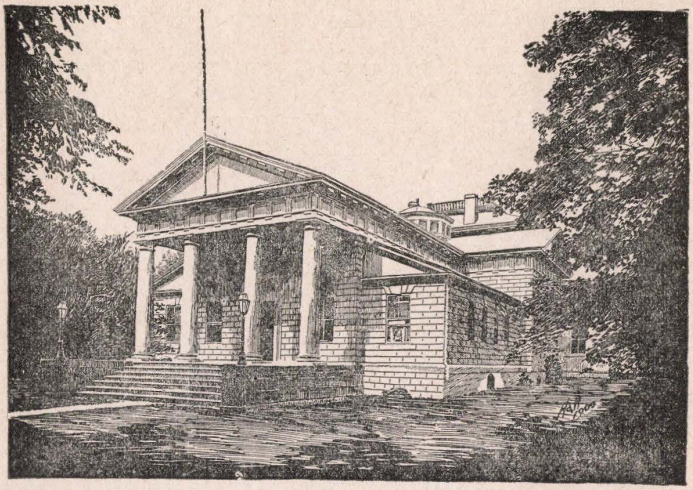
On the occasion of the dedication of the monument

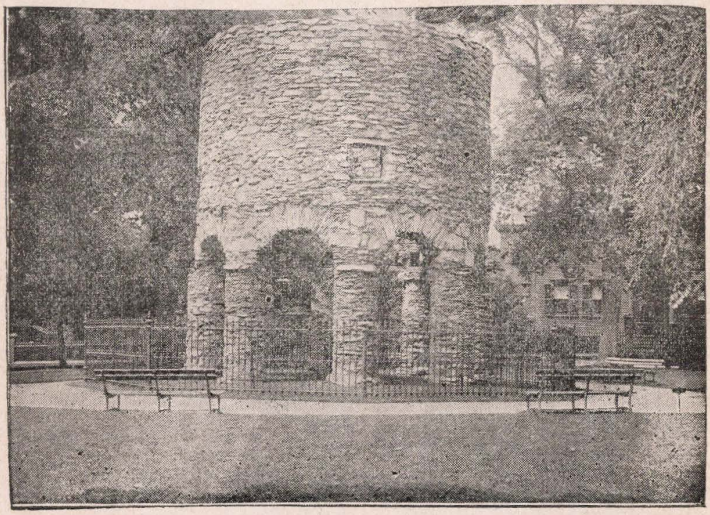
in 1843, in the presence of the President of the United States and Daniel Webster as orator, the generosity of Judah Touro was commemorated by the presiding officer in the toast which has since become famous:—

"Amos and Judah—venerated names!
Patriarch and prophet press their equal claims,
Like generous coursers, running neck and neck,
Each aids the work by giving it a check.
Christian and Jew, they carry out a plan—
For though of different faith, each is in heart
a man".

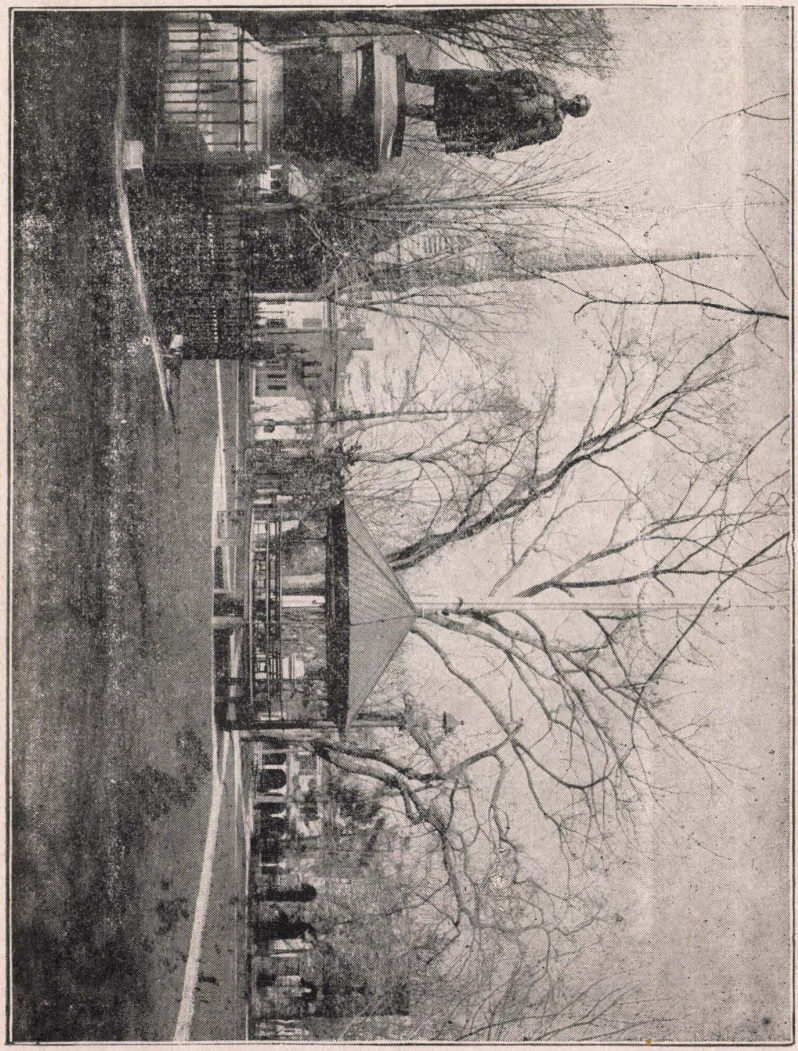
After his death, Judah Touro's generosity became manifest to all through his last will and testament. To Newport, the city he loved, he bequeathed $10,000 for the purchase of the Old Stone Mill with the grounds around it to be converted into a public park, as well as $3,000 for the Redwood Library, to which he had sent $1,000 in 1843, upon hearing that its portico was in a dilapidated state and needed immediate repair.

The love the former Jewish residents of Newport had for that city is illustrated in still another incident. This was some time in the fifth decade of the century. A woman about 80 years of age whose mother was of the Hart family of Newport came here from Savannah, Georgia. When the custodian of the synagogue opened the historic edifice for her, she sat down on the same seat she had occupied many a time in former days, and devoutly read her prayers. On a second visit, she went on the cemetery. When she was about to return from the cemetery to the hotel to prepare for her journey back





Redwood Library and Old Stone Mill, both in Newport.



Touro Park, Newport.

to Georgia, she inquired of Mr. Gould who was taking care of the burial ground, whether she might take a little of the soil of the cemetery "that upon her return to her home she could sprinkle it upon the graves of her parents and her family".[25]

The presence of Jews in Newport during the middle of the nineteenth century appears from a few other records.

In July, 1856, Mr. David Bendau of the Jewish faith, a teacher of foreign languages in one of the colleges in the city of New York, petitioned the Newport City Council to grant him the use of the side-buildng of the synagogue for a school during the summer to teach German. This request, according to the records of the council was not granted.[26]

Tombstones in the old cemetery show a burial in 1866. Three now obliterated stones mark the graves of children buried in the cemetery sometime after 1842.[27] Within the memory of an old member of the Newport Historical Society a funeral took place in the ancient "Abode of Life" sometime in the seventies of the last century.

Yet in 1858, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote:

THE JEWISH CEMETERY AT NEWPORT

How strange it seems! These Hebrews in their graves.
  Close by the street of this fair seaport town,
Silent beside the never-silent waves,
  At rest in all this moving up and down!

The trees are white with dust, that o'er their sleep
  Wave their broad curtains in the south-wind's breath,

While underneath these leafy tents they keep
  The long, mysterious Exodus of Death.

And these sepulchral stones, so old and brown,
  That pave with level flags their burial-place,
Seem like the tablets of the Law, thrown down
  And broken by Moses at the mountain's base.[28]

The very names recorded here are strange,
  Of foreign accent, and of different climes;
Alvares and Rivera interchange
  With Abraham and Jacob of old times.

"Blessed be God! for he created Death!"
  The mourners said, "and Death is rest and peace";
Then added, in the certainty of faith,
  "And giveth Life that never more shall cease".

Closed are the portals of their Synagogue,
  No Psalms of David now the silence break,
No Rabbi reads the ancient Decalogue
  In the grand dialect the Prophets spake.

Gone are the living, but the dead remain,
  And not neglected; for a hand unseen,
Scattering its bounty, like a summer rain,
  Still keeps their graves and their remembrance green.

How came they here? What burst of Christian hate,
  What persecution, merciless and blind,
Drove o'er the sea - that desert desolate -
  These Ishmaels and Hagars of Mankind? [29]

They lived in narrow streets and lanes obscure,

Ghetto and Judenstrass,[30] in mirk and mire;
Taught in the school of patience to endure
The life of anguish and the death of fire.

All their lives long, with the unleaven bread
And bitter herbs or exile and its fears,
The wasting famine of the heart they fed,
And slaked its thirst with marah[31] of their tears.

Anathema maranatha![32] was the cry
That rang from town to town, from street to street;
At every gate the accursed Mordecai
Was mocked and jeered, and spurned by Christian feet.

Pride and humiliation hand in hand
Walked with them through the world where'er they went;
Trampled and beaten were they as the sand,
And yet unshaken as the continent.

For in the background figures vague and vast
Of patriarchs and prophets rose sublime,
And all the great traditions of the Past
They saw reflected in the coming time.

And thus forever with reverted look
The mystic volume of the world they read,
Spelling it backward, like a Hebrew book,
Till life became a Legend of the Dead.

But ah! what once has been shall be no more!
The groaning earth in travail and in pain

Brings forth its races, but does not restore,
  And the dead nations never rise again.

And in 1867, Emma Lazarus wrote:

IN THE JEWISH SYNAGOGUE IN NEWPORT

Here, where the noises of the busy town,
  The ocean's plunge and roar can enter not,
We stand and gaze around with tearful awe,
  And muse upon the consecrated spot.

No signs of life are here: the very prayers
  Inscribed around are in a language dead;
The light of the "perpetual lamp' is spent
  That an undying radiance was to shed.

What prayers were in this temple offered up,
  Wrung from sad hearts, that knew no joy on earth,
By these lone exiles of a thousand years,
  From the fair sunrise land that gave them birth!

Now as we gaze, in this new world of light
  Upon this relic of the days of old,
The present vanishes, and tropic bloom
  And eastern towns and temples we behold.

Again we see the patriarch with his flocks,
  The purple seas, the hot blue sky o'erhead,
The slaves of Egypt, - omens, mysteries, -
  Dark fleeing hosts by flaming angels led.

A wondrous light upon a sky-kissed mount,
  A man who reads the great God's written law,[33]

Noble Memories

'Midst blinding glory and effulgence rare
  Unto a people prone with reverent awe.

The pride of luxury's barbaric pomp,
  In the rich court of royal Solomon -
Alas! we wake: one scene alone remains, -
  The exiles by the streams of Babylon.

Our softened voices send us back again
  But mournful echoes through the empty hall;
Our footsteps have a strange unnatural sound,
  And with unwonted gentleness they fall.

The weary ones, the sad, the suffering,
  All found their comfort in the holy place,
And children's gladness and men's gratitude
  Took voice and mingled in the chant of praise.

The funeral and the marriage, now, alas!
  We know not which is sadder to recall;
For youth and happiness have followed age,
  And green grass lieth gently over all.

Nathless the sacred shrine is holy yet,
  With its lone floors where reverent feet once trod
Take off your shoes, as by the burning bush,
  Before the mystery of death and God.

CHAPTER XIII

RECONSECRATION

Around 1870 a new Jewish settlement was developing in Newport. The immigration of Jews from Germany began in large numbers after 1846, and the immigration from Russia and other parts of Eastern Europe was in full swing in the 1870's. The new immigrants were attracted by the large cities in the United States. A few, however, scattered to the smaller communities such as Newport.

Among the Jews who settled in Newport at this time were families that came from Germany, Russia, Austria, Roumania and Italy. Before a decade had passed, a sufficient number of Jews were in the city to make it possible once again to consider the establishment of services of the Jewish Religion. The dream, hope and vision of Abraham and Judah Touro at last began to show signs of realization.

The synagogue was in perfect condition. During the year of 1858, no less than $4.455.46, had been paid out from the Touro Synagogue Fund established with the bequest of Abraham Touro by the General Assembly in 1823, more than three quarters of this sum having been spent for the repair of the edifice.[1] In October, 1866,

the synagogue was painted afresh.[2] In 1872, gas lighting was installed in the building; and, the year after, on June 21, the Newport Gas Light Company received $218.99 from the fund for its services.[3] A permanent custodian for the synagogue was employed by the City Council, who, for the meagre salary of $50 annually[4] looked after the needs of the structure and grounds. The cemetery was in the care of a member of the Gould family and well provided for. A 'hand unseen' kept all in green.

The Congregation Shearith Israel in New York had become the heir to the title of the synagogue and cemetery of Newport through the absorption amongst its members the remnant of the old Jewish community of Newport. Accordingly, when the new Jewish community began to develop in the last quarter of the century and contemplated the organization of Jewish religious services and the use of the synagogue, their attention was immediately directed towards securing the friendly co-operation of the New York Congregation.

On August 17, 1881, the Board of Trustees of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York, met to consider the affairs of the Newport synagogue and cemetery. Investigation followed, conducted by a committee consisting of Mr. Gratz Nathan and the Reverend Dr. H. Pereira Mendes, who appeared before the Town Council and Board of Aldermen of the City of Newport. This resulted in the agreement of the Newport municipal authorities, that "the petition or application of parties desiring the use of the Newport

Synagogue be transmitted to the Board of Trustees of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York".[5] Accordingly, the several Jewish families in Newport applied to the New York Congregation for permission to use the synagogue and apply the Judah Touro Ministerial and Cemetery Fund to the expenses of the services. The Newport application was considered at the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Congregation Shearith Israel on September 18, 1881. The result in the words of the Clerk of the Congregation, was entered in the minutes:— "Whereas: A communication has been received from certain members of the Jewish persuasion at Newport, R. I. asking permission to use the Synagogue at that place for worship during ensuing holidays, to have a permanent Rabbi, and to avail of the income from the Touro Fund to meet necessary expenses, on motion of Mr. Nathan, it was unanimously Resolved that the matter be refered to our Minister, *Parnas* and *Segan* with power to make such arrangements as they may see fit, for supplying a *Hozan* to the Newport applicants for services during the ensuing holy days, but that the Board will not assent to the Touro Fund being applied for that purpose until there shall be a sufficient number of permanent residents to maintain the Services throughout the year in accordance with the principles, and form of orthodox Judaism as contemplated by the term of the will of the late Judah Touro".[6]

The Reverend Henry Samuel Morais of Philadelphia was invited to officiate on those High Holy Days.[7] The

Rabbi Abraham Pereira Mendes.

Reverend Mr. Morais was the son of Dr. Sabato Morais, the eminent divine and spiritual leader of the Congregation *Mikveh Israel* of Philadelphia, and one of the founders of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. The Newport synagogue was without any ritual objects. These had been taken away when the services at the synagogue ceased at the end of the eighteenth century, and had been deposited for safe-keeping in the synagogue of the Congregation *Shearith Israel* in New York. To replace these, *Sefarim* and other necessary ritual objects for the services were sent to Newport from New York.

Once again, on the traditional anniversary of Creation, *Rosh Hashanah,* the Jewish New Year, the ancient and beautiful prayers were heard within the walls where long before "reverent feet had trod". Again the voice of Israel was heard chanting in unison, 'Hear O Israel'. Again the *Shofar's* blast sounded through this venerable shrine, evoking memories of countless ages filled with suffering and with joy. That day the memory of the Lopezes, the Riveras, the Seixases and the Touros was on everyone's lips.

These services were only temporary. There were not as yet enough Jewish families in Newport to warrant the holding of regular services. On October 25, 1881, after the holy days the *Shammas* (Sexton) of the New York Congregation was directed by the Board of Trustees to bring back from Newport, "the *Sefarim* &c. loaned to the Synagogue there for services during recent Holy days".[8]

Before a year had passed, a movement began in Newport to reestablish regular services at the synagogue, on every Sabbath and holy day. It was proposed as well to organize a Jewish religious school associated with the synagogue. For this purpose the Newport Jews addressed a communication to the Reverend Dr. H. Pereira Mendes. Dr. Mendes immediately presented the communication to the Board of Trustees of his Congregation at a meeting on December 13, 1882. The trustees referred the matter to a committee of three, together with the president, with instructions "to propose as early as possible a definite plan for the reestablishment of Services in the Newport Synagogue under suitable auspices."[9]

In the meanwhile this matter had been taken up with the Newport city authorities. On December 21, the committee of the Board of Trustees of the Congregation *Shearith Israel* of New York reported, presenting a resolution passed by the Newport Town Council granting permission to reopen the Touro Synagogue permanently and to employ the services of a Minister who should conduct the services and supervise the religious instructtion of the Jewish youth. The resolution of the Town Council expressed the desire that the call to the Newport pulpit be extended to the Reverend Abraham Pereira Mendes of London, the father of the Reverend Dr. Mendes of New York.

The report of the committee is thus recorded in the minutes of the New York Congregation, under date December 21, 1882. "The Committee appointed at last

meeting on the subject of reviving Services at the Newport Synagogue presented copy of a resolution adopted by the Newport City Council Nov. 7, 1882, by which the Committee of Finance of Said Council was authorized and empowered to act in relation to a Minister of the Touro Jewish Synagogue and the income of the Fund for his support, whereupon the following resolutions were adopted: Resolved, that in View of the fact that the Rev. Abraham P. Mendes at present the Preacher of the Cong. of Spanish and Portuguese Jews of London proposes to take up his residence at Newport, R. I., and to engage at that place in the instruction of Jewish youth, it is proper that suitable arrangements should be made for the reopening of the Touro Synagogue.

"Resolved that a call to the Ministry of said Synagogue is hereby extended to the Rev. Abraham P. Mendes, who is hereby designated during the pleasure of this Board as the Minister of Said Synagogue, and the religious instruction of the Jewish Community at Newport.

"Resolved that the Civic authorities of the Touro Fund are respectfully requested to place said Minister in charge of said Synagogue, and to make such allowance out of Said Fund for his salary as the condition of the Fund may admit".

Abraham Pereira Mendes was born in Kingston, Jemaica, on February 9, 1825. His first position was as instructor in the Beth Limud School of Kingston. At an early opportunity, he resigned his position in

Kingston in order to go to London, England, and there to pursue his studies for the ministry. In London he studied under Dr. Raphael Meldola, and the Reverend D. A. de Sola, from whom he received his Rabbinic diploma. He afterwards returned to Kingston and became assistant minister to the Reverend Isaac Lopez, Minister of the Kingston *Sephardic* Congregation. From here he was called to occupy the pulpit of the Montego Bay Congregation. With them he stayed until 1851, when he was elected Minister and Preacher of the Birmingham Congregation in England, a post at which he remained until 1858. At that time, he moved to London, where he was for six years the head of the *Neveh Zedek* school continuing in the meanwhile his ministerial and literary work. On the death of *Chacham* Artom, the Reverend Mr. Mendes for a brief period acted as the preacher and "*dayan*" of the Sephardic community in London. While he was thus engaged, the call to Newport came to him asking him to occupy the pulpit in the historic Touro Synagogue.[10] He gladly accepted the Newport invitation, and he reached the city early in the year 1883.

The first official rabbinic duty that he performed in Newport was the reconsecration of the synagogue. This event invited the attention of the entire population of the city. The prolonged anticipation of it was finally realized on Friday, May 25, 1883. A number of invitations were sent to notables of the community, as well as to a number of prominent persons outside of Newport. An invitation was also extended to the Board of

Trustees of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York, and the Rev. Doctors Pereira and de Sola Mendes.

On Friday afternoon, May 25, 1883, the reconsecration services were held before a crowded congregation consisting of Jews and non-Jews. The feeling in the synagogue was as intense as it had been when the beautiful building was dedicated in 1763. The synagogue was brightly illuminated. The candelabra suspended from the ceiling bore lighted candles that shed their soft radiance through all the corners of the edifice. Amongst the honored guests of the congregation were the Mayor Robert S. Franklin, Judge Tillinghast of the Supreme Court, City Treasurer Coggeshall, several of the local clergymen, several officers of the City Government, Dr. Henry E. Turner of the Newport Historical Society, and the noted Newport historian George C. Mason.[11]

The exercises were very similar to the dedication ceremonies which had taken place in this very building on December 2, 1763, one hundred and twenty years before. the scrolls of the Law, which had been kept in New York, and once more brought back to Newport on this occasion to be permanently deposited in the Ark of the Newport synagogue, were carried by the Reverend Dr. Frederick de Sola Mendes and his brother, the Reverend Dr. H. Pereira Mendes, both of New York.[12] These two ministers brought the scrolls of the Law to the door of the synagogue. They were preceded by their father Abraham Pereira Mendes. Upon reaching the door and knocking as a sign that they sought admission, the three

rabbis in unison chanted in Hebrew the verse, "Open to us the gates of righteousness, we will enter them and praise the Lord". To this the congregation within responded, chanting, "This is the gate dedicated to the Lord, the righteous shall enter therein".

As the rabbis entered the synagogue and proceeded with the scrolls to the *Tebah,* the entire congregation together with the ministers chanted in unison several verses from the Psalms, beginning with "Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord; we bless you from the house of the Lord". The procession then proceeded to make the circuit of the synagogue, during which time the Consecration Psalm XXX was chanted by the minister and the congregation. After the procession returned to the *Tebah,* the perpetual lamp, which had not burned for close to a century, was lighted, and twice the entire congregation chanted in unison the verse, "The Lord shall reign for ever; Thy God, O Zion, unto all generations, Hallelujah". The scrolls were then taken in procession and deposited in the Ark, during which time Psalm XXIX was chanted.

Rabbi Abraham Pereira Mendes offered a prayer for the government in English and in Hebrew. This was followed by a memorial prayer for the Reverend Isaac Touro, the first minister of the synagogue, and for his two sons, Abraham and Judah, whose beneficence had endowed this beautiful shrine.

The impressive reconsecration services were followed by the Sabbath eve service chanted by the Reverend H. Pereira Mendes. After this, Rabbi Abraham

Pereira Mendes preached an excellent sermon, using for his text the verse in Isaiah 11:5 "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins".[13]

Thereafter Rabbi Mendes conducted regular services on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings as well as on the holy days and festivals. He established a religious school for the Jewish youth, which he conducted as in the old days in the side building adjacent to the synagogue. Besides the services at the synagogue, the Reverend Mr. Mendes delivered lectures on various occasions, and in general quickened the spiritual life in the new growing Jewish community.

On June 23, 1885, he read a paper before the Newport Historical Society on the Jewish Cemetery at Newport. This has subsequently been published in the Rhode Island Historical Magazine, Volume VI, and has become the standard work on its subject. With great effort, he succeeded in deciphering all the inscriptions on the tombstones and in rendering them into a beautiful English. The Reverend Abraham Pereira Mendes was well fitted for this work, and he did it very skilfully. He had to his credit a number of published works, which he had written prior to his coming to America. As early as 1855, he published a volume of sermons in English, which was the first work of this type from the pen of a Sephardic rabbi. He translated the daily prayerbook. He also finished the translation of the festival and holy day prayerbooks, which had been begun by his father-in-law, the Reverend D. A. de Sola.

Besides this he had written and published "The Law of Moses, "Post Biblical History of the Jews", "Interlineary Translation of the Prayer-Book" and an edition of the *"Hagadah"*.[14]

In 1887, an additional *Sefer Torah* which had belonged to Newport, was brought back from New York and deposited in the Ark.[15] The news that the Newport synagogue had been reconsecrated and reopened for permanent services reached a certain Mrs. Edward Cohen, who was at the time living in Washington. She was a lineal descendant of Moses Michael Hays of Newport and had in her possession two sets of silver bells which once had adorned the scrolls of the Newport synagogue. Mrs. Cohen inherited these bells from her family in Richmond. We may recall here that Jacob Rodrigues Rivera bequeathed his "Five Books of Moses wrote on parchment by me heretofore deposited in the Jewish Synagogue in Newport, together with the Silver Bells and other ornaments thereto belonging". Apparently, the scroll and bells though deposited at times in the Ark of the synagogue, still remained the property of Mr. Rivera. This probably was also the case with the silver bells in the possession of Mrs. Cohen. Mrs. Cohen herself was also connected with the Myers family. At the synagogue now there are two sets of silver bells inscribed "Hays and Myers", which, judging by the inscriptions, date back to pre-Revolutionary days, and which are said to have been the contribution of these families. May it not be these silver bells that Mrs. Cohen had in her possession? The Hays

Order of Service

TO BE OBSERVED AT THE

Re-opening of the Touro Synagogue,

NEWPORT, R. I.

on Friday, 19th Iyar 5643.—25th May, 1883.

The persons appointed to carry the Scrolls of the Law, will bring them to the door of the Synagogue.

The minister, preceding them, will then chant;

Minister—: פתחו לנו שערי צדק נבא בם נודה יה

Open to us the gates of righteousness, we will enter them and praise the Lord.

Congregation—: זה השער לה׳ צדיקים יבאו בו

This is the gate dedicated to the Lord, the righteous shall enter therein.

Having entered, Minister and Congregation chant—

ברוך הבא בשם יי ברכנוכם מבית יי אל יי ויאר לנו : אסרו חג בעבותים עד קרנות המזבח אלי אתה ואודך אלהי ארוממך : הודו לי׳ כי טוב כי לעולם חסדו : הודו לי׳ כי טוב כי לעולם חסדו :

Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord: we bless you from the house of the Lord. God is Lord and He hath enlightened us. Bind the sacrifice with myrtle branches to the horns of the altar. Thou art my Lord, I will praise Thee O my God, I will extol Thee. O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever.

The procession then proceeds to make the circuit of the Synagogue during which the following Psalm is chanted by the Minister and Congregation.

Psalm XXX—מזמור שיר חנוכת הבית לדוד וגו׳

A Psalm and Song of the dedication of the house of David. I will extol thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me. Oh Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. And in my prosperity, I said I shall never be moved. Lord, by the favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled. I cried to thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord I made supplication. What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth? Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: Lord, be thou my helper. Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness; To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever

The Minister and bearers of the Scrolls having returned to the Tebah, the following is chanted :—

ימלוך ה׳ לעולם אלהיך ציון לדור ודור הללוה :

The Lord shall reign for ever; Thy God, O Zion unto all generations Hallelujah. (repeat)

Psalm XXIX—מזמור לדוד הבו וגו׳

A Psalm of David. Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thunderetb: the Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord breaketh cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn. The voice of the Lord divideth the flame of fire. The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness; the Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh. The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory. The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever. The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.

Prayer for the government.

Prayer in memory of Isaac, Abraham and Judah Touro.

SABBATH EVE SERVICE.

SERMON; by Rev. A. P. Mendes.

Hymn—ינדל אלהים חי - Extolled and praised be the living God.

Order of the Service at the Reconsecration of the Synagogue.

family, it is known, moved ultimately to Richmond. and it may well be that, when they left Newport, they took with them these two sets of silver bells from the synagogue.

On March 2, 1892, Mrs. Cohen addressed a letter to Rabbi Abraham Pereira Mendes in Newport, asking him to accept these silver ornaments for the scrolls of the synagogue.[16] Shortly afterwards, the beautiful antique silver bells once again adorned the old scrolls.

The Reverend Mr. Mendes ministered to the Congregation of the Newport synagogue, which by now had become known as the "Touro Synagogue", for ten years. On April 4, 1893, while on a visit to his children in New York, he was gathered to his fathers and there laid to eternal rest.

At the synagogue, a handsome tablet was later erected to his memory, expressing the love of the congregation for its pastor.

CHAPTER XIV

ADJUSTMENT

The Spanish-Portuguese Jews and their descendants are very zealous, that synagogues founded by them or in their control, should maintain and uphold the *Sephardic* tradition in the ritual of the services. This problem of the ritual arose as early as 1730 in New York, when the Congregation *Shearith Israel* was completing its first synagogue on Mill Street. At that time, the New York Congregation appealed for aid to various other congregations who responded graciously. Amongst them was the Congregation of Curacao, where the Reverend Raphael Jeshurun officiated as *Chacham*. We note that, when he sent his collection to New York, he specified definitely: "Now I must tell you that the Members of this Holy Congregation Whom devotly Contributed to Wards this Benefaction, as they know that the (asquenazum) or Germans, are more in number than Wee there, the desire of you not to Consent not Withstanding they are the most, to Let them have any More Votes nor Authority then they have had hitherto and for the performance of Which you are to get them to Signe and agreement of the Same by all of them, and that one Copy of the Sayd agreement Remain in the

Hands of Mr. Luis Gomez as the Eldest Member, and Another to be Sent to me for the Treasurer of this Congregation to Keep in his Books, and as this request is funded in Solesiting the Peace and Unety of that Holy Congregation I hope that you as Well as the *Asquinazim,* Whom all I wish God may bless, Will Comply With this my Petition for our devines tells us that the foundation of the Begist Blesing that God found to Bless his dear people was Peace (as it is written) God Bless his People With peace With which he may Bless and Keep you many years—according to his power—"

The Curacao Congregation in making its gift desired definite assurance that the ritual would be maintained according to the traditional Spanish-Portuguese *Minhag.*[1]

The same problem seemed to have arisen in regard to the new-born Jewish community in Newport, which was developing rapidly. This problem was very vexing to the New York Congregation, which was zealous to maintain the old form of worship as practiced in the Newport synagogue when it was first organized. As long as Rabbi Abraham Pereira Mendes lived the problem did not arise. With his death, not only the question of the ritual arose, but also the matter of a congregation.

The problem of the ritual was more aggravated because of the current Reform movement, which swept the entire United States like wild fire. With the immigration of the German-Jewish element, the

German-Jewish Reform movement began to develop in this country, and before long it took root in many old congregations, as well as in those newly organized. What the traditional Spanish-Portuguese Jew avoids more than the *Ashkenazic* ritual, is the Reform movement, and the Reform ritual in the Synagogue, and rightly, because of their high regard for the religious traditions and observances in the home and the synagogue, which have been woefully neglected and in many cases totally abandoned by Reform Jews.

This apprehension moved the New York Congregation *Shearith Israel,* who were at this time in charge of the Newport synagogue, to look with suspicion on the new Jewish community of Newport. Fortunately their suspicion was not well founded, for the new Jewish community was essentially traditional in character, and as eager to preserve traditional Judaism as the Spanish-Portuguese Jews in New York, but guidance and care on the part of the New Yorkers were nevertheless still necessary.

By the time the Reverend Mr. Mendes died, the new Jewish community of Newport, had not as yet formed an organized congregation. The old "Congregation Yeshuat Israel" had long ago been dissolved. Another congregation had not come in its place. The problem arose in Newport as to the organization of a new congregation. The Jewish people there were divided in their opinion as to the nature of this new congregation, and as to which of the Jewish residents of Newport should constitute this new body.

On June 13, 1893, the Board of Trustees of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York were the recipients of a communication from the Reverend David Baruch, whom they had appointed as the minister of the Newport synagogue to succeed the Reverend Abraham Pereira Mendes, to the following effect: - "Two seperate bodies had organized at that place, each claiming to exercise authority over the Synagogue and appurtenances, one of which had applied to the Legislature for a charter".[2] The Reverend Mr. Baruch recommended by the New York Congregation, was, of course, accepted and recognized by the Council of Newport as the minister of the synagogue and was paid his salary from the Judah Touro Ministerial Fund.

The Reverend David Baruch was born in Amsterdam, Holland, on April 19, 1847. He was of *Sephardic* origin and conducted the services at the synagogue according to the *Sephardic* ritual and in the *Sephardic* pronunciation, as had the Reverend Mr. Mendes.

The Jews of Newport who applied for a charter decided to call their newly organized congregation by the same name as that by which the old congregation had been known, namely Yeshuat Israel, spelling "Jeshuat" with a "J", instead of with a "Y", as the name had been spelled before.[3]

The charter for the new Congregation was granted by the legislature on June 13, 1894. The act of the legislature passed on that date read: "It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

"Section I. Eugene Schreier, Giacomo Seroadio,

Louis Hess, Henry Hess, Isaac Bergman, Julius Engel, Israel J. Josephson, Alfred Schreier, their associates and successors, are hereby made a corporation by the name of the Congregation Jeshuat Israel, for the purpose of religious worship, in the city of Newport, according to the Sephardic Ritual and strict rules and laws of the orthodox Jewish Faith".[4]

The stationery of the new Congregation Jeshuat Israel contained in its heading three lines. The first read: "Touro Synagogue Chambers". The second line in Hebrew, read: "Holy Congregation Yeshuath Yisrael", the third line read simply, "Congregation Jeshuat Israel". The date of the incorporation appeared in all letterheads, giving both the Hebrew as well as the American date.

The newly organized Congregation Jeshuat Israel obtained the privilege of holding its services at the old synagogue and of applying the proceeds of the Judah Touro Ministerial fund for the upkeep of its minister, religious services and school. The Reverend David Baruch automatically became the minister of the new Congregation Jeshuat Israel. Thus not only were the old synagogue and its services revived as had been the dream of the Touros, but the new Congregation bore the same name as the old one.

The Congregation Shearith Israel of New York, zealous to preserve the old Sephardic ritual in the synagogue, anticipated the granting of the charter to the new Congregation Jeshuat Israel with an act of conveyance or "Deed of Trust", which the remaining

legal heirs of the old synagogue in Newport made to them in April, 1894. This not only reaffirmed the rights of the Congregation Shearith Israel in the trusteeship and control they had held with relation to the synagogue for practically a century and which has never been challenged, but definitely determined the nature of the worship and the ritual that must be observed in this historic edifice.

In this "Deed of Trust", the conveyers definitely specify that they give the synagogue"herein above described and every part thereof, to use and apply the same, or cause the same to be used, occupied and employed for the maintenance therein of the usual and stated Religious Services according to the Ritual, Rites, and Customs of the Orthodox Spanish and Portuguese Jews, as at the time practiced and observed in the Synagogue of this Congregation Shearith Israel in the City of New York now located at No. 5 West 19th Street in Said City".[5]

To comply with this condition, the constitution of Congregation Jeshuat Israel, Article XIX, stipulated, "The Ritual and customs of this Congregation shall forever remain according to the *Sephardic Minhag,* as at present practiced and constituted in this Congregation". The bond between the Congregation Jeshuat Israel and the Congregation Shearith Israel was further strengthened by the provision in Article II of the constitution which combined these two organizations. In part this article reads: "The government of this Congregation shall be vested in the President, Vice-President

and three Trustees elected by this Congregation, and four Trustees appointed by the Spanish-Portuguese Congregation Shearith Israel of New York City".

On March 30, 1899, the Reverend David Baruch was gathered to his fathers. The funeral took place a day after, from his home on Division Street. The Reverend Abraham H. Nieto, Associate *Chazan* of the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue of New York, officiated. The funeral was attended by members of the various organizations with which the deceased had been affiliated, especially by the officers and members of the St. John's Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons. The interment took place in the Braman Cemetery in Newport. Masonic rites were performed by the officers of the lodge at the grave.[6]

The other of the congregations alluded to before continued its organization, even after the Legislature had granted the Charter to the Congregation Jeshuat Israel in 1894. This congregation functioned and held services under the name, "Touro Congregation". The services of the Touro Congregation were held in private houses . Occasionally, during a Holiday, the rooms at the old City Hall, the present Chamber of Commerce, one of the historic buildings of the City of Newport, were rented for public worship. Upon the death of the Reverend Mr. Baruch, the Touro Congregation elected as its minister the Reverend E. M. Myer. The Congregation Jeshuat Israel elected Moses Guedalia.[7] Because the Touro Congregation constituted a larger membership, the Council of the City of Newport voted

the salary from the Judah Touro Ministerial Fund to the Reverend E. M. Myer.[8] During the summer of 1899, both Congregations "Jeshuat Israel" and "Touro" joined together in worship at the old synagogue. The Reverend Dr. H. Pereira Mendes, who was spending the summer in Newport, conducted the services. During the high holy days of the year 1899, the Reverend E. M. Myer officiated, assisted by I. Levy, J. L. Cardoze, and H. J. Caplan.[9]

The controversy between the Congregation Jeshuat Israel and the Touro Congregation was only temporarily settled at this time. The final fusion of the two did not come about until the early part of the present century. In the controversy, the Congregation Shearith Israel inevitably supported the Congregation Jeshuat Israel which was the legal successor of the old Congregation. The attitude of the New York Congregation was motivated by the determination to preserve the ancient traditions, and to maintain over the synagogue in Newport their authority which now seemed to be challenged.

The Reverend E. M. Myer did not stay long in Newport. To succeed him the Reverend Henry Samuel Morais, - - who, we recall officiated here during the high holy days of the year 1881 when the synagogue was opened for the first time after having been closed over three quarters of a century - - was elected to the ministry of the Newport synagogue in 1900.

The Reverend Mr. Morais, who was born in Philadelphia, was of *Sephardic* origin. His father, Rabbi,

Sabato Morais came from Italy. Mr. Morais received his Hebrew education from his father. For about twelve years he was instructor in the schools of the Hebrew Education Society as well as in the Hebrew Sabbath Schools in Philadelphia. He was the founder and editor of the "Jewish Exponent" and of "The Hebrew Watchword and Instructor". He contributed frequently to the general and Jewish press in the United States. In 1897 - 8, Morais was acting minister of the Congregation Mikveh Israel of Philadelphia. In 1899-1900, he held the position of minister of the Congregation Adath Jeshurun of Syracuse, New York. It was from there that he received the call to come to Newport, where he officiated during the year 1900-1.[10] Morais was the author of two books published prior to his coming to Newport, "Eminent Israelites of the Nineteenth Century" and "The Jews of Philadelphia".

After a brief interval, the controversy between the "Touro Congregation" and the "Congregation Jeshuat Israel", was again renewed. The Touro Congregation held its services at 11 Coddington Street. For the holy days, they made use of the rooms of the old City Hall. The differences between the two Congregations attracted city-wide attention. Once again the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York was involved. After much controversy and misunderstanding, in which all the members of the "Congregation Jeshuat Israel" and the "Touro Congregation", as well as the "Congregation Shearith Israel" of New York participated, the matter came to a truce on April 25, 1902. The two Newport

Congregations united to worship and to function together under the one name "Congregation Jeshuat Israel", and to hold services in the historic synagogue, the trusteeship of which remained vested with the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York.[11] Hebrew and Sunday schools were held in the side building adjacent to the synagogue.

In 1902, the Reverend Jacob M. Seidel was called to the ministry of the Congregation. He was the first *Ashkenazic* rabbi of the Congregation. The services at the synagogue continued in the *Sephardic* ritual, however, but not as regards the Spanish-Portuguese pronunciation of the Hebrew.

Rabbi Seidel was succeeded in his ministry in 1905 by Rabbi Maurice Kaplan, who in turn was succeeded a year later by Rabbi B. H. Rosengard.[12]

In 1900, the synagogue was enriched with a scroll of the Law, donated by Leonard Lewisohn in honor of his marriage which was consecrated in the synagogue. Mr. Lewisohn was a descendant of some of the founders of the synagogue. He did not reside in Newport at the time of his marriage, but his love for the ancient synagogue induced him to be married in it. In respect to the synagogue, he not only donated the scroll, but also a beautiful *Kiddush* cup. To the scroll was attached a small metal plate on which was inscribed "A Donation From Leonard Lewisohn *Nisan* 14, 5660". The cup itself was inscribed, "Presented to the Touro Synagogue by Leonard Lewisohn, March 22nd, 1900".

The synagogue received other gifts: a beautiful breast-

plate for the scrolls of the Law with an inset of twelve stones of different colors representing the twelve tribes of Israel; a *Megillah* in a Palestinian wooden case, as well as an artistic Palestinian *Omer* Board from Mr. Alfred M. Marcus of Boston, whose family were descendants of the old Newport community. These objects were inscribed in Hebrew and in English. The English on the breast plate reads: "This Breast Plate is presented by Alfred A. Marcus' daughter Mary Ann, and son Simeon of Boston in sacred and holy memory of Kate Marcus, God rest her soul, who died at Boston, U. S. A., *Nissan* 11, 5647". The inscription also contains the names of the parents of "Alfred A. Marcus and his darling wife Kate"; "Simeon Marcus died in London, *Ellul* 16, 5612, his beloved wife Ellen died in London, *Shebat* 6, 5632. Judah Benjamin, died in Graham's Town, Cape of Good Hope, South Africa, *Heshvan* 10, 5598. and his beloved wife Mary Ann, died in London, *Iyar* 11, 5637".

The Hebrew inscriptions, which give the date of the deceased only on the box of the *Megillah,* read essentially the same as the English. From the Hebrew inscription on the breast plate, it may be seen that these gifts were made in 1888 under the ministry of Rabbi Mendes.

The Congregation Shearith Israel of New York was interested to preserve not only the historic religious tradition of the Newport synagogue, but also the physical structure itself. The synagogue in Newport was to remain unaltered both physically and spiritually. In 1905, the Congregation Jeshuat Israel

attempted to make certain alterations and additions to the side building where the religious school was conducted. As this could not be done without the consent of the Board of Trustees of the Congregation Shearith Israel, a letter was dispatched to New York, addressed to the Reverend Dr. H. Pereira Mendes, the minister of the New York Congregation.

Dr. Mendes presented the application of the Congregation Jeshuat Israel before the Board of his Congregation on February 27, 1905. The result was thus recorded in the Minutes: "Communication received from Congregation Jeshuat Israel, Newport, R. I. (addressed to the Minister) relative to altering Synagogue at Newport for additional school room and Reverend Mr. Mendes was directed to reply that this Board would not consent to any alteration of any description in that historic edifice".[13]

By 1908, the synagogue at Newport was restored to its ancient foundations in all aspects. As in the days of yore, the beautiful psalms were sung in the synagogue in the traditional *Sephardic* chants. In the building on the side, religious instruction was given to the Jewish youth of Newport. To complete the organization of the Jewish community as manifested in the synagogue, the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Congregation Jeshuat Israel was organized, taking for its aim, (a) "The building and establishment of a *Mikvah,* (b) the support and temporary help of the poor and sick, and visiting the poor of a deserving nature, so as to do away with the necessity of asking relief from house to house, and (c)

to see to the maintenance of a regular and well established Hebrew and Religious School".[14]

Before a decade of the new century had passed, the three things *Torah* - Education, *Avodah* - Religion, and *Gmilus Chasodim* - Beneficence again emanated from the portals of the old shrine - the historic synagogue of the Congregation Yeshuat Israel - as in the days of old. Not only was the physical structure restored and preserved, but the very name of the new Congregation - "Jeshuat Israel" - the Salvation of Israel was restored, with these its spiritual functions were renewed, its worship, its education and its charity revived.

CHAPTER XV

IMMORTALITY

The voices of the Jews of Newport were not heard very often on the battlefields, or in the halls of legislation; neither did their names fill the columns of the newspapers of the day. Yet the story of the Jews of Newport is of absorbing interest and it forms a unique chapter in the epic of Israel in America. Nay, more than this. The story of the Jews of Newport, with its historic remains and associations, is often quoted as an example of "noblesse oblige" from the beginnings of Israel in America. The synagogue and old cemetery in Newport have been immortalized in poetry and in prose. They have become historic landmarks, venerated by Jew and by non-Jew.

In the course of Israel's wandering, innumerble groups of Jews have built synagogues and acquired burial grounds, in the cities where they have found a haven of refuge. But only too often were these groups forced to forsake the holy shrines for which they had labored and suffered, and to take up their wandering anew, repeating for themselves or their descendants the tribulations they had experienced before. Such has been

the destiny of Israel, throughout the Diaspora. The shrines, which they had to abandon, were often seized and converted into churches, and all too often they passed into oblivion rather than were preserved.

This, however, was not the fate of the two shrines in Newport, the synagogue and the cemetery. The vision of Abraham and Judah Touro in leaving bequests for the preservation of both historic relics at the time when there were no Jews left in the town, simply with the hope that some day a new Jewish community might settle there, saved both these shrines.

When Judah Touro's funeral was held in the synagogue where once his reverend father had chanted the ancient hymns and prayers, one of the eulogists sounded the note of prophecy when he said: "Years will roll on, another generation will succeed us, many a name now shining in the meridian of its glory will be forgotten and unknown; yet the name and memory of Judah Touro will live in the hearts of posterity. Through the length and breadth of this country, the name and memory of this philanthropist will ever be coupled up with the beautiful words of Scripture— "The memory of the just will be for a blessing". — "The fruit of the just is a tree of life".

In 1908, more than a half a century after these words were uttered, the Congregation Jeshuat Israel of Newport in honoring the name of Touro erected a memorial tablet in marble on the western wall of the synagogue, with this text from the Scriptures; "The fruit of the just is a tree of life". To replace the old

wooden tablet which was dedicated to the memory of Rabbi Abraham Pereira Mendes only, the Congregation Jeshuat Israel decided to erect a more durable tablet of marble. In testimony of the unbroken faith which links the generations one to another, the Board of Officers of the Congregation decided to honor the memory of the four men who had been most closely connected with the birth, preservation and rejuvenation of the synagogue. The marble tablet was therefore dedicated to the memory of the Reverend Isaac Touro who was the first minister of the synagogue, and whose inspiration gave incentive to the devoted souls who built the historic edifice; to Abraham and to Judah Touro the two sons of the Reverend Isaac Touro, whose foresight and bounty kept the synagogue preserved to be ready and prepared, when the Jew once again should tread the soil of their beloved city of nativity - Newport; and to Rabbi Abraham Pereira Mendes, the link between the old and the new Jewish communities in Newport, and who one hundred and three years after the demise of the Reverend Isaac Touro succeeded him in the ministry in the synagogue, rededicating and reconsecrating the building which Isaac Touro had dedicated and consecrated.

The ceremony of the dedication of the memorial tablet to the four "pillars" of the synagogue was an impressive climax to the story of the old Jewish community and its transition to the new. The synagogue was decorated with flowers and palms and illuminated with burning candles from the old candelabra. It was Monday, September 7, 1908.

Although the ceremony of the unveiling and the presentation of the tablet took place in the morning, the synagogue was filled to capacity, much before the time set for the beginning of the ceremonies.

Within the reading desk enclosure were seated the Reverend B. H. Rosengard, rabbi of the congregation, and the Reverend Dr. David de Sola Pool, rabbi of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York. In the elevated pew on the northern wall of the synagogue and all along the wall were seated the Hon. N. Taylor Phillips, clerk of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York; the Hon. William P. Clarke; the Reverend Dr. Emery H. Porter; Mr. Leon Huhner, curator of the American Jewish Historical Society; and the Hon. Max Levy, president of the Congregation at the time. The Governor of Rhode Island and Doctor Cyrus Adler, as well as a number of other notables, sent messages of regret for being unable to be present, together with their congratulations upon the occasion.

Among those present, besides those already mentioned were; Ex-Mayor Patrick J. Boyle of Newport; Senator P. J. Murphy; the Reverend William S. Jones of the Channing Memorial Church of Newport; A. O'D. Taylor, President of the Newport Natural History Society; Commander Roy Campbell Smith of the United States Navy; the Hon. Robert S. Franklin, Senator of Rhode Island and former Mayor of the City of Newport; the Reverend William Brenton Green of Newport; the Hon. Darius Baker, Justice of the Superior Court of Rhode Island; and Doctor Nathaniel

G. Stanton, a prominent physician of Newport.

The ceremonies of dedication began with a eulogy by the Reverend Doctor Pool, which was followed by an historical address by the Hon. Max Levy, in which he rehearsed the story of the Jewish persecution, the arrival of the Jews on the American continent, their settlement in Newport and the building of the synagogue, bringing the survey down to the time of the dedication of the tablet. This address was followed by another eloquent oration delivered by Mr. Leon Huhner.

Among other remarks of an historic nature the orator pointed out: "To the Jew, Newport has always been a cherished name, for here it was that civil and religious liberty were first firmly established by that illustrious champion of brotherhood of man, Roger Williams . . .

"Like the great temple in Rome dedicated to all the gods, so Rhode Island became the Pantheon for all sects and all creeds irrespective of race or nation.

"Nor did the Jews abuse this liberality, for nowhere did they have a prouder record of the past than in this very city. While found as pioneers in each of the thirteen original colonies, it may fairly be said that nowhere did they exert greater or more beneficial influence than in Colonial Newport."[1]

Following the oration, the Hon. N. Taylor Phillips, after a short address, drew the curtain which unveiled the white marble tablet bearing the inscription in gold letters. Captain Phillips in his remarks dwelt chiefly

on the historic associations between the Congregation Jeshuat Israel of Newport and the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York. The tablet was presented to the City of Newport as the custodians of the "Holy Building". On behalf of the City, Mayor William P. Clarke, accepted the tablet with a brief address, expressing the joy of the city in preserving such records of its historic associations. The Memorial Prayer for those commemorated was then offered by Dr. Pool. It was followed by an address by the Reverend Emery H. Porter, who brought greetings in the name of the clergy of the city. The Reverend B. H. Rosengard closed the exercises with the priestly benediction.

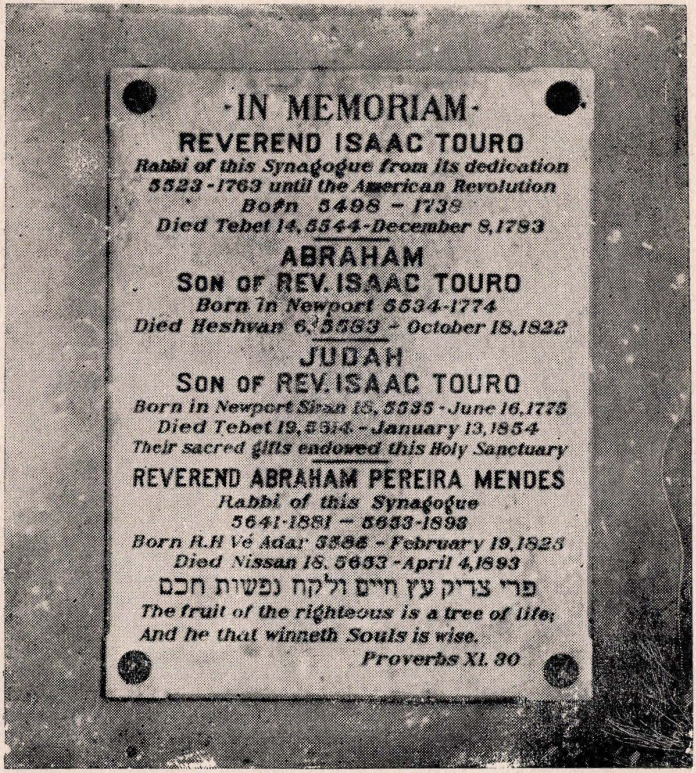
The Tablet bears this inscription:—

IN MEMORIAM
REVEREND ISAAC TOURO —
Rabbi of this Synagogue from its dedication
5523 - 1763 until the American Revolution
Born 5498 - 1738
Died *Tebet* 14, 5544 - December 8, 1783

* * * * * *

ABRAHAM
Son of REV. ISAAC TOURO
Born in Newport 5534 - 1774
Died *Heshvan* 6, 5583 - oct. 8, 1822

* * * * * *



Tablet to the Memory of the Reverend Isaac Touro, the Reverend Abraham Pereira Mendes, Judah and Abraham Touro, erected in the Synagogue in 1908.

JUDAH
Son of REV. ISAAC TOURO
Born in Newport *Sivan* 18, 5535 - June 16, 1775
Died *Tebet* 19, 5614 - January 13, 1854

* * * * * *

Their sacred gifts endowed this Holy Sanctuary
REVEREND ABRAHAM PEREIRA MENDES
Rabbi of this Synagogue
Born *R.H. Ve Adar* 5585 - February 19, 1825
Died *Nissan* 18, 5653 - April 4, 1893

פרי צדיק עץ חיים ולקח נפשות חכם
The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life;
And he that winneth Souls is wise.

Proverbs XI:30" [2]

Posterity does not always remember the heroes who have benefited humanity without egotism or personal pride. Yet one gains true immortality less by virtue of political power, or might, than by virtue of noble living.

Such were the lives of the Jews of Newport, among whom were the Touros, Lopez's, Riveras, Seixas, Hays and Harts. The heart of every Jew was instinct with benevolence and human love. In their charity they knew no differences of race, color, or creed. In their friendship they knew of no sectional or sectarian boundaries. Modesty and humility were the virtues of each one of them. They delighted in doing good to others, and in making them happy. The spirit of Religion penetrated their souls, and the spirit of God motivated their actions.

In their benevolence, their generosity and their noble

lives, they erected for themselves numerous monuments more durable than any of moulded bronze or chiseled marble which the gratitude of others may raise. Their lives teach a lesson of true wisdom.

The story of the Jews of Newport is a lesson in the "immortality" of man.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LAST WILL OF ABRAHAM TOURO, ESQUIRE

Dated at Boston, November 4th, 1822. Recorded in Probate Court, County of Suffolk, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Be it remembered that I, Abraham Touro of Boston, do make, publish and declare this my last Will, as follows, Viz:

First: I desire and direct that I may be buried at Newport, Rhode Island, in such manner, as I have expressed to my friends.

Item: I give to the Trustees of the Jewish Synagogue in New York Ten thousand dollars, for the purpose of paying the debts due by that Society, the Sum of about One thousand dollars due me from said Society, to be accounted part of this bequest.

Item: I give Ten thousand dollars to the Legislature of the State of Rhode Island, for the purpose of supporting the Jewish Synagogue in that State, in Special Trust to be appropriated to that object, in such manner as the said Legislature together with the Municipal Authority of the Town of Newport may from time to time direct and appoint.

Item: I give Five thousand dollars, to the Trustees of the Asylum for indigent Boys in the Town of Boston for the purpose of said Asylum.

Item: I give to the Female Asylum for Orphans in the Town of Boston, the sum of Five thousand dollars, by whatever name either of said Institutions be called.

Item: I give to the Trustees of the Massachusetts General Hospital the Sum of Ten thousand dollars.

Item: I give my rspected friend Govr. John Brooks, Ten Boxes of Wine now in the Store of Mr. Farley.

Item: I give to Doct. John C. Warren Ten Boxes of the same Wine.

Item: I give to Richard D. Shephard Ten Boxes of the same Wine.

where I now am, Five Hundred dollars.

Item: I give to the Municipal authority of the Town of Newport in Rhode Island the Sum of Five thousand dollars, in Special Trust and confidence that they will appropriate the same, in such manner they may judge best, for repairing and preserving the Street leading from the Burying Ground in said Town to the Main Street.

Item: I give to Mr. Isaac Coffin of Wiscasset Six Shares in the Capital Stock of the Boston Theatre.

Item: I give to Miss Juliet Lopez of the City of New York the Sum of Two thousand dollars; also I remit and fully discharge any debt, due from any member of the family to me.

Item: I give to the Trustees of the Provident Institution or Savings Bank of the Town of Boston, One thousand dollars, in Special trust, to appropriate the same to the use and benefit of Miss Francis Brewer during her life, and at her decease, to be equally divided among her Sisters.

Lastly: I give, devise and bequest, all the rest and residue of my Estate, Real and Personal, to my Brother Judah Touro and my Sister Rebecca Touro, equally to be divided between them.

I appoint my said Brother Judah Touro and Titus Wells of Boston, Merchant, joint Executors of this Will, and revoke all former Wills. In Testimony whereof I hereto set my hand and Seal this Seventeenth day of October A. D. 1822. Item: I give to Joseph B. Henshaw the Sum of Two hundred and fifty dollars.

Abrm. Touro

Mr. Touro wishes the following added as Codicil to the Will:

"He leaves Five thousand dollars to the Humane Society in trust, the interest of which is to be appropriated as the Trustees of that Society think proper. He fully remits to Wm. B. Proctor all monies owing him and also his liability to pay Money to him whether as endorser on Notes or Otherwise; he also gives the said Proctor Five Hundred dollars; the Bank Stocks in Virginia he gives to three daughters of Moses and Sally Myers, to be divided equally between them. He fully discharges Moses Myers of Norfolk from all claims which he has against him. He wills to Moses Myers of Norfolk in trust, to John Coffin Jones, Esqr. Five thousand dollars, of which Sum said Myers is to receive the interest with the right of disposing of the same at his decease. He gives Two thousand dollars to Moses L. Moses of the City of New York being his particular friend".

Continuation of the Codicil to the Will (on a separate sheet)
"He leaves John C. Jones One pipe of Wine now in the Store of Mr. Farley marked "T".

John Pratt, Jos. B. Henshaw, J. Coffin, Nathan Cobb.

APPENDIX B

BEQUESTS OF JUDAH TOURO

According to his Will drawn on January 6, 1854,
in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana

a. For Institutions in New Orleans

Hebrew Congregation Dispersed of Judah	Lots and Houses near the Synagogue, as well as property at a different location, the revenue of which should be applied for a School fund and salary of Minister.
Hebrew Hospital of New Orleans	All the property necessary
Hebrew Benevolent Association	$ 3,000.00
Cong. Shaarei Chesed	5,000.00
Ladies Benevolent Society	5,000.00
Hebrew Foreign Mission Society	5,000.00
Orphan's Home Asylum	5,000.00
Society for the Relief of Destitute Orphans	5,000.00
St. Armas Asylum for the Relief of Destitute Females and Children	5,000.00
New Orleans Female Orphan Asylum	5,000.00
St. Mary's Catholic Boys Asylum	5,000.00
Milne Asylum	5,000.00
Fireman's Charitable Association	5,000.00
Seaman's Home	5,000.00
For the establishment of an Alms House	80,000.00

b. For Institutions in Newport, R. I.

City of Newport, for Old Stone Mill	$10,000.00
Redwood Library	3,000.00

Jewish Synagogue	10,000.00
c. For Institutions elsewhere and other bequests.	
Cong. Ohabay Shalome, Boston, Mass.	$ 5,000.00
Hebrew Congregation of Hartford, Conn.	5,000.00
Hebrew Congregation of New Haven, Conn.	5,000.00
North American Relief Society for the Indigent Jews in Jerusalem	10,000.00
For the work of Moses Montefiore in Palestine	50,000.00
Jews' Hospital Society of New York	20,000.00
Hebrew Hospital Society Meshivat Nefesh, N. Y.	5,000.00
Hebrew Benevolent Society Gemilath Chesed, N. Y.	5,000.00
School Fund of Cong. Shearith Israel, N. Y.	13,000.00
Educational Institute of Cong. B'nai Jeshurun, N. Y.	3,000.00
Cong. Shaarai Tefila, N. Y.	3,000.00
Ladies Benevolent Society, N. Y.	3,000.00
Female Hebrew Benevolent Society of Philadelphia	3,000.00
Hebrew Educational Society of Philadelphia	20,000.00
United Hebrew Benevolent Society of Philadelphia	3,000.00
Cong. Ahabat Israel, Baltimore	3,000.00
Cong. Beth Shalome, Richmond, Va.	5,000.00
Cong. Shearit Israel, Charleston, S. C.	5,000.00
Cong. Shaarai Shomayim, Mobile, Alabama	2,000.00
Cong. Mikveh Israel, Savannah, Georgia	5,000.00
Congregation of Montgomery, Alabama	2,000.00
Congregation of Memphis, Tennessee	2,000.00
Cong. Adas Israel, Louisville, Ky.	3,000.00
Cong. Benai Israel, Cincinnati, Ohio	3,000.00
Hebrew School Talmud Yelodim, Cincinnati, Ohio	5,000.00
Jews' Hospital of Cincinnati, Ohio	5,000.00
Cong. Benei El, St. Louis, Missouri	3,000.00
Cong. Beth El, Buffalo	3,000.00
Asylum of Orphan Boys in Boston, Mass.	5,000.00
Female Orphan Asylum of Boston, Mass.	5,000.00
Massachusetts Female Hospital	10,000.00
David and Nathan Gould of Newport	2,000.00
Miss Catherine Hays, Richmond, Va.	5,000.00
Three daughters of Mr. Moses M. Myers, Richmond, Va.	7,000.00
The surviving children of Samuel Myers, Richmond, Va.	7,000.00
Mr. Supply Clapp Twing, Boston, Mass.	5,000.00
Rev. Isaac Leeser of Philadelphia	3,000.00
Rev. Moses N. Nathan, London	3,000.00

Rev. Theodore Clapp of New Orleans	3,000.00
Mistress Willen Brook, Boston, Mass.	5,000.00
For a memorial to Mrs. M. D. Josephs	2,500.00
For a memorial to Mistress Rebecca Kursheedt	2,500.00

APPENDIX C

THE INSCRIPTIONS ON THE TOMBSTONES IN THE OLD JEWISH CEMETERY IN NEWPORT.

INTRODUCTION

The old Jewish cemetery was purchased in the year 1677. The original dimensions, as appears from the deed, seem to have been 30 by 40 feet. The cemetery was gradually enlarged so that now the size is more than double the original. There are in the ground 42 tombstones which are scattered along what seems to have been originally four rows of graves. Three of these stones have no inscription at all. On the others, the inscriptions are still legible, though, in many cases the letters are worn to an extent that reading them is now impossible. The languages on the tombstones are Hebrew, English, Spanish, Portuguese and Latin.

The inscriptions have been copied twice; once by Nathan H. Gould, the custodian of the Synagogue and the Cemetery, in September 1872; and a second time by the Reverend Abraham Pereira Mendes, the spiritual leader of the Touro Synagogue, in 1885. Mr. Gould copied the inscriptions for the Reverend Jacques J. Lyons of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York. Not knowing Hebrew, he copied only the inscriptions in the non-Hebraic languages. The Reverend Mr. Mendes copied them for a paper on "The Jewish Cemetery", which he read before the Newport Historical Society, on June 23, 1885. For this purpose he translated all the inscriptions not written in English, and set them forth together with the original English. The copy by Mr. Gould is found in the Lyons Collection of the Publications of the American Jewish

Historical Society, Volume XXVII.[1] The copy by the Reverend Mr. Mendes is found in the Rhode Island Historical Magazine, Volume VI, pages 85 to 103. In neither instance, do we have an exact copy of the inscriptions in the original languages as they appear on the tombstones. To fill this need, which is essential to the study of the past history of the Jews of Newport, I have undertaken to give here all the readable inscriptions in the original languages in position and spelling exactly as they occur on the stones.

From our knowledge of the history of the Jews of Newport, we know that a number of the graves either were left unmarked or else that the stones in time became worn out, broken and eventually disappeared. In the course of erecting the fences (first the brick wall by Abraham Touro in 1822, and later the present granite and iron fence in 1842) many of the old stones were broken, and subsequently carefully heaped together and buried beneath the soil. (Mendes) Thus many of the tombstones were lost to posterity. It will be noted from the diagram of the cemetery, with the still existing monuments and their positions, that there are many spaces between the graves, which indicate that there were originally interments in these spaces. We know, for instance, that around 1700 a certain Jew, Frazier, who died in Boston, was taken to Newport for burial, because there was the only Jewish cemetery. His grave is not marked. Neither is the grave of David Lopez, who died in Boston in 1797, and who willed in his last Testament that he be interred in this old Jewish cemetery. The graves of Zachary Pollock and Isaac Hart are not known; both died in the seventies of the eighteenth century. There are no tombstones showing any burials between the year 1767 and 1780, yet we know of a number of deaths during this period.

From a glance at the diagram, it will be noted that when the cemetery was enlarged the boundaries do not seem to have corresponded with the present fence. According to the position of the tombstones, the rows of the graves seemed to have run originally from east to west, the graves being laid out from north to south. Not all the monuments are set upright. Some are like tables, either on a foundation of brick or stone or as in the Hays, enclosure, on pillars. Some lie flat on the ground. One can read the tables only by standing in the south and facing the north. According to the arrangement of the original rows, it is discernible that the southern wall, which is not straight, but which at the beginning of the Hays enclosure slants in, was erected partly on graves. The position of

the few tombstones east of the Hays' enclosure, clearly indicates this. In confirmation of this surmise, the pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church that now stands in the very back of the slanted cemetery fence informed the writer that some old people of his congregation told him that this church stands on old graves. Mr. Gould in copying the inscriptions also noted that there was a tradition that there were a number of additional interments throughout the line of the Hays enclosure as far as the fence on Touro Street.

On one of the early stones, the inscription was originally upon a lead or brass tablet which is not now extant, leaving the stone with a hollow space. This is a flat brown stone on the ground about 11 feet from the fence on Touro Street. This tablet was missing in 1872 when Gould copied the inscriptions. At that time, Gould noted that this "Lead tablet was taken during the time this Town was occupied by the English during the War of the Revolution, and no inscription remains. Tradition says it was placed to the memory of one of the men of the Pollock family".

Gould also made another interesting observation regarding the part of the cemetery marked on the diagram "No Graves Now". According to him it is the "West side of the cemetery" being at present on the "West side of the Avenue". Originally however it was the northern part of the Burial-ground. The observation reads: "The West side of the Cemetery or that portion of it West of the Avenue, has been buried over, but the only stone visible is that of Josephs, the unfortunate, which is not far from 20 feet from the Gate of entrance, and not far from 12 feet from the Fence on the Kay Street side, and as far as is known there is but one space unoccupied for a Grave and that was reserved for and by the request of Mordecai Myer, Esq".[2]

This stone of "Josephs, the unfortunate" is still visible today but it bears no identification, and it is hard to tell what it is. The "one space unoccupied" which was reserved by the request of Mordecai Myer, might refer to Mordecai Myer who was born in Newport in 1776, and served as Captain in the War of 1812, and died in 1871. I do not know his burial place. There is no identification of it in this cemetery. He died in New York State.

From the inscription one sees that the earliest tombstone dates from 1761. There are, therefore, no ways of identifying any of the interments between 1677, when the cemetery was originally purchased, and 1761. The inscriptions have been copied and deciphered so far as possible as they appeared originally. No attempt has been

made to change any of the Hebrew spelling or expressions, which in a number of cases do not follow the correct usage. The words in the brackets indicate the correct form.

The last burial marked is 1866. However I am assured by an old Newport resident working in the Historical Society, that she witnessed an interment in the old cemetery sometime in the late seventies of the last century. Some of the tombstones have decorations of a human skull or head on them.

It is hard to tell where the original entrance to the cemetery was.

There remains to be mentioned one more item, which is peculiar I believe, to this cemetery. I have reference to the inscription on a tombstone which does not mark a burial at all. It has been assumed by many that the Reverend Isaac Touro is interred in the old cemetery of Newport, which is not the case. The inference was drawn from the fact that, in the Touro enclosure, there is a tombstone bearing a memorial both in Hebrew and in English erected by Abraham Touro and dedicated to the memory of his illustrious father, the first minister of the synagogue of the Congregation Yeshuat Israel of Newport. The Reverend Isaac Touro, however, died and was interred in Kingston, Jamaica, in the West Indies, as is definitely stated on the stone. His son Abraham, in erecting a monument to his mother, wished to commemorate his father's memory as well, and so he dedicated part of the monument to the blessed memory of his beloved father.

The cemetery is at present well preserved and kept up by the Congregation Jeshuat Israel. During the summer, it has the appearance of a beautiful garden, and is pointed out to visitors as one of the landmarks of the city.

THE INSCRIPTIONS
FIRST ROW

Beginning from the Entrance on Touro Street.

1

מצבת קבורת אישה [אשה] חשובה מרת אביגיל
אשת הגביר אהרן לאפיז שהלכה לעולמה בערב שבת
קודש באחד ועשרים יום לחדש אייר שנת תק"כב לפ"ק
ויהיו ימי שני חייה שישה ושלשים ושנה [ששה ושלשים
שנה] ותהי נפשה צרורה בצרור החיים עם נפשות צדיקים
וצדקניות שבגן עדן.

Post Mortem quid quid remansit
Abigailis Lopes
est hic
sed
Proh dolore Est nihil
Fuit.....
dum fuit
virtute insignis charitateardens
fidelix
uxor et comes
tenem unam parens
Obuit
e 21 Yiaris
5522
hoc est
die 14 mensis May 1
Erae vulgaris
1762
Etatis suae
36

* * * * * *

2

ת"נ"צ"ב"ה

Aqui yaze.....hunrada y
virtuosa Senora Raquel Rodriguez
De Rivera que fallecco en Sabath
8 de Veadar 5521 que corresponde
14 de Maico de 1761 su Bendita
Alma goze de la Divina gloria Amen
Etatis sue 77

Here lieth the Body of ye virtuous
Mrs. Rachel Rodriguez de Rivera
who depated (departed) this life on Saturday
the 8th of Veadar, 5521, which
corresponds to ye 14th of March
1761, may her Blessed Soul enjoy
eternal happiness: Amen
Aetates sui 77

3

Headstone

In Memory of
Jacob ye Son
of Moses &
Rebeka Lopez
died Tisri ye 3d
5524 aged
9 years 3 M o
& 26 Days

Footstone

J. L.
5524

* * * * * *

4

Headstone

In Memory
of Isaac ye Son
of Moses &
Rebeka Lopez
died the 4th
Tisri 5523
aged 6 Mo &
9 days

Footstone

I. L.
5523

5

(Touro Enclosure)

מצבת קבורת
האשה החשובה והצנועה
אלמנת
פעגלה אשת מרדכי בר אלחנן
נל"ע בעיר בסטון
יום ב', י"ז לחדש אייר
ס' שנה לחייה
שנת התקף
תנצב"ה

In Memory of
Mrs. Phila, Relict of
Mr. Marcus Elcan
Late of Richmond Virginia
who in the 60th year of her age
departed this life at Boston
on the 1st May, 1820,
corresponding with the Hebrew
Month Yiar 5580

* * * * * *

6

(Touro Enclosure)

אל תירא אברהם אנכי מגן לך שכרך הרבה מאד
מצבת קבורת
הבחור הנחמד וחשוב אברהם בן לה... יצחק טורא ז"ל
נפטר בשם טוב לעולמו
עולם הצפון לצדיקים
בעיר בסטון
בשמנה וארבעים שנה לחיו ביום
ששי לחדש חשון שנת
טוב שם משמן טוב ויום המות מיום הולדה לפ"ק
תנצב"ה

Erected
To The Memory of
ABRAHAM TOURO
of Boston
Son of Isaac & Reyna Touro
Who was suddenly taken from this transitory
State in the 48th year of a useful and happy life,
deeply lamented by his afflicted relatives
and innumerable friends
distinguished and esteemed in those virtues
and good qualities which exalt the
character of a man
He was interred in this place by his own desire
on the 20th of October
1822

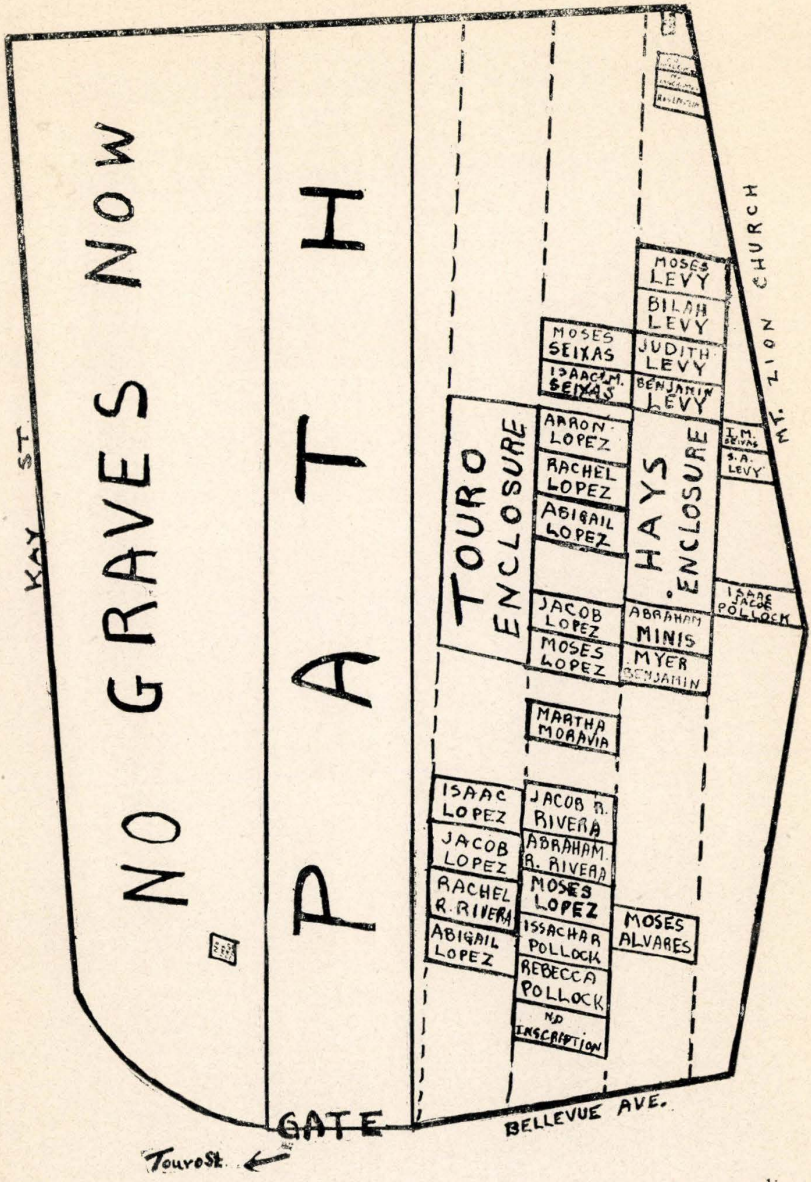
* * * * * *

South 7

(Touro Enclosure)

M. S.

Beneath are deposited
The remains of
MRS. REYNA
The worthy relict of
Revd. Isaac Touro
Who died at Boston on the
14th of Tisri A. M. 5548
and the 28th of September, 1787,
AE 44 Years
The memory of the Just
is blessed



Sketch of the Old Cemetery as it appears today, with an outline of the Graves and Gravestones.

יחיו מתיך נבלתי יקומון

West מצבת

לזכרון המשכיל .....
הנכבד והגביר .....
יצחק בן אברהם טורא ז"ל
דק"ק ישועת ישראל.....
נ"ל"ע ונקבר בקינגסתן יהמיקא
י"ד טבת תקמ"ד לפ"ק
ויהיו כל ימי שני חייו ששה וארבעים שנה

ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

North In memory of
the
Revd. Isaac Touro,
The able and faithful Minister
of the Congregation
Yeshuat Israel
in New Port, R. I.
who departed this life
on the 14th of Tebet A. M. 5544
and December 8th MDCCLXXXIII, (Jan. 8th, 1784)
At Kingston, Jamaica
where his remains lie buried
AE 46 years
The memory of the Just
is blessed.

This tribute of
filial piety is consecrated
East to the memory
of his honored parents
by their son
Abraham Touro
MDCCCXIV.

* * * * * *

North

8

(Touro Enclosure)

מצבת קברת
האשה החשובה והצנועה
רבקה אשת יהושע לופיז ובת יצחק טורא
בזאת עיר.....
י"ט טבת תקצ"ד לפ"ק
ויהי כל ימי שני חמישים רביעי
(חייה חמשה וארבעים שנה)

Sacred
To the memory of
REBECCA LOPEZ
wife of
South
Joshua Lopez
and daughter of the
Rev. Isaac Touro
Late of this Town
She departed this Life
much esteemed and respected
in the city of New York
on the 19th Tebet, A. M. 5594
it being the 19th December 1833
of the Christian Era
aged 54 years

Erected by Judah Touro Esq.,
of the City of New Orleans,
East
To the memory of a
Beloved Sister

* * * * * *

9

(Touro Enclosure)

To the Memory of
North
JUDAH TOURO
Born Newport, R. I. June 16, 1775
Died, New Orleans, La. Jan'y 13, 1854
Interred here June 6th.

South

The Last of His Name
He inscribed in the Book of
PHILANTHROPY
To Be Remembered For Ever

East

בצדקה וביושר צבר את הונו
לצדקה ולישועה פזרהו

West

יהודה בן יצחק טורא
אשר הלך לעולם הנצחי
ביום ה׳ יט טבת תרי״ד לפ״ק
בשנת תשעה ושבעים לימי חייו
ונקבר ביום ג׳ י׳ סיון תרי״ד לפ״ק
ת׳נ׳צ׳ב׳ה

* * * * * *

SECOND ROW

10

No Inscription
Tablet Missing

* * * * * *

11

Headstone

מצבת
קבורת האשה הנכבדת מרת
רבקה בת יהודה זצ״ל שהלך (שהלכה)
לעולמה עש״ק כ״ח אדר ראשון
שנת ת׳ק׳כ׳ד לפ״ק שני חייה ס״ה
שנים ו׳ חדשים י״ח ימים
תנצב״ה

Rebecca, the Wife of
Zachariah Polock
died March 2d, 1764,
Aged 65 Years
6 Mo, 18 Days

Footstone

No Inscription

12

מצבת
קבורת הישיש והנכבד הגביר
יצחק בר ר' מאיר פאלק זצ"ל
שהלך לעולמו
ביום ד' כ"א אייר שנת תקכ"ד לפ"ק
ימי חייו ס"ג שנים ט' חדשים ו' ימים
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

Mr. Isaac Pollock
departed this Life
May 23d 1764, aged
63 Years, 9 Months
and 6 Days.

* * * * * *

13

זה איש משה עניו מאד

מצבת

קבורת הישיש והנכבד
הגביר משה לופיז
נפטר ביום ז' ונקבר ביום ח' דחדש ניסן
בשנת ה'תקכ"ז ליצירה
ימי חייו אחד וששים שנה
ותהי נפשו צרורה בצרור החיים
עם נפשות צדיקים

Sacred to the Memory of Mr. Moses Lopez
Merchant, who suddenly quitted this transitory
Life, on the 6th April 1767, in the sixty-first
Year of his age
He was a Gentleman in whom were united
every Moral and Social Virtue, which prepared
his immortal Part for the fruitation of that
Glorious State, where the Pious and Virtuous
receive the Reward of their good Actions

14

ויגוע וימת אברהם בשיבה טובה

מצבת

קבורת הישיש הנכבד הגביר
אברהם רודריגש ריוירא
נפטר ביום ח"י להדש תמוז ונקבר בו ביום
שנת ה'תקכ"ה ליצירה

ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

הן פה בגוש עפר בזה הקבר
שוכב חכם לבב גדול הערך
זקן ושבע ימים ידיד כל גבר
חסיד ועשה טוב ואיש תם דרך
הנן כאברהם בחון ושבר
את כל עניי עם מרודי פרך
יגה באור וברי ויראה . . .
נועם כבוד עליון בגן הטוהר

SA

DELVIEJO VENERADO Y HONRADO SR.
ABRAHAM RODRIGUES RIVERA FO
EN 18 DE TAMUZ AO QUE
CONRESPONDE CON 7 DE JULIO AO 1765

S. A. G. D. G.

* * * * * *

15

ויהי ימי יעקב שנים ושבעים שנה

מצבת

קבורת הישיש הנכבד הגביר
יעקב רודריגש ריוירא
נפטר ביום כ"ג הדש שבט שנת ה'תקמ"ט
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

If to profess and patronize the principles of Judaism
If to observe the strictest integrity in extensive commerce
and to exhibit unbounded benevolence
for all mankind can secure
to the spontaneous and invariable practicer
of these virtues eternal bliss.
JACOB RODS RIVERA
whose mortal frame is deposited beneath this marble,
must, consonant to the ardent hope of all who knew him,
be in full possession of that superlative happiness.
He lived beloved and died lamented
the 23 Sebat A. M.
5549, corresponding with ye 18th Feby. A. D. 1789
Age 72

זכר צדיק לברכה

* * * * * *

16

In Memory of
Mrs
Martha Moravia
who departed this
Life (26 Tamuz 5547)
12th July 1787

Mrs
Martha Moravia

Headstone 17

מצבת

MOSES LOPEZ
A native of Portugal died
in the City of Newyork on the
6th of the Hebrew month Abib
5590 . April, 1830
Aged 86

During his residence in this town
which was nearly 60 Years he
enjoyed the friendship & esteem
of all who knew him.

Footstone No Inscription

* * * * * *

18

Headstone מצבת

Jacob Lopez
died 18 March, 1822
or 25 of Hebrew month
Adar 5582
aged 70

ת׳נ׳צ׳ב׳ה

Jacob Lopez
Footstone 1822

* * * * * *

19

מצבת
קבורת אשת חיל מרת הזקנה
אבגיל אשת הגביר אברהם לופיז
ימי שני חייה פ"ב שנה
נ"ל"ע ביום ו' מרחשון תקנ"ג לפ"ק
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

In Memory of Mrs. Abigail
the worthy relict of Mr.
Abraham Lopez, deceas'd
who departed this life in the
82d year of her age, on the 6th of
Hesvan, A. M. 5553, corresponding
to October 21st, 1792
The grateful remembrance of her
unaffected piety and benevolence
of heart ever replete with a feeling
of responsibility for the indigent and
distressed, is a lasting Monument to
perpetuate her virtuous character
in the minds of her numerous
relations and friends.

* * * * * *

20

ה' נתן וה' לקח יהי שם ה' מבורך
תנצב"ה
מצבת
קברת אשת חיל מרת רחל אשת הגביר
דוד לופיז
נ"ל"ע יום ד' אלול ה'תקמ"ט
ויהיו ימי שני חייה אחד ושלשים שנה זצ"ל

Sacred is this Marble here Erected in Memory of
Mrs. Rachel Lopez, the Beloved Consort of David Lopez, Jun.
and third Daughter of the Late Worthy Mr. Aaron Lopez
and Abigail, his Wife, who Exchanged the Imperfect and Evanescent
Enjoyments of this Vale of Tears for a Life
of Certain and Immortal bliss

on the 4th of Elul A. M. 5549, Corresponding to the 26th of August.
1789 A E 31.
Endued with all the Excellencies of the Amiable Woman, her span of life, tho, short, was employed in the exercise of every gentle Virtue. Exemplary for conjugal affection she lived an ornament to her sex, In Friendship tender, Constant and sincere,
the milk of human kindness filled her peaceful breast
and resignation marked her faith in God: thus in life
was she beloved and admired, in death lamented and revered.

* * * * * *

21

טוב שם משמן טוב יום המות מיום הולדה

שמע ה' קול אהרן

מצבת

קבורת הנכבד הגביר אהרן לופיז
נ"ל"ע ביום י"ד לחדש סיון שנת ה'תקמ"ב

ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

In Memory of Mr. AARON LOPEZ
who was drawn from this
Transitory existence to Eternal
rest, the 14th of Sivan A.M. 5542
AEtatis 51
He was a Merchant of Eminence,
of Polite & amiable manners.
Hospitality, Liberality and
Benevolence were his true
Characteristicks. an ornament
and valuable Pillar to the Jewish
Society, of which he was a
Member. his knowledge in
Commerce was unbounded
and his Integrity irreproachable;
thus he lived & died, much
regretted, esteemed & loved by all.

זכר צדיק לברכה

22

מצבת
קבורת הישיש והנכבד הגביר
יצחק מנדים סעשים
נ"ל"ע ביום ה' מרחשון תקמ"א לפ"ק
והיו ימי שני חייו ע"ב שנה זצ"ל
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

Mr. Isaac Mendes Seixas
of New York
died (5th Hesvan 5541) Novemr 3d 1780
aged 72 years

* * * * * *

23

מצבת

MOSES SEIXAS
died 4th Chisleu, 5570,
being Nov. 29, 1809
Aged 66

He was Grand Master of the
Grand Lodge of the Masonic
order of this State & Cashier of
the Bank of Rhode Island from its
commencement to his death

THIRD ROW

24

* * * * * *

Here lieth the body of Moses Alvares
who departed this life on the 19th of October
1766 in the 37th year of his age

מצבת

קבורת משה אלוארים
נ"ל"ע יום ט"ו לחדש השון שנת ה'תקכ"ז
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

SA

Do benaventurado
Moseh Alvares que fo
em 15 de Hesvan 5527
que conresponde 19
de Outubore 1766 de
Idade de 37 Annos

S. A. G. D. G.

* * * * * *

25

Headstone מצבת

קבורת הגביר מאיר בר בנימין
נפטר ביום א' לחודש כסלף (כסלו)
ונקבר ביום ב' שנת ה'תקל"ז
שלשה וארבעים שנה
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

In Memory of
Mr. Myer Benjamin
who departed this
life ye 20th November
1776 Aged 44 Years

Footstone Mr Myer Benjamin
1776

26

מצבת

קבורת הבחור הנכבד

אברהם בר אורי מינים

נ"ל"ע בשבת קודש כ' אלול שנת תקס"א

לפ"ק ימי שני חייו שלשה ועשרים שנה

ששה חדשים י"ד ימים

ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

In memory
of
Abraham Minis, Esquire,
of Savannah, in the state of Georgia
who
departed this life at Newport
on 29th Aug. 1801,
Aged 23 years, 6 months
and 14 days.
A dutiful Son
an effectionate relative,
a sincere and valuable friend,
of manners most pleasing,
of morals most correct,
and of irreproachable integrity.
This inestimable young gentleman fell a
victim in the bloom of life to the accidental
fracture of a leg,
and died universally beloved, esteemed and lamented.
The bereaved parent, Judith Minis, hath caused
this stone to be placed as a tribute to his memory
and his virtues and as a memorial of her
irreparable loss, 3d July, 1803.

27

(Hays Enclosure)

פ"נ
הבתולה רבקה בת משה
נ"ל"ע יום ה' כ"ב תמוז תקס"ב לפ"ק
ימי חייה היו ל"ג שנה וחמשה הדשים
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

In Memory
of
Rebekah
The Daughter of Moses M. Hays, of Boston;
in the State of Massachusetts,
who
departed this life
on
Thursday the 22d July, 1802
aged 33 years 5 months.
May her soul be bound up in the bands of
everlasting life

28

* * * * * *

פ"נ
הגביר הנעלה משה מיכל בר יהודה
נ"ל"ע יום ו' אחד עשר יום אייר
תקס"ה לפ"ק
ויהיו ימי חייו ששה וששים שנה. זצ"ל
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

Here
repose the ashes of
MOSES MICHAEL HAYS, ESQUIRE
who died in Boston in the state of Massachusetts.
on the 11th day of אייר
A.M. 5565
the 9th day of May, 1805, of the Christian era,
Aged LXVI years

In commemoration of his virtues, his son
with filial reverence erected this monument

* * * * * *

29

(Hays Enclosure)

מצבת קברת
הזקנה מרת רחל אלמנת הגביר הנעלה
משה מיכאל בר יהודה
נפטרת בשם טוב
כמעט שנים אחרי מות בעלה
ביום א׳ של ראש השנה תקע״א לפ״ק
ויהי כל ימי חייה שנים ושבעים שנה
ת׳נ׳צ׳ב׳ה

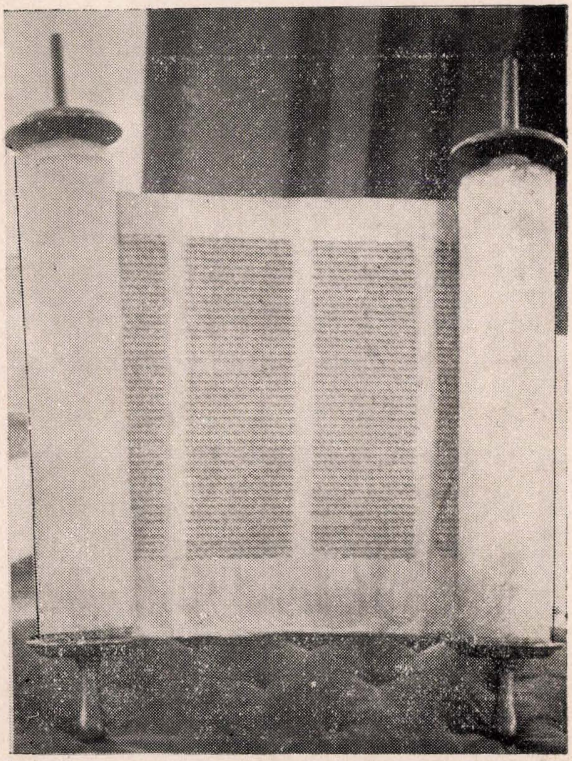
The Remains
of
Mrs. Rachel Hays,
Relict of Moses M. Hays Esq.,
Were conveyed from Boston,
In the State of Massachusetts, and interred here
She died on Saturday, the first day of
A.M. 5571
answering to the 29th day of Sept'r, 1810
of the Christian era,
aged 72 years

* * * * * *

30

(Hays Enclosure)

פ״נ
הבחור יהודה בר משה זצ״ל
נפטר ביום שלישי אחד בחדש אייר
תקצ״ב לפ״ק
ת׳נ׳צ׳ב׳ה
אמן



The Old Scroll of the Old Synagogue in Newport said to have been brought here by the first 15 Jewish families, who according to tradition came here in 1658.

On the first day of the Hebrew month
אייר תקצ"ג
Being the first day of May, 1832
Departed this life
Judah Hays
the son of
Moses M. and Rachel Hays,
Formerly of Boston, Massachusetts.
This monument
Sacred to the memory of that dear brother
is erected by
his deeply afflicted sisters

ביי בטחתנו

In God we trust

* * * * * *

31

(Hays Enclosure)

קבר
לזכר הבתולה סלויא בת משה ז"ל
שנפטרת ביום ט' לחדש חשון
שנת ה'תקצ"ז
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה
אמן

Sacred
to the memory of
Slowey the Daughter of Moses M. and Rachel Hays
who departed this life in Richmond, Va;
on the 9th day of Heshvan 5597,
being the 19th day of October
1836
God will redeem my Soul from the power of the Grave for
He will receive me.

(On opposite side of the same monument)

Catherine Hays
Born in Boston,
October 3, 1776,
Died at Richmond, Va.
January 2, 1854
Aged 77 years
2 months & 30 days

* * * * * *

32

Headstone

מצבת
קבורת הישיש והנכבד הגביר
בנימין בר יצחק הלוי
נ"ל"ע ביום י"ט טבת תקמ"ח לפ"ק
ויהי ימי שני חייו צ"ה שנה. זצ"ל
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

Mr. Benjamin Levy
died the 19th Tebet 5548
December the 30th, 1787,
Aged 95.

Footstone

B. L.

* * * * * *

33

Headstone

מצבת
קבורת אשת חיל הזקנה מרת
יהודית אשת בנימין הלוי
נ"ל"ע כ"ב תשרי תקמ"ט לפ"ק
ושני חיי ימיה פ"ו שנה
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

Mrs. Judith Levy
Died the 22d Tisri 5549
Oct. 23d 1788
Aged 86 years.

Footstone

J. L.

34

מצבת
קבורת הבתולה הצנועה מרת
בילה בת בנימין הלוי
נ"ל"ע ביום ה (ח) שבט תקמ"א לפ"ק
ושני חייה ל"ט שנה זצ"ל
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

Miss Bilah Levy
Died the 8th Sebath, 5541 (February the 3d 1781)
Aged 39 years

* * * * * *

35

מצבת
קבורת הישיש והנכבד
משה בר יצחק הלוי
נ"ל"ע ביום כ"ה סיון תקנ"ב לפ"ק
ויהיו ימי שני חייו פ"ח שנה זצ"ל

Mr. Moses Levy
Died the 28th Sivan 5552 June 18th 1792
aged 88 years

* * * * * *

FOURTH ROW

36

קבורת יצחק בן יעקב בן אהרן
נ"ל"ע בכ"ג לחדש חשון ה'תקמ"ג
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

Isaac Jacob Polok
of Surinam, who departed this
life the 23d day of Hesvan,
A.M. 5543, which corresponds
to the 28th day of October, 1782

37

In memory of
Sarah Ann,
daughter of
Jacob and Miriam
Levy
who died Sep. 21st, 1809
Aged 9 mos.
and 25 days.

* * * * * *

38

Headstone

מצבת

קבורת התלמיד

יצחק מענדים סעסים

נ"ל"ע ביום ז' אדר תקמ"ו לפ"ק

ויהי בן ששה שנים וששה הדשים

ת'נ'צ'ב'ה

Isaac M. Seixas
Died the 7th Adar 5546
February 5th, 1786
Aged 6 years, 6 months

Footstone

I. M. S.

* * * * * *

39, 40, 41,

No Inscriptions.

(According to Gould these are "three graves of children not over 3 years of age, buried since 1842".)

(The last marked interment near the northeast corner that may be between the second and third rows.)

42

Sacred
to the memory of
Edwin
Son of
Leo and Mathilda Rosenstein
of New York,
Born March 27th, 1866
Died July 23, 1866

APPENDIX D

EXTRACT OF LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF JACOB RODRIGUES RIVERA

Dated January 9, 1787. Recorded in Probate Records of Newport, Book II p. 98, ff.

"First of all, I recommend my Soul to God that gave it, and order that after my death I may be buried in the Jewish Burying Place according to the Hebrew Ritual and Custom, and that at some convenient time hereafter a decent Tomb Stone with a proper inscription thereon shall be placed on my grave. As to my worldly estate wherewith it hath pleased the Almighty to bless me I do hereby dispose thereof in manner and form following; that is to say. It is my Will that all my just debts and funeral expenses shall be paid by my executors hereinafter named in some convenient time after my decease.

"Also I give and bequeath unto my son, Abraham Rodrigues Rivera my five Books of Moses wrote on parchment by me here-

tofore deposited in the Jewish Synagogue in Newport aforesaid together with the Silver Bells and other ornaments thereto belonging; all other my books, my Silver Pot, all my wearing apparel of every kind, my Gold and Silver Watch, my Silver hilted sword and my right in the Redwood Library in Newport.

"Also I give and bequeath unto the Jewish Synagogue in Newport the sum of Ten pounds lawful money to be paid to the proper person of the Jewish Religion authorized and qualified to receive the same by my Executors hereinafter named on Condition that yearly Prayers may be said for me on the Day of Atonement forever.

"Also I do hereby declare and make known unto all proper persons that I have no exclusive right or title, of, in, or to the Jewish Public Synagogue in Newport on account of the Deed thereof being made to myself, Moses Levy & Isaac Harte, which Isaac Harte thereafter conveyed his one Part thereof to me; but that the same was done, meant and intended in Trust only, to and for the sole Use, Benefit and Behoof of the Jewish Society of Newport, to be for them reserved as a Place of Public Worship forever. Therefore I do for myself and my Heirs hereby remise, release and forever quit claim to all exclusive right, Title or Interest therein or thereto and to every part and Parcel thereof, Always saving and excepting such right as I have by being a single member of that Society.

"Also it is my will and I do hereby order and direct that my Executors shall distribute among the Poor of the Jewish Society in Newport aforesaid the sum of Ten pounds lawful money and also the sum of Ten pounds of like lawful money among the Christian Poor people of this City".

APPENDIX E

EXTRACT OF THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF MOSES LEVY

Dated June 6, 1792. Recorded in Probate Records of Newport. Book II, p. 230 ff.

"I do hereby release and discharge all such ballances as shall at the time of my decease be due and unpaid of monies by me heretofore

advanced towards building the Synagogue in Newport on condition that there shall be a Solemn Prayer said for me in the said Synagogue yearly and every year on the evening or day of Kipur or Atonement.

"All the residue and remainder of my Real and Personal (property) wheresoever the same may be found, I give, devise and bequeath to my kinsman, Hiram Levy, Moses Seixas and Simeon Levy and their Heirs forever, equally to be divided among them, subject nevertheless to the condition hereinbefore prescribed".

APPENDIX F

DEED OF TRUST

Deed of Trust of Mary Ann Lopez, Adolphus S. Solomons, Mary Jane Solomons, Herman S. Phillips, Sidney A. Phillips, Arthur Phillips, Frederick Phillips, J. Edgar Phillips and Sophie his wife, Isaac F. Phillips and Amelia J., his wife, Naphtali Taylor Phillips and Rosali S. his wife, Miriam David, widow, Zillah P. Cohen, widow, Miriam G. Hirsch, Rachel P. Hyman, Eva P. Graff, Sophia P. Hendricks, individually and heirs at law of Isaac, Jonas and Joshua Phillips, residuary legatees of Billiah Levy Seixas, formerly of Newport, Rhode Island, deceased, Gertrude S. Carmick, Lavinia Phillips and Josephine Phillips, of the City, County and State of New York, conveying Title and Trust of the Touro Synagogue and its Grounds and Appertenances, to the Trustees of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York.

Dated: April 27th, 1894, May 2nd, 1894.

Recorded: Book of Land Evidence, Newport, R. I. Vol. 67 p. 274 ff.

"All that certain tract of land with the building erected thereon situate lying and being in the City of Newport, State of Rhode Island, whereon the Jewish Synagogue now stands and bounded

and described, as follows: - Southerly on Touro Street, Ninety - two and 46/100 feet; Easterly on land of the Newport Historical Society, One hundred nine and 8/100 feet; Northerly on Barney Street, Ninety and 65/100 feet, and Westerly on land of George P. Lawton, be the same premises which were conveyed by Ebenezer Allen to Jacob Rodrigues Rivera, Moses Levy and Isaac Harte by deed bearing date June 13th, 32 D. year of George 2nd (1759) and recorded in the Land Evidence of Newport, Volume 15 Page 376 - June 7th, 1827.

"Together with the appurtenances and all the estate and rights of the said party of the first in and to said premises.

"To have and to hold the above granted premises unto the parties of the second part, their successors and assigns, as joint tenants and not tenants in common, so long as the said L. Napoleon Levy, Lewis Hyman J. Edgar Phillips, Elmer Hendricks, Joseph Blumenthal, David De Meza, Anthony Wallach, said parties of the second part respectively shall continue to be the Trustees and so long as the said N. Taylor Phillips shall continue to be clerk of the Congregation Shearith Israel of the City of New York; and upon any one of the said parties ceasing to be such Trustees then and to their and his successor or successors and to the remaining of the said parties of the second part or the successors of such of them as may have previously ceased to be such Trustees as Joint tenants as aforesaid. In trust nevertheless and for the uses and purposes following, that is to say, to take possession of the said premises herein above described and every part thereof and to use and apply the same, or cause the same to be used, occupied and employed for the maintenance therein of the usual and stated Religious Services according to the Ritual, Rites and Customs of the Orthodox Spanish and Portuguese Jews, as at the time practiced and observed in the Synagogue of the Congregation Shearith Israel in the City of New York now located at No. 5 West 19th Street in said City."

APPENDIX G

EXTRACT OF THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF MOSES SEIXAS

Dated November 26, 1809. Recorded in the Probate Records Book IV, p. 620 ff.

"I give, devise and bequeath all my personal estate of whatever nature and kind soever. And also all and singular my real estate whatsoever and wheresoever unto my wife, Jochebed Seixas for and during the term of her natural life. It is also my Will and desire that my daughters, Billiah, Abigail, Grace and Hetty continue to be maintained by my said wife out of the Income of my Estate for and during the time they shall remain unmarried and remain residing with their mother.

"It is also my Will and desire that after the decease of my said wife the whole of my estate both real and personal be equally divided among my children share and share alike".

APPENDIX H

LIST OF MINISTERS OF CONGREGATION JESHUAT ISRAEL.

RABBIS

Rabbi Abraham Pereira Mendes
1883 - 1893

Rabbi Henry Samuel Morais
1900 - 1901

Rabbi Jacob M. Seidel
1902-1905, 1928-32

Rabbi Bernard Rosengard
1906 - 1909

Rabbi Benjamin Lichter

Rabbi Shappo
1921,

Rabbi Abraham Bengis
1922,

Rabbi Alter Abelson
1926 - 1927

Rabbi Morris A. Gutstein
1932 -

CANTORS

Reverend David Baruch
1893 - 1899

Reverend E. M. Myers
1899 - 1900

Reverend Maurice Kaplan
1905 - 1906

Reverend Julius Block

Reverend David Brodsky
- 1920

Reverend Sol Bailey
1922 - 1925

Reverend Nathan Friedman
1910-

Shochetim in the Community

Nathan Ball
1902 - 1905

Raphael Raphaelson
1905 - 1909

Reverend S. Novik
1909 - 1911

Reverend Jacob Bernstein
1911 -

* * * * * *

MINISTERS OF THE CONGREGATION AHAVATH ACHIM

Reverend Benjamin Janowsky

Reverend Julius Block

Reverend Abraham Friedman
1929 - 1931

Reverend Jacob Bernstein
1911 - 1929 1931 -

APPENDIX I

LIST OF OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION JESHUAT ISRAEL

PRESIDENTS	*VICE-PRESIDENTS*
Isaac Levy	Eugene Schreier
Eugene Schreier	J. Davidson, 1897
Julius Engel	
Fischel David	
Israel J. Josephson	Max Teitz 1919
David Frant	David Frant 1920-22, 24, 26
Hon. Max Levy - 1919, 1923	Nathan David 1923
Max Teitz	Joseph J. Josephson, 1924
Nathan David 1920-22, 1924-34	Harry Teitz 1927 - 1934
Max Adelson 1935 -	A. L. Greenberg 1935 -

APPENDICES

SECRETARIES

Rev. David Baruch 1897

Nathan Ball -1919
Samuel Adelson 1920 - 22
Max Adelson 1923
Joseph J. Josephson
Morris David 1925 - 27
Al Gluckman 1928
Hon. Robert M. Dannin 1929 -

TREASURERS

Lewis Hess 1897

Lazar Herz - 1921
Sigmund Herz 1921 - 1934
Hyman Rosoff 1935 -

* * * * * *

TRUSTEES

Adelson, Elix 1928 -
Adelson, Max 1922, 26 - 28
Adelson, Dr. Samuel 1933
Aronson, Jacob 1920
Ball, Nathan 1935 -
David, Abraham 1925
David, Fischel 1919
David, Herman 1921
David, Morris 1923
Dannin, Joseph 1925
Greenberg, A. L. 1934
Engel, Julius 1897
Hess, Lewis 1897
Hess, Henry 1897
Jaffee, Max 1931 - 32, 1934 -
Josephson, Israel J. 1919
Kosh, Samuel 1928 - 29
Kraut, Abraham 1920 - 22
Lack, Louis 1919
Mines, Herman 1931, 36
Peisachov, Benjamin 1924, 32-33
Podrat, Herman 1926, 27
Richards, Bernard 1924 - 27
Rosen, Daniel 1923 - 24
Rosen, Gabriel 1930
Rosoff, Hyman 1922, 29
Teitz, Harry 1919
Teitz, Max 1920, 23, 30

* * * * * *

NOTE: This list does not include the Building Trustees.

The Officers and Trustees until 1919 are not all included in the list because of the lack of records.

* * * * * *

APPENDIX J

THE CONGREGATION JESHUAT ISRAEL COMMUNITY CENTER, NEWPORT, R. I.

With the growth of the new Jewish community in Newport which began toward the end of the last century, the need for a Community House to accomodate the growing Talmud Torah and Sunday School, as well as the various Jewish organizations, began to be felt. It was only natural for the Congregation Jeshuat Israel to fill this need. On December 1st, 1913, the Honorable Max Levy purchased the land opposite the synagogue on the corner of Touro and Division Streets upon which the center now stands. This land was held in trust until it was conveyed to Walter A. Reed, General Treasurer of the State of Rhode Island, on December 1st, 1914, as a result of an Act of the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island, appropriating the required purchase price from the accumulated earnings of the Touro Synagogue Fund.

Lack of funds delayed the erection of a building until 1926. In that year, the Congregation succeeded in obtaining the residence of the Honorable William P. Sheffeld, which was standing on Washington Square where the present Court House was erected Through the efforts of Mr. Nathan David who was the President of the Congregation at that time, permission was obtained to remove the building to its present site. Accordingly it was divided into two parts, and, with great effort, was brought to the lot that had been purchased opposite the synagogue.

To accommodate the needs of the Jewish community, the building was altered and renovated. On the first floor, two classrooms were provided for the daily and Hebrew school. A spacious social hall for the younger people was provided on the same floor. On the second floor, was arranged a large meeting hall, besides two smaller rooms, one for the use of the library and for Board meetings, and the other for a lounge. In the basement a large dancing and banquet hall was built.

Through the efforts of Mr. Nathan David, the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York, contributed $5,000 to help complete the building.

On August 26th, 1926, the Community Center was dedicated and consecrated as the "Congregation Jeshuat Israel Community

Center". It has since served every need of the Jewish community of Newport. At present no less than twenty different organizations with a membership of all ages meet and hold functions at the Center.

In 1934, the Jewish Men's Club of Newport renovated the third floor for the use of its various activities. The Club, thus provided for the use of the younger members of the Jewish Community a large billiard and ping pong room, a library, and an executive room, besides a lounge in the hall.

The tenth anniversary of the dedication of the C. J. I. Community Center was appropriately observed this year with an indoor carnival.

APPENDIX K

THE TOURO FUNDS

The synagogue, cemetery, and all the premises belonging to the Congregation Jeshuat Israel, are supported in part by the endowments that were left by the two brothers, Abraham and Judah Touro. These funds are vested with the Municipal and State authorities. Various laws and legislations have been passed, regarding the funds since the bequests have been made by the two brothers. The original bequests have been greatly increased because of the accumulated interest and earnings of the investments. In order to show how these funds operate we give here in Appendix K, selections from the various laws governing these Touro Endowments.

I

General Laws of 1923, Chapter 110, Section 1646.[1]
Of the Abraham Touro Fund.

Act of the General Assembly accepting a trust under the last will and testament of Abraham Touro, continued in force:-

The following act as passtd by the General Assembly in June, 1823, and amended in June 1827, and June 1834, and subsequently amended to continue in force:

Whereas it has been made to appear to this General Assembly upon the representation of Titus Wells, Esq., Executor of the Last Will and Testament of Abraham Touro, Esq., of the City of Boston and State of Massachusetts, that the said Abraham by his last will

bequeathed a legacy in the following words, viz:

"Item. I give Ten Thousand Dollars to the legislature of the State of Rhode Island for the purpose of supporting the Jewish synagogue in that State; in special trust to be appropriated to that object in such manner as the said legislature, together with the municipal authority of the Town of Newport, may from time to time direct and appoint".

Section 1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly and by the authority thereof it is enacted, that said legacy and trust be and hereby are accepted by the General Assembly, and the General Treasurer is authorized and directed to apply for and receive from said executor the said legacy or donation of Ten Thousand Dollars, to give all proper receipts and acquittances therefor upon receipt thereof, and as soon as possible to invest the same entirely in the stock of some substantial bank or banks, or in some of the United States stocks; and the certificates or evidences of such stock shall be carefully kept by the said General Treasurer in his office; and it shall be the duty of the General Treasurer once in every year to report to the General Assembly the state of said fund.

(1647) Section 2. And be it further enacted, that, the city council of Newport may and it shall be their duty to cause all repairs to be made upon said synagogue buildings and premises and upon the wall inclosing the Jewish burying-ground in Newport appurtenant to said Synagogue, which in their opinion may be necessary and proper; and whenever there shall be no person of the Jewish persuasion residing in Newport and qualified and authorized to have the care and superintendence of said synagogue, said council shall appoint some suitable person or persons for that purpose with such compensation as said council with the approbation of the General Assembly, shall think reasonable: PROVIDED, that nothing in this chapter shall be construed to authorize said city council or any other person whatever in any manner to interfere with or restrain the full and free exercise of the Jewish religion in said synagogue by any individual of that faith residing in Newport, or to interrupt the possession, control and management with which the proprietors of said synagogue and premises, or any other persons according to the laws and customs of the Jews, may be invested.

(1648) Section 3. And be it further enacted that it shall be the duty of said city council from time to time, as occasion shall present, to recommend to the General Assembly such measures and provisions as in their opinion shall be best calculated to promote and

fulfill the object and intention of the donor, the said Touro, as expressed in his said will, in supporting and advancing said Jewish institution.

(1649) Secion 4. And be it further enacted that, the city council of Newport be and they are hereby authorized from time to time as occasion mey require to draw on the General Treasurer for the interest of the Touro Jewish synagogue fund, or so much thereof as may be necessary to keep said synagogue and premises in complete repair; and that said council make report of their expenditures to the General Assembly annually at the January session.

(1650) Section 5. The General Treasurer shall have the care and management of this fund, with full power to regulate the custody and safekeeping of all claims and evidence of property belonging thereto; he shall deposit subject to his order, to the use of this fund, all dividends, interest, or income arising therefrom, in such bank or banks, trust company or trust companies, as he may now deposit state funds, he may invest and re-invest in his discretion, surplus dividends, interest and income, in the capitol stock of safe and responsible bank or banks, or in bonds of the United States, or of towns or cities within this state, and change and vary existing investments thereof, and he may sell and dispose of any or all of such investments so made, when necessary to meet the draft of the city council of Newport as provided in Section 4 of this chapter.

(1651 Section 6. The General Treasurer is authorized and directed to expend the sum of Five Thousand Dollars out of the Abraham Touro fund towards the purchase of a parcel of land in the City of Newport and the construction of a building and other improvements thereon to be used in connection with the Jewish synagogue in said city. (P. L. 1914, Ch. 1066).

(1652) Section 7. The title to the said premises and the improvements thereon shall be vested in five trustees, consisting of the General Treasurer of the State of Rhode Island, the Mayor of the City of Newport, and three other persons to be elected by the Congregation Jeshuat Israel, a religious and educational corporation created under the laws of the State of Rhode Island, and now worshipping in said synagogue.

(1653) Section 8. The selection of the trustees set forth in Section 7 shall be subject to the approval of the Superior Court of the State of Rhode Island and they shall hold the said premises for all time hereafter in accordance with the provisions, objects, and purposes, expressed in the said last will and testament of the said Abraham

Touro, deceased.
(1654) Section 9. The trustees selected from time to time as set forth in Section 7, as provided for in section 8, shall have the power at any and all times for the purpose of obtaining money with which to pay for the construction of a building and other improvements provided for in Secton 6, to mortgage the parcel of land purchased under the provisions of said section together with any building or buildings and other improvements that may be constructed thereon and to sign all deeds, notes, or other instruments which may be necessary to effect the mortgage of the same.[2]

II

General Laws of 1923, Chapter 111.[3]

Of the Judah Touro Ministerial Fund.

Act of the General Assembly relating to a bequest under the last will and testament of Judah Touro, continued in force:-

The City Council of Newport may hold and invest the Judah Touro Ministerial Fund.
(1655) Section 1. The following act as passed by the General Assembly in March 1879, shall continue in force:-

Whereas, it has been made to appear to this General Assembly that Judah Touro, formerly of New Orleans, deceased made in his will the following bequest:

"I give and bequeath Ten Thousand Dollars for the purpose of paying the salary of a reader or minister to officiate in the Jewish synagogue of Newport, Rhode Island, and to endow the ministry of the same, as well as to keep in repair and embellish the Jewish cemetery in Newport aforesaid, said amount to be appropriated and paid or invested for that purpose in such manner as my executors may determine concurrently with the corporation of Newport, aforesaid, if necessary, and it is my wish and desire that David J. Gould and Nathan H. Gould, sons of my esteemed friend, the late Isaac Gould, Esq., of Newport aforesaid, should continue to oversee the improvements in said cemetery and direct the same", and that said City of Newport accepted said bequest and that the said money was paid by said executors to the persons authorized by said city to receive it, and the same, with accumulations now stands invested in the name or in the hands of said trustees of the Judah Touro Ministerial fund, appointed by said city. And whereas it is desired

that said city shall be expressly authorized to hold said trust property and perform the trust thereof, Therefore:

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

Section 1. The said city of Newport, by its city council, is hereby empowered to demand, recover, and receive for and take and hold the property aforesaid, and to invest and keep invested the same in its name upon the trusts aforesaid, and to use and apply the same to and for the said trusts, with power to appoint and employ such officers and agents as may be needful or desirable for the care of said property and the proper performance of said trusts.

III

Public Laws of 1928, Chapter 1149.[4]

An act of amendment of Sections 2 and 4 of Chapter 110 of the General Laws, entitled "Of the Abraham Touro Fund".

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

Section 1. Sections two and four of Chapter 110 of the General Laws of 1923 entitled "Of the Abraham Touro Fund" are hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 2. And be it further enacted that the City Council of Newport may and it shall be their duty to pay all of the running expenses of said synagogue, buildings and premises, to cause all repairs to be made upon the wall inclosing the Jewish burying-ground in Newport appurtenant to said synagogue, which in their opinion may be necessary and proper; and whenever there shall be no person of the Jewish persuasion residing in Newport and qualified and authorized to have the care and superintendence of said synagogue, said council shall appoint some suitable person or persons for that purpose, with such compensation as said council, with the approbation of the General Assembly, shall think reasonable; provided, that nothing in this chapter shall be construed to authorize said city council or any other person whatever in any manner to interfere with or restrain the full and free exercise of the Jewish religion, in said synagogue by any individual of that faith residing in Newport, or to interrupt the possession, control and management with which the proprietors of said synagogue and premises, or any other persons according to the laws and customs of the Jews, may be vested".

"Section 4. And be it further enacted that the city council of Newport be and they are hereby authorized from time to time as

occasion may require, to draw on the said General Treasurer for the interest of the Touro Jewish synagogue fund, or so much thereof as may be necessary to keep said synagogue and premises in complete repair, and to pay the said running expenses of said synagogue buildings; and that said council make report of their expenditures to the General Assembly, annually, at the January Session".
Sec. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

Public Laws 1929, Chapter IV, 1410.[5]

An Act in Amendment of Sections 2 and 4 of Chapter 110 of the General Laws, entitled "Of the Abraham Touro Fund" as amended.

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

Section 1. Sections 2 and 4 of Chapter 110 of the general laws, entitled "Of the Abraham Touro Fund", as amended by chapter 1149 of the public laws, 1928, are hereby further amended to read as follows:

"Section 2. And be it further enacted, that the city council of Newport may, and it shall be their duty to cause all repairs to be made which in their opinion shall be necessary and proper, upon said Jewish synagogue, upon the walls enclosing the Jewish burying ground in Newport appertaining to the synagogue, and thereafter, so far as funds may be available, to apply the same toward the maintenance of that part of the synagogue premises known as the community building and to pay such other expenses as said city council may deem necessary and proper, the total expenditures herein authorized, however, not to exceed in any one year the annual income of the Abraham Touro fund; provided, that all said expenditures shall be first approved by the board of officers of the Congregation Jeshuat Israel, worshipping in said synagogue, and by the trustees selected by said congregation under the provisions of section 7 of chapter 110 of the general laws; and whenever there shall be no person of the Jewish persuasion residing in Newport and qualified and authorized to have the care and superintendence of said synagogue, said council shall appoint some suitable person or persons for that purpose, with such compensation as said council, with the the approbation of the general assembly, shall think reasonable; and provided, further, that nothing in this chapter shall be construed to authorize said city council or any other person whatever in any manner to interfere with or restrain the full and free exercise of the Jewish religion in said synagogue by any individual of that faith residing in Newport, or to interrupt the possession, control and

management with which the proprietors of said synagogue and premises, or any other persons according to the laws and customs of the Jews, may be vested.

"Section 3. And be it further enacted that the city council of Newport be, and they are hereby authorized from time to time, as occasion may require, to draw on the general treasurer for the annual income of the Abraham Touro fund, or so much thereof as may be necessary, to pay for the expenditures authorized under section 2 hereof, and that said council shall make detailed report of their expenditures to the general assembly annually and at the January session".

Section 4. This act shall take effect upon its passage, and all acts and parts of acts inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

NOTES

NOTES

CHAPTER I

THE DIM BEGINNINGS

[1] The Legends of the Jews: Louis Ginzberg, Volume III, p. 148.

[2] The Mill Street Synagogue, etc.: David de Sola Pool. p. 3.

[3] Ill Newes from New England or a Narrative of New England's Persecution: John Clarke. (Quoted in Early Religious Leaders of Newport: Newport Historical Society, 1917, p. 16.)

[4] Early Religious Leaders: Newport Historial Society. p. 14.

[5] Life of Roger Williams: Oscar S. Straus p. 178.

[6] Ibid. p. 110ff.

[7] Quoted from John Nieuhoff in "The Jews Come To America": Paul Masserman and Max Baker.

[8] Original Narratives of the Netherlands p. 392 ff. (Quoted in "Jewish Pioneers In America": Anita Libman Lebeson).

[9] Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society (Abbreviated from now on, P. A. J. H. S.) Volume XVIII, p. 4.

[10] The order which Governor Stuyvesant received from the Dutch West India Company, granting the Jews the right to live freely and trade in New Amsterdam, is perhaps the first American Magna Carta granted to the Jews, and is worth quoting at length: "We should have to fulfill your wishes, that the new territories should no more be allowed to be infested by the peoples of the Jewish nation, for we forsee therefrom the same difficulties which you fear, but after having further weighed and considered the matter, we observe that this would be somewhat unreasonable and unfair, especially because of the considerable loss sustained by this nation with others in the taking of Brazil, as also because of the large amount of capital which they still have invested in the shares of the company. There-

fore, after many deliberations we have finally decided and resolved.. that these people may travel and trade to and in New Netherland and live and remain there, provided the poor among them shall not become a burden to the company or to the community but be supported by their own nation. You will now govern yourself accordingly". (Quoted in "The Jews Come To America" By Paul Masserman and Max Baker p. 47).

[11] P.A.J.H.S. Volume XVIII, p. 5.

[12] The Settlement of the Jews in North America: Charles P. Daly. Newport: Jewish Encyclopedia, (Article by Leon Huhner and Max J. Kohler) Volume IX, p. 294. The Hebrews in America: Isaac Markens, p. 33, and others on the subject.

CHAPTER II

DAWN

[1] History of Rhode Island and Newport in the Past: The Reverend Edward Peterson, p. 101. He speaks of them as coming from Holland. The author of Frankel's Wochenschrift, quoted .in P. A. J. H. S., Volume VI, by Max J. Kohler claims that they came from Brazil. He bases his conclusion on the similarity between the name Campanal and Campanelli, who was one of the Jews who went to Brazil together with Rabbi Aboab in 1642, and lived there until the Portuguese conquered Brazil. Mordecai Campanal is said to have been among the fifteen families who came to Newport in 1658. (Compare P.A.J.H.S. vol. II, p. 99). In view of the fact that a contingent of Spanish-Portuguese Jews did come to North America from Brazil, after the Portuguese conquest of 1655, the theory of the author in the Wochenschrift sounds plausible.

However, it may well be that the first permanent Jewish settlers in Newport to which the quotation in Peterson's History refers, came from Barbados. This is possible, for a number of reasons. First, we know, that Newport merchants were trading with Barbados at a very early period. And it might be, that because of this trade relationship, some Jews, upon hearing, about the religious toleration in Rhode Island, decided to come here. Secondly, in a "List of Jews made Denizens in the Reign of Charles II and James II, 1661-1687",

we find the name of "Moses Israel Pachoe", which was suggested to be amended to Pacheco, and who may be identical with Moses Pacheco, who together with Mordecai Campannal is associated with the purchase of the Burial Ground in Newport in 1677. We also find, other members of the Pacheco family in Barbadoes in 1680. (See, P.A.J.H.S., Vol. XX, p. 109 ff. and Vol. I, p. 105 ff.).

Dr. Pool was kind enough to call the writer's attention to the article "The Jewish Colonists in Barbados" by Wilfred S. Samuel, which is fully documented and definitely proves that the origin of the Jewish community of Newport was Barbados. Speaking about Simon Mendes who figures in 1684, in the resolution of the General Assembly giving the Jews rights to live in Rhode Island and assuring them full protection, Samuel says: "This SIMON MENDES was one of a little group of Speightstown Jews who early became identified with the congregation of Newport, Rhode Island - the oldest congregation of Jews in America. Its burial ground (to be celebrated two centuries later by Longfellow) had in February, 1678, been acquired by MORDECAI CAMPERNELL and one other Jew. A few months later Mordecai Campernell landed on the Island of Barbados and no doubt made his temporary home in St. Peter's Parish with "DANIEL CAMPERNELL, Jew" another of Lt.-Col. Tidcom's militiamen. Mordecai Campernell was a Colonist of some experience who had formerly lived in Brazil, and he seems to have employed his time while visiting his kinsmen and friends on Barbados Island in persuading them of the far greater possibilities which were held out to settlers by Rhode Island. His colleague of the previous year in the purchase of the Newport burial ground had been MOSES ISRAEL PACHECHO of Hamburg but also well known on Barbados, where he had settled at the Restoration, and whence he had successfully petitioned king Charles in the year 1662 for denization. Pachecho and Campernell's desire to secure recruits for the Jewish nucleus at Newport, R. I., was largely satisfied by Mordecai Campernell's mission to Barbados in 1678-79. On the 1st April, 1679, he shipped himself back to New England; ten days later he was followed by Abraham Burgos and Jacob Tinoco, both of Speights. On the 18th September Daniel Nasy (probably one of the Speightstown Fonsecas) sailed away in the ship HOPE for New England - Newport being perhaps his ultimate destination. Subsequently Simon Mendes, with his wife, as well as the entire Campernell family left, 31st March 1685, - six years later - the Surveyor for Newport, R. I., commenced an action at law against the

representative local Jews (in connexion with the burial ground) the eight defendants included the bearers of these familiar names: Abraham Burgos, Rachell, widow of Simon Mendes, Mordecai Campernell, David Campernell, Daniel Campernell and Abraham Campernell".

This seems to prove conclusively, that practically all the Jews who constitute the nucleus of the Jewish community, and who were later as a group brought to trial in 1685, came from Barbados. According to Samuels, the date of their settlement is not certain. But at all events they were in Newport already (at least some) before 1677. Samuels is not right in his statement that these Jews were brought to trial in connection with the burial ground. (See quotations from records of trial in text, also P.A.J.H.S. Vol. XIX.

[2] Peterson in his History states that the colony was settled by 18 men. In the "Early Religious Leaders", it is stated (p. 13) that before another year after the settlement of Newport in the spring of 1639, there were 200 families in the town. In an "Historical Discourse, etc." delivered by John Calender in 1739 and published the same year, the number of white inhabitants of Newport in 1730 is given as 3843 (p. 40).

[3] History of Newport, etc.: Peterson p. 29.

[4] Colonial Records of R. I.: John Russell Bartlett, Vol. I, p. 85. R. I. Historical Magazine, Vol. VI, p. 60.

[5] History of R. I., etc.: Peterson p. 29.

[6] Ibid p. 42.

[7] The Jews in New York, though they organized their Congregation Shearith Israel in 1655, had a difficult time to obtain permission to hold Public worship, or to build a synagogue. Dr. Pool in his sketch on the Mill Street Synagogue, quotes a number of utterances of the Dutch West India Company concerning this matter. Some of those quotations are worth mentioning:-

"The consent given to the Jews to go to New Netherland and there to enjoy the same liberty that is granted them in this country was extended with respect to civil and political liberties, without the said Jews becoming thereby entitled to license to exercise and carry on their religion in synagogues and gatherings". (p. 6) As late as 1763 Jews were indicted in London for holding public services. It is recorded that on the 11th of February of that year the King in Council ordered; "that the Attorney General stop all

proceedings and that they receive no further trouble in this behalf". See P. A. J. H. S. Vol. XXVII, p. 481.

[8] Dr. Ezra Stiles mentions in his Literary Diary, (Vol. I, p. 11) that the Reverend Isaac Touro showed him a scroll over 200 years old at that time. George A. Kohut in his "Ezra Stiles and the Jews", also refers to an old scroll at the synagogue dating to 1658, which was brought by the first fifteen families. (p. 61) At present, there is still extant a very old Scroll at the synagogue written on leather, which is said to be the Scroll referred to.

[9] The Jewish Cemetery at Newport, R.I.: The Rev. Abraham P. Mendes, p. 82, published in the R. I. Historical Magazine Vol. VI No. 2. Cf. P. A. J. H. S. Vol. II p. 99.

Mendez speaks of this Congregation as the Congregation "Yeshuat Israel".

[10] See note 1.

The names Campanal and Pacheco are spelled variously in different sources. Spellings like Campunal, Campannel, Campannall and other variations are common. Likewise we find the spelling of Pachecho, Paceco, Pachoe, Packecoe and other variations, for Pacheco. We have adopted the use "Campanal" and "Pacheco". (Cf. P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXIX, p. 32.)

[11] P. A. J. H. S. Vol. XIX, p. 12.

[12] The Jews and Masonry in the United States before 1810: Samuel Oppenheim. (Published in the P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIX) p. 11. See page 12 ff. of the same article about a critical analysis of the quotation and the proof of the authenticity of the manuscript.

In volume XXVII p. 416 of the P. A. J. H. S., the manuscript is quoted as following: "On ye 5th day of ye 9th month 1658, ye 2nd Tisri A. M. 5518 we assembled at ye house of Mordecaih Campanall and gave a degree to Abraham Moses"

There are number of discrepancies between the two texts. Some inconsistencies in the latter quotation of the manuscript, have been noticed by the Reverend Jacques Judah Lyons, when he copied the quotation from the original manuscript in the seventies of the last century. He noted: "How could this be done on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, or was it on the night after the 2nd day, in which case it should have been dated 3d of Tisri". In addition to this there is a more conspicuous discrepancy in the Lyons quotation between the date of the general calendar and the date of the Jewish calendar.

5518 which is the year according to the Jewish calendar given in the document, does not correspond with 1658. 5518 corresponds with 1758 which is a hundred years later. But this is impossible in knowledge of the fact that in 1758 there was no Mordecai Campanal in Newport. Besides, the Masonic Lodge by that time was a fully developed institution in the city, having a regular meeting place and it did not meet in any private homes. Besides, we possess the list of Jewish Masons, who belonged to the Order in Newport, from the time the first Masonic Lodge was regularly constituted in the forties of the eighteenth century.

The only explanation of these discrepancies seems to be the fact that the manuscript when seen by Lyons was very much obliterated. The manuscript as quoted by Oppenheim comes from a reading of it in 1870 by N. Gould, who was the possessor of this valuable paper. At that time already Gould noted in copying it that part of the date was obliterated.

The Reverend J. J. Lyons copied the same manuscript in 1872. Although two years should make not much difference, yet, because of the age of the paper, it is quite plausible that by the time Lyons saw it, the reading was still more difficult, and the date was altogether obliterated. It may also be that Gould did not take the trouble to decipher the entire document, especially the part containing the Hebrew date which, the Reverend Jacques Lyons, who was interested in it more from a point of view of Jewish history than masonry, did attempt to read more completely. The error in the Hebrew date may simply be an error of Mr. Lyons in copying or an attempt to render the obliterated date more fully.

The words "and affter Synagog", which do not appear in the Lyon's quotation, were probably altogether missing at the time he copied it.

However, whatever reasons there might be for the apparent differences in the readings of the original document concerning the first settlement of the Jews in Newport, all authorities on the subject agree that 1658 is the date the Jews first came to the shores of Rhode Island as a group; and that they, immediately upon their arrival organized a congregation, which conducted its services in private houses for over a century until a Synagogue was built.

[13] The Jews in Newport: Max J. Kohler in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. VI.

[14] History of Rhode Island, etc.: Peterson, p. 155.

[15] Colonial Records of R. I. : Bartlett, Vol. I, p. 337, 338, Rhode

Island Its Making, etc.: I. B. Richman, p. 27.

[16] Economic and Social History of New England: Weeden Vol. I, p. 154.

[17] Our State of Rhode Island: Lilliam B. Miner, p. 66ff.

[18] Colonial Records of Rhode Island: Bartlett, Vol. I, p. 581.

[19] Ibid. p. 223.

[20] Short History of the United States: John Spencer Basset, p. 76.

[21] Rhode Island, Three Centuries of Democracy: Charles Carroll.

[22] Short History of the United States: John Spencer Basset, p. 78.

[23] See last paragraph of Cemetery Deed; Cf. P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIX, p. 14.

[24] History of Newport County: Richard M. Bayle, p. 467; Colonial Records of R. I. ; Newport Historical Society Bulletin No. 44, p. 17.

[25] See note 23.

[26] The Jewish Cemetery : Mendes, in R. I. Hist. Mag., Vol. VI, p. 82.

[27] The earliest existing map, which is reproduced elsewhere in this volume, is that of John Mumford, and dates from 1712. On it the name Jew's Street already occurs. Cf. History of Newport County: Richard M. Bayle, p. 484-5. The street is also marked "Jews Street" and "Jew Street" on later maps.

[28] Rhode Island Historical Magazine, Vol. VI, p. 24.

[29] The Jewish Cemetery: Mendes in R. I. Hist Mag., Vol. VI, p. 83, Cf. P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 425.

[30] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXV, p. 42.

Under date of August 29, 1695, Isaac Naphtali in a petition for letters of denization in New York is described as a "Jew butcher in Rhode Island". The use of butcher for the term *Schochet* is not uncommon. Asser Levy who was sworn in as slaughterer of animals in 1660 is also referred to as a butcher. Later we will note that Benjamin Seixas is referred to as the butcher for the Jews, which in fact meant that he practiced *Schechita.* See on this last instance the chaper "The Close of a Colorful Chapter". It should be noted here that in the Talmud the term "*Taboch*" which means "butcher" is used synonymously with *Schochet.*

[31] History of Rhode Island,etc. : Peterson.

[32] Record of the General Court of Trials, 1671 - 1724, p. 73.

[33] Ibid. p. 87.

[34] The Jewish Cemetery: Mendes in the R. I. Historical Magazine, Vol. VI, p. 84.

[35] The Jews of Newport: Kohler in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. VI.

[36] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 413. It may perhaps be that this was a chapel or a small synagogue, a little removed from the cemetery, which was responsible for the Street being called Jews Street, though the Jewish Cemetery might just as well be responsible for this. There is a tradition that there was another smaller synagogue in Newport before the one dedicated in 1763 was built.

[37] See note 24.

[38] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. II; Cf. Ibid Vol. VI, p. 78.

[39] R. I. Three Centuries of Democracy : Carroll, Vol. I, p. 157.

[40] Records of the General Court of Trials 1671 - 1724, p. 72, 73.

[41] Colonial Records: Bartlett, Vol. III, p. 160.

[42] Records of the General Court of Trials, 1671 - 1724, p. 73.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid. p. 97.

[45] R. I. Historical Magazine, Vol. II, p. 226.

[46] Records of the General Court of Trials, 1671-1724, p. 146. P. A. J. H. S., Vol. VI, p. 68.

[47] The Jews Come to America: Paul Masserman and Max Baker. p. 53, note 17. Cf. P. A. J. H. S., Vol. II, p. 87.

[48] New York Historical Society; Extraxts of Wills, Vol. I, p. 399.

[49] The Mill Street Synagogue: David de Sola Pool, p. 27.

[50] Early American Jews: Lee M. Friedman, p. 9.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ipswich Vital Records. (Quoted in Early American Jews).

[53] P. A J. H S., XXI, p. 43 ; Cf. Ibid, Vol. VI, p. 101; Ibid. Vol II, p. 48.

[54] Ibid. Vol. XXI, p. 41.

[55] Ibid. p. 69-70, 91.

[56] New York Colonial Mss. Vol. XL, p. 65, quoted in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXV, p. 42.

[57] The Mill Street Synagogue: D. de Sola Pool, p. 72.

[58] See Next Chapter.

[59] Ezra Stiles and the Jews: George Alexander Kohut, p. 42-3.

[60] Ibid. ; Diary of Samuel Sewall, reprinted in Mass. Hist. Soc. Collections, series 5, Vol. XI, p. 95, quoted in Early American Jews: Lee M. Friedman.

[61] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. X, p. 146.

[62] The Jews in Newport: Kohler in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. VI, p. 67.

The list of Jews and their occupations, supposedly of the seventeenth century, given by Judge Daly in his book "The Settlement of the Jews in North America", page 78, is an error. These Jews lived in the eighteenth century. (See P. A. J. H. S., Vol, XIX, p. 18 ff. ; and Ibid. Vol. XXVII, p. 416).

This error has been copied by all subsequent writers on the subject. Judge Daly apparently took these names from the list of Masons in Gould's letter referred to in notes 11, 12, in which he speaks of the earliest lodge. Daly took the expression "earliest lodges" to refer to lodges of the seventeenth century. But Gould refers to the "earliest" of the regularly constituted lodges, after the revival of Free Masonry. Gould refers to St. John's Lodge organized in 1749 or 1747. (Cf. P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIX, p. 18).

CHAPTER III

PROGRESS

[1] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. X, p. 142ff. Note also "The Jews Come to America": Masserman and Baker, p. 59, note 37, where the authors state, that, early in the eighteenth century, Abraham de Lucena of New York exported wheat to Lisbon, and the vessels brought back Jews to New York and Newport.

[2] R. I. Hist. Magazine, Vol. IV, p. 80, gives the census of 1744. The total population then was 9209, as compared with 3843 in 1730, as given by Callender. See note 6.

[3] Rhode Island, Three Centuries of Democracy: Charles Caroll, Vol. I, p. 124.

[4] Reminiscences of Newport: George Champlin Mason, p. 9.

[5] History of Newport County: Richard M. Bayle, p. 487.

[6] Historical Discourse, etc. : John Callender. Delivered and Published in 1739.

[7] Colonial Records of R. I.: John Russell Bartlett, Vol. I, p. 30.

[8] Original Will in Vaults of Newport Historical Society. Also quoted in Early Religious Leaders: N. H. S., p. 9.

[9] Extracts of Wills published in the R. I. Hist. Mag.

[10] Governor of Rhode Island 1657, 1662-66, 1669-72 and from 1677 to 1678.

[11] R. I. Hist. Mag., Vol. VI, p. 35.

[12] Newport Historical Society Bulletin, No. 14, p. 1.

[13] Ibid. p. 3.

[14] Annals of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum in Newport, Rhode Island: George Champlin Mason, p. 9.

[15] Rhode Island, Three centuries of Democracy: Charles Carroll, Vol. I, p. 125.

[16] R. I. Hist. Mag., Vol. IV, p. 27ff.

[17] Annals of the Redwood Library, etc. : Mason, p. 10. The Reverend George Berkeley was Dean of Derry, the well known author of "Principles of Human Knowledge".

[18] Joseph Jacob, who was a member of the Philosophical Society in 1730, and later Treasurer of the Redwood Library at the time of its founding in 1747, is thought by many to have been a Jew. There was a Joseph Jacob a Jew at a later date who was at one time the *Schochet* of the Community. See P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII.

In the Annals of the Redwood Library already referred to, we have a detailed biography of the same Joseph Jacob, where it is distinctly mentioned that Jacob was a Quaker. He was a member of the Society of Friends. Ezra Stiles also indicated Jacob's religious affiliation, by a "Q", appended next to his name. The same author speaking about Jos. Sylvester has nothing to say except, the mere mention of his name, and the facsimile of his signature. This is the only case of the sort in the book. In all other instances some biographical material is added. It may well be because of Sylvester's having been of the Jewish faith.

[19] Abraham Hart and John Phillips were admitted as members of the library, Nov. 4th, 1747. Moses Lopez was admitted in 1749. Jacob Rodrigues Rivera was admitted in 1758.

[20] Historical Sketch of the Redwood Library and Anthenaeum in Newport, Rhode Island by David King, Boston 1860, p. 10-11.

Also note 3, P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 449.

NOTES

[21] R. I. Historical Magazine, Vol. VI, p. 45 ff.

[22] Ibid.

[23] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. VI, p. 67.

[24] Superior Court Records of Newport.

Book B, p. 40, 79, 585; Book D, p. 163, 180; Book F, p. 58, 82· Book E, p. 46, 252, 386, 401, 414, 472.

[25] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. II, p. 82; Superior Court Records ot Newport, Book A, p. 393; Book B, p. 654, 672; Book C, p. 209, 264, 269, 317.

Moses Levi is not to be confused with Moses Levy. According to the court records they are not identical.

[26] See next chapter.

[27] Superior Court Records, Book A, p. 229, 234, 242, 253; Book C, p. 227, 361, 372, 406; Book D, p. 164, 188.

[28] Early American Jews: Lee M. Friedman.

[29] Index to the Advertisements in the Newport Mercury in the files of the Newport Historical Society, Newport, R. I.

[30] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. VI, p. 124.

[31] Rhode Island Historical Magazine, Vol. IV, p. 150.

[32] Jewish Pioneers in America: Anita Iibman Lebeson, p. 86.

[33] Rhode Island, Three Centuries of Democracy, Vol. I, p. 114.

[34] Compare list of Masons and their occupations in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, and Vol. XIX.

[35] Reminiscences of Newport: Mason, p. 61.

[36] Ibid. p. 38.

[37] Original Ledger and Record in the Vaults of the Newport Historical Society. This industry seems not to be known by writers on the commerce of Rhode Island of this period.

[38] Colonial Records of Rhode Island: Bartlett, Vol. V, p. 375.

[39] Ibid.

[40] R. I. Historical Magazine, Vol. V, p. 295.

[41] Reminiscences of Newport: Mason, p. 38. Cf. Commerce of Rhode Island, (published by the Massachusetts Historical Society), Vol. I.

[42] Boston Weekly Gazette, August 18, 1747. Colonial Records of Rhode Island: Bartlett, Index.

[43] Rhode Island in Colonial Wars: Howard M. Chapin, (published by the Rhode Island Historical Society), p. 87.

[44] Ibid. p. 102.

[45] Colonial Records of Rhode Island: Bartlett, Vol. V, p. 307.

[46] Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

FROM INQUISITION TO FREEDOM

[1] History of Rhode Island and Newport in the Past: The Reverend Edwards Peterson, p. 181.

[2] Obadia 20.

[3] A History of the Jewish People; Max L. Margolis and Alexander Marx, p. 303.

[4] Ibid.

[5] The word Marrano is incorrectly derived from the New Testament phrase, "maran atha", which means our Lord has come. (See Jewish Encyclopedia article on Maranos.) Compare the use of this phrase in Longfellow's poem, "The Jewish Cemetery at Newport".

[6] Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VI, p. 589. The entire article in the Encyclopedia deals with the Inquisition in Spain and Portugal and is the basis for most of the statements on this subject in the chapter.

[6] Shebet Yehudah, p. 96 ff. as quoted in the Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VIII, p. 319.

[8] Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VIII, p. 181 ff.

[9] Ibid. p. 182.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. II, p. 104.

[13] Ibid. p. 105.

[14] Ibid. Vol. XXVII, p. 153.

[15] Ibid. Vol. II, p. 105.

[16] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 529.

[17] The History of the State of Rhode Island: Thomas Bicknell, Vol. II, p. 626. There the author states that the women who came from Spain and Portugal had much more difficulty in adjusting themselves than the others. He says, Abroad "where persecution was so strong their children had two sets of names. Remember, that these women to disarm suspicion and to save their lives and the lives of their children seemingly told their beads in public, though their hearts formed not the Ave Maria and the Pater Noster, but the Shemang. Remember that these women were so much slaves of habit and fear that even here, far from their bloodthirsty oppressors they still fingered their beads as they repeated their Hebrew prayers, though their one desire was to throw off all memory of their days of persecution".

[18] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. II, p. 47.

[19] Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. X, p. 432.

[20] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. II, p. 105.

[21] Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. X, p. 432.

[22] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXI, p. 15.

[23] The Mill Street Synagogue, etc. : Pool, p. 72.

[24] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXIX, p. 35.

[25] Ibid. Vol. X, p. 142 (quoted there in a Synopsis of the Jews of Surinam by Joseph Corcos).

[26] Ibid. Vol. XXIX, p. 35.

[27] Ibid. p. 25.

[28] Ibid.

[29] See note 56 in chapter "Dawn".

[30] The Touro Family in Newport: Morris A. Gutstein, p. 4 ff.

[31] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. IV, p. 201, 209.

[32] Ibid. Vol. II, p. 46.

[33] Ibid. Vol. IV, p. 190.

[34] Ibid. p. 213. Captain N. Taylor Phillips is an attorney in New York City. He has held a number of high offices in the muncipal and state government. At present he is the president of the Spanish-Portuguese Congregation Shearith Israel of New York. He contributed a number of scholarly articles to the Publications of The American Jewish Historical Society, dealing especially with the genealogies of the early Sephardic Jews in America, and their Synagogue life. He is a lineal descendant of the purchasers of the Newport Synagogue lot, a legal owner of the title of the Synagogue, in part, with other descendants.

[35] See note 24 chapter "Progress".

[36] See article in Jewish Encyclopedia.

[37] Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VI, p. 240.

[38] Ibid. Vol. X, p. 114 ff.

[39] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 11, note 2. List of Jewish Masons, in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 416. The Settlement of the Jews in North America: Charles P. Daly. The Hebrews in America: Markens.

CHAPTER V

THE SYNAGOGUE

[1] Yer. Targ. Ex. XVIII:20; Pesik. 129b; DeVita Moses; Philo III:27; Contra Apion: Josephus II:17. (Quoted in the Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. XI).

[2] Judaism: George Foot Moore, Vol. I, p. 283.

[3] Ibid. p. 285.

[4] Jer. Hagigah 76c. (Quoted by Moore, ibid. p. 317).

[5] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 11, note 2.

[6] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. VI, p. 124.

[7] Ibid. Vol. XXVII, p. 407.

[8] Ibid. (The source probably has reference to Mr. Jacob Isaacs and Zachary Polak, both of whom seem to have been men of learning. They may be identical with the Isaacs and Polak, who were licensed as *Shochet* and *Bodek* respectively by the Reverend David Mendez Machado in 1730. See P. A. J. H. S., Vol. II, p. 48).

[9] The Mill Street Synagogue, etc. : D. de Sola Pool, p. 22 f.

[10] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 181.

[11] Records of the Probate Court of Newport, R. I., Vol. II, p. 98 ff. (It may be noted here that Rivera refers to the Congregation in the word "Society". This use of the word "Society" also occurs earlier in the Cemetery Deed, which is taken also to refer to the Congregation that existed in Newport at the time the Cemetery was purchased in 1677).

[12] Ibid. p. 230-233.

[13] The deed is dated June 13th, 1759. In March of that year the

Newport Congregation addressed a letter to the New York Congregation asking them for assistance to build the Synagogue and stating that they had already obtained a lot by purchase. Hence it shows that the lot was obtained before the deed was dated.

[14] Griffin's Land is mentioned in the cemetery deed of 1677.

[15] See note 13.

[16] Book of Land Evidence, Vol. XV, p. 376.

[17] The value of the money according to the old tenor, as may be derived from a contemporary note by Stiles, was 8 pounds for 1 dollar. Accordingly the purchasing price of the lot for the cemetery was $187.50, which is not such an enormous sum. Cf. The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, 225-6

[18] The Mill Street Synagogue, etc. : D. de Sola Pool, p. 25.

[19] Among the contributors to the Mikveh Israel Synagogue in Philadelphia in 1782 were many Newport Jews. Jacob Rodrigues Rivera of Newport was also a trustee of the Jewish Cemetery in Savannah, Georgia in 1773.

[20] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 408.

[21] Ibid. p. 178-9.

[22] Ibid. p. 178.

[23] Ibid. p. 179.

[24] Ibid. p. 179, 180.

[25] Ibid. p. 181.

[26] The Early Religious Leaders of Newport: Newport Historical Society, p. 109.

[27] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 408.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Reminiscences of Newport: Mason, p. 54.

[30] Jewish Enmyclopedia, Vol. XI, p. 632.

[31] Gentlemen's Magazine and Historical Chronicle, Vol. XLVIII, Year 1778, p. 200.

[32] Travels Through the Middle Settlements in North America in the Year 1759 and 1760: Rev. Andrew Burnbay, p. 121.

[33] Minutes of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York City, 1728-1764, published in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXI, p. 81.

[34] Dedication Booklet of the C. J. I. Community Center, printed in Newport 1925, by the Congregation Jeshuat Israel. (This

pamphlet, which contains articles contributed mostly by Eugene Schreier, has a number of inaccurate general statements. However one would not very likely err in a specific fact, such as the number of bricks in the building; and one would hardly choose to state such arbitrarily.

[35] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 181 ff.

[36] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 6 note.

[37] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 183.

[38] Ibid.

[39] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 6, note.

The impression is usually gathered that the Synagogue in Newport is the oldest in the United States. This is not quite so. It is the oldest synagogue that is still in existence and in use. There was at least one other synagogue in North America that antedated the one in Newport by more than 30 years. This was the synagogue of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York, which was organized in 1655, and built a synagogue on Mill Street in that City in 1730. This synagogue stood for almost a century. It was rebuilt in 1817, and services were continued in it until 1833, when the new synagogue of that Congregation was built on Crosby Street. (See The Mill Street Synagogue referred to above in many places).

[40] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 6 note.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Reminiscences of Newport: Mason, p. 55. (Mr. Mason saw the oven in 1884 when he wrote the book. His descriptions are mostly from personal observation. The oven has since been demolished; but the matzo table, on which the dough for the unleavened bread was prepared, is still preserved. A picture of it is reproduced elsewhere in this volume).

[43] In many places, as for instance in the Orient, the custom still exists to build the *Mikvah* either within the synagogue precincts or very close to it.

[44] 1765 (5525 is the Year of the Creation of the World according to the traditional Jewish Chronology).

[45] The Reverend J. J. Lyons, who was in Newport in the seventies of the last century to gather material for the history of the Jews of America, copied all the inscriptions on the various ornaments in the synagogue. Relative to the center candelabrum Mr. Lyons states that it has no inscription, a statement accepted by all writers on the

subject. However, from a close observation I was able to find the inscription on this candelabrum which I give in the text.

It may be interesting to note here that, due to the fact that the donor of this candelabrum was not generally known, a beautiful legend grew up concerning it. According to this legend, this candelabrum once belonged to some Church in Spain, over which presided a priest who was of a Marrano family. Before his death, this priest bequeathed this candelabrum to the Jews to whom it originally belonged. It ultimately found its way to these shores and now adorns the historic synagogue. Whatever credence we give to this legend, the non-Jewish origin of this center candelabrum seems to be apparent from its ornamentation. The four figures of a human head gives it a distinctly non-Jewish appearance, in as much as it is hardly likely that traditional Jews would violate the tradition prohibiting the making of sculptured figures especially in a synagogue. This may have given rise to the legend.

[46] 1760 (See note 42).

[47] 1770.

[48] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 408.

[49] 1765.

[50] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 11.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid. p. 6 note.

[53] Ezra Stiles and the Jews: Kohut, p. 61. At the dedication, the Reverend Isaac Touro pointed out to Stiles an old scroll which Mr. Touro described as very old and from Amsterdam. This may well refer to the scroll brought to Newport in 1658. If this scroll had been the donation of the Amsterdam Congregation of that period, (the synagogue of which we reproduce elsewhere in this volume) the prayers offered on *Yom Kippur* eve (note 59) would certainly have contained a mention of it, as they do in the case of all other donors and benefactors.

[54] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 11.

[55] Ibid.

[56] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 408.

[57] See note 33.

[58] Records of the Probate Court of Newport, R. I., Vol. II, p. 98.

[59] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 407-409.

[60] Historic Silver of the Colonies and Its Makers: Francis Hill Biglow, p. 427 ff.

[61] The original of this Painting was painted in 1675 by Sr, H. Avilla in London. An account of it is found in "El Libro De Los Recuerdes", being the records and accounts of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue of London, from 1663 to 1681, translated from the original Spanish and Portuguese by Lionel D. Barnett, Oxford University Press, 1931.

[62] 1769.

[63] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 11.

[64] The Jewish Synagogue in Newport: Emma Lazarus (1867).

CHAPTER VI

A GLIMPSE AT JEWISH LIFE

[1] In 1771, there were in Newport, 1 Church of England Church; 2 Congregational Churches; 4 Baptist Meeting Houses; 1 Moravian Church; 1 Quaker Meeting House, besides the Synagogue. See R. I. Hist. Mag., Vol. I, p. 122.

[2] R. I. Hist. Mag., Vol. IV, p. 84.

[3] Meat was certified as Kosher in the synagogue; Matzos were baked in the Synagogue, beside the other functions of the synagogue which are described in the book.

[4] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 6 note.

[5] G. H. R. Scrap Book No. 969, p. 157, in the Newport Historical Society vaults.

[6] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XX, p. 89; Graves at Newport: H. T. Tuckerman in Harpers Monthly, Vol. XXXIX, p. 372.

[7] Reminiscences of Newport: Mason, p. 55.

[8] The Settlement of the Jews in North America: Daly p. 77.

[9] Ibid. p. 77 ; R. I. Hist. Mag., Vol. IV, p. 162; G. H. R. Scrap Book No. 969, p. 157; The Jewish Cemetery at Newport: Mendes in R. I. Hist. Mag., Vol. VI, p. 82 ff.

[10] Harpers ; G. H. R. Scrap Book No. 969, p. 169.

[11] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 6 note.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid. p. 11 note.

[14] Ibid. p. 11.

[15] Newport Vital Records.

[16] R. I. Hist. Mag., Vol. I, p. 122.

[17] Census of 1774 taken by order of the General Assembly.

[18] Stiles, Vol. I, p. 11 note; List of Masons in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII and XXX.

[19] List of Masons.

[20] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 407.

[21] Reminiscences of Newport: Mason, p. 61.

[22] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 620, 214.

[23] Census, Court Records and Tombstones.

[24] The name most popular before Revolution. Does not occur in Census because probably did not submit to counting because of religious scruples.

[25] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 374. Stiles notes how Rabbi Carregal corrected the reading of the Reverend Isaac Touro of the word in Leviticus 25:29, which is to be pronounced "Gaulto", a Sephardic pronunciation of the word.

[26] Newport Vital Records. In this record of the Churches in Newport, recorded by Dr. Ezra Stiles, the names of Isaac and Abner Touro occur as the pastors of the "Jews Synagogue". It cannot possibly be that Stiles should have written Isaac and Abner Touro instead of Isaac de Abraham Touro as the Reverend Isaac Touro used to sign his name, for Stiles was too good a Bible scholar to make an error in a Biblical name. Perhaps Abner was a brother of Isaac? Or has the diary been misread?

[27] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 5.

[28] Ibid. p. 422.

[29] The Life of Ezra Stiles: Abiel Holmes, p. 122 ff.

[30] Leon Huhner in his pamphlet on the Jews of Newport is mistaken in his statement that the Reverend Isaac Touro preached from the pulpit of the Synagogue. Cf. The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 378 ff.

[31] See Index to Stiles in Vol. III, in reference to Isaac Touro.

[32] R. I. Hist. Mag. Vol. I, p. 43.

[33] The Literary Diary of Stiles, Vol. I, p. 393.

[34] See chapter "The Synagogue".

[35] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 408.

[36] Ibid.

[37] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 32.

[38] Stiles probably meant Exodus. Ibid. p. 377.

[39] Ibid. p. 36.

[40] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIX, p. 107; Vol. XXVII, p. 8.

[41] Stiles.

[42] Tagebuch: Johann Doehla in German found in the New York Public Library, translated by Erich O'D. Taylor in Ms.

[43] See note 25, and the transliteration of the many Hebrew words that occur in the text.

[44] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 453.

[45] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 377.

[46] Ibid. p. 403.

[47] Ibid. p. 293.

[48] Ibid.

[49] The word "Life" is translated into Hebrew "Chai" and is spelled with the letters that have the numerical value of 18. In Hebrew the letters of the alphabet are used to denote numbers as well.

[50] Stiles I, p. 377.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Copies of the Sermon are available in the Rhode Island Historical Society in Providence, R. I.; Mass. Hist. Soc., Boston, Mass., New York Public Library, American Jewish Historical Society and in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

[54] The sermon was translated into English by Abraham Lopez.

[55] Stiles, Vol. I, p. 256.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid. p. 377.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Psalms, 100:4, 5.

[61] Stiles, Vol. I, p. 392.

[62] Jeremiah, 46:27-8.

[63] Stiles, Vol. I, p. 392.

[64] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 348. (Stiles writes about a visitor on July 25th, 1772, who was a MOHEL and he remarks "In America got a Living by it; but not so in Europe where he had no Fees, but accounted it an honor" (Vol. I, p. 254-6). He also gives there a very interesting description of a ceremony of circumcision. It was carried out in the Synagogue, and at times in the houses as well).

[65] Ibid.

[66] History of Leicester, Mass : Washburn, p. 122 ff.

[67] Shipping books in vaults of Newport Hist. Soc.

[68] Recollections of Early Newport: Channing, p. 199-202.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

[71] R. I. Hist. Mag., Vol. VI, p. 45 ff.

[72] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XX, p. 144, article on R. I. and Consanguineous Marriage by Benjamin H. Hartogensis.

[73] Ibid. Vol. XXVII, p. 171.

[74] Letter in Newport Historical Society.

[75] P. A. J. H. S., II, p. 104.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid. Vol. IV.

[78] See Index Volume of P. A. J. H. S.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Commerce of R. I., Vol. I, p. 196.

[81] Advertisement in Newport Mercury, Index in Newport Hist. Soc.

[82] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 212 ff.

[83] Diary of Frederick MacKenzie, p. 179, quoted in Newport Historical Society Bulletin No. 93, p. 8.

[84] R. I. Hist. Mag., Vol. II, p. 42-43.

[85] Note 42.

[86] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 256.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Ibid. p. 17.

[90] Ibid. p. 19.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid. p. 607.

[93] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 97 ff.

[94] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXIX, p. 32.

[95] Ibid. Vol. XXVII, p. 250.

[96] See note 2 next chapter.

[97] Ibid. I have in my possession letters written from Cadiz to Aaron Lopez and Jacob Rivera asking for aid.

[98] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, 461-2.

[99] Ibid. p. 182.

[100] P. A. J. H. S., XXVII, p. 248.

[101] Ibid. p. 350.

[102] See Will, Records of the Probate Court, Newport, R. I., Vol. II, p. 98 ff.

[103] Shipping Book of Aaron Lopez, 1771-73.

[104] Letter 1767 in Newport Historical Society.

[105] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 185.

[106] Original letter in Vaults of Newport Hist. Soc.

[107] Reminiscences of Newport: Mason, p. 55.

[108] The Jewish Cemetery at Newport: Mendes, p. 81 ff.

[109] Ibid.

CHAPTER VII

VISITORS

[1] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. II, p. 77.

[2] Note by the editor of the Diary of Stiles.

[3] Minutes of the Congregation Shearith Israel 1760-1786 in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXI, p. 91.

[4] Stiles, Vol. II, p. 77 ; Vol. I, p. 299.

[5] Apta, Poland was the seat of an eminent Chassidic Rabbi known as the Aptor Rov. According to the title of this visitor given by Stiles it might refer to this dignitary. However this is doubtful.

It might have been just one of the Rabbis who lived in that city.

[6] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 299.

[7] Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics; edited by James Hastings, Vol. XII, p. 858.

[8] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles.

[9] George Alexander Kohut in his splendid essay on Ezra Stiles and the Jews is surprised at this observation. Kohut claims that it is not likely that a Rabbi should shave his head, and therefore he concludes that Stiles probably was mistaken about it. Rabbi Carregal might have been bald headed, and because of his covered head, Stiles mistook it for shaved. The fact, however, must be that Stiles was not mistaken in such a specific observation. As a matter of fact, the custom prevailed amongst many of the old orthodox Rabbis of shaving their heads completely, while not touching the beard and the earlocks.

[10] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 362-3.

[11] Ezra Stiles and the Jews: Kohut, p. 88.

[12] Stiles, Vol. I, p. 357.

[13] Appendix in Ezra Stiles and the Jews by Kohut.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 357.

[17] Ibid. p. 374.

[18] Ibid.

[19] There are a number of references to Jews from the West Indies who went to Holland to pursue their Hebrew studies. Rabbi Carregal occupied the position of Rabbi in one of the synagogues in place of the Minister who went to Holland to continue his studies. That students from Poland should go to Holland is indeed surprising in view of the fact that Poland at the time was the seat of great Academies of Learning.

[20] Rashi died 1105 not 1180.

[21] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 423.

[22] Ibid. p. 423.

[23] Ibid. p. 443.

[24] Ibid. p. 591. Cf. P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXI, p. 32.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid. p. 591.

[27] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 413.

[28] Minutes of Congregation Shearith Israel 1760-1787 in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXI, p. 139.

[29] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 184.

[30] Ibid. Vol. XXI, p. 131.

[31] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. IV, p. 209, where the author states by mistake that the Reverend Gershom Mendes Seixas was born in Newport.

[32] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 66, 68.

HERZLIAN LIBRARY TEACHERS SEMINARY

CHAPTER VIII

THE JEW IN THE COMMUNITY

[1] Tagebuch of Johann Doehla, Ms. New York Public Library. Translated by Erich O'D. Taylor in Ms.

[2] The Settlement of the Jews in North America: Daly, p. 77.

[3] Ibid. p. 78.

[4] Commerce in the Colonies: Edward Eggleston, referred to in "The Century Magazine, Vol. VI, N. S., p. 25, quoted in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. VI, p. 62.

[5] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 454.

[6] Ibid. Vol. I, p. 122.

[7] The Settlement of the Jews in North America: Daly, p. 79.

[8] The Jews Come to America: Masserman and Baker, p. 68.

[9] Commerce of Rhode Island, Vol. I, p. 67, Mass. Historical Society Collection 7th Series, Vol. IX.

[10] Reminiscences of Newport: Mason, p. 53.

[11] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 482.

[12] Ibid. Vol. I, p. 96-7.

[13] Itineraries and Correspondence of Ezra Stiles (edited by Dexter) 1755-1794.

[14] Superior Court Records, March term 1762.

[15] Itineraries and Correspondence: Ezra Stiles 1755-1794.

NOTES

[16] History of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations: Arnold, Vol. II, p. 494-5.

[17] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. VI, p. 71.

[18] Early American Jews: Lee M. Friedman, p. 3.

[19] Commerce in Rhode Island, Vol. I, p. 100. Moses Lopez also signed this agreement, besides those who signed in 1761. See note 9.

[20] Lopez Shipping Book in manuscript in the vaults of the Newport Historical Society.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Quoted in "Rhode Island, Three Centuries of Democracy: Caroll, p. 200.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Census of 1774, taken by order of the General Assembly.

[29] See Commerce in Rhode Island 1726-1800 (2 volumes). Census of 1774 and 1790. Cf. Will of Jacob R. Rivera, where he speaks of a black servant Quaco.

[30] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 210.

[31] Reminiscences of Newport: Mason, p. 37.

[32] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 210, 211.

[33] Portraits of Jews by Gilbert Stuart and Others: Hannah R. London, p. 47.

[34] Rhode Island Historical Society Magazine, Vol. VI, p. 163.

[35] See chapter "Dawn".

[36] Ibid.

[37] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIX, p. 3.

[38] Ibid. p. 18.

[39] Ibid. Vol. XXVII, p. 412. Among the list of Jewish Masons of the eighteenth century, mention is made of Daniel Phillips who was made a Mason in 1747.

[40] History of Freemasonry: Henry W. Rugg, p. 44, 49.

[41] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIX, p. 19.

[42] Ibid. Vol. XXVII, p. 416.

[43] The Touro Family in Newport: Morris A. Gutstein.

[44] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIX, p. 5.

[45] Ibid. p. 7.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid. p. 21.

[48] Rhode Island Historical Magazine, Vol. IV, p. 58 ff.

IX

UPROAR, DISPERSION AND DECLINE

[1] See chapter "Dawn".

[2] R. I. Three Centuries of Democracy: Caroll, Vol. I, p. 264.

[3] R. I. Hist. Mag., Vol. VI, p. 46.

[4] Ibid. p. 265.

[5] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 448.

[6] See Index Volume P. A. J. H. S.

[7] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 21.

[8] See chapter "The Synagogue".

[9] The History of the Jews in Philadelphia: Henry S. Morais, p. 22.

[10] Haym Solomon advanced to Congress for the Revolutionary War the sum of $658,007.13; Sheftal and Noah advanced $100,000; Isaac Moses advanced $15,000. See the Jews in the Making of America: George Cohen.

[11] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. I, p. 590. Stiles speaks of "Twelve United Colonies" on p. 585.

[12] Ibid. p. 591.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] References in Ezra Stiles and the Jews of Kohut.

[16] History of Rhode Island and Providence Plantation: S. G. Arnold.

[17] Quoted in R. I. Three Centuries of Democracy: Caroll, Vol. I, p. 271.

[18] Ibid. p. 272.

[19] Newport Mercury, July 22, 1776.

[20] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. II, p. 29.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid. p. 131.

[23] R. I. Hist. Mag., Vol. 43.

[24] The American Jew as Patriot and Soldier : Simon Wolf, p. 49. The Jews in Philadelphia: Henry S. Morais, p. 241 and 458.

[25] In Wolf his name is given as Aaron; in Ezra Stiles and the Jews by Kohut, p. 34, his name is also given as Aaron. The Will in the Probate Court gives the name as Abraham.

[26] Record of the Probate Court, Vol. II, p. 304.

[27] Spelled also Roffey by Arnold as well as Rophe by others.

[28] The Spirit of '76 in Rhode Island, p. 194.

[29] The Jew as a Patriot, etc.: Wolf, p. 45.

In the old Jewish Cemetery in Newport there is a tombstone to the memory of Meyer Benjamin. Lee M. Friedman in his book "Early American Jews", where he gives all the names of the Jewish residents in Massachusetts before the Revolution, does not mention this Samuel Benjamin.

[30] Colonial Records of R. I., Vol. VII, p. 46.

[31] Ibid. p. 608.

[32] Mss. in Newport Historical Society Vaults, quoted in Newport Historical Society Bulletin No. 3, p. 15 ff.

[33] Rivington Gazette, December 2, 1780 quoted in "Ezra Stiles and the Jews", p. 35; Cf. P. A. J. H. S., Vol. V, p. 8.

Colonial Records, Vol. IX, p. 139.

[34] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. II, p. 24.

[35] Historical Sketches of the Town of Leicester, Mass., etc. By Emory Washburn, p. 121.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Letter of Moses Michael Hays written from South Kingston in 1779 (Newport Historical Society Vaults). Commerce of Rhode Island, Vol. II, p. 58.

[40] Amongst the members of the Congregation Mikveh Israel in

Philadelphia, are many names of Newport Jews, such as Lucena, Marks, Moses, Judah, Myers, Pollock, Hart, Cordoza and others.

[41] Isaac Jacob Pollock interred in the old Cemetery is described as of Surinam, though he lived in Newport before the Revolution.

[42] Commerce of R. I., Vol. II, p. 51, 52.

[43] Ibid. p. 52.

[44] Records of the Probate Court of Newport, Vol. I, p. 20, 23.

[45] Tebet 14th, corresponds to January 1784 and not December 8, 1783.

[46] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. IV, p. 212 ff.

[47] Commerce of Rhode Island, Vol. II, p. 57. Original letter in vaults of Newport Historical Society.

CHAPTER X

EVACUATION AND REVIVAL

[1] Rhode Island, Three Centuries of Democracy: Caroll, Vol. I, p. 338.

[2] Ibid. Cf. Colonial Records of the period.

[3] Jewish Encyclopedia, article on Newport.

[4] The Jews of Philadelphia: Henry S. Morais
The Jew as Patriot, etc. : Wolf.

[5] Newport Historical Society Bulletin No. 6, p. 9.

[6] The Lopez Letters in Manuscript, found in the vaults of the Newport Historical Society, reproduced in "Commerce of Rhode Island", Vol. II, p. 109 ff.

[7] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIX, p. 20.

[8] Ibid. p. 21.

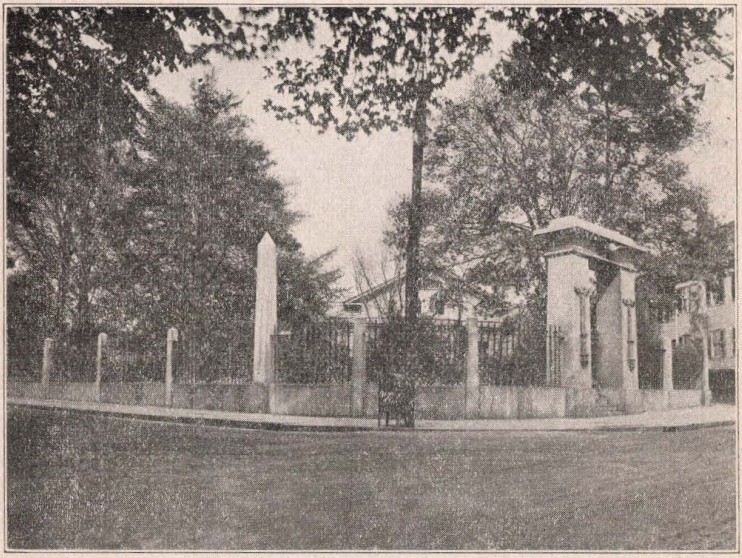
[9] Letters of Aaron Lopez in ms. found in vaults of the Newport Historical Society.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, Vol. II, p. 24 ff.

[13] Ibid. p. 25.



Picture of the Exterior of the Old Jewish Cemetery as it appears today.

Picture of the Interior of the Old Jewish Cemetery.

[14] Newport Mercury, June 1st, 1782.
[15] Ibid.
[16] The History of Leicester, Mass. : Washburn, p. 123.
[17] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 185.
[18] Ibid.
[19] First Census of the United States, taken in the year 1790.
[20] Original Shipping book in Newport Historical Society vaults.
[21] Rhode Island Historical Magazine, Vol. II, p. 24.
[22] Reminiscences of Newport: Mason.
[23] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 461-63.
[24] Ibid. Vol. I, p. 17.
[25] Newport Herald, Feb. 26, 1789.
[26] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. II, p. 108-9.
[27] Ibid. Vol. XXVII, p. 217-18.
[28] Ibid. p. 218
[29] Ibid. p. 219 ff.
[30] Ibid. Vol. II, p. 87 ff.
[31] Newport Historical Society Bulletin No. 84, p. 13.
[32] Ibid. p. 13.
[33] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. II, p. 87 ff.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.

CHAPTER XI

THE CLOSE OF A COLORFUL CHAPTER

[1] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 189.
[2] Ibid. p. 211.
[3] Ibid. p. 189.
[4] Ibid. p. 187-8.
[5] Ibid. p. 185.
[6] Ibid. p. 189.

[7] Records of the Probate Court of Newport, R. I., Book II, p. 230 ff.

[8] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 74 ff.

[9] Early Recollections of Newport: George G. Channing.

[10] Records of the Probate Court, Book II, p. 230 ff.

[11] Ibid. p. 98-100.

[12] The Settlement of the Jews in North America: Charles P. Daly, p. 89, Cf. P. A. J. H. S., XIX, p. 40.

[13] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIX, p. 24.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Preface "An Oration on Independence Day, etc". Abraham Redwood Ellery, published in Warren, R. I., 1796.

[16] Superior Court Records, Book G, p. 96-98.

[17] Ibid. p. 118.

[18] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. IV, p. 203.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid. Vol. XXVII, p. 451.

[21] Narragansett Historical Society Publications. Cf. P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIX, article "The Jews in the Early Colleges".

[22] The American Jew as Patriot, etc. : Simon Wolf. Cf. article on "The Jews in the War of 1812" in P. A. J. H. S.

[23] Ibid.

[24] The Jews of Philadelphia: Henry S. Morais, p. 459. Cf. P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIX, p. 19.

[25] The Myers of Pennsylvania and New York, Benjamin in Connecticut, Seixas in Georgia and others, had family connections with Jews of Newport.

[26] The Hebrews in America: Isaac Markens, p. 127 ff.

[27] Judah Touro: Alexander Walker, in "Life of American Merchants".

[28] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 424.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

[31] The Crosby Street Synagogue of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York City: D. de Sola Pool, p. 48 ff.

NOTES

CHAPTER XII

NOBLE MEMORIES

[1] Will in "Early American Jews" by Lee M. Friedman, p. 203.

[2] Independent Chronicle, Boston, Dec. 28th, 1791.

[3] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 156, 252, 418.

[4] Ibid. p. 156.

[5] On the life of the Touros in general see the Touro Family in Newport, by the writer, published by the Newport Historical Society; and Judah Touro in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIII.

[6] Early American Jews: Lee M. Friedman, p. 21.

[7] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 425.

[8] Ibid. p. 426.

[9] Records of the Town Council of the City of Newport.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 437.

[16] Ibid.

[17] The Jewish Cemetery at Newport: Longfellow.

[18] Life of American Merchants, Vol. II, Judah Touro by Alexander Walker, p. 444.

[19] History of Rhode Island, etc. : Peterson, p. 79.

[20] Newport Mercury, July 9th.

[21] Ibid. B. B. H. Notes, January 2, 1915.

Cf. History of R. I., etc. : Peterson.

[22] Will of Judah Touro in P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XIII, 355.

[23] City Document No. 3, 1854.

[24] City Document No. 7, 1855.

[25] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 458 ff.

[26] Records of the City Council, Vol. I, under date July 8, 1856. The records show that a committee was appointed to act on the application; but there is no report that this committee ever acted.

[27] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 191.

[28] See Exodus XXXI:18.

[29] See Exodus XXI:14.

[30] Italian and German names for Jewish Quarters. The term Ghetto in particular was applied to the section, which was reserved for the Jews, and which was subject to many restrictions during the late Medieval ages, in all European countries where Jews dwelt.

[31] *Marah* - bitter. See Exodus, XV:23.

[32] A denunciation. See 1 Corinthians XVI:22.

[33] In the original the Tetragrammaton (the four lettered meflable name of God J. H. V. H.) is here written out in English.

CHAPTER XIII

RECONSECRATION

[1] City Documents of Newport No. 20, 1858-9.

[2] City Documents No. 7, 1866-7.

[3] City Documents No. 8, 1874-5.

[4] City Documents No. 4, 1876-7.

[5] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Congregation Shearith Israel of New York City. (ms), Vol. VII, p. 200, 202.

[6] Ibid. p. 203.

[7] The Jews of Philadelphia: Henry S. Morais.

[8] Minutes of the Cong. Shearith Israel, Vol. VII, p. 204.

[9] Ibid. p. 241.

[10] Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VIII, p. 486.

[11] Newport Daily News, May 26th, 1883.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VIII, p. 486.

[15] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Cong. Shearith Israel, Vol. VII, p. 324.

[16] Original Letter in the Archives of the Congregation Shearith Israel in New York.

NOTES

CHAPTER XIV

ADJUSTMENT

[1] The Mill Street Synagogue of the Cong. Shearith Israel: D. de Sola Pool, p. 49.

[2] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Cong. Shearith Israel, Vol. VII, p. 46.

[3] See spelling on Memorial Stone dedicated to the Rev. Isaac Touro, in the old Jewish Cemetery in Newport. Compare also spelling of the name as it occurs in contemporary correspondence.

[4] Original application in the Archives of the State Legislature of R. I. in Providence, R. I.

[5] Book of Land Evidence of the City of Newport, Vol. 67, p. 274 ff., 277 ff., 296 ff.

[6] Newport Daily News, March 31st, 1899.

[7] Ibid. July 11th, 1899.

[8] City Document No. 26, 1899-1900.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VIII, p. 679.

[11] Newport Daily News, April 25th, 1902.

[2] City Records, 1905-6.

[13] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Cong. Shearith Israel of New York City, Vol. VIII, p. 277.

[14] Constitution and By-Laws of the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Congregation Jeshuat Israel of Newport, R. I.

CHAPTER XV

IMMORTALITY

[1] The historical address delivered by the Hon. Max Levy on this occasion has been published by the Newport Daily News and Newport Herald, on September 8th, 1908.

The oration delivered by Leon Huhner has been published as a pamphlet, under the title "The Jews of Newport".

[2] A few errors in dates, occur on this tablet.

a. The Reverend Isaac Touro remained in Newport during the Revolution and British invasion of the city. During this time he still officiated in the synagogue. He left Newport about 1780.

b. As to the date of the death of the Reverend Touro, although the monument in the old cemetery from which it is copied has December 8th, 1783, still it should be January 8th, 1784. The last date corresponds with the Hebrew Tebet 14th, 5544.

c. Rabbi Abraham Pereira Mendes was the Rabbi of the Synagogue from 1883 to 1893, and not from 1881. The invitation to Rabbi Mendes to come to Newport was sent to London late in 1882. He arrived here in Newport in 1883. On May 25th, 1883, he reconsecrated the Synagogue.

APPENDICES

C

[1] P. A. J. H. S., Vol. XXVII, p. 191 to 210.

[2] Ibid. p. 206.

I

[1] Through some misfortune the record books of the Congregation Jeshuat Israel, up to the year 1919, have been lost. Because of this it is difficult to ascertain the exact dates of some of the officers prior to that date.

K

[1] Title XIV, p. 525 ff.

Cf. General Laws, 1909, ch. 98.

[2] Public Laws, 1921, Ch. 2078.

[3] Cf. General Laws, 1909, ch. 99.

[4] P. 510. These amendments were brought about through the efforts of Mr. Nathan David, who was the president of the Congregation Jeshuat Israel at the time.

[5] P. 300.

A voluntary committee consisting of Herman Mines as Chairman, Fischel David, Hon. Max Levy, and A. L. Greenberg, Esq. and with the co-operation of Mayor Mortimer A. Sullivan of Newport, and Governor Norman S. Case, Attorney-General Charles P. Sisson, State Treasurer George Clarke, obtained the enactment of Chapter 1410 of the Public Laws of 1929, of Section 2 and Section 4, in reference to "Of the Abraham Touro Fund".

This law made it imperative that:

First: All income of said fund be applied to the Jewish Synagogue and on the walls enclosing the Jewish burying ground, and then if any balance, the same shall be applied towards the maintenance of the synagogue premises known as the Community Building.

Second: It made it imperative that the total expenditures authorized shall not exceed in any one year the annual income of the Abraham Touro Fund.

Third: That no expenditures shall be made until first approved by the Board of Officers of the Congregation Jeshuat Israel and by the trustees selected by said Congregation.

Fourth: As further set forth in said Act.

(The above information was submitted to the writer by A. L. Greenberg, Esq.)

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

Ab — Fifth month of the Jewish Calendar.

Ab Fast of — See *Tisha B'av.*

Adar — Twelfth Jewish month.

Adjunta — Council, Governing body of Synagogue.

Adjuntos — Members of Adjunta.

Ashkenazim — Jews residing elsewhere than in Spain and Portugal, more especially the Jews of Germany, Eastern and Central Europe and their descendants.

Ashkenazic — Applying to Ashkenazim.

Avodah — Literally, "Temple Service".

Banca — Bench, the seat in which the President of the Congregation sits. In the Synagogue in Newport it is the elevated seat adjacent to the northern wall.

Beth Chayim — Literally House of the Living, the traditional Jewish designation of a Burial Ground.

Beth Elohim — House of God.

B'rith Milah — Covenant of Circumcision performed at the age of eight days.

Bodek — Examiner of the ritually slaughtered cattle to see whether it is fit for use according to Jewish law.

Casher — See *Kosher.*

Chanukah — The Feast of Lights (around the end of December.)

Chacham — Ordained Rabbi, the Sephardic title of the Rabbi.

Chazan — Cantor or Reader of the Prayers at the Synagogue.

Dayan — Rabbi who acts as judge in religious and civil matters according to Jewish law.

Elul — Sixth month of the Jewish Calendar (around August and September.)

Gabay — Trustee.

Gmilas Chasodim — Active Charity, Beneficence or Kindness.

Hagadah — Order of Service used for the *Seder* (See *Seder*).

Haphtarah — Prophetic Reading after Pentateuch reading.

Hashkabah — Memorial Prayer.

Hechal — Ark in the Synagogue where the scrolls of the Law are kept.

Heshvan — Eighth month of the Jewish Calendar. (around October - November.)

Iyar — Second month of the Jewish Calendar (around May.)

Jehidim also *Yehidim* — Members of the Congregation.

Jeshuat Israel (spelled in early days *Yesuat* or *Yeshuat*) — Salvation of Israel.

K. K. — Abbreviation of *Kahal Kadosh.*

Kaal — Congregation, also *Kehilah.*

Kahal Kadosh — Holy Congregation.

Kashruth — In accordance with Jewish dietary laws.

Kiddush — Literally, sanctification, Prayer offered on Friday evenings and Festival eves over a cup of wine after the evening services at the Synagogue and at the home before the meal.

Kippur or *Yom Kippur* — Day of Atonement, i.e. 10th of *Tishri.*

Kislev also written Kislef and Kislieu — Ninth month of the Jewish Calendar (around October and December.)

Kosher — "Suitable" , "fit", Food fit to be eaten according to the Jewish ritual.

Maftir — Last part of the Pentateuch reading.

Mahamad — Standing Committee or Body of Trustees.

Matzo — Unleavened bread, eaten on Passover.

Megillah — "Scroll", refering more especially to the Book of Esther in a scroll form used on *Purim,* the Feast of Lots.

Mikvah — Ritual Bath.

Mikveh Israel — Hope of Israel.

Minhag Sephardim — The custom of the Spanish-Portuguese Jews in the Synagogue ritual.

Minyan — Quorum of ten men above thirteen years of age necessary to hold a public service at the Synagogue.

Mitzvah (plural *Mitzvoth*) — Commandment, good deed, religious duty, an honorary function in the religious service performed

by a member of the Congregation.

Mohel — One who performs the rite of circumcision.

Nedabah — A free will gift, also an alm or donation.

Ner Tamid (also *Tamid*) — See Tamid.

Nevay Shalom — Dwelling of Peace.

Nissan — First month of the Jewish Calendar (around April.)

Parnas — President of the Congregation (plural *Parnasim.*)

Parashah (also written *Parasang* or *Parasah*) — Portion of the Pentateuch read at the Synagogue.

Passach (Passover) — The Festival celebrating the Exodus from Egypt.

Rabbi — Literally, My Master, title of the Spiritual Leader of the congregation; ordained person to decide on Jewish ritual law.

Rimonim — Ornaments placed on the top of the Scrolls in the Ark and carried in procession during services at the Synagogue, whenever the Scroll is read.

Rosh Hodesh — The new moon, beginning of the Jewish month.

Rosasanah — See Rosh Hashana.

Rosh Hashanah — The Jewish New Year, on the first and second of Tishri, around September.

Seder — Home Service on the first two eves of Passover.

Sefarim — Plural of *Sefer.* (Referring to Scrolls of the Law).

Shamash — Sexton or Caretaker of the Synagogue.

Shearith Israel — Remnant of Israel.

Shechitah — The slaughter of animals according to Jewish law.

Sepher Torah — Scroll of the Pentateuch.

Shangar Hashamayim — See *Shaar Hashamayim* (also occurs as *Sahar Asamaim.*)

Shaar Hashamayim — Gate of Heaven.

Shebat — Eleventh month of the Jewish calendar (around February and March.)

Schochet — One who slaughters cattle or fowl according to the ritual requirements of the Jewish law.

Shofar — Rams horn used in the Synagogue service during the month of Elul, Rosh Hashanah and after the concluding service on the Day of Atonement.

Shavuoth — Pentecost, the Festival of Weeks, seven weeks after the second day of Passover.

Sedaka (*Tzedakah*) — Charity.

Sepharad — Spain.

Sephardic — Applying to the Jews of Spain and Portugal and their descendants.

Shekinah — Divine presence.

Sivan — Third month of the Jewish Calendar (around May-June.)

Talith — Prayer shawl used by men, principally after the age of thirteen, during services at the Synagogue or private morning prayer.

Talmud — (Traditional "Oral Law".) Rabbinical collection of Jewish law, consists of Mishnah and Gemara. There are two versions of the Gemara, one compiled in Palestine and called Talmud Yerushalmi, and one compiled in Babylonia called the Babylonian Talmud or Talmud Babli. The basic text for both is the Mishnah.

Talmud Torah — Jewish Religious School.

Tamid — Perpetual Lamp burning in front of the Ark in the Synagogue.

Tamuz — Fourth month of the Jewish Calendar (around July.)

Tebah — The Reading Desk in the Synagogue, situated as a rule in the center of the Synagogue.

Tebeth — Tenth month of the Jewish Calendar (around December and January)

Tish'a B'Ab or (*B'av*) — Ninth day of the Jewish month Av. Fast Day commemorating the destruction of the first and second Temple.

Tisri (also pronounced and spelled *Tishri*) — Seventh month of Jewish Calendar (around September - October.)

Torah — In the Hebrew division of the Holy Scriptures, the first part, i.e. the Pentateuch, is refered to as Torah. The word Torah however has a much wider connotation and application. With reference to it see "Judaism" by George Foot Moore.

Ve-adar — Thirteenth month of the Jewish Calendar in the case of a Jewish Leap Year. (around March.)

Yom Kippur (also *Kippur*) — Day of Atonement.

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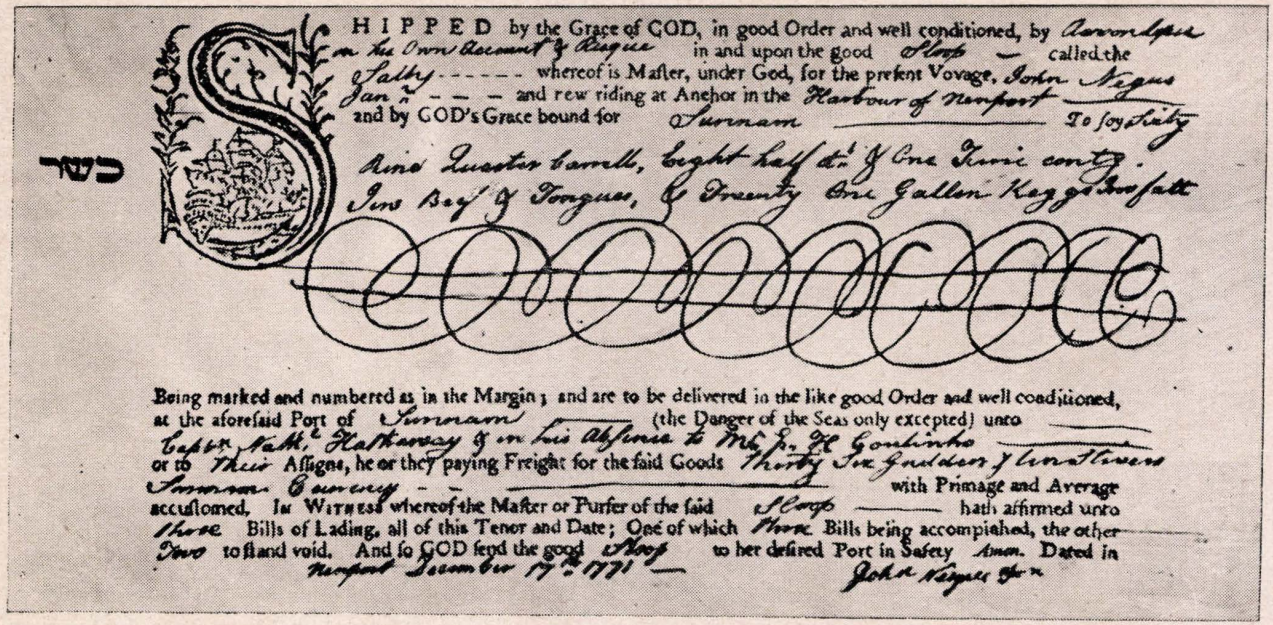

כשר

SHIPPED by the Grace of GOD, in good Order and well conditioned, by Aaron Lopez on his Own Account & Risque in and upon the good Sloop — called the Sally ------ whereof is Master, under God, for the present Voyage, John Negus Junr — — — and now riding at Anchor in the Harbour of Newport — and by GOD's Grace bound for Surinam — To say Sixty Nine Quarter barrels, Eight half do. & One Tierce conty. Five Beef & Tongues, & Twenty One Gallon Kegs Brandy

Being marked and numbered as in the Margin; and are to be delivered in the like good Order and well conditioned, at the aforesaid Port of Surinam — (the Danger of the Seas only excepted) unto — Capt. Nathl. Hathaway & in his Absence to Mr. J. M. Gonlinho — or to Their Assigns, he or they paying Freight for the said Goods Thirty Six Guilders p Cent Currency — — with Primage and Average accustomed. In WITNESS whereof the Master or Purser of the said Sloop — hath affirmed unto Three Bills of Lading, all of this Tenor and Date; One of which Three Bills being accomplished, the other Two to stand void. And so GOD send the good Sloop to her desired Port in Safety Amen. Dated in Newport December 17th 1771 —

John Negus Mr.

Facsimile of a Page of the Shipping Book of Aaron Lopez.

Interior of the Old Synagogue in Newport.

INDEX

INDEX

Abelson, Rabbi Alter, 325.
Aboab de Fonseca, Rabbi Isaac, 24.
Abraham, 48.
Abrahams, Abraham I., 132.
Abrahams, Israel, 53.
Adath Jeshurun, Congregation, 276.
Adelson, Elix, 327.
Adelson, Max, 326 ff.
Adelson, Samuel, 327.
Adelson, Dr. Samuel, 327.
Adler, Cyrus, 284.
Aguilar, Rabbi Moses Raphael, 24.
Allen, Ebenezer, 85 ff.
Allen, Sussana, 86.
Almy, Holder, 218.
Alvarez, Family, 77, 114.
Ann, Mary, 278.
Aquidneck Island, 21.
Aquilar, Emanuel, 198.
Arnold, Governor Benedict, 38, 50.
Aronson, Jacob, 327.
Auchumty, Judge, 129.

Bailey, Rev. Sol, 325.
Baker, Darius, 284.
Ball, Nathan, 326 ff.
Baruch, Rev. David, 271, 272, 274, 325.
Barney, Jacob, 85.
Bendau, David, 251.
Bengis, Rabbi Abraham, 325.
Benjamin, Abraham, 46.
Benjamin, Family, 77, 115, 183.
Benjamin, Isaac, 46.
Benjamin, Israel, 77.
Benjamin, Judah, 77, 278.
Benjamin, Samuel, 183.
Bergman, Isaac, 272.
Berkeley, Dean, 49.
Bernstein, Rev. Jacob, 326.
Bloch, Rev. Julius, 325.
Blog, Abm. Solomon, 156.
Bosquilla, Rabbi, 154.
Boyle, Patrick J., 284.
Brodsky, Rev. David, 325.
Brown, David, 39.
Brown, Saul, 39, 41 ff.
Bunker Hill Monument, 249.
Bush, Mathias, 177.
Burgos, Abraham, 30, 39, 41, 43.

Calveres, Rabbi, 198.
Callender, John, 49.
Campanal, Abraham, 39, 43, 44, 161.
Campanal, Asher, 45.
Campanal, David, 39, 43, 44.
Campanal, Daniel, 39, 43.
Campanal, Family, 45.
Campanal, Mordecai, 30, 31, 37, 39, 41, 43.
Campanal, Rachel, 45.
Campanal, Valentine, 45.
Caplan, H. J., 275.
Cardoze, J. L., 275.
Carmick, Gertrude S., 323.
Carr, Caleb, 41, 44.
Carr, S., 218.
Carregal, Rabbi Haym Isaac, 121, 125, 129, 149 ff.
Carregal, Rabbi Abraham, 152.
Casseres, Family, 46.
Channing, George, 132, 192.
Charles II, King of England, 36.
Clarke, John, 21, 22, 35, 50.
Clarke, Walter, 41.
Clarke, Wm. P., 284, 286.
Coddington, William, 21, 29, 41, 86.
Coggeshall, Major John, 41.

David, Nathan, 326, 327.
Davidson, J., 326.
Dazevado, Isaac, 198.
Declaration of Independence, 181 ff.
De Meza, 46.
De Pass, Joseph, 198.
De Sola, Rabbi D. A., 262, 265.
Dias, Isaac, 55.
Dickens, Nathaniel, 37 ff.
Dutch West India Co., 26.
Dyre, Major Williams, 40 ff.

Easton, John, 37, 38, 41.
Eber bar Shelomo, 106, 107.
Ellery, Abraham Redwood, 218.
Elizer, Eliezer, 168, 169, 198.
Elizer, Family, 77, 114.
Elizer, Isaac, 88, 92, 108, 159 ff., 168 ff., 182, 198.
Engel, Julius, 272, 326, 327.
Ennis, William, 235.
Ferdinand V., 62.
Cohen, Aaron, 46.
Cohen, Abraham, 141.
Cohen, Mrs. Edward, 266.
Cohen, Family, 46.
Cohen, Isaac, 46.
Cohen, Matthew, 141.
Cohen, Nathan, 46.
Cohen, Rabbi Samuel A., 125, 140, 154, 178.
Cohen, Solomon, 46.
Cohen, Zillah P., 323.
Cohen de Laria, Isaac, 39, 53.
Collins, John, 54.
Collins & Rivera, 158.
Cordoza, Family, 115.
Costa, Rodrigues de, 46.
Cozzens, Captain, 141.
Cozzens, Matthew, 85.
Cranston, Caleb, 218.
Copernicus, 65.

Dannin, Joseph, 327.
Dannin, Robert M., 327.
David, Abraham, 327.
David, Fishel, 326, 327.
David, Herman, 327.
David, Morris, 327.
David, Miriam, 323.

Franc, Jacob, 46.
Franks, David, 177.
Franks, Family, 115.
Franks, Jacob, 169.
Franks, Moses Benjamin, 55.
Franklin, Mayor Robert S., 263, 284.
Franklin, Benjamin, 51.
Franklin, James, 51.
Frant, David, 326.
French and Indian War, 56.
Frazon, Joseph, 45.
Friedman, Rev. Abraham, 326.
Friedman, Rev. Nathan, 325.

Galileo, 65.
General Assembly, 114, 175, 179, 183, 191, 192, 235, ff, 256, 271.
General Court of Trials, 41.
George II, 85.
Gluckman, Al., 327.
Gibbs & Channing, 133.
Gomez Daniel, 55, 107, 142.
Gomez, Family, 46.
Gomez, Isaac, 55, 198.
Gomez, Jr., Isaac, 55.
Gomez, Moses, 55.
Gomez, Jr., Moses, 198.
Gould, David J., 249.
Gould, Nathan H., 249.
Gould, Stephen, 225, 231, 239.
Graff, Eva P., 223.
Gratz, Michael, 177.
Green, Rev. William Brenton, 284.
Greenberg, A. L., 326, 327.
Griffin, Benjamin, 37 ff.
Griffin Street, 84, 85, 136.
Guedalia, Moses, 274.
Gutheim, Rev. J. K., 247.
Gutierezes, 39.
Gutstein, Rabbi Morris A., 325.

Hart, Aaron, 77.
Hart, Abraham, 42, 52, 158.
Hart, David, 55.
Hart, Elias, 198.
Hart Family, 53, 58, 76, 114, 136, 184, 250.
Hart, Isaac, 52, 77, 83, 84, 86, 88, 92, 158, 182 ff., 212.
Hart, Naphtaly, 54, 92, 95, 106, 115,

INDEX

117.
Hart, Naph. & Co., 158.
Hart Nathan, 54, 182.
Hart, Nathaniel, 136.
Hart, Samuel, 97, 158.
Hart, Jr., Naphtaly, 172.
Harrison, Peter, 54, 93.
Hayman, Rachel P., 323.
Hays, Barak, 168.
Hays, Family, 58, 115, 228.
Hays, Judah, 53, 54, 76, 117, 183, 241.
Hays, Moses Michael, 76, 117, 168, 169, 183, 186, 192, 198, 230, 241, 266.
Hays, Reyna, 117.
Hays, Slowey, 241.
Hays & Myers, 108, 266.
Hebrew Watchword Instructor, The, 276.
Hendricks, Family, 115.
Hendricks, Nathaniel, 198.
Hendricks, Sophie P., 323.
Hendricks, Uriah, 198, 215.
Henriques, Family, 46.
Henry, Rev. H. A., 247.
Herz, Lazar, 327.
Herz, Sigmund, 327.
Hess, Henry, 272, 327.
Hess, Lewis, 272, 327.
Hirsh, Miriam G., 323.
Howland, Captain Wm., 143.
Huhner, Leon, 284 ff.
Hunter, William, 237.
Hutchison, Anne, 21.

Isaac, Family, 58, 77, 114.
Isaac, Samuel, 46.
Isaacs, Abraham, 182.
Isaacs, Isaac, 168, 169.
Isaacs, Jacob, 54, 88, 168, 172, 183, 198, 199.
Isaacs, Michael, 51.
Isaacs, Moses, 168, 169, 182, 192.
Isaacs, Rev. S. M., 247.
Isabella the Catholic, 62 ff.
Israel, Family, 77.
Israel, Rabbi Joseph, 146 ff.
Israel, Judah, 53.

Jackson, Andrew, 222.
Jacobs, Abraham, 46,
Jacobs, Family, 115.
Jacobs, Jacob, 168, 169.
Jacobs, Joseph, 55, 177, 198, 214.
Jacobs, Judah, 109.
Jacobs, Raphael, 198.
Jaffe, Max, 327.
James, Jacob, 46.
James, Moses, 46.
Janowsky, Rev. Benjamin, 326.
Jeremiah, 81.
Jeshuat Israel, Congregation, 143, 271 ff., 276 ff.
Jeshuat Israel Community Center, Congregation, 328 ff.
Jeshurun, David, 55.
Jeshurun, Rev. R., 268.
Jew's Street, 38, 49, 85, 238.
Jewish Exponent, The, 276.
Jewish Theological Seminary, 259.
Jews of Philadelphia, The, 276.
Jones, Rev. William S., 284.
Josephson, Israel J., 272, 326, 327.
Josephson, Joseph S., 326.
Josephson, Manuel, 215 ff.
Judah, Abraham, 53.
Judah, Family, 77.
Judah, Hillel, 194, 198.
Judah, Isaac, 136.
Judah, Jacob, 46, 56.
Judah, Joseph, 46.
Judah, Samuel, 97, 104, 107.
Judah Touro Ministerial Fund, 272, 275.

Kaplan, Rev. Maurice, 277, 325.
Kemper, Reuben, 223.
Kerr, Dr., 223.
King David, 59.
Kosh, Samuel, 327.
Kraut, Abraham, 327.

Lack, Luis, 327.
Lawrence, Amos, 249.
Lazarus, Emma, 254.
Leeser, Rev. Isaac, 247.

Leo, Rev. Ansel, 247.
Lenthal, Rev. Robert, 50.
Levara, Mr., 216.
Levi, Abraham, 48.
Levi, Moses, 39, 53, 54.
Levy, Benjamin, 55, 76, 117, 189, 201.
Levy, Family, 58, 76, 114, 221.
Levy, Hayman 55, 76, 136.
Levy, Hiram, 217,
Levy, Isaac, 275, 326.
Levy, Jochebed, 198.
Levy, Max, 284 ff., 326.
Levy, Moses, 53, 73, 76, 83, 84, 86, 92, 155, 172, 182 ff., 198, 207, 216 ff., 239 ff.
Levy Moses, Will of, 322 ff.
Levy, Samson, 178.
Levy, Samuel, 169.
Levy, Simeon, 217.
Levy, Sol, 198.
Levy, Ziporah, 134.
Levy, Jr., Hayman, 177, 182.
Lewison, Leonard, 277.
Lichter, Rabbi Benjamin, 325.
Longfellow, Henry W., 241, 251.
Lopez, Aaron, 52, 66, 68, 88, 92, 104, 106, 113, 115, 124, 129, 132, 133, 136, 141, 142, 143, 158, 159, 161 ff., 183, 186, 187, 189, 190, 192, 194 ff., 228, 241.
Lopez, Abraham, 66 ff., 125, 198.
Lopez, Anna, 67.
Lopez, Catherine, 67.
Lopez, David, 54, 66, 69, 143, 168 ff., 193, 228, 198.
Lopez, Dom Diego Jose, 67, 68.
Lopez, Duarte, 66.
Lopez, Edward, 67, 68.
Lopez, Elihu, 66.
Lopez, Ezekiel, 66.
Lopez, Family, 58, 65, 66, 69, 70, 114, 141, 185, 217, 221.
Lopez, Isaac, 66.
Lopez, Isaac Henriques, 66.
Lopez, Jacob, 68, 185, 198, 225.
Lopez, Joanna, 67.
Lopez, John, 67, 68.
Lopez, Joseph, 67, 68, 133, 198, 221.
Lopez, Joshua, 241.
Lopez, Judith, 132, 189.
Lopez, Mary Ann, 323.
Lopez, Michael, 67, 68.
Lopez, Moses, 52, 55, 56, 66, 68, 69, 88, 96, 97, 133, 135, 157, 159 ff., 168, 169, 172, 185, 198, 225.
Lopez, Rebecca, 240.
Lopez, Samuel, 68, 132, 221.
Lopez & Co., 158.
Lopez, Jr., David, 168, 190.
Lopez, Rivera & Cordoza in Co., 55.
Lopez, Sr., David, 198.
Lucena, Family, 77, 115.
Lucena, James, 54 ff., 157, 159, 161.
Lyon, Enoch, 105.
Lyon, Family, 77, 115.
Lyons, Isaac, 46.
Lyons, Rev. J. J., 247.
Lyons, Nathan, 46.

Machado, Rev. David Mendez, 75, 77.
Machado, Family, 73.
Machado, Rebecca Mendez, 190.
Malhado, Jacob, 55.
Malki, Rabbi Moses, 146.
Marcus, Alfred A., 278.
Marcus, Kate, 278.
Marcus, Simeon, 278.
Mark, Family, 115.
Marks, Henry, 198.
Marsh, Benjamin, 218.
Mason, George C., 263.
Megapolensis, Domine Johannes, 25.
Meldola, Dr. Raphael, 262.
Mendes, Abraham Pereira, 168, 185.
Mendes, Rabbi Abraham P., 260, 261 ff., 267, 283, 287, 325.
Mendes, Family, 77, 115, 185.
Mendes, Rev. Dr. Frederick de Sola, 263.
Mendes, Rev. Dr. H. Pereira, 257, 260, 263, 264, 275, 279.
Mendes, Isaac Pereira, 135, 143.
Mendes, Simon, 30, 39, 41 ff.
Mendez, Solomon, 46.
Men's Club, Jewish, 170.
Mikveh Israel, Cong. of Curacao, 88, 107.
Mikveh Israel, Cong. of Philadelphia, 76, 199, 215, 276.
Mill Street Synagogue, The 44, 70.
Mines, Herman, 327.

INDEX

Molina, Family, 46.
Morais, Rev. Henry S., 259, 275, 325.
Morais, Dr. Sabatto, 256, 259.
Mordecai, Moses, 177.
Moses, 19, 80.
Moses, Abraham, 31, 37, 167.
Moses bar David, Rabbi, 147.
Moses, Family, 115.
Moses, Isaac, 46, 54, 56.
Moses, Judah, 46.
Mumford, John, 49.
Murphy, Senator P. J., 284.
Myer, Rev. E. M., 274, 275, 325.
Myers, Benjamin, 46.
Myers, Haym, 97.
Myers, Family, 77, 115, 136, 137.
Myers, Manuel, 198.
Myers, Mordecai, 222.
Myers, Moses, 46.
Myers, Myer, 108.
Myers, Naphtaly, 46.
Myers, Naphtaly Hart, 52, 55, 93, 104, 107, 115.
Myers, Solomon Aaron, 168 ff., 194.

Naphtaly, Isaac, 39, 45.
Nathan, Gratz, 257.
Nathan, Nathan, 53.
Nathan, Simon, 198.
Nassy, David, 31.
Navigation Acts, 35, 40.
Nunez, Dr. Samuel, 74, 75.
Nevey Shalom, Cong. of Surinam, 88, 107.
Newport Mercury, 117.
Nieto, Rev. Abraham H., 274.
Non-Exportation Agreement, 181.
Non-Importation Agreement, 177, 181.
Novik, Rev. S., 326.

Ogden, Captain, 223.
Oglethorpe, 75.
Oliver, Judge, 129.
Old Jewish Cemetery of Newport, Deed of, 37 ff., Inscriptions on Tombstones in 298 ff., Survey of present condition of, 295 ff.
Old Stone Mill, 38, 250.
Osborne, Jeremiah, 113.
Pacheco, Moses Israel, 30, 31, 37, 39, 41, 43.
Patterson, Commodore, 223, 224.
Peisachov, Benjamin, 327.
Phillips, Amelia, 323.
Phillips, Arthur, 323.
Phillips, Daniel, 169.
Phillips, Family, 77, 115.
Phillips, Frederick, 323.
Phillips, Herman S., 323.
Phillips, Isaac, F., 323.
Phillips, J. Edgar, 323,
Phillips, Jacob, 198.
Phillips, Jonas, 190, 202, 323.
Phillips, Joshua, 323.
Phillips, Josephine, 323.
Phillips, Lavinia, 323.
Phillips, N. Taylor, 76, 284, 285, 323.
Phillips, Nathaniel, 169.
Phillips, Sidney A., 323.
Phillips, Sophie, 323.
Philosophical Society, 51.
Pinto, Jacob, 55, 77.
Podrat, Herman, 327.
Pollock, Abraham, 77, 169.
Pollock, Family, 58, 77, 114, 136.
Pollock, Isaac, 77, 88, 93, 107, 172, 198, 323.
Pollock, Issachar, 54, 77, 91, 172.
Pollock, Jacob, 54, 77, 104, 115, 136.
Pollock, Myer, 136, 188.
Pollock, Zachary, 77.
Pool, Rev. Dr. D. de Sola, 255, 284, 285, 286.
Porter, Rev. Emery H., 284, 286.
Potter, Captain James, 143.

Rachel the Widow, 41, 43.
Raphael, 65.
Raphaelson, Raphael, 326.
Raphall, Rev. Dr. M. J., 245, 247.
Read, Oliver, 218.
Redwood Library, 51, 52, 93, 221, 250.
Rhode Island Gazette, 51.
Richards, Bernard, 327.
Rivera, Abraham Rodrigues, 70, 88, 104, 107, 115, 145, 221, 226.
Rivera, Dona Blanca de, 70.

Rivera, Diego Lopez, 70.
Rivera, Family, 58, 70, 115, 136, 141, 185, 217, 221.
Rivera, Isaac, 70.
Rivera, Jacob Rodrigues, 52, 54, 70, 71, 83, 86, 88, 91, 92, 94, 104, 106, 115, 136, 141, 142, 156, 157, 166, 172, 189, 192, 198 ff., 201, 247.
Rivera, James, 52.
Rivera, Rachel Rodrigues, 144.
Rivera, Rebecca, 69, 70.
Roger Williams, 21 ff.
Rophes, Family, 77.
Rophee, Solomon, 182.
Rosen, Daniel, 327.
Rosen, Gabriel, 327.
Rosengard, Rabbi B. H., 277, 284, 286, 325.
Rosoff, Hyman, 327.

Sacks, Benjamin, 218, 219, 221.
Sacks, Rev. J. 247.
Sanctum Officium, 62.
Sardis, 59.
Sarzedas, Abraham, 54, 172.
Sarzedas, David, 182.
Sarzedas, Family, 77, 114, 183.
Schreier, Alfred, 272.
Schreier, Eugene, 271, 326.
Seidel, Rabbi Jacob M., 277, 325.
Seixas, Abraham, 183.
Seixas, Ben., 134.
Seixas, Benjamin Mendez, 73.
Seixas, Billah Levy, 323.
Seixas, Family, 58, 73, 115, 217, 321.
Seixas, Rev. Gershom Mendez, 73, 199, 221, 229.
Seixas, Rev. Isaac B., 73, 240.
Seixas, Isaac Mendez, 73, 76, 135, 136, 156, 183.
Seixas, Moses, 54, 132, 133, 135, 136, 168, 182, 183, 189, 190, 192, 193, 194, 198 ff., 205, 208 ff., 212, 215, 218, 219.
Seixas, Moses Mendez, 73, 169, 189.
Seixas, Moses, Will of, 324 ff.
Seixas, Sr., Moses, 141.
Sepharad, 59.
Seroadio, Giacomo, 271.
Sewall, Samuel, 45.
Shaarei Shamayim, Cong. of Jamaica, B. W. I., 88, 107.
Shaarei Shamayim, Cong. of London, England, 88, 107.
Shappo, Rabbi, 325.
Shearith Israel, Cong. of New York, 70, 75, 76, 87, 88, 90, 94, 97, 107, 141, 146, 155, 156, 204, 217, 226, 239, 257, 258, 259, 260, 268, 270, 272 ff., 276, 278, 279.
Shechinah, 20, 80.
Shepherd, Rezin D., 223 ff.
Simeon Ben Yochai, Rabbi, 82, 148.
Simson, J., 97, 115.
Simpson, S., 169.
Simpson & Barke, 218.
Sixtus IV, Pope, 63.
Smith, Commander Roy Campbell, 284.
Solomon, David, 46.
Solomon, Haym, 148.
Solomons, Adolphus S., 323.
Solomons, Mary Jane, 323.
Spanish Inquisition, 163 ff.
Speightstown, Barbados, 30.
Stanton, Dr. Nathaniel G., 285.
Stiles, Dr. Ezra, 69, 101 ff., 114, 116, 130, 146, 192.
Stuyvesant, Governor Peter, 26, 27.
Sylvester, Joseph, 52.
Synagogue, Dedication of, 98 ff.
Synagogue, Description of, 101 ff.

Taylor, A. O'D., 284.
Taylor, Nicholas, 235.
Teitz, Harry, 326, 327.
Teitz, Max, 326, 327.
Tillinghast, Judge, 263.
Tinoco, Jacob, 31.
Tobiah Ben Judah, Rabbi, 125, 153, 154.
Toro, 71.
Torres, Luis de, 23.
Touro, Abner, 115.
Touro, Abraham, 231 ff., 238, 239, 243, 256, 264, 282, 286.
Touro, Abraham, Will of, 291 ff.
Touro Congregation, 274, 276.
Touro, Family, 46, 58, 71, 72, 114, 248.
Touro Funds, 329 ff.

Touro, Rev. Isaac, 72, 73, 77, 82, 94, 99, 101, 115, 116, 119, 125, 129, 169, 182, 188, 189, 222, 229, 235, 240, 242, 264, 283, 286.
Touro, Juda, 72.
Touro, Judah, 73, 222, 223, 224, 230, 242, 244, 246 ff., 256, 258, 264, 282, 283, 287,
Touro, Judah, Bequests of, 293 ff.
Touro, Manuel, 72.
Touro, Nathan, 229.
Touro Park, 38, 251.
Touro, Rebecca, 229.
Touro, Reyna, 229.
Touro Street, 38, 136, 288.
Touro Synagogue, 260, 262, 267, 277.
Touro Synagogue Fund, 256.
Touro Synagogue Chambers, 272.
Town Council of Newport, 238.
Turk, Jacob, 55.
Turner, Dr. H. E., 263.

United Company of Spermaceti Chandlers, 56.
Uster, Edward, 42.

Vers, Aaron, 39, 43.

Wanton, Governor, 129.
Wanton, Captain Stephen, 94.
Washington, George, 192, 204, 207, 208, 213.
Webster, Daniel, 250.
Welles, Titus, 236.
Whiting, Captain J., 56.
Williams, Roger, 21.

Yeshuat Israel, Congregation, 73, 82, 88, 149, 178, 204, 205, 280.

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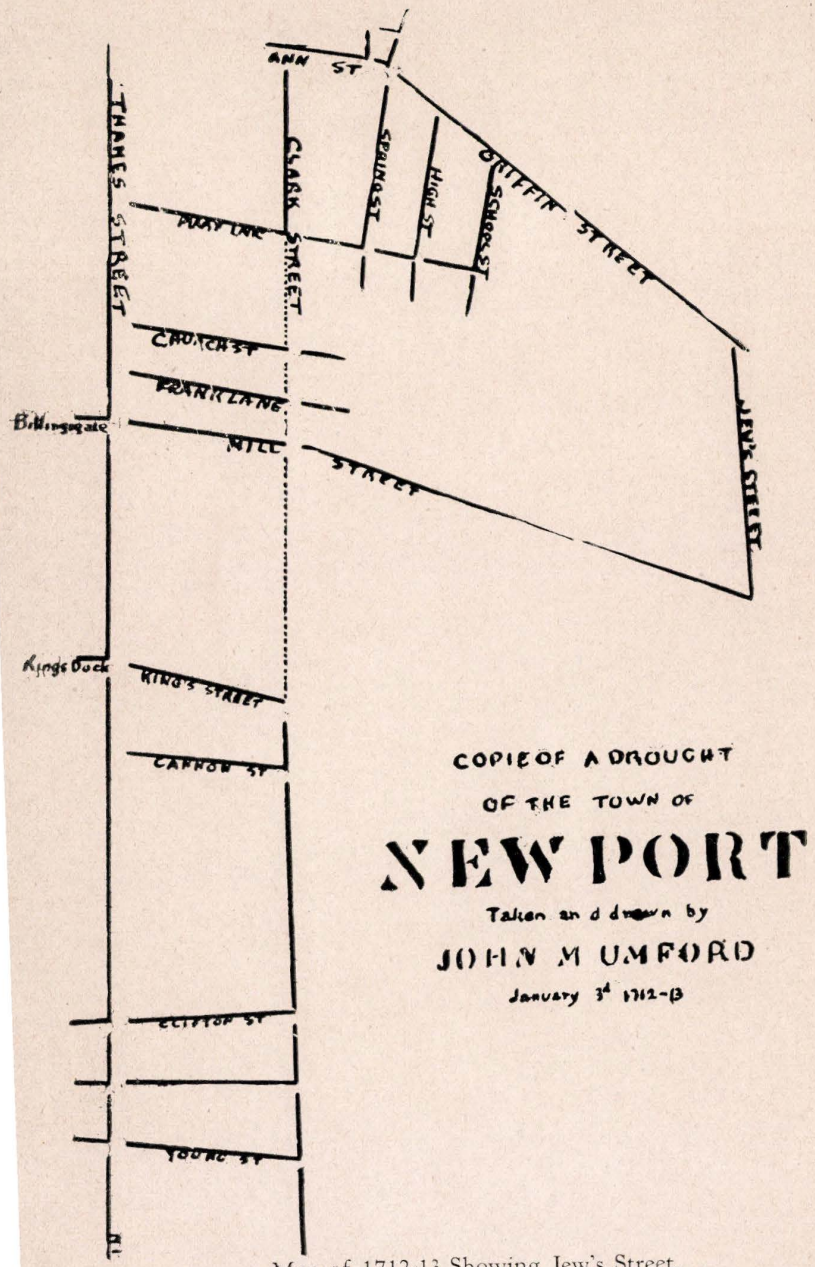
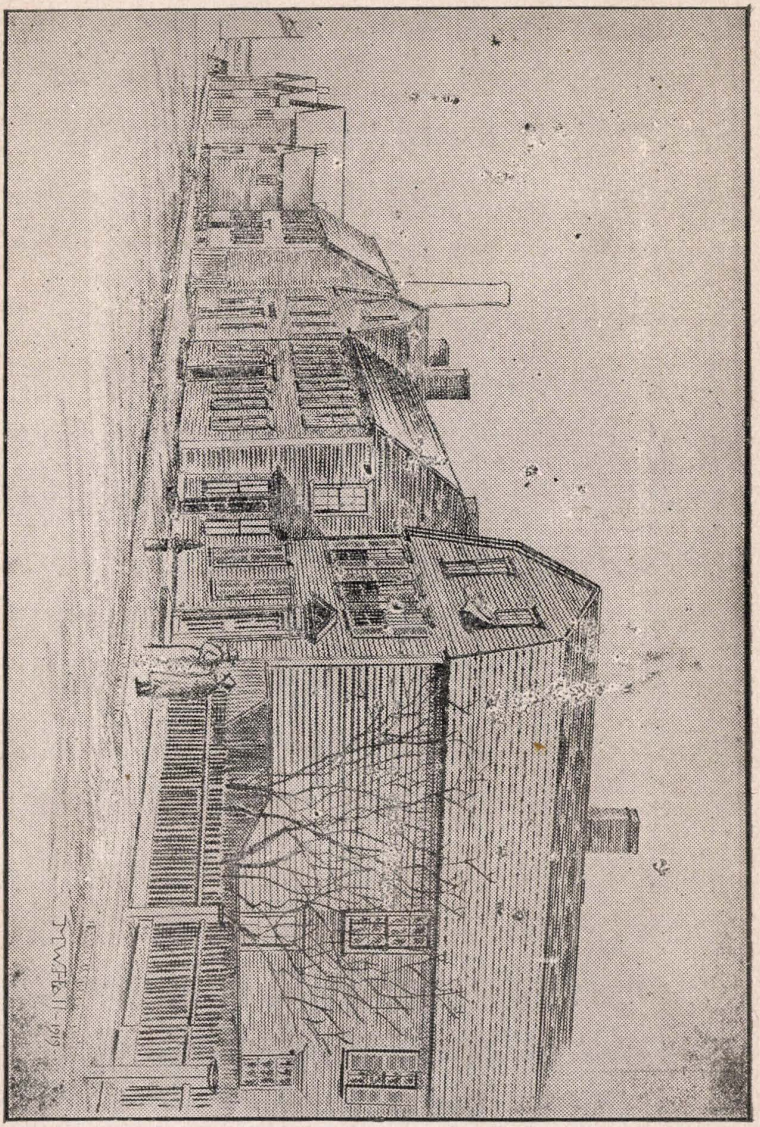


Map of 1712-13 Showing Jew's Street.



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