

The Jews of the Confederacy

Introduction by BERTRAM W. KORN

[*In this issue, the American Jewish Archives takes pleasure in presenting a number of documents relating to the Jews of the Confederacy. The next issue, to be published in October, 1961, will deal with material relating to the Jews of the Union. — Editor.*]

This is an extraordinarily rich selection of Jewish Confederate documentary material which the American Jewish Archives has assembled for our information, edification, and delight. I hope that I shall be pardoned for the use of a word like “delight” in connection with a war whose cost in human life has been unequalled in American history, but Civil War *aficionados* cherish with a strange emotional and intellectual joy every new revelation of the experiences, events, and personalities of the conflict whose Centenary our country is now beginning to mark: witness the ceaseless production of books on every possible aspect of those times now flowing from the nation’s presses; the publication of a quarterly journal devoted exclusively to scientific studies of the Civil War; and the articles and celebrations now being undertaken for popular consumption. Civil War “buffs,” together with those who are especially interested in the records of American Jewish life, will find much that is revealing and intriguing in these pages.

Predominant, of course, is the portrait of personal commitment on the part of its Jewish citizens to the struggles and fortunes of the Confederacy. Soldiers and civilians alike gave themselves virtually without stint to its support. There appears to have been little distinction in the feeling of identification which young Jewish men possessed towards their section, whether they were immigrants like Adolph Rosenthal, the pathetic story of whose battle-wound, decline, and death is described in a remarkable series of letters and telegrams, or native-born sons like Eugene Henry Levy, who

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reminisces in later years about the days of glory long ago. Only an unusual exception like Major Alfred Mordecai, torn between loyalty to his Army and his wife's family, on the one hand, and the region of his birth on the other, would stand frozen and immobile. But, once the decision had been made by their political leaders, most Southern Jews had no doubts about fighting for what Rabbi James Gutheim called "our beloved Confederate States," although many undoubtedly had reservations about the wisdom of the decision. They were Southerners and would no more think of repudiating their Confederate citizenship than would Northern Jews their Unionist fidelities. For Southerners, Jews and Gentiles alike, it was no longer "rebellion," when their state seceded; it was "loyalty" — to their state, their neighbors, and their friends — that impelled them to support the Confederacy. And more: the South was being invaded, not the North; Southern cities and homes were in danger; Southerners themselves would bear the suffering, if they could not throw back the brother-enemy who would not let them do in 1861 what the thirteen colonies had done in 1776.

The reader will find among the Southern Jews who live again in these pages no understanding of the causes of the Civil War, nor of the ideals of the Union. This was, of course, not an ordinary war between two countries fighting over territory or honor; it was a war to preserve or destroy a democratic *Union*, a war which trumpeted itself into being because the nation could not peaceably resolve the contradiction between the extension of democratic rights for its citizens and the enslavement of Negroes. The documents published here do not reflect any feelings of guilt on the part of Jews over their participation in the "peculiar institution" of the South, nor do they reveal qualms over the destruction of the Union. For Jewish as well as most other Southerners, this was a war simply to preserve the independence of the Southern states.

The Jews of the Confederacy had good reason to be loyal to their section. Nowhere else in America — certainly not in the ante-bellum North — had Jews been accorded such an opportunity to be complete equals as in the Old South. The race distinctions fostered by slavery had a great deal to do with this, and also the pressing need of Southern communities for high-level skills in commerce, in the professions, in education, in literature, and in

political life. But the fact of the matter is that the older Jewish families of the South, those long settled in large cities like Richmond, Charleston and New Orleans, but in smaller towns also, achieved a more genuinely integrated status with their neighbors than has seemed possible in any other part of the United States then or now. Political recognition, social acceptance, and personal fame were accorded to Jews of merit. The inevitable consequence of this social situation was a high rate of intermarriage. But other factors, too, made their contribution to this development: the small numerical size of the Jewish population of the South; and the social and cultural gap which separated the older families from the newer German immigrants. There is no evidence, however, that Southern Jews deliberately sought intermarriage as a stepping-stone to integration; on the contrary, social intercourse was itself the result of unlimited assimilation, and intermarriage stemmed from the welcome which was accorded to Jewish young men and ladies in the homes of their non-Jewish neighbors.

Nor is there any evidence which would indicate that a calculated repudiation of Jewishness or Judaism was involved in many such cases of intermarriage. A few, like the North Carolina Mordecai girls — Alfred's sisters — underwent seemingly genuine religious conversions to Christianity, and David Levy Yulee, the Senator from Florida, appears to have agreed to leave Judaism before, and because of, his marriage — but many were simply indifferent to religion, Judaism in their case. Judah P. Benjamin was characteristic of this group, which probably also included Phoebe Yates Pember, whose husband had not been Jewish. But Phoebe was no more or less devoted to Judaism than her sister Eugenia, who married the brilliant Philip Phillips, a Jew who never demonstrated very much concern with matters of religious observance.

The general intellectual climate of the times, and the unprogressive, unattractive nature of most Jewish congregations, made it easy for many of these people to ignore their religious obligations. But their life was filled with other intellectual concerns. Phoebe Pember, whose descriptions of hospital life at Chimborazo are a fascinating chapter in Civil War literature, was fairly typical of the upper-class Jews of the Old South, especially in her literary aspirations. Like her brother, Samuel Yates Levy, who had published a drama, *The*

Italian Bride, in 1856, and her friend Thomas Cooper De Leon, the young littérateur from Columbia, S. C., who cut a dashing figure in war-time Richmond, she wrote because she was alert and cultivated, and because she yearned to express herself. During the lonely nights at Chimborazo, she wrote "for the magazines," as she described it, although I have not succeeded in identifying any of her works during that period. On the other hand, she may already have been engaged in writing some germs of her *Southern Woman's Story*; shortly after the war had ended, she contributed some chapters of the book to a new magazine, *The Cosmopolite*, which her friend De Leon began to edit and publish in Baltimore. The first number of this same journal, issued in January, 1866, also saw the first appearance in print of some chapters of De Leon's work, *Four Years in Rebel Capitals*, which has become a standard reference work and a highly desired collector's item.

These folk, the Mordecais, De Leons, Levys, Phillipses, and others, hardly constituted a majority of the Jews of the Confederacy. The rank and file were German Jewish immigrants who did not have so easy a time of it. They were foreign, poor, unprepossessing; they were also more likely than their co-religionists to become victims of latent anti-Semitism by virtue of their concentration in petty trading. To be sure, some of the anti-Jewish prejudice of Civil War times was directed against Judah P. Benjamin, a perfect target for bigotry because of his political vulnerability, but most of it was aimed at the storekeepers and small merchants who could not help being involved in the Confederacy's economic troubles. Confederate newspapers, diaries and correspondence reflect the assumption of many Gentiles (and even of a Jew like T. C. De Leon) that immigrant Jewish traders were responsible for the abnormally high prices of consumer goods in the Confederacy. The folk in Thomasville, Georgia, were not alone in choosing the immigrant Jews as their scapegoat. And the Jews of Savannah were not the only ones to react with indignation to the slurs which were cast upon their group. The congregations in Richmond even held official meetings to decide what steps they should take to defend themselves. Fortunately, there were many non-Jews who were unwilling to join in the outcry, and a number of newspaper editors took occasion to denounce the agitation against Jews.

Anti-Semitism was not the only bond which held Jews together. The overwhelming majority held fast to their ancestral faith. Captain Madison Marcus may have felt that he was more valuable to the Confederate Army if he remained on duty, and therefore decided to forego the opportunity to worship in Richmond on Yom Kippur; but many other Jews either celebrated the festivals and Holy Days in camp, or took advantage of the special furlough orders which Rabbi Maximilian Michelbacher, of Richmond's Beth Ahabah Congregation, regularly obtained from General Robert E. Lee and other Confederate Army generals. Adolph Rosenthal and large numbers of other immigrant Confederate Jews were deeply attached to Jewish beliefs and ceremonies and, in life as well as at the edge of death, were likely to turn to Judaism for comfort and inspiration. Rabbis like Maximilian Michelbacher and James Gutheim (whose story appears in these pages) strengthened the loyalty of their congregants and co-religionists with stirring appeals to patriotic endeavor.

But beyond these communal ties of loyalty to Judaism and resistance to prejudice were the personal relationships which then as always made Jewish life distinctive at the family level. Many of these documents reflect the warm ties of friendship and familial intimacy which kept Jews, no matter how far away they were from home and friends, in the bosom of Jewishness. A word of Yiddish, a reference to Jewish friends and associates, thoughts of parents — these reveal that, for Confederate Jews as for Jews through all time, the foundations of belongingness were the cradle of Jewish survival.

These documents, and the data and insights they contain, emphasize once more the contribution which the American Jewish Archives has made and is making to the unfolding of the nature and patterns of American Jewish life. The files of the Archives contain thousands of similar narratives, letter collections, clippings, excerpts, and diaries which elucidate the experiences of Confederate Jews during the Civil War. Only a few are collected here. Scholars and students would do well to investigate the Archives' holdings in their pursuit of Civil War memorabilia.

LINES TO SET THE HEART A-THROBBING

The war against the North was a Holy War for many of the Southerners who rallied to the colors in 1861. Among them were three brothers from a New Orleans family, the children of Jacob Louis Levy. One of his sons fell, leading the advance at Shiloh. Another, Eugene H. Levy, was fighting at the end of the war directly under the command of Robert E. Lee.

After the surrender at Appomattox Court House, Eugene returned to Louisiana, ran a sugar plantation for a number of years, and then, because of ill health, moved north to New York City. There he finally became a reporter and the owner of the Dixie Book Shop.

In April, 1897, on the eve of the anniversary of General U. S. Grant's birth and shortly before the dedication of the Grant mausoleum, the fifty-seven-year-old Louisiana veteran wrote a letter to the editor of the New York Tribune, a letter paying tribute to the great Northern general against whom he had fought a generation earlier.

This tribute is significant because, far from stoking the furnace of animosity between the South and the North, in its high literary quality it reflects the culture of the Old South at its best. Four years of fratricidal war destroyed that culture which, for Jews, had centered in Charleston, South Carolina. It lives again, in all its beauty and charm and sentimentality, in this letter which was published in the Tribune on April 28-29, 1897. Levy's letter and the admiring responses it called forth in the columns of the Tribune are reprinted here from holograph copies in the papers of the American Jewish Archives.

[Note: See "Eugene Henry Levy, Appomattox: Prelude and Postlude," in Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews: 1775-1865* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1956), III, 299 ff.]

Grant At Appomattox

Reminiscences of a follower of the Lost Cause.

The feeling of humiliation that was replaced by other emotions when the Victory's terms were known.

To the Editor of the *Tribune*:

Sir: In the four years of terrible conflict, during which I wore the gray and served as a private in "the Army of Northern Virginia," as General [Robert E.] Lee's direct command was called, I learned much of death in its most tragic and violent forms. Thirty-two years have past since the battle-flags were furled and the victors turned to the North and the vanquished faced their desolate homes in the South to begin the life struggle under that old flag which had been the idol of their Revolutionary fathers.

After statesmen had wrangled for nearly two generations, the question between sections was left to the arbitrament of the sword, and the true men of the South never showed more valor or more manliness than they did in bowing heroically and uncomplainingly to the will of Providence and the power of the heavier batteries and battalions.

Since that day at Appomattox, the mystic angel's bugle-call has been summoning with increased rapidity the remnant of the Army of Northern Virginia to cross the dark river.

I am not regarded as a sentimentalist, though I hope I am a man of sentiment, but to-day on the eve of [Ulysses S.] Grant's birthday and the dedication of his mausoleum, I must confess my heart is touched; and the years roll away and I am again a lean gaunt boy with the last of the old battery about me listening to the terms Grant proposed to the leader Lee, whom we all so loved, and whom every man in blue respected. If, by some Divine mandate, the comrades in gray, who died before or who have been called since, could once more assemble at the drum's long roll or the bugle's summons, I feel they would rally in the lines and dress ranks, to do honor to the memory of [Grant,] the heroic commander of the [Army of the] Potomac. He was the leader, who in the hour of his

magnificent triumph proved his splendid manhood by considering the feelings of the men he had beaten after the most terrific fighting and heroic suffering of any soldiers of whom history has preserved a record.

In that supreme moment, when Fame covered his efforts at the bidding of Victory, Grant gave no thought to himself, nor did he need to consider his superbly equipped army. The impoverished men in gray — the men whose clothing was rags, the men whose ranks, whose money was waste paper, yet the men whose manhood remained because they were of his race — it was to the care of these he gave his first thought, and we, who survive to witness or share in this crowning honor to himself, cannot forget it till we, too, are called to join him and the heroic Americans who have gone before.

How rapidly even boys grew bronzed and aged and desperately thoughtful during the war, only those who have survived the furnace of battle can tell, but I am sure it is not senility that makes a man well under sixty like myself, reminiscent; it is the fact that at the most receptive age, it was my fate to be a witness to the greatest event in the recorded history of the Western World — the surrender at Appomattox.

If I were to attempt to write this formally, I could not write it at all, for the closing days of that terrible conflict are to me a chaos: — a memory of muddy roads, of short rations; of marching and halting and getting into battery to resist the desperate rush of that splendid corps of horsemen in blue, who so unexpectedly assaulted us from all sides.

Our hope was to unite with "Joe" [Gen. Joseph E.] Johns[t]on in North Carolina, and in some way that the private soldier did not understand but was willing to leave to his officers, to fight it out while a man was left. Rages [rags], hunger, and red mud roads were no new experience to the remaining veterans of Lee's army, but we were astounded to find those ubiquitous horsemen on our line of retreat, and the bridges, by which we hoped to cross, destroyed. Even these calamities brought some compensation for the halt for repairs gave us a chance to sleep on the damp ground by our lean, staggering horses.

Not in the hours of its most assured success, when the war was still young, did the soldiers of the "Lost Cause" fight more heroically than on that desperate retreat. The last volley fired by the Army of Northern Virginia in that last stubborn stand before Grant* sent in his white flag compares favorably with the Yank's charge at Fredericksburg, [Gen. George E.] Pickett's splendid advance at Gettysburg or [Gen. James] Longstreet's desperate assault at Knoxville.

I recall again the feeling of indignation, of humiliation, that swept through our lines when we learned that the surrender had been agreed to between the opposing commanders. It was alone our faith in Lee that reconciled us to the inevitable.

But when the truth became known to us, when men in blue came over to divide with us their rations and blankets, and when we learned of Grant's terms — for they were all his — our spirits revived and we felt that life was still worth living to the ragged remnant of Lee's army.

Before me, as I write, there is a torn and faded diary in which I put down — the ink is now yellow — the story of that retreat, and there are splotches on the poor pages that give my heart broken expressions of the surrender. I can see how I cursed Providence then in my madness just as I bow to the Supreme Will now when age has ripened reason, and charity has taken the place of hate. And Grant had more to do in making this change than any man on either side. I did not vote for him while living; I honor him while dead, and on his grave I lay my sprig of Louisiana magnolia blossom now that his tomb is being dedicated and his countrymen leave the rest to history.

It was through Grant that we were returned to our homes, and it was largely [due] to his influence that we were returned to our old positions in the Union.

The day is coming when we who fought on opposing sides will

[* Editor's note: To mention Grant in this context may have been a "Freudian slip" on Levy's part; he may have meant to write "Lee." Or Levy may have been speaking of a flag of truce sent in by Grant in response to Lee's request for a cessation of hostilities. See U. S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs* (New York: Charles L. Webster & Company, 1886), II, 485-86, 627-28.]

be mustered out. Then a broader charity will take the place of sentimental hate. Then our children and their children's children will glory in the exploits of Americans, no matter who led or where they fought. A few names like Lincoln and Grant and Lee and "Joe" Johns[t]on will rise over all as the finest types of American manhood. Our prosaic mountains and rivers and villages will be full of ennobling legend and poetic tradition to the coming generations because of the men in blue and the men in gray who struggled in them.

And this we know — and it thrills our hearts to know it — that the rivers by which our heroes sleep will be drained to the sea, and the battle mountain on which they rest will be levelled to the plains before the story of their valor dies out, or the record of their heroism ceases to ennoble mankind.

EUGENE H. LEVY
A. P. Hills Corps, Army of
Northern Virginia

New York, April 15, 1897.

Admirations of the article by Eugene H. Levy anent Tribute to Grant at Appomattox published in the *Tribune*, Apr. 28 and Apr. 29, respectively, of the year 1897.

"Tribute from the Blue to the Gray."

To the Editor of the *Tribune*:

Sir: As an admirer of General Grant and a veteran of the Civil War, I have read everything published of late about our dead leader. But nothing has so filled my heart and my eyes as that splendid letter of Mr. Eugene H. Levy, which appeared in your "Grant Supplement" last Wednesday.

That letter was written by a brave man, and by a man, too, of genius. There are lines in it that set the heart a-throbbing and quicken the pulse.

Private Levy is a man one would [want] to know; and it is comforting to think that he is a fair representative — as he certainly is an able one — of the survivors of Lee's army.

GEORGE R. ROBERTS
Late 9th Pennsylvania Cavalry

Brooklyn, April 29, 1897.

To the Editor of the *Tribune*:

Sir: I am fifty-six years of age. I served against the Confederates from '61 to '65 in the 7th Pennsylvania Cavalry. However, my purpose in writing is not to tell of myself, but to express my high admiration for that article of Eugene H. Levy's in your Wednesday edition. I don't know Mr. Levy's rank in the Confederate army, but that article shows him to be a large, brave, intellectual man. We want more such men as Mr. Levy on both sides — if there [are] sides now. There are but few men, if any, who can write as he does, but, for Heaven's sake, let us all feel the same way.

GEORGE W. NORRIS

Brooklyn, April 28, 1897.

THE VALLEY OF DECISION

One of the most distinguished officers in the United States Army in the days before the War was a native North Carolinian, Major Alfred Mordecai. He was the son of the educator, Jacob Mordecai, who ran a well-known boarding school for girls at Warrenton.

In 1861 Alfred Mordecai was one of the outstanding ordnance experts in this country and the author of several works, all dealing with military matters. The first ordnance manual published by the Army was largely his work. Recognizing his ability, the Government had put him in charge of some of its most important arsenals, and in 1861 found him in command of the Watervliet Arsenal, across the Hudson from Troy, N. Y.

In that year, when the break between the North and the South seemed — and proved — inevitable, Major Mordecai, a Southerner, was faced with bitter alternatives. Either he had to stay in the United States Army and help make the munitions that would destroy his own family, or he had to join the South and wage war against the Union and the flag which he had solemnly sworn to defend. There was still a third alternative: his resignation from the service which he loved, a return to civilian life — and genteel poverty. It was a hard decision to make for a man of fifty-seven — with a wife and a family of seven, four of whom were not

yet twenty. How he made it is described in these letters to his brothers Samuel, in Richmond, and George, in Raleigh.

The letters published here are from the originals in the Mordecai Collection of the Library of Congress.

[Note: See the articles by Stanley L. Falk, "Alfred Mordecai, American Jew," American Jewish Archives, X (1958), 125-32, and "Divided Loyalties in 1861: The Decision of Major Alfred Mordecai," Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, XLVIII (1958-59), 147-69; Jacob Rader Marcus, "Alfred Mordecai, Brilliant West Point Cadet," Memoirs of American Jews: 1775-1865 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1955), I, 216 ff.]

Watervliet Arsenal

January 20, 1861

My dear George:

I received last evening, through a friend in Washington, a letter from Governor [John W.] Ellis to Mr. [Warren] Winslow of the House of Representatives, asking the latter to ascertain if it would be possible to procure my services in the work of putting North Carolina on a war footing, and proposing to me to resign from the army and come to North Carolina. Having no personal acquaintance with either Mr. Winslow or the governor, I prefer asking you to communicate my answer to the latter.

Indeed, I think it not a little singular that he should not have spoken to you on the subject before writing. Our conversations together and my letters from Richmond and from here will have enabled you to anticipate my answer to this proposition, and to give sufficient reasons for my declining it, with due politeness, and thanks for the good opinion implied by the offer. I need not, therefore, go into an exposition now of the political or personal considerations which induce this decision. The controlling reason is sufficient: that, however discouraging the prospect of a peaceful settlement may be, I will not do anything to sanction or encourage revolutionary measures, as long as there is the least hope of an adjustment of our national troubles. Any military preparations which

our state may make, at this particular juncture, can only be regarded as preparatory to revolution; and I cannot but consider them as premature, at least until a convention of the people shall have decided that there is to be a revolution in the state; and I believe the Legislature has not yet even determined that a convention shall be called for the purpose of considering the matter.

If the organization in which I am invited to participate could be regarded as a mere administrative measure, such as exists in many of the other states, without reference to the present crisis, I think it no disloyalty to my native state to say that I prefer to serve her in my present position as an officer of the Federal army. In that capacity, I shall continue to discharge my duty, in the fervent hope that the calamity which has befallen us may yet be remedied without bloodshed, and that the alternative of choosing sides in a civil war may never be presented to me.

The informal and entirely indefinite manner in which Governor Ellis's proposal is made absolves me from the necessity of a written reply to it, or of any other than that which you can convey to him verbally; and I gladly avoid, as far as possible, any chance of getting my name into a newspaper.

I have been hoping to hear from you; but I suppose you are too busy, as usual, and I fear that you have nothing agreeable to say. Give my best love to . . . all our families. . . .

Let me hear from you soon, and, believe me, always

Your affectionate brother,

ALFRED MORDECAI

Watervliet Arsenal

March 10, 1861

My dear Colonel:

I lose no time in replying to your friendly letter of the 4th inst.[ant], received last evening.

I am truly grateful to Mr. [Jefferson] Davis for this new proof of his good opinion and it is with real concern that I feel compelled

to decline entertaining the proposal [of a position with the Confederate forces] suggested in your letter.

I cannot enter here into an explanation of the reasons which have led me to this conclusion. I will only say that my decision on the subject was made on the occasion of a previous proposition of a similar kind.

I will not even trust myself to add another word on the engrossing subject of the heart-rending disruption which is taking place in the army and the country.

With thanks for your kindness and a request that you will make my sincere acknowledgments to Mr. Davis,

I am as ever,

Truly yours

ALFRED MORDECAI

Colonel [William J.] Hardee

Watervliet Arsenal

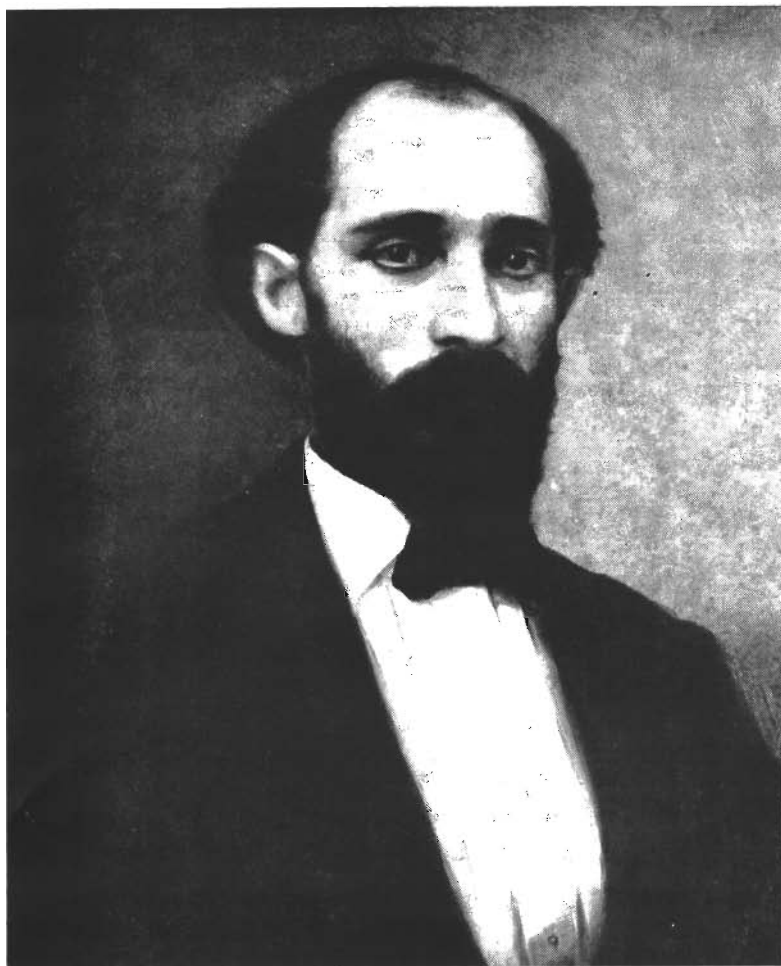
March 17, 1861

My dear brother:

In these calamitous times it is well that relatives and friends should understand each other's positions, and as my views may not be fully known by our family, I will devote this leisure Sunday to communicating to you so much of them at least as may influence my own action in relation to public affairs.

I do not think it necessary to begin at the beginning and to give you my opinion on the abstract questions of the moral effect, or the social or political advantages and disadvantages of the institution of African slavery, which has produced the convulsion that is now rending the Union to pieces.

To any common sense appreciation of the subject it appears to be sufficient to know that at the formation of our government slavery existed all over the land and was expressly protected by the Constitution from being interfered with by any authority but the states themselves; that therefore the people who have retained it are

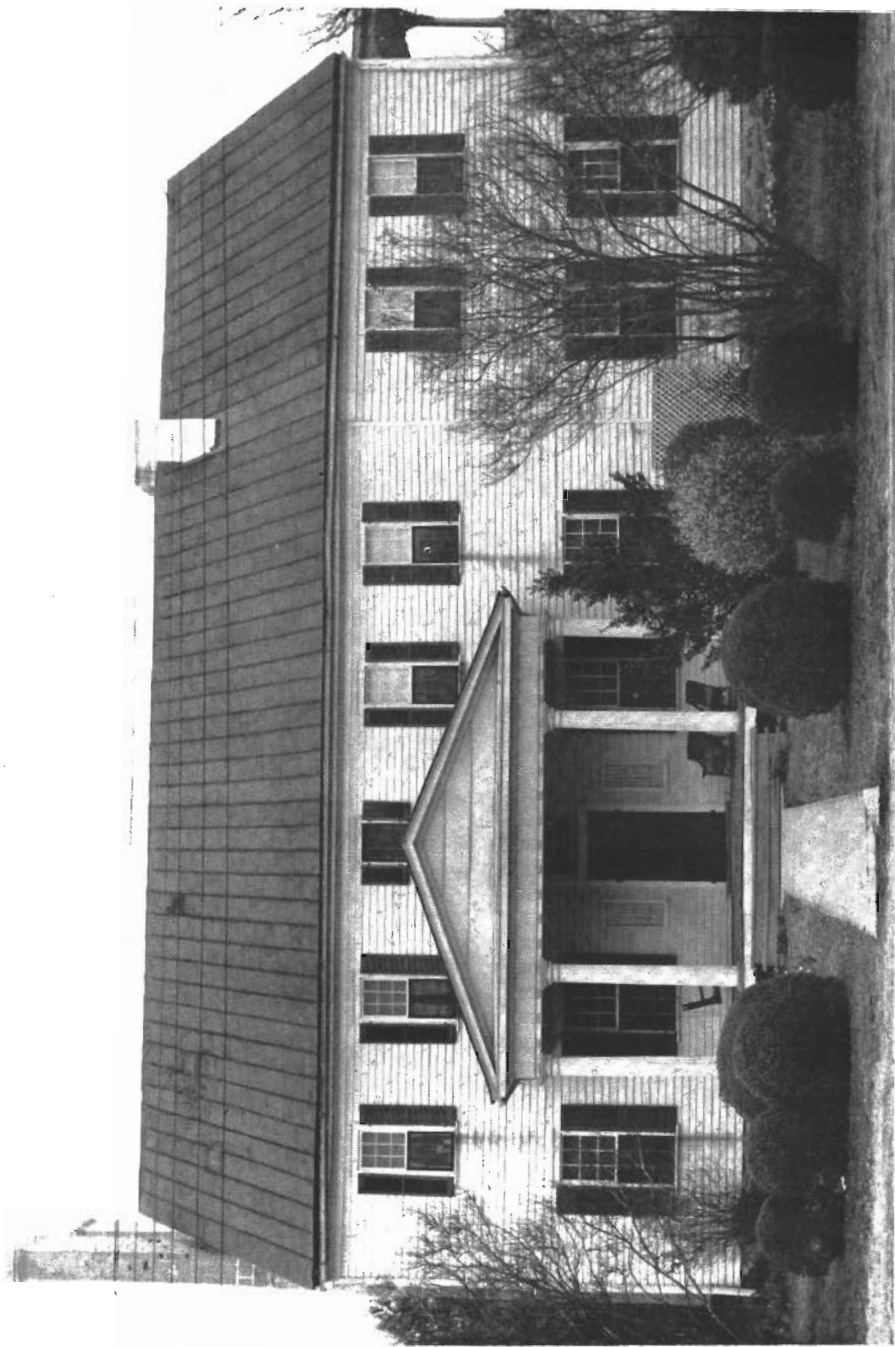


Courtesy, Deronda Levy, Columbus, Ga.

EUGENE H. LEVY

“A large, brave, intellectual man.”

(see pp. 8-13)



Courtesy, Robert Neal, The Press Publishing Co., Warrenton, N. C.

THE MORDECAI HOME IN WARRENTON, N. C.
Birthplace of Alfred Mordecai

entitled to the enforcement of their constitutional rights with regard to it both in the letter and the spirit. This being conceded, the whole question is as to the best way of maintaining those rights against communities or persons who are inclined to interfere with them. I confess that if, as indicated by the resolutions adopted by the late peace conference [The so-called Washington Peace Convention, called by Virginia (and attended by twenty-one states) in February, 1861, to propose a Constitutional amendment similar to the Crittenden Compromise Plan; Congress failed to act on the proposal.], the state of public feeling at the North is so squeamish on this subject that the very *name* of slavery cannot be used in expressing what are meant to be conciliatory measures towards the South, the continuance of harmony between the sections seems to be well nigh hopeless. But I regard the existence of the Union so essential to the welfare and respectability of our country, at home and abroad, that I am unwilling to give up the hope that both sides may yet see the utter madness of the course on which we are rushing to our ruin.

Therefore, I have avoided doing anything to encourage the revolutionary ideas which prevail among the extremists of both sections. And I have been unwilling, until very lately, to believe that there is any considerable body of our countrymen so insane as to desire a separation of the states, if it can be avoided without a sacrifice of the most valuable and indeed vital principles.

In the North, notwithstanding the prevalent feeling against slavery, there is undoubtedly a large party who are willing to sustain the South in all that they ask, which is simply, as Mr. Davis expressed it at Boston, to be let alone.

Into the late Presidential contest, the South entered with the hope that through the aid of this party, they might prevail; and it seems to me that they were bound to abide by the result, until it was shown that the administration of the party which has attained the ascendancy was incompatible with their enjoyment of their essential rights. With the Congress, in both branches, opposed to the Republican administration, if the southern states had remained represented, it would not have been possible to enact any measures seriously injurious to the latter; and if the executive had evinced, by his recommendations and appointments to office, a disposition

to infringe the rights of the South, and had been supported by the public opinion of his own party, the South would have enjoyed the great advantage of being placed obviously in the right, when resistance became necessary, and no doubt also of being sustained in their opposition by a great body of the northern people.

If, therefore, they were sincere in their desire to maintain the Union as long as possible, it seems to me that it was eminently the duty of the southern people to try all constitutional remedies, before resorting to the extreme of revolution. Nor can I imagine how, by this extreme measure, they can reasonably expect to place themselves in a better and more secure position as regards the preservation of their slaves and even of the institution of slavery.

But I did not mean to enter so fully into the discussion of this political question. I only intended to express my belief that our people, or I should say, the people of the extreme South, have pursued an injudicious and rash course, and I am glad that the northern slave states have not suffered themselves to be hurried onwards into the precipitate measures of their southern neighbors.

Under these circumstances I have not felt disposed to join in the cause of the extreme South and I have peremptorily declined the advances made to me to enter the service of southern states. I have continued to discharge my duty to the government at Washington faithfully and zealously, without any reservation or *arrière-pensée*, as to the effect on the southern states of the measures in which I am called upon to assist; hence the arsenal under my charge has presented a scene of unusual activity during the last month or six weeks, in the preparation and forwarding of warlike stores. I hope it is no dereliction of sincerity to wish, with Mercutio's quarrelsome fellow [in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*], that "God may send us no need of them."

You are not to suppose, however, that I mean to deny to the southern people the right to judge of the injury which they have sustained or with which they are threatened, and of the remedy or redress which they shall seek for. On the contrary, if any great body of them think that their existence or happiness is inconsistent with the maintenance of the Union, let them go in peace. But it is at least reasonable to demand that they shall agree among themselves

as to the extent of the evils complained of and the nature of the remedy; and not suffer the country to be split up into incoherent fragments, to become the inveterate foes of each other, and the scorn and contempt of the rest of the world.

I have no patience to think of the spectacle which our lately prosperous country would present under such circumstances, and no disposition to join in the miserable strife which will result from the entire rupture of our Union. If I am doomed to witness that calamity, which certainly seems to be impending very nearly, you know that I would not take sides against the South; but I confess that I should be almost equally reluctant to enter the ranks against those with whom I have been so long associated on terms of close intimacy and friendship. In such a case, my first wish would be to retire, at least for a time, to private life, and seek in a civil pursuit the means of supporting my family during (what I should expect to be) the miserable remnant of my days.

But the whole subject is so utterly distasteful to me, that I try my best to put it out of consideration, in the fond hope that, through some wonderful interposition of Providence, the necessity for a decision may be averted. I trust there are many officers of the army, from the North as well as the South, who feel as I do on this unhappy subject.

My letter has run into Monday, and whilst writing I have received a letter from you and one from our good George. Neither of them gives me much encouragement to hope for a happy termination of our troubles; but it is a great comfort to feel that we all concur in our views and wishes.

This is the first time that I have attempted to express my opinions on this subject at any length, in writing, and I scarcely ever *speak* of them. So many considerations crowd on me that I dare say I may not have expressed myself very clearly; but I wish my southern friends to understand my position and I know they will appreciate my motives for adhering, to the last, to the hope, even the most feeble, of a re-adjustment, which may repair this incredible calamity and restore us to respectability in the family of nations — although social bonds cannot restrain, when the ties of nations are severed. My family relations with the North may, almost unconsciously

and certainly not inexcusably, exert an influence on the decision which I may find myself compelled to make, as to a change of condition; but in this I know that I shall not be liable to misconstruction on your part.

I trust that nothing may prevent my carrying out the intention of making a visit in April with my dear wife to our good mother and all of you. Besides being the pleasantest season for the journey, that is the time when I can most conveniently leave my business here. As soon as we can determine on the time we will let you know. . . .

May we soon meet you all in peace and health.

Ever truly

Your affectionate brother,
A. MORDECAI

Samuel Mordecai, Esq.
Richmond, Va.

Finished this morning (18th) 4 o'clock — at sunrise.

Private.
Watervliet Arsenal,
May 2nd, 1861

Lieut. Colonel J[ames] W. Ripley

My dear Colonel: I am truly sorry that my first private letter to you, since your return, should be on so unpleasant a subject. I hoped that some arrangement might be made by which my private feelings could be consulted, without a dereliction of duty on the part of the government, but your answer to my official letter leaves me no room to hope for this consideration, and no alternative therefore but to resign. I shall not make known my resignation here until my successor arrives, or until it is announced from Washington; so everything will go on as usual at the Arsenal. If you can send [Capt. William A.] Thornton to relieve me, and quickly, I shall be glad; I think the position is due to his industry and zeal, as well as to his rank.

I have no hesitation in saying confidentially to you what I have said to my brother and family, that when I contemplated the possible necessity of resigning, in order to avoid engaging in this unhappy contest against my kindred, I had no intention of joining the southern army. I hoped to be permitted by both sides to retire quietly to private life. I shall make no preparations now which may indicate the course I have taken, hoping that some way be afforded me to pack up such of my furniture and effects as I may not otherwise dispose of. I shall then take my family to Philadelphia and make arrangements for my future life.

[ALFRED MORDECAI]

Watervliet Arsenal
May 2d, 1861

To Lieut. Col. J[ames] W. Ripley, [Chief of the] Ordnance Dept.
[, U. S. Army]

Sir: I have received by Lieut. [Horace] Porter your letter of the 29th ult. in reply to mine of the 23d. My letter from New York, which you state is not to be found in your office, was an informal letter to Col. [Henry K.] Craig [the former Chief of Ordnance], of which I retained no copy; but it was acknowledged in an official letter from Col. Craig, of the 19th ult. I thank you for the complimentary terms of your letter, but peculiar circumstances, which it seems to me unnecessary to explain further, make it impossible for me to continue in the discharge of the duties of commanding officer of this Arsenal, and as your reply cuts off the hope of my being relieved from them, I have tendered the resignation of my commission in the Army.

Wishing to spare you unnecessary embarrassment, I enclose my letter of resignation to you, in order that, before presenting it, you may make arrangements for a successor in the command of this important post.

After thirty-eight years of faithful service I trust that I need not assure you that the public interests here will, in the mean time,

be perfectly safe in my hands; but I hope that the interval before the arrival of my successor will be as brief as possible.

It will be gratifying to me if a competent officer, of suitable rank, can be found to make a suitable inspection of the Arsenal before I leave it. I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

A. MORDECAI

Watervliet Arsenal

May 2d, 1861

To

The Adjutant General of the Army
Washington

Sir:

I hereby tender the resignation of my commission as Major of Ordnance in the Army of the United States, and request that it may be accepted by the President.

Respectfully

Your obedient servant

A. MORDECAI

Major of Ordnance [?]

Philadelphia, June 2d, 1861

My dear brother:

The date which I have just written reminds me again that yesterday was the twenty-fifth anniversary of my wedding day, when you so kindly came here to rejoice with me in the prospect of domestic happiness which opened for me.

My expectations have been realized more fully than those of man usually are; an affectionate, devoted wife [, Sarah Ann Hays,

of Philadelphia], and good children have blessed my lot and fulfilled the happy augury of that day. Who could then have imagined that so brief a period of time would produce the terrible convulsion which now almost alienates my wife's family from my own? This event and its immediate consequences to me are so overwhelming that even now I can scarcely believe them, and I seem to be walking in some horrible dream. But the very fact that I have hardly felt it safe and prudent to write confidentially to you about my situation and feelings brings the sad truth too forcibly to mind.

I have written two or three brief notes, to let you know where we were and to thank you all, including our dear [brother] George, for your kind proffers of assistance and welcome. That I am compelled to decline them is not the least painful circumstance which has attended this sad change in my fortunes. After the rather premature announcement of my resignation in the newspapers, I was too much and too sadly occupied at the Arsenal to write fully to you, in explanation of my course. And indeed I would hardly have trusted to the mails from there. Since my arrival here, a week ago, I have fatigued myself with going about to find a retreat for my family, and it is only on this Sunday morning that I am resting from my, as yet unsuccessful, labor.

After I left you in Richmond, the Sunday after the surrender of Fort Sumter, events were precipitated with such terrible rapidity that there was scarcely time for one to think, in the hurry of action.

I tried to carry out the plan which I mentioned to you, and which would at least have given me time to make some provision for the comfort of my family.

[Major Benjamin] Huger [, of South Carolina,] received my telegram and met me in Baltimore. He had just sent in his resignation, as I expected, and he wrote that evening to Washington, as I believe, to suggest the change which I wished to make. Hurrying on to my post, I found time in New York to write on Monday to Colonel [Henry K.] Craig [, Chief of Ordnance,] for the same purpose. The colonel is not a very prompt man, and although, as I afterwards learnt from him, he was favorably inclined to my proposition (of being relieved from duty at Watervliet and placed in a more retired situation), he deferred acting and in a day or two after

he was taken sick and was unable to attend the office. Advantage was taken of this temporary indisposition to make a change which I had expected as soon as I heard of [Lieutenant] Colonel [James W.] Ripley's return from abroad. Colonel Craig was set aside and Colonel R[ipley], the next in rank to him, was put in charge of the office.

At this time, you will recollect, the mails to Washington were interrupted by the disturbances in Baltimore, and when at length, receiving no answer to my request, I sent a messenger to Washington with a repetition of it, he found Colonel Ripley in charge, and his views being different from Colonel Craig's, I received a decided, though flattering, refusal to make the change which I desired. In the mean time nearly a fortnight had elapsed, during which I felt myself in duty bound to make the most vigorous efforts for carrying out the orders which crowded on me for work at the Arsenal, in equipping and arming the troops that were rapidly raised, under the wild enthusiasm which prevailed at the North. I had to organize a large force of workmen, and I did as much as any man, I think, could have done in the same time.

You may imagine what a melancholy and exhausting labor this was to me, under the circumstances; although from long habit and natural love of business, I could not help taking an interest in my work, which would often make me forget the purpose of it.

During my visit to Richmond and Old P[oin]t [Comfort, near Hampton, Va.,] the newspapers had already begun to circulate stories of my having left the service. And in the midst of all my exertions, I was regarded with suspicion by the state authorities and local politicians. This was inevitable and formed of itself a sufficient reason for complying with my wish to be removed; if it was even considered just to the government and to myself to keep me in such a painful position. At any rate it was one which I could not consent to occupy, and seeing no hope of a different decision, I sent in my resignation. If I had been removed from the scene of my active operations, and sent, for instance, to California, where an ordnance field office had been stationed before, consideration for my family would have induced me to escape this sad recourse by remaining in the service under the hope, however small, of better

times; or at least of being able to make the change under more favorable circumstances.

Having no doubt seen the northern papers until very lately, you must have some idea of the excited and violent feeling which pervades this community; the more violent perhaps the further you go North; and yet I do not think you are aware of the nature of my situation there. When my resignation was announced, the lower class of the population in Troy, and even some of those in the village of West Troy [now Watervliet], instigated by the rabid politicians, were in the greatest excitement, threatening arrest and even personal violence to prevent me from going to the South and using for the benefit of the Southern Confederacy the knowledge which I had acquired in the service of the United States. In . . . a private letter to Colonel Ripley, when I sent in my resignation, I told him that, in leaving the army, I designed simply to retire to private life and not to take any part in the unhappy contest which divides the country.

When my resignation was known, two of the most respectable citizens of Troy called on me (the same evening), and told me of the excitement which prevailed on the subject. One of them, who is the United States Commissioner, had been called upon to put me under arrest. He told those who called on him that it was absurd, as no charge had been made or could be made. But they came to ask me whether I could say anything that would enable them to quiet the public mind. In anticipation of attacks in the newspapers, I had prepared copies of my correspondence relating to this and other matters relative to my administration of the Arsenal, for the purpose of having them printed, and I saw no reason why I might not communicate a part of it to them, if they thought it would have the effect of preserving the public peace. They accordingly took the correspondence immediately preceding my resignation and published it. Some of the local papers, whilst disapproving of my course (as they were afraid not to say so), had independence enough to excuse it, under my peculiar circumstances. As for the higher class of people, with whom we had associated, their behavior to us was most affectionate and touching; as well as that of the many poor people in the village whom we had befriended. All claimed the

interest of old friends in us, and we were constantly summoned from affectionate and tearful adieus in the parlor to receive the blessings, choked by sobs, of the poor people in the hall. We all said that we never expected to find again so many friends, or to leave a place with so much regret.

Having no occasion to go out of the Arsenal and full occupation for all my time, I avoided, for the sake of my family, any appearance in public, and I believe the excitement was soon allayed; at least I heard nothing more of it.

It was five days after my resignation took effect, before I was officially informed of it, and in the mean time I continued to transact the business of the Arsenal. After that we were some ten days employed in packing up our furniture and effects. Sara, Laura and the two little boys came here, where [my in-laws] Dr. and Mrs. [Samuel] Hays had most kindly offered us a home as soon as my resignation was announced. Rosa and Miriam remained with the Willards in Troy until last Thursday, when they went to West Point, where they still are; and as soon as I cleared out the house I joined Sara here. I have left my things stored at the Arsenal, until I find some place of rest.

You see that when I received George's kind offer of a home, and afterwards Mamma's through Eliza, it would really not have been possible for me, if I had wished, to accept them, without exposing my little personal property, perhaps even my family, to say nothing of myself, to very serious danger or annoyance at least; and I could not think of anything else until I had established my family.

But now comes the most painful part of my communication, to explain why I adhered to my first intention of taking no part in this horrible war. It is not enough to say that I am bound by the assurances to that effect, which are known to so many friends at the North. The considerations which induced me to form this intention in the first place are personal and in several respects, I think, peculiar, although I find that some other officers have taken the same course. In a former letter to you I spoke rather of the political views which I entertained, not agreeing with the southern leaders and people as to the necessity or the expediency of their course, and yet disapproving entirely of the attempt to prevent them, by

force, from adopting the government which they may consider best for themselves. I did not then think it necessary to mention other considerations of a personal nature, peculiar to my case.

In the first place, say what they will on either side, I regard this contest at the bottom as a struggle about the institution of slavery, and on *this* ground, whilst I utterly condemn the North for attempting to interfere, I have no sympathy with the southern feeling, or doctrine rather, as lately inculcated.

From very early youth, it seems to me from the time I first knew enough to reflect on it, I have regarded the existence of slavery here as the greatest misfortune and curse that could have befallen us, and it used to delight me to think what would probably be the prosperous condition of all the states north of South Carolina and Alabama if they were, as I once hoped they would be, relieved from this incubus; and that this would have been the case but for the abolition movement in the North, I firmly believe. With this impression as to the institution itself and its effect on the country was combined a sort of repugnance to the Negroes which has increased upon me as I have been less and less associated with them. Therefore, I have never wished to make a home among them. This feeling is, naturally enough, much stronger on the part of my family; we have seldom spoken of it, but I am sure that it would be utterly repugnant to the feelings of my wife and daughters to live among slaves, and if it can be avoided, I should be extremely lo[a]th to oblige them, by residence and habit, to overcome this repugnance, even supposing it possible.

I am perfectly willing that those who are not only "to the manor born," as I was, but who have been habituated to think approvingly of it, should be permitted freely to make use of its advantages and conveniences. I have no objection to its existence, under the circumstances in which we have it here, on the score of sinfulness or injury to the Negro, and all that sort of thing. I have no doubt that the race is in a better condition here than they are as savages in Africa, or than they would be as free men, from all the experience we have seen. But I never wished to be one of the agents in thus bettering their condition. I can perfectly understand how those who contrast domestic servitude at the South with domestic insubordina-

tion at the North should wish to retain the former, when they have been accustomed to it; and I am utterly averse to any participation in the schemes for destroying or weakening the hold of the masters on their slaves, unless they themselves shall be willing to abandon it.

But whilst I regard with abhorrence this crusade against the South and am unwilling to be in any manner connected with it, I am amazed and, I may say, disgusted, with the madness and folly which have characterized the southern leaders and people in regard to it. They ought to have known the inevitable unpopularity of their cause in the estimation of the world; and yet instead of strengthening themselves against prejudice, by forbearance to the last moment, in the Union, and preparing for the contest, if it must come, by concert and union among themselves, which I believe would have prevented for a long time this terrible catastrophe, they have weakened their cause by divisions, and given the opposite side an advantage which it will be very difficult for them to overcome. That the South will ultimately maintain their independence, I hope and believe, and that the separation will be permanent, perhaps after a long struggle, I have no doubt. Indeed, the people of this section seem to me [so] utterly maddened by hatred and passion that they cannot see the impossibility of restoring good relations with the South, and the hopelessness of any benefit resulting, to either party, from this war.

You cannot know, my dear brother, for I can hardly yet realize myself, what I have sacrificed to avoid engaging in it: the labor of a whole life seems to be rendered useless. I have given up one of the most delightful homes for my family to be found in this country; from the enjoyment of every comfort, and even luxury, my family are suddenly reduced to a situation where they may soon have to look poverty in the face. Notwithstanding this I have not heard a murmur, or seen a sign of discontent from one of them. Greatly grieved they of course are, as I am myself; but my dear wife and the girls have borne their misfortune with the greatest fortitude, even with cheerfulness, because they saw that the sacrifice was necessary for my peace of mind. They say that they are willing and anxious to work, to do anything for their support, if I will not join the southern army. But that no foresight of mine could have an-

ticipated this speedy overthrow of our national prosperity, I should feel as if I had committed a fraudulent action in taking a woman from her home, and rearing up children, to throw them, as it were, on the charity of the world. Under this feeling, I must carefully refrain from forfeiting that last possession, my own self esteem, or from giving them cause to mourn for me before my death.

Alfred [Mordecai, Jr.], from his late education and association, has, I am sorry to say, imbibed a strong anti-southern feeling. He is determined to accept a commission in the army, but I think he would be glad to escape active service in the war by going to the Pacific or in some distant service. At West Point the most violent feeling is encouraged even by the professors who belong naturally to the South. Mrs. Mahan (a New York woman) wishes "she had twenty sons to send to the war," and her husband, I fear, coincides. Nothing can exceed the fury which has taken possession of the minds of men. All sense of humanity, all regard for social relations, or the ties of kindred, seem to be banished. It is most horrible! And you may imagine the conflicting feelings by which I am tormented.

Poor old Mr. [President James] Buchanan, who is spoken of here with nothing but contempt, is the only man, as far as I have seen, who has ventured to go so far as to say, in a published letter, that he can understand how an officer may resign from the army rather than to bear arms against his kindred. But even he cannot excuse the next step, of joining his kindred against the government.

I reject all this sort of argument, but I mention it to show the prevailing sentiment here. I *know*, however, that there are many people of sense and human feeling enough to take a liberal view of my course, because several who could not venture to speak out publicly have assured me of their sentiments in private. And as I said to one of my friends on leaving Troy, the good feeling exhibited by them, lately strangers to us, is the most cheering augury of hope in my future life.

I only beg my Southern friends to extend the same charity to me, and not to add to my distress by making me feel that I am alienated from them. Here is a paragraph which Dr. Hays has just sent me from some newspaper. The complimentary notice, which is of no

value in my estimation when coupled with the disparagement of [Confederate Generals Robert E.] Lee and [Pierre G. T.] Beauregard, is due to the fact stated in the second part of the article.

Huger and Mordecai, both formerly of the ordnance, are the only men whom our army has lost, whose places could not be filled by hundreds of officers every way their superiors. They are men of talents, experience, and unquestionable science — men as incomparably the superiors of Beauregard and Lee as can be well imagined; and, of course, Macgruder, Johnson, Hardee, and the traitors of that class, do not expect to be named in connection with officers of science in either service.

Mordecai has refused to take service under the Rebels and to make war upon the stars and stripes; and although he has erred, he has not added *disgrace* to the crime of withholding from his country his military experience in this her hour of need. We cannot excuse his conduct; but we honor his self-respect; and hope at some future day, to see him restored to a field of usefulness compatible with the feelings and sentiments of an honorable man.

I am looking here for a house or for lodgings. I now think of taking country lodgings until the autumn, in hopes that I may be able by that time to see my way a little better. But I believe I have said that before.

I write on hardly knowing where to stop, when I have so much, as it seems to me, that I wish to say. If you can write to me, try to say something that may soothe a heart oppressed with grief and torn by conflicting emotions and claims. God knows I do not set myself above other men; but if I had had the means of independence for my family, I should have pursued just the course I have taken, and that without hesitation; and I scorned to allow pecuniary considerations to influence my conduct in a case of honor and feeling.

Say everything that is soothing and affectionate to my dear mother and our sisters and other relatives and send this letter to our dear George, with my love to him and his.

How I shall get it to you I do not yet know, but receive it as a message from the innermost heart of

Your afflicted, but affectionate, brother,

A. MORDECAI

Samuel Mordecai, Esq.

REBELS WITH A VENGEANCE

In May, 1861, the Jewish community of Shreveport, Louisiana, paid their "respects" to the Reverend Samuel M. Isaacs, editor of The Jewish Messenger, of New York City. Isaacs had adjured his coreligionists to "stand by the flag" — but in the spring of 1861 the flag which he had in mind was not much to the taste of Shreveport society.

The leaders of Shreveport Jewry, most of whom were German immigrants, were not satisfied to be merely 100 per cent Southern patriots; like some latter-day Jews who have been integrated into the modern political state, they insisted on being 125 per cent patriots.

The resolutions which they adopted in regard to The Jewish Messenger and its editor were printed in that militantly Unionist newspaper on June 7, 1861.

TERRIBLE CENSURE. — We have refrained from publishing the many extraordinary letters we have recently received from the South, though we have carefully laid them by for future reference. But the following "resolutions" are so peculiarly rich, especially considering that we have only one subscriber in Shreveport, and he has not paid for two years, that we cannot resist the temptation of putting them in print:

WHEREAS, we received the *Jewish Messenger* of the 26th of April, a paper published in New York, in which an appeal has been made to all, whether native or foreign born, Christian or Israelite. An article headed "Stand by the Flag!" in which the editor makes an appeal to support the stars and stripes, and to rally as one man for the Union and the Constitution. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we, the Hebrew congregation of Shreveport, scorn and repel your advice, although we might be called Southern rebels; still, as law-abiding citizens, we solemnly pledge ourselves to stand by, protect, and honor the flag, with its stars and stripes, the Union and Constitution of the Southern Confederacy with our lives, liberty, and all that is dear to us.

RESOLVED, That we, the members of said congregation, bind ourselves to discontinue the subscription of the *Jewish Messenger*, and all Northern papers opposed to our holy cause, and also to use all honorable means in having said paper banished from our beloved country.

RESOLVED, That while we mistook your paper for a religious one, which ought to be strictly neutral in politics, we shall from this out treat it with scorn, as a black republican paper, and not worthy of Southern patronage; and that, according to our understanding, church and politics ought never to be mingled, as it has been the ruination of any country captivated by the enticing words of preachers.

RESOLVED, That we, the members of said congregation, have lost all confidence and regard to the Rev. S. M. Isaacs, editor and proprietor of the *Jewish Messenger*, and see in him an enemy to our interest and welfare, and believe it to be more unjust for one who preaches the Word of God, and to advise us to act as traitors and renegades to our adopted country, and raise hatred and dissatisfaction in our midst, and assisting to start a bloody civil war amongst us.

RESOLVED, That we believe, like the Druids of old, the duties of those who preach the Holy Word to be first in the line of battle, and to cheer up those fighting for liberty against their oppressors, in place of those who are proclaiming now, from their pulpits, words to encourage an excited people, and praying for bloody vengeance against us. Brutus, while kissing Caesar, plunged the dagger to his heart.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the editor of the *Jewish Messenger*.

RESOLVED, That papers friendly to the Southern cause are politely requested to publish the foregoing resolutions.

M. BAER, *President*

ED. EBERSTADT, *Secretary, pro tem.*

BREAD CAST UPON THE WATERS

Some time in June, 1861, the Jewish women of Charlotte, North Carolina, undertook to contribute \$150.00 to destitute families of troops at the front.

In a resolution of gratitude the town commissioners promised not to forget this act of philanthropy and, in addition, to favor the removal of anti-Jewish political disabilities imposed by the state constitution.

The organic statute of 1776, as amended in 1835, denied every one who was not a Christian the right to hold public office. This religious test was, in fact, not removed until 1868, when the Reconstructionist



Courtesy, Rabbi Julian B. Feibelman, New Orleans

RABBI JAMES KOPPEL GUTHEIM

A prayer for "our beloved country, the Confederate States of
America."

(see p. 38)



Courtesy, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library

EUGENIA (MRS. PHILIP) PHILLIPS

“The first to rebel — the last to succumb.”

(see p. 42)

legislature — aided by its Negro members — adopted a new constitution omitting all religious tests except a belief in Almighty God.

The resolution of the Charlotte commissioners and the editorial comments on it are reprinted from The Charleston (S.C.) Daily Courier of June 24, 1861.

HEBREW PATRIOTISM — The fair daughters of Judah are nobly represented in Charlotte, N. C., as may be seen in the following communication:

To the Intendant and Commissioners of the Town of Charlotte.

Gentlemen:

Enclosed find the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars from the Jewish ladies, residents of this town, to be appropriated for the benefit of the families of our brave volunteers now fighting in defence of our home and liberty.

With our prayer to Almighty God for their safety, and that he will bless our glorious cause with victory and success,

We remain,

Yours respectfully,

THE JEWISH LADIES OF CHARLOTTE

The Commissioners of the town have very properly published this noble instance, and have

RESOLVED, That the thanks of the community are due, and they are hereby tendered through the Commissioners of the town, to "the Jewish ladies of Charlotte" for the generous, patriotic and appropriate contribution above enclosed: one hundred and fifty dollars . . . for the families of our absent soldiers, and the Commissioners cannot forego the opportunity of testifying to the uniform kindness and liberality which has ever characterized the entire Jewish population of our town, since their residence amongst us, being among the foremost in every benevolent or other enterprise tending in any way to the advancement or prosperity of our town; and to congratulate them upon the removal now, or soon to be effected, of all unjust restrictions upon those who have contributed so liberally not only of money, but of men for upholding the equal rights of the South.

This instance is more praiseworthy from the fact that the Jewish population is not large in North Carolina, we believe, and not relatively large in Charlotte, and that North Carolina still retains a relic of law disqualifying the Jew — a law which we trust, as above intimated, will soon yield to the true spirit of the American Constitution.

[*The Charleston Daily Courier*, June 24, 1861]

A RABBI GOES INTO EXILE

Rabbi Jacob (or James) Koppel Gutheim was probably the most distinguished of the South's Jewish ministers. Like most of mid-nineteenth-century America's Jews, he was a native of Germany; he had emigrated to these shores in 1843. Six years later he accepted a rabbinical post in New Orleans.

Gutheim was not a "political" rabbi; yet during the course of the War he did become a passionate supporter of the Southern cause. The prayer that he delivered at the dedication of the Montgomery, Alabama, synagogue, in May, 1862, documents his devotion to the Confederacy and his break with the North where he had once served a congregation.

*After the occupation of New Orleans by Federal troops in the spring of 1862, Gutheim refused to take the required oath of allegiance to the "Dictator of Washington." He chose instead, along with most of the members of his congregation, to leave the city. His friend, the Reverend Isaac Leeser, of Philadelphia, unostentatiously, but sympathetically, reported his departure in *The Occident*.*

Following his expulsion, Gutheim became the rabbi of the cities of Montgomery, Alabama, and Columbus, Georgia, until the conflict was over. He then returned to New Orleans.

The prayer at the dedication of the Alabama synagogue is taken from an unmarked clipping of a Montgomery newspaper. It is from the I. Solomon Collection in the manuscript department of Duke University Library.

*Leeser's comments on his friend Gutheim are found in *The Occident*,*

XXI (1863), 140-41, 234-35. See also Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1951), pp. 47-51.

NEW ORLEANS. — It is with deep regret that we announce the departure of our friend and former correspondent, the Reverend James K. Gutheim, from New Orleans, in obedience to a military order, banishing those who will or cannot take the oath of allegiance offered to the citizens of that place. We know the value of Mr. G. as a Jewish minister, and fear that his leaving may result in the dismemberment of his flock during the prevalence of the fearful war now raging in this country. We have nothing to advance one way or the other respecting the mandate which condemns Mr. G. with many of his congregation to exile and poverty; but we trust in the Merciful One that He may soon send peace to smile again on the land, and restore the shepherd and his flock to their homes and sanctuary.

NEW ORLEANS. — When our last number was ready for the press we received several items respecting New Orleans, which we see had also been sent to the papers [*The Jewish Messenger*] in New York and [*The Israelite* in] Cincinnati, wherefore we will condense them to suit the comparative narrow limits at our command, our contemporaries, appearing weekly, having far greater room for news purpose than falls to our lot.

We have already announced that the Rev. Mr. Gutheim was compelled to quit the city for political reasons. In brief, his opinions and the expression of them were displeasing to the military authorities, and having refused to take the oath of allegiance demanded of all as the price for permission to reside there, he was banished with the greater portion of his flock, who were similarly situated with himself. The Sabbath before he left, the synagogue was crowded, as many persons besides his own congregation wanted to hear him once more in the place which will know him no longer under the present condition of things. Where he now is we cannot

tell, not having heard from him; though we have learned indirectly that when about to sail with his banished members and their families from their late homes, he offered up a touching prayer to the throne of the Most Merciful, which moved the hearts of the hearers; and let us hope that the affliction which they now endure may counsel them to turn away from the vanities of this world, and seek refuge in the practice of religion, so that they may find consolation even in the comparative state of poverty into which they have been plunged.

Gutheim Dedicates an Alabama Synagogue

Montgomery, Alabama, May 16, 1862

ELOQUENT PRAYER

The following eloquent and appropriate prayer was delivered by the Rev. Mr. Gutheim, of New Orleans, in this city, on the occasion of the dedication of the Jewish Synagogue Kahl Montgomery:

Almighty and most merciful God — Father of all mankind — sole and omnipotent Ruler of the universe! Thou, whose throne is the heaven and whose foot-stool the earth; let Thy glory fill the house, which we this day dedicate to Thy holy name, and shelter it under the wings of Thy heavenly protection.

Listen, O Father, to the supplications of Thy children, that are now gathered together and that will in future here assemble, to pour out their hearts before Thy throne of mercy! Grant consolation to every mourner — relief to every distressed — comfort to every afflicted — hope to every sufferer — a gracious pardon to every repentant sinner — and to all, who come in Thy name, Thy heavenly blessing.

Open our eyes, that we may see the beauties of Thy law. May Thy word prove to us the quickening dew of life, refreshing to our hearts and grateful to our minds.

Regard, O Father, in Thine abundant favor and benevolence our beloved country, the Confederate States of America. May our young Republic increase in strength, prosperity and renown; may the helm of state be piloted with judgment; may wisdom resound in the halls of legislation, and harmony, obedience to the law,

fortitude in trials and a self-sacrificing devotion prevail among the people. Endow, O God, the chosen Executive and his advisers with the spirit of wisdom, of knowledge and of strength, so as to be able to devise and to execute the best measures for the defense of our liberties and the protection of our homes and our lives. Behold, O God, and judge between us and our enemies, who have forced upon us this unholy and unnatural war — who hurl against us their poisoned arrows steeped in ambition and revenge. May they soon discover the error of their ways, relinquish their cruel designs of subjugation, their lust of gain and dominion, and yield a ready and willing ear to the dictates of humanity, of justice and of right.

Bless, O Father, our efforts in a cause which we conceive to be just; the defense of our liberties and rights and independence, under just and equitable laws. May harmony of sentiment and purity of motive, unflinching courage, immovable trust in our leaders, both in national council and in the field, animate all the people of our beloved Confederate States, so as to be equal to all emergencies — ready for every sacrifice, until our cause be vindicated as the light of day.

And we pray Thee, O God, to bless and protect the armed hosts, that now stand forth in the defense of our sacred cause. — Vain are the exertions of man without Thy aid. Behold, O Father, and cover with the shield of Thy heavenly guardianship our sons, our brothers and our friends — the flower and the hope of the land. Endow their hearts with courage — nerve their arms with strength in the hour of combat. May the breaches lately made in our lines soon be repaired, a series of glorious victories blot out our recent reverses [at Ft. Donelson, Nashville, Shiloh, and New Orleans], and the unrighteous invaders be repulsed on every side, abashed, confounded and discomfited. Thou, O Lord, who makest peace in the highest heavens, mayest Thou bless us with a speedy and honorable peace, so that safety, confidence and happiness again smile upon the land, and our independence be recognized by all families of the earth.

We also crave Thy benediction for the State of Alabama, its government and people, its institutions and laws. May Thy blessing rest upon its soil, and every honest pursuit of industry and commerce thrive and flourish.

Grant Thy heavenly protection to this City; spread over it the bower of Thy peace, and deliver it from every danger and evil. May it obtain gladness and prosperity, increase in godliness and virtue, and may unrighteousness and vice flee away. May the spirit of brotherly love, evinced this day, for ever live in this community and be manifested in all the transactions of life. — Side by side, and shoulder to shoulder let us promote every laudable enterprize, sacredly observing the respect due to each other's religious faith and opinions, and looking up to Thee as our common Parent. "O how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Guard and protect also, O Father, Thy people, the whole house of Israel, throughout their dispersions. May the clouds of oppression and injustice, which here and there darken the sky, soon vanish, and the sun of freedom and justice break forth in the horizon of mankind. Mayest Thou accelerate the promised time when *truth, peace and happiness* will embrace the whole human family in one brotherhood, and when the prediction of the Prophet will be fulfilled, "Then will the Lord be King over the whole earth — on that day the Lord will be One and his name One" [*Zechariah* 14:9]. Amen.

EUGENIA LEVY PHILLIPS: FIERY SECESSIONIST

Eugenia Levy Phillips, the daughter of a respected and highly educated Charleston insurance executive, Jacob C. Levy, was the wife of a famous lawyer and former member of Congress. Her husband, Colonel Philip Phillips, of Mobile, Alabama, and Washington, D.C., was probably the most distinguished Jew in the United States during the decade before the War.

Mrs. Phillips was a fiery, uncompromising, vocal, and belligerent rebel. When her sister, Phoebe Yates Pember, wrote years later, in A Southern Woman's Story (New York, 1879), that "the women of the South . . . were the first to rebel — the last to succumb," she may very well have been thinking of Colonel Phillips' volatile wife. A gauge

of Mrs. Phillips' attitude to the Union is supplied by her remarks that the Federal Government was guilty of "cruelties and fearful vindictiveness" and that Lincoln's cabinet officers, William H. Seward and Simon Cameron, were "the jailors of American liberty." Suspected of espionage, Mrs. Phillips was imprisoned in Washington for three weeks in the late summer of 1861. After her release she was exiled to the South and took up residence in New Orleans with her family.

Annoyed at that time by the constant insults directed at the Union forces by Southern women passionately devoted to the Confederate cause, the general commanding the forces of occupation, Benjamin F. Butler, sought to solve his problem by declaring that any woman guilty of such misconduct would be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation. "A woman of the town" was General Butler's delicate way of referring to a prostitute.

In the case of Mrs. Phillips, different action was taken, as can be seen from the following order issued by the exasperated Butler. Ship Island, mentioned in the order, was an unhealthy, desert-like sand bar in the Gulf of Mexico. From the Diary and from the Memoirs of Mrs. Phillips, it would appear that she was not guilty of the charge for which she was imprisoned.

The Special Order, reprinted below, is taken from *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886), Series I, Vol. XV, pp. 510-11.

SPECIAL ORDERS,

HDQRS. DEPARTMENT OF THE GULF,

No. 150

New Orleans, June 30, 1862

Mrs. Philips, wife of Philip Philips [Phillips], having been once imprisoned for her traitorous proclivities and acts at Washington and released by the clemency of the Government, and having been found training her children to spit upon officers of the United States, for which act of one of those children both her husband and herself apologized and were again forgiven, is now found on the balcony of her house during the passage of the funeral procession

of Lieutenant DeKay laughing and mocking at his remains, and upon being inquired of by the commanding general if this fact were so contemptuously replied, "I was in good spirits that day";

It is therefore ordered that she be not "regarded and treated as a common woman," of whom no officer or soldier is bound to take notice but as an uncommon, bad and dangerous woman, stirring up strife and inciting to riot; and that therefore she be confined at Ship Island, in the State of Mississippi, within proper limits there until further orders, and that she be allowed one female servant, and no more, if she so choose; that one of the houses for hospital purposes be assigned her as quarters and a soldier's ration each day served out to her with the means of cooking the same, and that no verbal or written communication be allowed with her except through this office, and that she be kept in close confinement until removed to Ship Island.

By order of Major-General [Benjamin F.] Butler.

R. S. DAVIS,
Captain and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General

THE MATRON OF CHIMBORAZO

One of the daughters of Jacob C. Levy, of Charleston and Savannah, was the outspoken Confederate sympathizer, Eugenia Phillips, whose encounter with General Benjamin F. Butler is recorded in the selection above. Another of Levy's daughters was Phoebe Yates Levy, who in 1856, at the age of thirty-three, married a Gentile, Thomas Noyes Pember, of Boston. Pember died five years later, and when Phoebe Pember appeared on the scene in 1861, she was already a widow.

Jacob C. Levy had done a good job in educating his children. Certainly his daughters, Eugenia and Phoebe, wrote beautifully; Samuel Yates Levy, his son, was a poet, and the father himself was the author of a very interesting apologia for Judaism, still in manuscript.

Forced by need to support herself, Phoebe Pember became matron of

the Chimborazo Hospital in Richmond, a complex of wards that sheltered about 7,000 sick and wounded soldiers.

She recounted her experiences at the hospital in a memoir-like book, entitled A Southern Woman's Story (New York: G. W. Carleton & Co., 1879). The book was recently republished, under the editorship of Bell Irvin Wiley, as A Southern Woman's Story: Life in Confederate Richmond (Jackson, Tenn.: McCowat-Mercer Press, 1959). The following excerpts are taken from pp. 36-44, 72-76, of the original 1879 edition.

While in Richmond, Mrs. Pember carried on a correspondence with her sister Eugenia, who was four years her senior. From her book and from her extant letters, it is abundantly clear that she had few social contacts with the "new" German Jews — immigrants — who were to be found everywhere in the South. It is interesting to note that, while she dropped the family name Levy, she did retain the name — Yates — of her maternal Anglo-Jewish forbears. Her associates were nearly all Gentiles, and she moved in the highest social circles in the Confederacy. Among her closest friends were Confederate Secretary of War George W. Randolph and his wife, with whom she lived for some time in war-time Richmond; it was Mrs. Randolph who was responsible for Mrs. Pember's appointment as matron at the Chimborazo Hospital.

Judging from her writings — and, of course, from her own marriage — Mrs. Pember had no objection whatsoever to intermarriage; yet, as her father's daughter, she was conscious, if not proud, of her faith — of her "church." This attitude toward Judaism is reflected in the letter to her sister Eugenia, printed below. It is found in the Philip Phillips Papers in the Library of Congress.

[Note: "A Prayer for Peace," by Mrs. Pember's brother, Samuel Yates Levy, was published in the American Jewish Archives, X (1958), 133-34.]

... Pleasant episodes often occurred to vary disappointments and lighten duties.

"Kin you writ me a letter?" drawled a whining voice from a bed in one of the wards, a cold day in '62.

The speaker was an up-country Georgian, one of the kind called "Goubers" by the soldiers generally; lean, yellow, attenuated,

with wispy strands of hair hanging over his high, thin cheek-bones. He put out a hand to detain me and the nails were like claws.

"Why do you not let the nurse cut your nails?"

"Because I aren't got any spoon, and I use them instead."

"Will you let me have your hair cut then? You can't get well with all that dirty hair hanging about your eyes and ears."

"No, I can't git my hear cut, kase as how I promised my mammy that I would let it grow till the war be over. Oh, it's onlucky to cut it!"

"Then I can't write any letter for you. Do what I wish you to do, and then I will oblige you."

This was plain talking. The hair was cut (I left the nails for another day), my portfolio brought, and sitting by the side of his bed I waited for further orders. They came with a formal introduction:

for Mrs. Marthy Brown.

My dear Mammy:

I hope this finds you well, as it leaves me well, and I hope that I shall git a furlough Christmas, and come and see you, and I hope that you will keep well, and all the folks be well by that time, as I hopes to be well myself. This leaves me in good health, as I hope it finds you and —

But here I paused, as his mind seemed to be going round in a circle, and asked him a few questions about his home, his position during the last summer's campaign, how he got sick, and where his brigade was at that time. Thus furnished with some material to work upon, the letter proceeded rapidly. Four sides were conscientiously filled, for no soldier would think a letter worth sending home that showed any blank paper. Transcribing his name, the number of his ward and proper address, so that an answer might reach him — the composition was read to him. Gradually his pale face brightened, a sitting posture was assumed with difficulty (for, in spite of his determined effort in his letter "to be well," he was far from convalescence). As I folded and directed it, contributed the expected five-cent stamp, and handed it to him, he gazed cautiously around to be sure there were no listeners.

“Did you writ all that?” he asked, whispering, but with great emphasis.

“Yes.”

“Did *I* say all that?”

“I think you did.”

A long pause of undoubted admiration — astonishment ensued. What was working in that poor mind? Could it be that Psyche had stirred one of the delicate plumes of her wing and touched that dormant soul?

“Are you married?” The harsh voice dropped very low.

“I am not. At least, I am a widow.”

He rose still higher in bed. He pushed away desperately the tangled hay on his brow. A faint color fluttered over the hollow cheek, and stretching out a long piece of bone with a talon attached, he gently touched my arm and with constrained voice whispered mysteriously:

“You wait!”

And readers, I *am* waiting still; and I here caution the male portion of creation who may adore through their mental powers, to respect my confidence, and not seek to shake my constancy.

At intervals the lower wards, unused except in times of great need, for they were unfurnished with any comforts, would be filled with rough soldiers from camp, sent to recuperate after field service, who may not have seen a female face for months; and though generally too much occupied to notice them much, their partly concealed, but determined regard would become embarrassing. One day, while directing arrangements with a ward-master, my attention was attracted by the pertinacious staring of a rough-looking Texan. He walked round and round me in rapidly narrowing circles, examining every detail of my dress, face, and figure; his eye never fixing upon any particular part for a moment but traveling incessantly all over me. It seemed the wonder of the mind at the sight of a new creation. I moved my position; he shifted his to suit the new arrange-

ment — again a change was made, so obviously to get out of his range of vision, that with a delicacy of feeling that the roughest men always treated me with, he desisted from his inspection so far, that though his person made no movement, his neck twisted round to accommodate his eyes, till I supposed some progenitor of his family had been an owl. The men began to titter, and my patience became exhausted.

“What is the matter, my man? Did you never see a woman before?”

“Jerusalem!” he ejaculated, not making the slightest motion towards withdrawing his determined notice, “I never did see such a nice one. Why, you’s as pretty as a pair of red shoes with green strings.”

These were the two compliments laid upon the shrine of my vanity during four years’ contact with thousands of patients, and I commit them to paper to stand as a visionary portrait, to prove to my readers that a woman with attractions similar to a pair of red shoes with green strings must have some claim to the apple of Paris [in the Homeric epic].

Scenes of pathos occurred daily — scenes that wrung the heart and forced the dew of pity from the eyes; but feeling that enervated the mind and relaxed the body was a sentimental luxury that was not to be indulged in. There was too much work to be done, too much active exertion required, to allow the mental or physical powers to succumb. They were severely taxed each day. Perhaps they balanced, and so kept each other from sinking. There was, indeed, but little leisure to sentimentalize, the necessity for action being ever present.

After the battle of Fredericksburg [where the Union sustained a defeat in December, 1862], while giving small doses of brandy to a dying man, a low, pleasant voice said, “Madam.” It came from a youth not over eighteen years of age, seeming very ill, but so placid, with that earnest, far-away gaze, so common to the eyes of those who are looking their last on this world. Does God in his mercy give a glimpse of coming peace, past understanding, that we see reflected in the dying eyes into which we look with such strong yearning to fathom what they see? He shook his head in negative

to all offers of food or drink or suggestions of softer pillows and lighter covering.

“I want Perry,” was his only wish.

On inquiry I found that Perry was the friend and companion who marched by his side in the field and slept next to him in camp, but of whose whereabouts I was ignorant. Armed with a requisition from our surgeon, I sought him among the sick and wounded at all the other hospitals. I found him at Camp Jackson, put him in my ambulance, and on arrival at my own hospital found my patient had dropped asleep. A bed was brought and placed at his side, and Perry, only slightly wounded, laid upon it. Just then the sick boy awoke wearily, turned over, and the half-unconscious eye fixed itself. He must have been dreaming of the meeting, for he still distrusted the reality. Illness had spiritualized the youthful face; the transparent forehead, the delicate brow so clearly defined, belonged more to heaven than earth. As he recognized his comrade the wan and expressionless lips curved into the happiest smile — the angel of death had brought the light of summer skies to that pale face. “Perry!” he cried, “Perry!” and not another word, but with one last effort he threw himself into his friend’s arms, the radiant eyes closed, but the smile still remained — he was dead.

Feminine sympathy being much more demonstrative than masculine, particularly when compared with a surgeon’s unresponsiveness, who inured to the aspects of suffering, has more control over his professional feelings, the nurses often summoned me when only the surgeon was needed. One very cold night . . . [in] 1863, when sleeping at my hospital rooms, an answer was made to my demand as to who was knocking and what was wanted. The nurse from the nearest ward said, something was wrong with Fisher. Instructing him to find the doctor immediately and hastily getting on some clothing I hurried to the scene, for Fisher was an especial favorite. He was quite a young man, of about twenty years of age, who had been wounded ten months previously very severely, high up on the leg near the hip, and who by dint of hard nursing, good food and

plenty of stimulant had been given a fair chance for recovery. The bones of the broken leg had slipped together, then lapped, and nature, anxious as she always is to help herself, had thrown a ligature across, uniting the severed parts; but after some time the side curved out, and the wounded leg was many inches shorter than its fellow. He had been the object of sedulous care on the part of all — surgeons, ward-master, nurse, and matron, and the last effort made to assist him was by the construction of an open cylinder of pasteboard, made in my kitchen, of many sheets of coarse brown paper, cemented together with very stiff paste, and baked around the stove-pipe. This was to clasp by its own prepared curve the deformed hip, and be a support for it when he was able to use his crutches.

He had remained through all his trials stout, fresh, and hearty, interesting in appearance, and so gentle-mannered and uncomplaining that we all loved him. Supported on his crutches, he had walked up and down his ward for the first time since he was wounded, and seemed almost restored. That same night he turned over and uttered an exclamation of pain.

Following the nurse to his bed, and turning down the covering, a small jet of blood spurted up. The sharp edge of the splintered bone must have severed an artery. I instantly put my finger on the little orifice and awaited the surgeon. He soon came — took a long look and shook his head. The explanation was easy; the artery was imbedded in the fleshy part of the thigh and could not be taken up. No earthly power could save him.

There was no object in detaining Dr. _____. He required his time and his strength, and long I sat by the boy, unconscious himself that any serious trouble was apprehended. The hardest trial of my duty was laid upon me; the necessity of telling a man in the prime of life, and fullness of strength that there was no hope for him.

It was done at last, and the verdict received patiently and courageously, some directions given by which his mother would be informed of his death, and then he turned his questioning eyes upon my face.

“How long can I live?”

“Only as long as I keep my finger upon this artery.” A pause

ensued. God alone knew what thoughts hurried through that heart and brain, called so unexpectedly from all earthly hopes and ties. He broke the silence at last.

“You can let go-”

But I could not. Not if my own life had trembled in the balance. Hot tears rushed to my eyes, a surging sound to my ears, and a deathly coldness to my lips. The pang of obeying him was spared me, and for the first and last time during the trials that surrounded me for four years, I fainted away.

A Letter to Eugenia

Richmond, 13 September, 1863.

As I am confined to my room, my dear sister, I think that I had better fill up the leisure time by answering my letters, and yours come first upon the list.

I have been quite sick with no actual disease but only what the English call “a low state.” I think that during the intense summer heats, being so much in the gangrenous and typhus wards, that the infected air may have induced this state. With all the precautions of cleanliness and ventilation the air will become close when each bed is only allowed a certain number of feet.

Dr. [James B.] McCan sent me a furlough, but I had no where to go, for if even I had the means to pay the enormous board charged, I could not go alone. I am all right again, I believe, for the cool weather has set in. Our surgeon, Dr. [Stephen E.] Habersham, went off and so did my assistant, Miss [Kate] Ball, so that double work fell on me. I suggested to the surgeon in chief to make me surgeon in charge, on the ground that Toney Lumpkin’s mother had been a colonel and his aunt a justice of the peace, but nothing came of it.

I have not seen [your son] Eugene [Phillips] for some time, but heard that they were all studying very hard. I met him on Main Street looking very nicely in his undress uniform, which I believe he moved all creation to get. I would not give him too much money

if I were you. He gets more than enough to support himself, fifty dollars a month, ten of which goes to his mess bill. All his clothing he gets at government price and I have his washing done for him. They charge three dollars a dozen here and, as I am entitled to have mine done at one dollar at the hospital, I extend the permission to his. This leaves him forty dollars a month clear, quite enough for a boy of his age. It is all that I get and I make it answer, though I pay full price for all wearing apparel. I have told him to come to me for all the sewing and mending he wants done, and you need not tell him anything on the subject, as if I object to do what he might ask, I should have no delicacy in telling him so.

I am more than surprised at the desponding tone of your letters. You ought to be with the Army and hear the soldiers talk. I would like anybody to tell *them* that *they* had been beaten at Gettysburg, or anywhere else. They would laugh in your face. They have been obliged, they allow, to fall back before superior force at times, but never where there have been any equality of numbers. I have never had a doubt of the final end, even if, as you say, "Lagrange [probably Lagrange, in West Tennessee, near the Mississippi line] should become a frontier town." I live almost in the Army and find every man willing to fight to the end. They are patient, enduring, and brave and such material cannot fail.

There has been a cabinet of war sitting at the President's for the last week, resulting in Gen. Lee being sent with a large part of the Army to Tennessee. [The Union Gen. George G.] Meade, they say, has but *one* effective corps and [Confederate Gen. George E.] Pickett's division can keep that in check here. I went to town to pay a visit at the Warwicks and a gentleman stopping to hand me out of an awkward ambulance proved to be Gen. Lee. He looked much older and greatly worn.

I shall lose very kind and devoted friends by [President Jefferson] Davis appointing [Col. Jeremy F.] Gilmer a major general, and sending him to Charleston. I have spent every evening with them for five months, and shall have no place to go now. I live a mile and a half from the city proper. As a sett off Mrs. Lawton has come in, as [Gen. Alexander R.] Lawton has been made Quartermaster General, but she lives where all my other friends live at the extreme

west end. It makes the prospect of the coming winter very gloomy for me, for though I have an ambulance it is against orders for it to leave the hospital after eight o'clock, which precludes all spending the evening out.

Gen. Gilmer writes very hopefully from Charleston. He says that the enemy will certainly take [the Charleston forts] Sumter, Gregg, Moultrie, and Simpkins, as they have already taken [Ft.] Wagner, but the inner line of defences is very strong. Time is of the greatest importance, to strengthen the city, as the call of [Gen. Pierre G. T.] Beauregard for Negroes to work had not been properly complied with. Beauregard seems to have got a little above himself and transmitted all his orders thro' [his chief of staff, Gen. Thomas] Jordan, a man who was, or rather had made himself, so obnoxious to the citizens that they paid no attention to his demands. I hear from what the newspapers say is reliable authority that at the time of the first attack [Gen. Roswell S.] Ripley and Jordan were so engaged in blockade running that the safety of their expected cargoes were uppermost in their minds, instead of the safety of the city. Ripley has made a million, they say, and Jordan half as much. General Gilmer counts a great deal upon the high equinoctial winds at this season among the clumsy and unmanageable monitors [armored warships], and also upon those three ironclad steamers now receiving their armament in France. The splendid guns, firing six hundred and seventy-five pounds, have been mounted on the battery in the city, and also a mortar throwing a shell weighing four hundred and twenty-five pounds. General Gilmer pronounced all the defences at Savannah and in the harbor useless as they were constructed with mud, through which the new projectiles go without difficulty. They are cutting them down and building them of sand; he thinks in time.

I wish that [your daughter] Fanny [Phillips] would accept [Assistant Secretary of War John A. Campbell's daughter] Kate Campbell's invitation and come for a time to Richmond. I would give her half my room with pleasure, whenever she would come to me, and it is quite as nice as at any hotel. It is away from the hospital, to which she need not come unless she wished to do so, and even then my office, parlor, kitchen, and laundry are pretty

far from the wards, with which she would not be brought into contact. I have a sweetheart for her, though I am not much of a match maker. He is a nephew of Gen. Lee, one of the Shirley Carters of Brentford, the oldest Virginia family extant [the first Carters of Virginia had come from Hertfordshire, England, in 1649]. That is also his name, and a sweet fellow he is, about twenty-six. I have talked to him (for he comes to see me almost daily) about Fanny till he is half in love with her, and I think he could win any girl's heart. Ask [your daughter] Lena [Caroline (Lena) Phillips Myers] if she will not give me Fanny's daguerreotype I gave her last winter. I hope that she will not refuse me such a trifle! Particularly as she was indebted to my generosity for it.

The feeling here against the Yankees exceeds anything I could imagine, particularly among the good Christians. I spent an evening among a particularly pious sett. One lady said she had a pile of Yankee bones lying around her pump so that the first glance on opening her eyes would rest upon them. Another begged me to get her a Yankee skull to keep her toilette trinkets in. All had something of the kind to say. At last I lifted my voice and congratulated myself at being born of a nation and religion that did not enjoin forgiveness on its enemies, that enjoyed the blessed privilege of praying for an eye for an eye, and a life for a life, and was not one of those for whom Christ died in vain, considering the present state of feeling. I proposed that till the war was over they should all join the Jewish Church, let forgiveness and peace and good will alone, and put their trust in the sword of the Lord and Gideon. It was a very agreeable evening, and all was taken in good part. I certainly had the best of the argument, and the gentlemen seconded me ably. Yesterday some of the gentlemen came out, among them Major Coxe, who asked me after either you or the girls. He is a very fine looking, rather dissipated looking man.

I paid a visit yesterday about which I would like to consult you, not about the visit but the results, as you are acquainted with one of the parties. The friend I called on spoke very kindly of the life of exertion and self-sacrifice she fancied I was leading [as a hospital matron], dilated very strongly upon the sinfulness and scandal making of any woman who would or could say anything reflecting

upon me and, to make a long story short, I found that Mrs. L-y was the mischief maker. She brought no charges, it seems, against me, only that small and mean style of *surmising* which is worse than the damning with faint praise. "She knew what brought me to Richmond; no one could tell *her* anything about *me*; if I lived alone I had my reasons." All this is very bad and very malicious; my life is irreproachable now as it morally always has been. There is nothing in the past or the present to touch it. My time is past [passed] from morning till night by the bedside of the sick and dying, fulfilling to the extent of my capability the duties of my position, never considering my personal comfort, living what to most women would be a life of self-abnegation and sacrifice, but which is neither to me. Every one I come in contact with has respected and made much of me, and here comes this woman pretending to know something wrong in my former life and present motives. It is like a small but poisonous sting. Would you advise me to see her and speak to her of the mischief she does, or not to notice the matter. You know my life is a little peculiar. I am entirely independent and alone, perhaps younger and more attractive than the very old and very unattractive women who fill these positions, and the world might put any construction upon the matter they pleased. She said that she had heard from my sister that my work was entirely a matter of choice, but I immediately contradicted this (as the choice of such a life would naturally be considered an absurdity) and said I had no means and it was a necessity. Who would suppose or believe that days passed among fever wards and dying men, in a hospital away from the city, with no comforts and every privation, was voluntary! I dared not aspire to that!

Eugene says you mentioned something about black and white gingham at 4.50 a yard, but that I do not intend to give. I am going on a shopping expedition next week. I had to give fifty dollars a pair for leather shoes and, what is worse, wear them with the thermometer at ninety-six. I think prices are better for the purchaser here than anywhere else.

I had quite a present yesterday. I had made a black cravat for Eugene and it was lying upon my table when Major Mason of the Army came in and took it, saying he wanted one. I let him keep it

and a few hours afterwards he sent me five new novels, and twenty pounds of coffee, telling me he knew I was too honest and scrupulous to drink the hospital coffee. The only luxuries now that gentlemen can send one is tea and coffee, and at the present rates his gift cost him over one hundred dollars. Shall I send you some?

I am sure I have not the slightest idea of what you mean when you say "[Our sister] Emma is learning something." Is anything wrong with her husband [Samuel Prioleau Hamilton]? As for [our sister] Fanny's engagement I do not wonder she broke it off, but only that it was on. He was such a dirty, wriggling, little tobacco chewer. She would prize a little notoriety much, from a morbid vanity, and will not mature into any of the nobler attributes of womankind, I think. [Our niece,] Fanny [Yates] Cohen [daughter of Octavus Cohen and Henrietta Yates Levy Cohen] makes no secret, I believe, of her partial engagement.

Do tell me if you ever heard of a young man named Napier Bartlett of the Washington Volunteers, a very ugly but remarkably intelligent person, from New Orleans. The reason I wish to know is that I met him casually and did him some little favors in the way of my profession which he seems very grateful for. He writes me very often, very clever, shrewd, rather brilliant letters from camp which I have not answered, and sends me books, one or two which he has written; one, a very pretty little novelle called *Claribel, A Tale of the War*. Please answer this as I am rather curious, fancying him rather a self-made man.

If you are in earnest about being willing to preserve me some peaches if sugar was not so high, I should like a very small jar. I have over twenty pounds of sugar, being a part of my monthly rations, and I could either send it to you, or sell it for two dollars a pound here and send you the money. I don't want many. If convenient please remember me. Thank dear Fanny [your daughter] a thousand times for her offer concerning her shawl, but tell her the Quartermaster General [Lawton] has promised to let me have some woollen cloth at government prices, as soon as any comes in, which will answer. I received her letter, and will answer soon. I wish I could see [your daughter] Lena's baby [born in March, 1863, and named Eugenia, after her grandmother]. Is it really such a little

beauty? I hope that she is pleased; she was always so anxious for it.

I must say goodbye as the doctor has just come to lance a great abscess I have on my arm that has almost crazed me. You don't know how courageous the constant sight of amputations make one; you look upon anything less as trifling. Do give my kindest remembrances to all your household and write me soon. My greatest pleasure is the letters I get.

Sincerely yours

PHEBE

[Written in the left margin of the letter's first page:]

My paper is miserable but I really cannot afford better, so will have to make up in agreeability for all defects.

PREJUDICE IN GEORGIA

The desperate need for consumers' goods in a South whose industry was inadequate, whose currency was rapidly depreciating, and whose ports were closed by an effective Union blockade — all this conspired to call forth a storm of resentment. The enraged and thwarted populace needed a scapegoat on whom to vent its frustrations; all too often it found that scapegoat in the petty shopkeeper. In many villages Jews were the shopkeepers, and because they could not provide an ample supply of goods at pre-war prices, they were frequently accused of profiteering. In Georgia, they were driven out of a number of towns.

It is interesting to note that the grand jury of Talbot County, Georgia, issued a public pronouncement denouncing Jews as profiteers, and when the county's only Jewish merchant — whose conduct was above reproach — remonstrated, the grand jury waited on him and declared with extraordinary naïveté, or else with equally extraordinary chicane, that they had never meant him. Angered at this expression of bigotry, the merchant left Talbotton and never returned. His name was Lazarus

Straus. Years later his sons bought R. H. Macy & Co., and developed it into the largest retail establishment in the world.

The denunciation and banishment of the handful of Jews in Thomasville, Georgia, provoked the Jewish community of Savannah to come to the defense of their coreligionists in a sharp and bitter letter. The letter, which set forth four resolutions, was published in the Savannah Republican of September 14(?), 1862, along with an editorial "protest against both the erroneous assumption and proscriptive spirit of the third resolution," and is reprinted below.

The motion to prepare a public resolution of protest was made by Joseph Rosenthal. As recorded elsewhere in this issue, Joseph's brother, Adolph, was a Confederate soldier and in 1864 died of wounds received in battle.

MEETING OF GERMAN JEWS

Savannah, Sept. 13th, 1862

At a meeting of the German Jews of this city held this evening, Mr. M. Loewenthal was called to the Chair, and Mr. A. L. Grabfelder requested to act as Secretary.

The chairman stated the object of the meeting, when on motion of Mr. Joseph Rosenthal, a committee of five were appointed to draft suitable resolutions for the consideration of the meeting. The Committee consisted of Messrs. J. Rosenthal, S. Gardner, M. Selig, H. Meinhard and M. Brown.

The committee retired, and, returning, reported the following preamble and resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, we have read [in the *Savannah Republican*] with amazement and contempt the proceedings of a meeting at Thomasville, held on the 30th August last, in which German Jews are denounced in unmeasured terms — are prohibited from visiting that village, and banishing all those [Jews] now resident in that place.

This wholesale slander, persecution, and denunciation of a people, many of whom are pouring out their blood on the battle fields of their country, in defence of civil and religious liberty, is at war with the spirit of the age — the letter of the constitution — and the principles of reli-

gion — and can find no parallel except in the barbarities of the inquisition and the persecution of the dark ages. We feel that we have no remedy but in an appeal to an enlightened public opinion, and to that we do appeal.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, [1.] That whilst we do not indiscriminately eulogise our people, yet we boldly aver that as a class, they are as honest, as true and as faithful as their persecutors and slanderers, and to this end refer to the criminal courts of the country.

RESOLVED, [2.] That we hold all concerned in that meeting as enemies of human liberty and freedom of conscience.

RESOLVED, [3.] That all newspapers giving currency to this slander and intolerance are participators in the foul wrong, and we recommend every Jew to withhold from the same his patronage and support.

RESOLVED, [4.] that the *Savannah Republican*, and all other papers which support civil and religious liberty and are opposed to persecution, be requested to publish the above.

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

M[AGNUS] LOEWENTHAL, *Chairman*.

A. L. GRABFELDER, *Sec'y*.

MURDER IN MISSISSIPPI

One of the plagues of the Civil War was the appearance in the South and in the border states of guerrillas — ruthless murderers who, disregarding the rules of "civilized" warfare, preyed on the weak and defenseless. It was out of bands like William C. Quantrill's Missouri "bushwhackers" that there came such desperados as Jesse James and his associates, who terrorized the West for some fifteen years after the War.

The account reprinted below from The Israelite of December 4, 1863, describes how two Memphis Jewish businessmen, embarked on a cotton-buying expedition in Mississippi, were brutally assaulted by a guerrilla band.

MEMPHIS. — A late number of the *Memphis Argus* contains the following account of horrible barbarities committed upon two Hebrew gentlemen of that place:

Mr. H. L. Peres (brother of Rev. J[acob] J. Peres) and his brother-in-law, a Mr. Wolf, coreligionists, left for below [i. e., Mississippi] a couple of weeks since, for the purpose of buying cotton. They went down nearly to the mouth of White river, landed on the opposite side, and struck out into the country. Their headquarters was the residence of Mr. Anderson, a planter residing near the river, and at this place, up to the middle of last week, they had collected nine bales of cotton, which had been purchased in different portions of the neighborhood.

On Wednesday or Thursday night last, at a very late hour, a band of guerrillas suddenly appeared at Mr. Anderson's door, and demanded Messrs. Peres and Wolf. They soon appeared, and were taken out in the yard. Here the cotton was burned before their eyes and the two men were ordered to accompany the guerrillas, after being first robbed of all the money they possessed. They could do nothing else than comply, and the whole party traveled through the woods until they reached a point several miles from the river.

Here they met another portion of the band, between whom and their captors a council (evidently involving the fate of the prisoners) was held at some distance from them. At last several of the band returned, and informed Mr. Peres and Mr. Wolf that they must die. They plead for their lives but their prayers were of no avail to the demons surrounding them. Both sank to their knees, imploring their captors to spare their lives. Their answer came in the reports of two guns. Both fell — Mr. Peres pierced to the heart, and his companion severely though not mortally wounded.

After the shots were fired the murderers stood near for a few moments, and preparatory to leaving made an examination of both Peres and Wolf who lay stretched on the ground. Satisfied that the former was dead, they left him, but ascertaining that the other still lived, ordered another shot to be fired. The order was obeyed, and another ball entered the poor man's body; fortunately, however, missing a vital portion. After receiving the first shot Mr. W. feigned death, and by remaining perfectly motionless after the second had been fired, so deceived them that believing both dead, the scoundrels left.

Mr. Wolf's agony during the hours he spent in the woods cannot even be conjectured. His only hope was that Mr. P., like himself, had only been feigning death, and that both would yet recover. When morning came he crawled to his companion and learned to his horror that life was extinct and the body cold. The wound had proved instantly fatal.

Summoning all his energies Mr. Wolf, crawling and attempting to walk by turns, at length reached a hut in the vicinity, was discovered by one of the female occupants, told his adventures with the guerrillas and was received and provided for. As soon as proper attention had been paid him, a cart was sent to the woods for Mr. Peres' remains, which were brought

in. On the day following, Mr. Wolf and the corpse were conveyed to Mr. Anderson's and placed on a steamer. Both arrived here day before yesterday, and the remains of the murdered man will doubtless be interred to-day. Mr. Wolf is in an extremely critical condition; and it is feared by his friends that he can not recover.

This crime equals in diabolism the most atrocious that could be conceived. It calls for a speedy and fearful retributive justice, and that such may be accorded its blood-stained authors will be the prayer of all whose hearts have not become demonized.

THE DEATH OF A SOLDIER

In April, 1864, German-born Adolph Rosenthal, a Confederate soldier, was stationed with the ordnance department of Lieutenant General John B. Gordon's "Georgia Brigade." Rosenthal was homesick and "low," but otherwise all right. That month he wrote two letters to his good friend Magnus Lowenthal, of Savannah; in the one dated the 11th, he reported that the troops were moving forward.

The next month, on the 12th, he was wounded in the skirmishes and bloody battles around Spotsylvania Court House, Virginia. Mr. Lewis Lippman, a prominent Savannah Jewish businessman, then in Richmond, telegraphed the news to Lowenthal, and later Lippman wrote a letter describing in detail Adolph's condition.

On May 23rd, Rachel C. Semon, Adolph's sweetheart in Richmond, began writing and telegraphing Lowenthal. She reported that Adolph had taken a turn for the worse. On the 27th she telegraphed him that Adolph had passed away.

After the soldier's death, Rachel sent three letters — one to Mrs. Lowenthal, one to Adolph's brother Joseph, and one to Lowenthal himself — in which she gave expression to her grief.

It has been estimated that there were about 780,000 casualties on both sides during the four years of the bloody conflict that is commonly called the Civil War, but these are cold statistics. Here, in the letters and telegrams published below, is something that statistics can never supply — the story of the wounding and death of one man, and the sufferings of one woman who nursed and loved him.

Some time after Adolph's death, the letters and papers that touched on his army career were all surrendered to his brother Joseph. Many years later, Joseph's daughter Leah, of Cincinnati, gave them to Jacob R. Marcus of the Hebrew Union College, and he, in turn, deposited them in the American Jewish Archives.

Ordnance Dept. Gordons Brigade
April the 3th, 1864.

My dear Magnus:

Your six lines, dated March 21, with enclosed lettre have been duly received. I thank you for the trouble in forwarding the lettre. The few words "We are all well and myself have fully recovered," were pleasant news for me. I thank God for it. You was up and going about when I left S[avannah], but I knew very well that you did not feel well enough to be up. I hope you had a pleasant time on Purim [the Feast of Lots]. I spent my time in the wards [defensive stations], between Kingsville and Willmington, where we had a break down.

Have you received all my lettres from Richmond and from here? Also the kid gloves I sent to Fanny — and how did they suit? I intended to send a barrel of apples, and something else, but the apples were not to be had, and besides my money got schort, so much so that I had to draw on Louis. You will therefore please tell Fanny sche must take the good will for the deed. At some future day I will probably be able to carry out my plans.

Dear Magnus! If I tell you I feel bad, I don't half express my feelings. I am homesick, and feel wretched. I endeavored to shake of this feeling but can't do it. I had a great deal work to do since I came back; if it had not been for that I believe I would have turned crazy.

Ever since I came back the waether has been awful — snowing, raining, wind blowing, or something disagreeable all the time. No doubt it is all for my own special benefit.

The bad waether and roads will delay Grant's grant [great] advance, but we may look for him as soon as the roads will permitt.

I have no fear of the result. Our troops are in fine spirits, and will fight like bull dogs. Great preparations are going on. All our artillery has been ordred up, and I think Lee is all ready. I heard yesterday that [Confederate General James] Longstreet with his whole corps is near Richmond. If that is true, Grant will be little, soon. It will be at least two weeks before a general engagement will take place, as it will take that lenth of time for the roads to be in travelling ordre. If we whip Grant, we go into Pensylvania again. War news enough. . . .

Kiss the children for me. Write soon. Take good care of yourself and believe me to be

Truly your friend
ADOLPH

P.S. Dear Magnus! When ever a oppportunity schould offer to get me to Savannah be sure and make use of it, even if it schould cost something. Please send me some Savanah papers ocasionaly.

Camp of Gordons Brigade
April 11th, 1864.

My dear Magnus:

It was two weeks on yesterday since I wrote you a long lettre. From Richmond I wrote you a few lines, and send a pair of kid gloves for Fanny, but up to day I havn't heard anything from you. What is up?

From [my brother] Joe [Rosenthal] I havn't heard a word yet, and I commence to feel very uneasie about him. I wrote to my cousin to New York a few days ago. I hope I will hear some good news from him soon. Did you receive and forward the lettre I send to you for Joe? I am still homesick, and don't grew very fat on corn-bread and bacon.

The waether is bad, but great preparations are going on for a forward move. We have ordres to send all surplus bagage to the rear, send the sick men of[f] to hospitals, and keep seven days rations on hand, evrything indicating a forward move. I don't care how soon it does commence. Newman, who stayed over night with

me a few days ago, sends his compliments to you all. He is now appointed Q.M. [quartermaster]. He is well of[f]. . . .

Write to me regular even if you don't hear from me, as while on a march I can't write. I thank you for the S[avannah] papers. Please send them regular. I want them for General [John B.] Gordon. Give my kind regards to Fanny. Kiss the children for me.

Your
ADOLPH

THE SOUTHERN TELEGRAPH COMPANIES. . . .

Received at: Savannah, May 19, 1864, at 11 o'clock P.M.
By telegraph from Richmond . . . to M. Lowenthal

Adolph is badly wounded at Mr. Simons [Semon's] house. Is well taken care of and has every comfort.

LEWIS LIPPMAN

Richmond, May 21st, 1864

Mr. M. Lowenthal

Dear Sir:

Adolph requested me to write to you. He received your two dispatches, the last one saying that you could not come on. He is sorry to hear that you cannot come on, but he knows now the difficulty of transportation. He begs me to say to you that he is receiving all the attention a man can receive at the hands of the family. He was wounded about five days before he came here. It was in the battle of the 12th near Spotsylvania Court House. He came on and suffered very much. He came at night and the next morning he wrote me a note that he had arrived. He was at the hospital. I went out with Miss Rachel Semon in a hack and after a good deal of trouble we brought him to the house. He is now here and all of us are showing him all the attention we can, and trying to make him as comfortable as possible.

He is wounded just in the instep . . . ; the bone is broken. We

have the best physician in Richmond attending him, and he says with a little patience he will get him up and walking. The ball was extracted on the battle field where he was wounded. Yesterday the doctor lanced it on the other side . . . for the purpose of allowing the matter more chance to run and the broken pieces of bone to discharge sooner. A change for the better has taken place since he had it cut. . . .

Give my kind regards to all at home.

I remain,

Yours truly,

LEWIS LIPPMAN
Box 160 P.O.
Richmond, Va.

Adolph wants you to send a draft for the money on here to Miss R. C. Semon, 98 Main Street, two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00), as early as possible.

Richmond, Va., May 23, 1864

Mr. Lowenthal

I feel it my duty to right to you concerning Adolph. He is very sick indeade and has sufferd a graideil [great deal]. I have had the whole charge of him. Oh, how he has sufferd, and he wanted to see you so bad. I have the best doctor in the city for him and I can asure you he has all attention paid to his every want. I hav dun a sister's duty to him. To night he semes to rest much eas[i]er then he has since he has been her[e], but still I feel uneasee about him. He is as helpless as a child. We lift him in and out of bed.

I wish you would send me his brother's direction [address]. I wish to right to him. I can send him letters by my blockkade runner. It is nessessary he should know. Pore Adolph he do[e]s suffer so with his wound. I hope with the help of God he may recover. Our whol famely dos every thing to console and comfort him. He is very low spirited. Cashes [Cassius? Casper?] Myers was her to night. He is loocking so well and sais he never enjoyed better helth.

You will pleas tel his sister he leves tomorrow for to go down the river to attack the enemy. I woud like very much if you could com on as I know Adolph want to see you. Luis [Lewis] Lipman is her. He also sitt up with him.

I will close with hoping you will answer this and direct.

MISS RACHEL C. SEMON
Box 1006
Richmond, Va.

THE SOUTHERN TELEGRAPH COMPANIES. . . .

Received at Savannah, May 24, 1864, 11 o'clock 35 minutes A.M.
By telegraph from Richmond . . . to M. Lowenthal

Adolph is dying by degrees. He has given me all information in regard to his burial and affairs. If possible I shall bring his remains on to you as it was his request. We all sympathize with him and nothing remains undone for his comfort.

MISS R. C. SEMON

THE SOUTHERN TELEGRAPH COMPANIES. . . .

Received at Savannah, May 27, 1864, at 4 o'clock, P.M.
By telegraph from Richmond. . . To M. Lowenthal

Adolph died just now two thirty 2:30 P.M. everything necessary was done for him we are all in deep distress.

MISS R. C. SEMON

Augusta, Geo., June 6, 1864.

Mrs. Lowenthal

My dear Adolph[']s friend:

As you see I will not delay eney time to right to you. Yes, my friend, it gives me pleasure to converse with eney of my *dalling's* friendes. To day was indead a sad day for me. I was thinking of

pore Adolph all day, and at this moment I would giv worlides for som secret place to give vent to my broken heart. What is life to me now, that *he is goon*. Oh, you do not know the anguish of my feelings and his parting words to me — they ring in my ears: “*Giv me a passing thought sumtimes when I am goon, my darling, will you?*”

Excus my letter if not rote well. My eyes is blinded with tears. I don't think he left one on earth that will simpathies for him as much as his Rachel. Oh, when we joynd our handes and hearts together I thought he would die from griefe dayes before he died. Had I wings I would flye to heaven. I think I better stop or you will call me crasey which I am halff alreddy. Be pleas to except my thanks for your kindness to me while in your city. Should you or your husband or brother or Mr. [Dr.?] Hardwig [Harding?] ever com to Richmond, com and see me and make my house your home and eney thing I can do for you I will. Just let me know. Enclose is a piece of elastick. If it is not anueff let me know and I will send you more. Dear friend, do not get tierd of my letter.

I went to day and had pore Adolph[’s] likness taken life sise in painting for myseleff to hang in my rome. The frame I will hang in black crepe. Oh, if you could see him your heart would brake. He almost speakes to you. It will be finished tomorrow. Cost one hundred and fifty dollars. I would not care if it cost a thousand dollars. I would get it. The gentelman that tooock it was astonish[ed] when I told him he was no more and said he would take extrer pains for my sake. If I ever com to Savanah I will bring it along and show it to you. Mrs. Lowenthall, my kind friend, I will aske you somting but do not say no. Giv me my darling’s watch to ware. It is not the valuation of the votch. I want it becaus it is his and he wore it. I will ware it, and never part with it. It was his diing [dying] wish that I should proses [possess] all he owned. Giv me the watch and I want nothing more. Show this letter to your husband. I know he will not refues my only wish. If you liv for years you will always find it upon me. I could say a gradiel [great deal] but I dare not. If you should not find all right in dear Adolph[’s] affairs hav patance and all will be right in time. I am reddy at eney time to helpe towardses giving him a handsom tome stone. I will pay all

if you are satisfide. I fiel it my duty to do so. Oh, *God*, would that my darling had lived. You would of known all and seen a gradiel, but the will of God an[d] not ours be dun.

I must stop. I am haleff crasy. Go somtimes and loock at his grave for me, and imagin I am thare. Let a gardner fix it up handsom, and I will pay all expences. I know I cannot stay long from Savanah on account of seeing his *grave*. Go and see it. Tell your dear husband also to visit somtimes and I know Hardwig [Harding?] will visit sometime. He promised me he would. Tel him to right to me somtimes, and let me know how it looks.

I will close as I know this dos not enterest you eny, but you will forgiv me if you find enything wrong in this. Remember me to Mr. and Mrs. Eckman and famely, Mr. and Mrs. Einstein and famely and all enquir[in]g friends, to your kind husband and brother in law. A kiss for all the children and except the same for yourseleff.

From your ever true and devoted fri[en]d

RACHEL

Answer and direct Miss R. C. Semon, Car[e] of C. W. Hersey, Broud St., Augusta, Geo.

[Written upside-down at the top of the letter's fifth page:]

I leve for Mountgomery Tuesday evening. Will return to Augusta next Monday. Good by, God bless you all.

Richmond, Va., June 10, 1864.

Mr. Joe Rosenthal

My beloved Adolph[']s broth[er]:

How shall I right? I cannot tel, my heart is broake. Your dear *Adolph* is ded. Oh, *God*, it is two true! He died in my armes. All that could be dun on earth was dun for him. He died a good Jew. We even had him *benched* [blessed by giving him a new name in accordance with rabbinic custom, in order, as the Talmud says, to "cause an evil decree passed on man to be cancelled" (*Rosh Ha-Shanah* 16b. See also *Bereshith Rabbah* 44:12; *Mishneh Torah, Hilkoth Teshuvah* II.4; *Shulhan Aruk, Yoreh Deah* 335:10, *hagah.*)]

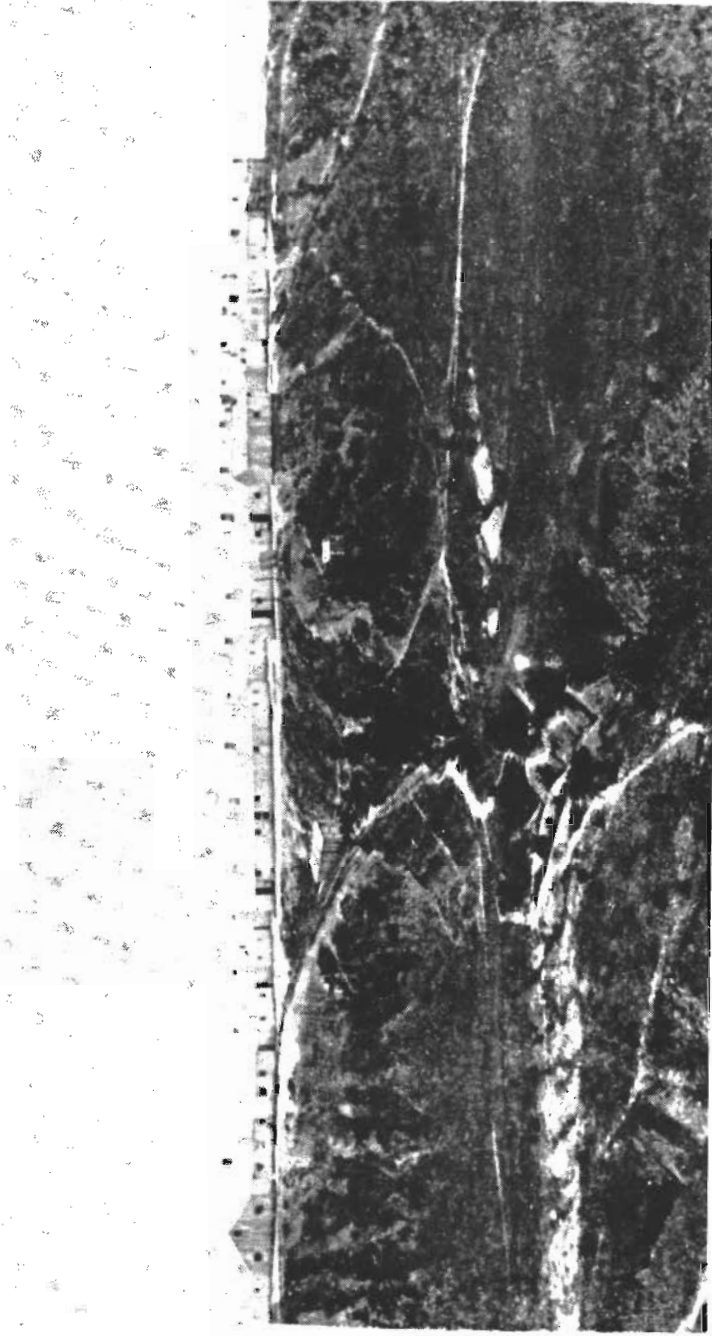


Courtesy, McCowat-Mercer Press, Inc., Jackson, Tenn.

PHOEBE YATES PEMBER

“Trust in the sword of the Lord and Gideon.”

(see p. 44)



Courtesy, The M. Solis-Cohen Collection

From Levy and Cohen's Views of the Rebel Capital and Its Environs

RICHMOND'S CHIMBORAZO HOSPITAL

Where, wrote Phoebe Pember, "scenes of pathos occurred daily."

(see p. 44)

His [newly chosen] name was *Moses*. I will tel you all som day as he told me every thing what to do four days befor he died. We joined hearts and hands together. Had he not died we would of [have] been marrade [married]. I cannot tel you now but will as soone as I get a chance as my heart is broak anueff alredy. God bless his sole. May he rest in peace. I even toock his remains to Savanah and burried him. I hav his close [clothes]. Good by, God bless you, my dear unknown brother [-in-law] that was to be.

Your broken hearted sister

RACHEL

Answer and direct Miss R. C. Semon, No. 98 Main St., Richmond, Va. Mr. Lowenthal and famely is well.

Richmond, Va., June 16, 1864
Sunday evening

Mr. M. Lo[w]enthal

My dear Adolph[?]s good friend:

On my ariewel home last night I found your letter and one from Dr. Addington, from dear Adolph[?]s doctor, that toock the ball out his foot. The doctor rote if dear Adolph would of [have] let him taken his foot off he could of [have] saved him.

Oh, *God*, would that he had dun it, but my pore Adolph spoake to som of his friendes in Germin and said, "If the doctor attempt[s] to cut off my foot through [throw] the knife out his hand." The doctor understod Germin and would not attempt, and a grate menny of dear Adolph[?]s Jew friendes would not let his foot be cut off. The doctor said he layed three days on the field before eney thing could be dun to him. I am thankefull to our heavenly father that he was throune [thrown] in my path, and I had the power to do what I did for him, but I would rather he had lived. Oh, *God*, why did you take him away? I must not complain. The will of God and not ours be dun.

You requ[e]sted to me in your letter to tel you of pore Adolph[?]s wound. I hav told your dear wife and I supose she has told you all.

I hav rote his bro[ther] a beutiful letter. I also rote your dear wife a letter which she has not answered. I also asked of her, and now I will aske you to send me my dear Adolph[’s] wotch. It is not for the vallue and not that I am [in] nied [need] of eney, but it was my pore Adolph[’s] request that I should get and prosess [possess] all he left behind. He said [, and] her[e] is his words: “Rachel darling, all that I prosess [possess] is for you. Get it and keepe it and millions with it would not be anueff for you.” I have his close [clothes]. He tooock to campe his papers and all his letters and when ever I meet his brother, if it is God’s will, I hav to tel him sumthing which no one shall know but himseleff.

Now, my dear friend, you hav his dying words and you can act as you pleas and think propper, but for his sake and my wish send me his wotch. I will ware it and nothing but deth can seporate it from me. I will aske of you a favour. Go and visit pore Adolph[’s] grave som time and give him a *passing* thought. Let his memory be with you and your famely as fresh as the evergreen that never dies. Tel your dear wife I will send her a lock of Adolph[’s] haire the first chance I get. I would not like to put it in a letter for fear it will not reach you.

I will draw this letter to a close, hoping you will answer and not refues my wish. While I remain ever your and your famely[’s] best friend and well wisher. My respecetes to all. Also tel your dear wife to answer.

I remain

Your[s] with respects

R. C. SEMON

Direct Miss R. C. Semon

Box 1006

Richmond, Va.

Kiss your darling children for me.

My regards to your brother Mr. Lo[w]enthall. Do not bury eney person by my darling Adolph. Yet awhile, I will seeke my grave thare if I do not marry. God rest his sole.

WE WANT A YID IN THE TREASURY

In June, 1864, Henry Solomon, of Augusta, Georgia, wrote to his brother, N. E. Solomon, in Victoria, British Columbia.

It was an affectionate letter, full of war gossip and business news. But at the back of Henry's mind were certain misgivings. A Jew — a good businessman — in the Treasury would solve a lot of problems. The South might possibly survive the hammering of the North, but even if she did, she would be economically shattered for years.

The original of this letter is in the possession of Mr. Ted Solomon, of Detroit, a grandson of the addressee.

Augusta, Georgia
June 8, 1864

Mr. N. E. Solomon

Victoria, Vancouver Island
British Columbia

My Dear Brother:

Your welcome letter of March 31st came to hand on the 3rd inst. I was very happy to learn it left you and Simon in good health. We also are well thank God. A few days prior to receiving the above I wrote you. I was "bad off" for a letter from you, considering myself unfortunate, as everybody who had friends abroad were receiving letters. Blockade running has been successful lately. Nine vessels arrived in one week. Business has been very dull here since November. Merchants are almost bare of goods. Very few have made or making expenses since Christmas. Confederate money buys very little of anything. What was worth a dollar formerly is worth from 30 to 100 dollars now. Our financial affairs are ruinously managed. Every attempt to remedy our finances seems to provoke additional distrust. Every proposed alteration inflates prices, instead of reducing them.

We want a Yid or good merchant in the Treasury Beureau. "Uncle Bob," as General Lee is called, becomes a greater General every day. He has the entire confidence of the people. [Gen. Pierre G. T.] Beauregard (who is worshipped by the Carolinians) gave [Gen. Benjamin F.] Butler a severe whipping last month. Matters in upper Georgia do not look quite as gloomy as they did a few weeks ago. General Jos[eph] E. Johnston is pitted against Sherman. The correspondent of the *London Herald* has immortalized himself by his graphic descriptions of the Battles in Virginia from the 5th to 12th of May. Don't fail to read them. It will rank as a classic in a future time. Yesterday was the 335th day of the Siege of Charleston. [Ft.] Sumpter [in Charleston Harbor] stands supreme; every shot hurled against it [, it] appears, has rendered the lower ones shot proof; all the shells and shot falling upon it adds so much to its solidarity. The shells going on the city strike beyond Nat Levin's old residence; it is reported they do very little damage. I have not been down there.

I have not read of any of our friends sustaining any loss. Bill Jacobs has been in Augusta several weeks. He is a government agent. Jake [Jacob] Levy was slightly wounded in Virginia and is home. Solly Levin was slightly wounded in the calf. A big fellow named Joseph, formerly one of A. Simon's peddlers, was wounded in both hands and lost 3 fingers. I have been and continue in business with Loeser and Baum since January. The latter was formerly Kauffus' partner.

This madena [country] will be macholu [bankrupt] for many years is my opinion. If you can buy a good location in Victoria probably it will be advisable as I think it will be the metropolis of that section of the country. Should matters turn out well here, you could sell out probably at a profit there. The war may end this year; if it does not, who can tell how long it will continue? I hope the mines you mention may turn out profitably for you. What kind of business men do Ed and Simon make? Is there a rapid increase in emigrants to Vancouver and British Columbia — what proportion do you think are agricultural? Do the lands produce heavy crops? The grain crop here is very promising.

I will tell you a strange turn in some affairs. The country people

complain of ravages committed by the abundance of wild rabbits since the war, the quantity of small birds have increased beyond description. This war among mankind has been peace to game. Ammunition has been too scarce to be wasted upon those luxuries. The powder mills at the head of this town and the works at the arsenal reflect great credit upon the Confederacy.

Your letter I have sent to Nat Levin for perusal. I don't remember anything else that needs answering. My last, which was written last week, I sent by the latter. I am under obligation to Moses Levy for sending this. The evening paper (extra) just out says English accounts received says Grant whipped Lee, which is a hoax. The reverse is true. Lee whipped Grant. I do not think of anything else of interest to write to you. Should I think of anything tho, I have left room on the margin of this to paste an additional piece.

Sarah and the children write in love with me to yourself, Simon and Edward.

Goodbye, God bless you.

Your affectionate brother,

/s/ HENRY SOLOMON

I forgot to mention your esteemed friend, Harry Nomolos, was re-examined by a board of physicians and declared permanently unfit for military service. The poor fellow has been so for the last thirty years; that miserable consumption will stay with him until death. He has tried everything considered good for it but he finds motso klise [matso balls — made of unleavened bread] affords him more relief than anything yet prescribed. Simon of Hamburg has been very sick since his wife died. He has inflammatory rheumatism, probably he will lose a leg. Sam Levy was driven from Cassville [Georgia] when it was occupied by the Yankees. His wife had been confined only seven days previous to his sudden exodus. He lost nearly all his accumulation of many years toil; his brother-in-law, A. Levy, is owner of the Bridge Bank Building where Drs. Bandry and Dennis keep store.

THE TIES THAT BIND

Hearing of the death of his mother, Johanna Simon Friedheim, Aaron Friedheim, a Louisiana soldier who had apparently emerged from Federal captivity only a few days before, sat down to write a letter of consolation and assurance to his sister Harriet, with whom, it seems, he had previously quarreled. Though she had friends and family about her, Harriet missed her brothers Aaron and Abram, who were both in the Confederate Army.

Harriet, about whose education Aaron was concerned, later married Bernard Lemann, a prominent Louisiana businessman. Their son, Monte M. Lemann, was one of the South's most distinguished lawyers in the early twentieth century. In 1929 he was appointed a member of the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement (the Wickersham Commission).

The original of the letter published below is in the possession of the Lemann family in New Orleans.

Camp near Alexandria [La.]
November 12th, 1864

Dear Sister:

After a long silence, for which we both ought to be blamed, I will take the first step to make atonements of past errors, and hope you will forgive, as well as forget, all pretty [petty] differences, which in the course of human life may happen to all. For nobody is perfect.

My darling Harriett, I am sure you have heard of our great loss and sad bereavement we have sustained. Yes, the last link to the centre of our affection has been broken. She, our last remaining and dearly beloved parent, has been taken from us, to life everlasting, to join our sainted father [Judah Levi Friedheim] and sister, "Peace to their ashes." They are now looking down on us with angelic smiles, praying for our happiness in this our short sojourn on earth, and oh, let us hope that their united prayer may instill that feeling of charity and love for each other, which we so much need. It has been my misfortune to [have] been absent from the

bedside of those dear departed saints, and I feel, like Esau, that the blessings of those dear departed have not been vouchsafed to me [*Genesis* 27:36]. I feel lonely, my dear sister, and hope you will regularly write to me. Let us endeavor to be to each other all that brotherly and sisterly affection command us to be, advice each other in our actions, improve ourselves in all departments of life's calling, so that we may be true to be the descendants of our sainted parents.

I had a letter from Levy [probably Levy Thal, our brother-in-law], informing me of their enjoying good health, only that brother Abraham [Abram], though convalescent, was too weak yet to write to me, my letter dated the 6th inst. and I hope you have later news from there. Brother Abraham will come to see you as soon as he is able. I told him to send Kate [probably a Negro slave] to you. You will take care of her, and make such disposition with her as you think proper. Anything else you wish, inform brother Abraham, who will send it to you, or make such arrangements as his present state of health will permit.

I send you a copy of two new pieces of music, which was lately brought over the lines. Rebecca [probably Rebecca Weil, our niece] can have the benefit of them also. We shall go to Shreveport in a few days when I expect to get a furlough to see [you?], and hope to hear that you have progressed in your music, as well as those other branches which you are now studiing. It will be my greatest pleasure to see you attain all the requirements of a classic and finished education, also all that you can master on the piano, for I know it was the greatest anxiety of our sainted mother to see you attain those qualifications. My sole object, dear sister, is now to see you happy, accomplished, and good, for my inmost feelings are centred to see you such. Command me and I shall always be yours, whenever you shall need me. I speak this not as a braggadocio, but as a brother in the same manner as I would recieve the same kind wishes and advice from you, my sister. It is my duty, as well as it is yours, to advice each other in all things appertaining to our good. All selfish feelings ought to be thrust aside between all and we should enjoy the confidence of each other. Each one of us (and I make no exceptions — all our brothers and sisters) ought to make

it their dayly study how they could possibly assist in smoothing this life's path to the other. We are, thank God, grown to years of maturity when those little bickerings which is allways the case among children should cease. Though in the moment of passion they may have been wronged or have wronged, still it is our duty to come forward to forget and forgive; such a spirit of frankness will bring good feelings and instill charity and confidence in each other. I hope you will accept them in the same spirit as I send them to you.

Mr. Silbernagel has lost little Balmy; may God console them in this their sad hour of bereavement.

I was exchanged last week. I will write to you again from Shreveport and hope you write to me as often as you can. Direct your letters to Shreveport, 3rd La. Infty.

My sister, I must close, hoping this few lines may reach you in as good health as they have [left] me.

Your affectionate brother,

AARON FRIEDHEIM

THE DEFENSE OF FORT GILMER

On October 13, 1864, young Captain Madison Marcus, a member of the 15th Georgia Infantry, died defending Fort Gilmer, near Richmond.

Apparently, the Captain was an Acting-Battalion Commander, for five companies served under him.

The following account, telling of the desperate struggle to defend the fort, was reprinted in The Jewish Chronicle (London), on December 16, 1864, from a Richmond newspaper.

NEWS FROM THE CONFEDERATE STATES. Jewish news from the Confederate States is so rare, that we feel quite grateful to the gentleman who favoured us with the following extract from a Richmond paper:

“A Hebrew Hero — Capt. Madison Marcus — This gallant officer, who was killed on Thursday, the 13th inst., was in com-

mand of the heroic defenders of Fort Gilmer when it was attacked by a force of Negroes and whites. His defensive force was composed of five companies of the Fifteenth Georgia regiment and a few stragglers from other commands. He instructed his men to reserve their fire until the enemy were almost upon them; at which time he gave the order, and more terrible fire from cannon and ringing rifles never greeted any foe. The Negroes, leaping down to the ditch immediately beneath the work, endeavored to hoist up one another on their shoulders; but no sooner did the whites of a Negro's eyes gleam over the embankment than they were sealed in death. Capt. Marcus ordered his men to use the shells in the fort as hand grenades. They accordingly cut off the fuse to two seconds, just giving time to allow their being rolled over the parapet. They exploded before reaching the bottom of the ditch, and many of the Negroes were so mangled by this proceeding as to render their features undistinguishable. Our defence was heroic, and [the] result all that could be desired. Captain Marcus was a young man between twenty-five and thirty. He was an Israelite, and although a number of his people who were in the army were granted leave of absence to attend upon the ceremonies of the 'Feast of Atonement' [Yom Kippur], which is a season of release from all labor, the Feast of Tabernacles [Sukkoth] closely following, yet he asked no leave, considering that in performing his duty to his country he worshipped his God in an acceptable manner. The funeral services were performed in the German Jewish Church [Richmond's Beth Ahabah Congregation], by Rev. Mr. [Maximilian J.] Michelbacher."

A TEEN-AGE ARTILLERYMAN

Lionel C. Levy was only fourteen years of age when he joined the 13th Louisiana Regiment. Later he enlisted in Captain Charles E. Fenner's Louisiana Battery, the New Orleans Light Artillery. In 1865, as an ex-soldier and veteran of many bloody encounters, he was only eighteen years of age.

Though Levy's family lived in New Orleans, they were — like

other Jews in that city — Charlestonians who had moved "West" from the coast to Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. And because they were Charlestonians of good family, they were men of good taste and culture, and literate to a high degree.

In this memoir, written about the year 1890, Levy touched lightly on the severities of war and wrote with fond recollection of the happy hours that the young artillerists had spent in making of war a pleasant and memorable experience. Obviously he and his comrades in the battery were men of good breeding and good education. This again was the Old South at its best.

After the conflict had come to an end, Levy married the daughter of Major Raphael J. Moses, studied law in Columbus, Georgia, and became one of the outstanding lawyers and orators of that part of the country. He died in 1906.

The original of this memoir is probably in the possession of the family. It is reprinted here from a typescript copy in the American Jewish Archives.

Long absence from among my old comrades of the Battery and residence in a different state has prevented my keeping so fresh in memory the details of our army life to the same extent that those have done who, by frequent intercourse, have constant reminders of its incidents, and much of deep interest, if it could be recalled, has faded from my mind; indeed, it often seems like a dream or phase of existence in some other world when those days, in which were so mingled privation and pleasure, anxiety and gaiety, sadness and joy, loom up in these more sober hours of our later years, when many of us who were but small boys then are now grown grey, and are wending our way toward the setting sun.

My first recollection of the Battery was at Jackson, Mississippi, and the vivid description of my subsequent friend and messmate, Henry Addison, of the picturesque appearance I presented, was one to be by him never forgotten nor ceased to be told. I was quite a stripling at the time, just fifteen years of age, and had been serving a few months previously as an independent volunteer in the 13th La. Regiment (of [Gen. Braxton] Bragg's army). I had become the proud and self conscious possessor of a long, heavy bowie knife, a

six shooter, and the usual other army accoutrements of a new recruit, including haversack, knapsack, blanket and oil cloth (which would a year or two later have been an ample equipment for the whole 5th detachment, to which I was assigned).

If I recollect correctly, the 5th was then commanded by Sergeant Gus Beers. (Addison always declared that all that was visible of myself as I entered the encampment was my aforesaid bowie knife, which he afterwards appropriated to the hewing down of saplings, and to culinary uses.)

I evidently created an impression on the campus — and the campus on myself — I had never been before connected with artillery, and remember well the thrill of pride with which I viewed those twelve pound Napoleon guns and Howitzers parked upon a grassy plain. No less well do I remember the immense and unwieldy sabres which were at that time part of our equipment, and which became gradually “lost,” as we entered upon active campaigns, until they were known no more forever. I had a letter of introduction to the captain, Chas. E. Fenner, and to our old comrade, Gus Beers, and was received by them both so kindly that I felt at once at home and among friends. Captain Fenner, with that quiet, cordial dignity, impressed my boyish imagination with a decidedly wholesome awe; I felt absolutely convinced that he was a veritable Bonaparte, and that he would soon be lost to me as a friend and captain by being called to some higher command of a division or army corps. Something about his manner, his reserve force, his imperturbable temperament (and his top boots) recalled constantly to mind the ideal War God of my youthful imagination, the great Napoleon.

Lieutenant Duggan was, I think, then the First Lieutenant of our Battery, and Wat Tyler Cluverins the first Junior; handsome, careless, debonnair Cluverins, perfect type of the Virginia cavaliers. Geo[rge] Harris was Second Lieutenant. I do not now remember whether brave, light-hearted Charlie Howell had then been commissioned as our second Junior Lieutenant. Gus Beers was my sergeant, Joe Carley corporal of our gun, and we were drilled day after day in a knowledge of the simple manœuvres that go to make up good cannoneers. I remember being assigned as “No. 3” of detachment 5 at Jackson, and holding on to that post, until we were

finally disbanded. The shelling we received at Fort Hudson was my first "baptism of fire" and I can recall even now the graceful curves prescribed by those huge mortar shells, coursing one after the other through the night, and only occasionally coming uncomfortably close, as when one exploded near the parapet, and prematurely, though, happily but for a moment, burying several slumbering cannoneers beneath the upturned earth.

Our march from Fort Hudson [, Louisiana], to the "Big Black" [River in Mississippi] was uneventful, except for our brief stay at or near Springfield, Louisiana (which resulted in placing several of us *hors de combat*). I recall the enthusiasm of a female seminary near that little town, which found vent in a patriotic serenade to our battery from the school house balcony as we passed along the road, bursting suddenly and all unawares upon us, with "The Bonnie Blue Flag." We had some hard, dusty, weary miles of marching on this campaign, but I remember well some delicious cool springs and tempting creeks along the route, and learning the sad lesson of all new recruits (the folly of bathing one's feet during the noontide halt) by finding mine so swollen after the experiment that I was unable to get my shoes on again, and had to obtain the privilege of a driver's place until the evening rest. What a glorious time we had bathing in the Big Black River! There we received the tidings that our "labor was in vain," and for the first time came in contact with mounted artillery, which followed us up quite actively, taking advantage of every favorable elevation to send a shell or solid shot as an accelerator of our retreat. Our position in the works at Jackson was a peculiarly fortunate one in point of effective view and service. Our gun was next to the public road, and I recall seeing Gen. Jno. C. Breckenridge dash by with his staff for a reconnoissance just before the general fighting began. He was a superb specimen of graceful manhood and sat his horse like a veritable centaur, so perfect was his pose and seat.

I think it was the second day when the first death in our battery occurred. Poor Henry Layton was seated on the limber chest (which was buried in a trench) behind our gun, and was serving the ammunition with which we were replying at intervals to the heavy shelling in our front. I could see the shell or solid shot which killed him,

as it came. It recochet twice before reaching our gun, then lifting in a final curve in an air line over the gun, seemed to barely touch his side as it passed behind us. That touch was death, and I do not think he ever knew what struck him. We narrowly escaped at this point, having our buried limber chest exploded. The Union batteries got our range down very close, and it was during the shelling on about the third day that Lieut. Cluverins uttered the startling exclamation "By G—, there goes a \$40 pair of boots!" — as a ragged piece of an exploding shell struck him, cutting through his boot top and severely wounding him in the leg. He would not consent to leave the line, and treated the wound as though it were but a trifle, though it eventually came near costing him his life.

The Federal dead in front of the Washington Artillery on and after their ineffectual effort to pierce the line was the most sickening sight I ever beheld during the truce which was held to bury the dead, on account of the intolerable stench. I went out with several others to view the field. It was a July day, and there lay between five hundred and six hundred stalwart men literally festering in the scorching sun; their condition was so sickening and appalling that many of the burial squads were unable to stand the work, and the burying was accomplished in many instances by pulling or pushing the swollen and discolored corpses into the trenches with the aid of long hooked poles.

I remember well the severe flooding rains which caused us to march through water from knee to waist deep on the retreat from Jackson, rising so high as to endanger the safety of the ammunition in our "limber chests." It was on this campaign in the marches between Port Hudson and Jackson that we first held those open air "concerts," and astonished the natives of the infantry brigades with our rendition of French and Italian operas, Worlper and Augustin in the leading roles. I shall never forget the excitement which was worked up at one of these open air opera balls, which was being held where our guns were parked, when the visiting infantry, having gathered around us triple deep, a bal masque (minus the masque) was improvised. During the progress of an enchanting waltz "Lilly" ([played by] Theodore Whitman) shrieked out, with feminine indignation, "he squeezed my hand!" Worlper, who was one of

Lilly's ardent admirers, rushed to the rescue, drawing a sabre from one of the gun carriages. Lilly's "insulter" drew another; sabres flashed and sparks flew, many of us joined in *supposed* melee. Other (improvised) women screamed and plead with their several "lovers" and finally, as the excitement grew more intense, pistols commenced to gleam. Bill Worlper's sonorous voice rising above the din in curses loud and deep, "Lilly's" inimitable shriek of woe, Augustin's *rage* of indignation. Our infantry friends, actually believing that a genuine row was on hand, melted rapidly away out of range of the pistol shots which seemed momentarily imminent; about which time one of the officers sent an order out to the park to "suppress that noise" — and quiet reigned supreme.

My first experience of snow was the succeeding winter at Dalton, Georgia, before we commenced to build those winter quarters (first for horses and then for men). At this time, the cold being very severe and rations slender, whiskey was issued to the troops; the quantity was, however, so limited that we had a drawing or lottery to determine what *five* members of the battery should have it *all*. I was one of the fortunate (?) five, and the prize, contained in a large dish pan, was enjoyed out of tin cups in a closed tent. We were encamped upon a very steep hill or mountain side, from which the small saplings had been cleared in part to within two or three inches of the ground, leaving sharp, jagged points which were a source of infinite solicitude and anguish to some of the "prize winners," who made several ascents and descents of the mountain in an effort to reach their different camp fires; one in particular attaining his quarters succeeded in burning all the hair off of one side of his head and was a veritable sight when he appeared at roll call, resulting in a special leave to visit Dalton, where the other side of his head was almost shaved to conform, by a local barber, and in this guise of an escaped convict he returned to camp. His mortification and unhappiness can be better imagined than described when on the next day after, by the gracious favor of Captain Fenner, he was granted leave to visit a young lady cousin who, with a bevy of other charming women was visiting the then recent bride of General [William J.] Hardee. The sham battles that were fought here during the heavy snows with snow balls assumed such large proportions as to be

eventually stopped by special orders; it commenced by one company snow balling another; then regiments and finally brigades became engaged; colors and quarters and camps were captured and the greatest enthusiasm and excitement prevailed. It resulted, however, in producing a great deal of sickness and was subsequently prohibited.

About this time by "special request" was produced the great and original tragedy of Spazerini Zimluco, or the Pirate of the Aegean Sea, by John Augustin, who, I think, assumed the role of Rinaldo Renaldini, while Bill Worlper enacted the bloody pirate, and "Lilly" (Theodore Whitman) was the sweet heroine, Matilda. I, myself, participated as one of the numerous ferocious pirates. We secured a long, vacant store house in Dalton, built a stage with rough plank and logs, and our scenery was the artistic conception of a battery artist, made with battery tarpaulins by the aid of chalk and charcoal. Our audience was large and select (our army officers and comrades, and if I am not mistaken, several generals with full staff were among them, and not a few commissaries and quartermasters). When Spazerini Zimluco, in his inimitable and resounding voice, uttered that *sublime passage*, "Welcome, brave and jovial band, your chief delights to see you thus arrayed, ready and willing, brave as *quartermasters* — to steal and plunder!!" the "house came down"; the play was a great success, and some kind friend in the Quartermaster's department, after it was over, sent us (complimentary) a whole bucket of ambrosial, pine top whiskey. So we closed up the warehouse, made a huge fire out of parts of our stage material, and drawing around it in a large circle enjoyed a musical treat from the "Kentucky Glee Club" who kindly furnished our orchestral music for the play. Never before or since have I heard a voice equal to that of one Huthnance, in his rendition of "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," toward the "Wee, sma' hours." After much song and wassail, tired nature's sweet restorer overcame them all, and I covered over several rows of inanimate beings with the recent scenery, and kept alive the smouldering embers until day light, to keep us from freezing, for it was a bitter cold night, and I prayed earnestly for day light — or the battery wagons. They came in pretty early to haul out the tarpaulins and "disabled" and during their progress through town to our encampment, Spazerini

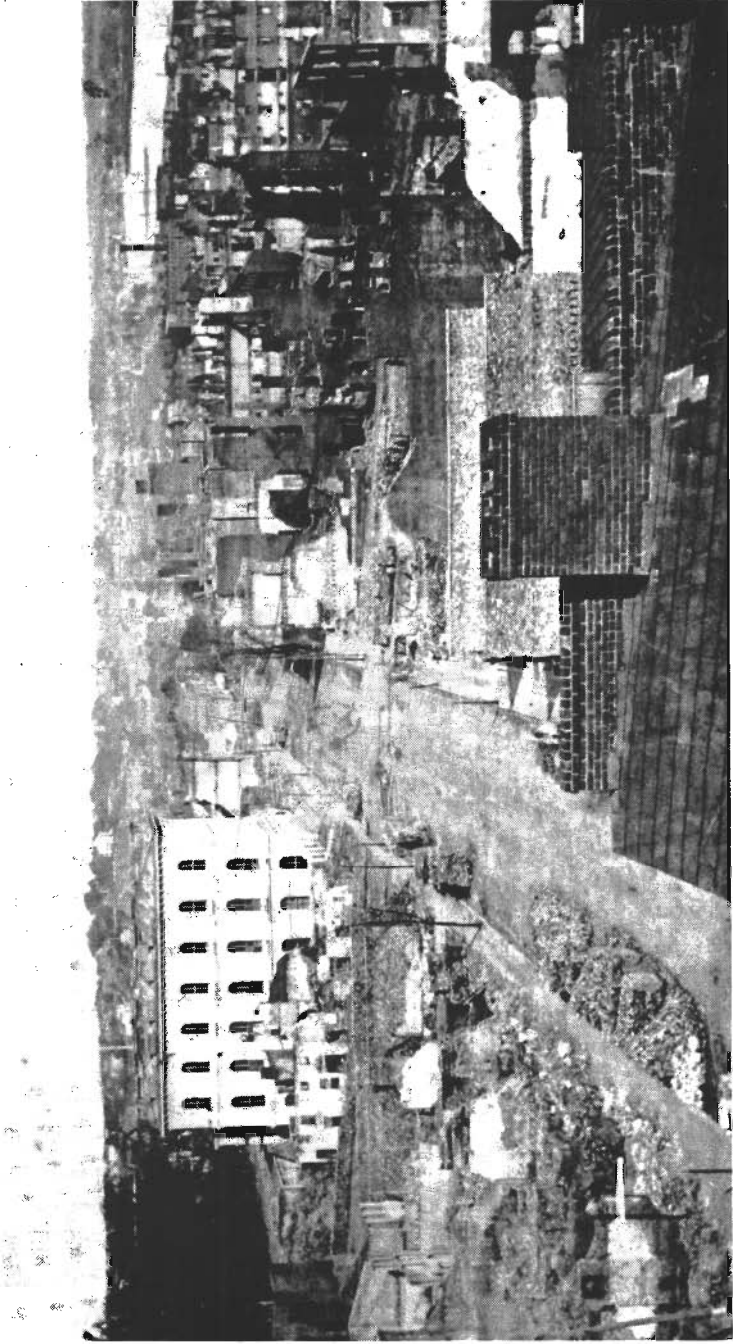
Zimluco performed his tragedy again and again over the helpless form of our sweet composer (E. O. Eaton, who wrote many notable pieces), whose bruised body showed the effects of the sword prodding and rocky road for many days thereafter. We built our stable here, working on them in the day time and on our own log cabins at night. At twelve o'clock at night the cabin of my mess was finished daubing, and as we were taking a good wash to eradicate the clay and dirt, the bugle sounded "Boots and Saddles" (the hitch-up call) and by three o'clock — before day — we had parted from the scene of many days and nights of weary labor, to behold them no more forever. We *thought*, and *felt*, and *spoke*, long, deep and loud. We had a pretty hard time before leaving Dalton; the day's rations had gotten down to one third of a pound of wretched bulk pork or bacon and three fourths of a pound of meal, with a substitute occasionally for the former of a large spoonful of sour molasses.

We next moved down to Kingston, Georgia, where we built really good quarters, and enjoyed them for several weeks. I remember no incident worthy of mention there, except a visit to our camp by that sweet "Seur Seraphine" of the army, Mrs. Fannie Beers, the wife of my messmate, Sturge Beers. We entertained her at dinner, borrowing all of the best plates and utensils of the camp. While in Kingston, I was so fortunate as to discover some soda in the town, and purchased a pound for my mess for five dollars! I think we went from Kingston to Mobile, where we camped out at Dog River Factory, and immediately ensued a war of invention and circumvention between the "boys" and Major Truhart [Daniel Trueheart?], the commander of the Post at Mobile. He thought we had no right to visit this most delightful of cities in which almost all of the battery had numerous friends and sweethearts, and no effort was spared on his part to keep us out of the city, or upon ours to evade his provost guards and pickets. On one occasion he stationed guards at the theatre to arrest us as we emerged, but a good, friendly detective passed the word around, and we emerged safely out at a side entrance. The provost guards, almost all of them Mobile cadets, were all of them our friends, and our stay in Mobile was an elysium of unalloyed bliss, sweetened by the delicious sauce of stolen fruit



Courtesy, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

JUDAH P. BENJAMIN
Confederate Statesman



Courtesy, The M. Solis-Cohen Collection

RICHMOND
"The heart of Virginia."

in our ability to out-manoeuver the post commander, Major T. One of the boys was supremely blessed as being absolutely safe from arrest or molestation. He succeeded, no man knows how, in getting an entirely rusty black suit, of clerical cut, a white neck tie and pair of green goggles. He could "run the pickets," strip off his uniform and don this suit and walk the streets of that elysium with grave and solemn tread, and literally look every man in the face, for as Rinaldo Rinaldini in our great tragedy exclaimed, "If one were once his father, twice his sister, or even thrice his mother," he would never have been distinguished as the great "pirate of the Aegean Sea." Several of us secured a retreat just inside the lines in an old, vacant house in which we were safe from molestation and supremely happy. The weeks flew all to[o] swiftly that carried us again into that arduous campaign which terminated only with the war.

It is useless to recapitulate the different trials and tribulations, marching, storming and fighting that ensued. Our orderly sergeant's chapter will doubtless give a faithful and official statement of all the engagements in which we participated in the hardship of that continuous campaign from Dalton to Atlanta, Atlanta to Nashville and Murfreesboro [Tennessee]. They need no reminders other than their own recollection; notable among the incidents of this campaign was our splendid defence against [Gen. Joseph] Hooker's corps, the attack and attempted surprise of [Gen. Joseph E.] Johnston's rear guard at New Hope Church [, Georgia]; the casualties we sustained in killed and wounded, as before stated, will elsewhere appear. I recollect the difficulty we had in wrenching the "Pendulum Hause" from our gunner's hand (Phil McGrath). He was wounded, holding it in his hand when struck, and the muscles had so tightened about it that he could not relax his grasp, and it took all the power of a strong man to force its release.

I met a commanding officer of Hooker's corps at the Union League Club since the war, and he assured me that no severer defeat has ever been sustained by them in any engagement. He put their loss down at from 2,000 to 2,500 men in that three hours fight, and says most of them fell before the batteries. The most scientific piece of work, and the most effective in its result that we accomplished

during this campaign was the holding of that bridge under [Gen. Nathan B.] Forest's orders at Murfreesboro until his wagon train was safely over. The fire so effectively maintained by our guns, and their gradual withdrawal by Lieut. Cluverins "en echelon," until we, too, crossed the bridge well illustrated the value of scientific military discipline, when combined with cool and intelligent command, without which this manoeuver could never have been successfully accomplished.

We had to spike and abandon all but one of these guns on the retreat from Tennessee, but we had the satisfaction at least of never having lost a gun in battle, and of having held them at times and under circumstances, when their abandonment would have been well justified.

Take our dear old battery, in officers and men, in all it was a typical representative body of the true Southern soldiers, full of that esprit for which, in every branch of service, the Louisianians were noted. They were hopeful, cheerful and bright under every hardship; in danger they were gay and gallant to very [great extremes?], and no unpatriotic or despairing voice was ever heard among them.

It would possibly be too invidious [invidious], among so large a body, to enumerate the marked characteristics which have so well rounded out their lives and given us in proportion to the number of those who survived among our comrades, a larger representation of distinguished and successful men, in councils of state, on the bench, and in commercial life than any organization in the Confederate army.

As I stated in prefacing these army life pages, a long removal from among them, and the cares and anxieties incidental to a busy life, have eliminated many of the incidents of our comradeship from my mind, but my heart never will cease to throb with pride at the privilege of that association, nor my pulse to quicken at the sight of a dear old comrade-in-arms of Fenner's Louisiana Battery.