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Portrait of Alexander Korda by Anthony Wysard National Portrait Gallery

Alexander Korda — Filmmaker & Spy

A Wandering Jew

Forgotten Soldier

The Warburg Institute



The time between this Westminster Quarterly, and the last, though only three months, has been momentous for me and Leah. Jules Pessie Jordan Stanley was born to us on the 9th of April. She is to me genuinely a bundle of joy, even when she is screaming. Her birth is, I suppose, the most important thing to happen to me in my life.

We wanted a name beginning with 'J' to honour my late father, Jack Stanley, who passed away, now, over six years ago. I have been contemplating over the last months how I want to be inspired by my father to be the best Dad I can be. He was gentle, present, proud and loving. I want to be deeply present with Jules - and the two months of parental leave, from which I have just returned, have given me a great start. Moments hanging out with Jules, at all times of day and night, observing her range of facial expressions, and rocking her growing weight through the air while singing, have been the best. I have also become aware of how proud I am of her as, whenever I can, I go out to our house stoop with her, and sit there, fishing for compliments- which are then abundantly forthcoming.

Over the last year I have been returning to something which a Rabbinic colleague at a previous *shul*, years ago, used to say. It concerned me then and, with time, it now appals me! While seated next to me at a synagogue Friday night meal, he said to a member that he had decided he was not going to have children because 'I want to be an excellent Rabbi, and I don't think you can be an excellent Rabbi and a good parent'. At the time I was bothered by how this patter was part of an attempt to show off how hard he works, to meet and even beat the hours of the hard-working member sitting opposite him - but, the more I think about what he said the *more* it bothers me. Let me explain why.

Bringing forth and caring for a child is at the centre of our *Torah*. Literally. Near the middle of the middle book of the *Torah* we recently read:

The Eternal spoke to Moses saying: Speak to the Israelite people thus: When a woman at childbirth brings forth seed and bears a male, she shall be impure seven days; she shall be impure as at the time of her condition of menstrual separation. (Leviticus/ Vayikra 12.2, beginning of Parshat Tazria.)

This verse and the section with which it begins could be uncomfortable. It is taught that a mother should be separated from the sacred sphere after birth, and, well, the verses also talk about birth, seed and blood. Some might feel such topics are incompatible with a sacred text.

Yet, in a comment found in the commentaries *Vayikra Rabba*, Rabbi Simlai teaches on this verse, as the *Torah* now turns to the body and the baby, 'Just as the formation of the human took place after that of every cattle, beast and fowl when the world was created, so, too, this teaching regarding the human (birth) is set forth after the law regarding cattle, beast and fowl'. He thus makes a parallel between the Divine creation of humanity (after the animals) and a woman giving birth, the laws for which are given after the laws of *kashrut*, of eating animals. He suggests that a woman giving birth is akin to the crowning act of Divine creation and celebrates that our Holy *Torah* directs us to pay attention to the pain, wonder, and even blood, of our sacred bodies.

Although the verses themselves may suggest that in birth some separateness may be desired, we can still learn that there is nothing more holy than creating a human and turning to another human, another body, and caring for those and that which could have been rendered prudishly invisible, too base for a sacred text.

Caring for another human can, I hope, make us the best Jews we can be - rather than being incompatible with Jewish excellence. I have been picking up a book by Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg about parenting. She reminds us that Rabbi Akiva taught that the greatest principle of the whole *Torah* is to love your neighbour as yourself - and so, she suggests, there is

nothing more sacred, more spiritually vital and important than loving another in all those mundane details of soothing a crying child and changing a nappy.

As I return to work now, serving our Westminster Synagogue, I am aware that I have let my routine slip over these last couple months. I have let go of my regular learning appointments, and been without the rigour of work and regular prayer and pastoral visits. I have just been oriented around this baby. But, I do hope I have learnt something, a lot even.

As Leah got through six days of sleep-depriving early labour, and then many hours in hospital were brought to successful fruition through a sudden, frightening, emergency C-Section, I developed finer gratitude. For Leah, most, and for life, and for the NHS midwives and doctors. For you too. We have been joyfully overwhelmed by all your wishes, notes, cards and presents. Thank you. I hope I have also learnt in these months that there can be a vital joy in just being - and being with loved ones. I want to soften my urge to compete in life in a whole range of vague imaginary arenas that no-one really cares about - and to stop stressing over small things so much!

I'll be delighted if I can become an excellent parent and a half decent Rabbi - and I know that caring about the former role can only make me better at the latter.



Rabbi Benji Stanley

Sir Isaac Lyon Goldsmid (1778-1859)



Among the many great achievements of Sir Isaac Lyon Goldsmid was that of being created the first English Jewish hereditary Baronet. He was the grandson of Aaron Goldsmid who had left Holland in 1765 with his family to settle in London, where he founded the firm of Aaron Goldsmid & Son. Aaron had four sons and four daughters. The second son, Asher, Isaac's father, was one of the founders of the firm Mocatta & Goldsmid, bullion-brokers to the Bank of England. Benjamin and Abraham were famous as financiers and philanthropists, but their story came to a tragic end when Benjamin was forced into bankruptcy and committed suicide. This followed two years after Abraham, in a fit of depression, also took his own life.

However, Isaac, their nephew, was more fortunate. He was born in London in 1778, and also went into the bullion business, to the firm of Mocatta and Goldsmid, where his father Asher was already installed. Isaac was entrusted with financial operations in Turkey, Brazil and Portugal, and in gratitude the Portuguese government created him Baron da Palmeira in 1846. The Goldsmid family were very wealthy; they had what Chaim Bermant in *The Cousinhood* called 'the Midas touch'.

As often happened in the wealthier Anglo-Jewish families, Isaac married his cousin

Isabel, Abraham's daughter. They had twelve children, six girls and six boys, though several died very young. One, Francis, became the first Jewish QC and later a Member of Parliament. Little is known about Isabel, except that she entertained lavishly, even inviting Queen Victoria and her son Albert to their splendid home at Regent's Park. This was St. John's Lodge, a beautiful house with a large garden. It now belongs to the Sultan of Brunei. When later he was created a Baronet, Isaac took as his title Sir Isaac Lyon Goldsmith, of St. John's Lodge.



St John's Lodge Regents Park

Isaac Goldsmid made as his life's mission the emancipation of the Jews in England, working for social and political reform and for education without religious affiliation. He was something of a radical politically, working to obtain civil rights for the Jews. The Catholic Relief Act 1829 was passed by the Parliament of the United Kingdom. It was the culmination of the process of Catholic emancipation throughout the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Jews in England felt very strongly that if the Catholics had the right to vote and to stand for Parliament, the same rights should be extended to the Jews. Goldsmid involved himself in the fight for emancipation, but it was not until 1858 that The Jews Relief Act, also called the Jewish Disabilities Bill, was finally passed. The difficulty for a Jew to stand for Parliament centred round the necessity for any elected candidate to swear the oath as a Member of the Christian Faith, but finally the House of Lords agreed to a proposal to allow each house to decide its own oath. The bill allowed 'any Person professing the Jewish Religion to omit the Words "and I make

this Declaration upon the true Faith of a Christian" in their oaths, and finally Lionel de Rothschild was allowed to take his seat. Jewish MPs were still not allowed to advise certain government officials on matters related to appointments in the Church of England or the Church of Scotland.

It was largely through his friendship with Lord Holland, an eminent member of the House of Lords, that Isaac Goldsmid brought his influence to bear on matters so dear to his heart. As well as his interest in the political emancipation of his fellow Jews - he never wished to take an active part in Parliamentary affairs - he was much occupied in extending the same freedom to young people's education. In 1825 he had purchased a large plot of land in Bloomsbury, with the idea of possibly giving London its own centre of higher education. He went to Berlin to study universities in Germany, returning to sit on the original Board of a new college of learning.

Goldsmid was also a close friend of the Scottish poet Thomas Campbell, who was interested in university education. In 1825 Campbell wrote a letter which was published by *The Times*, addressed to Sir Henry Brougham, M.P., an advocate for liberal causes, especially regarding education. He was a founder (in 1826) of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Isaac convinced Brougham and Campbell to work together on the proposed 'London University'.



A Rothschild 50-gram gold bar from Mocatta and Goldsmid

University College London (UCL) was founded on 11th February 1826, under the name *London University*, as a secular alternative to the strictly religious universities of Oxford and Cambridge. It



*The Goldsmid Crest
(By union and diligence)*

had the intention from the beginning of being a university, not a college or institute.

However its founders encountered strong opposition from the Church of England, the existing universities and the medical schools, which prevented them from securing the Royal Charter under the title of 'university' that would grant 'London University' official recognition and allow it to award degrees. It was not until 1836, when the University of London was established, that it was legally recognised (as a college, under the name of *University College, London*) and granted the authority to submit students for the degree examinations of the University of London.

he laid the foundation of the new Synagogue

When the West London Synagogue of British Jews was founded in 1840, the Goldsmid family was much involved. Two of Isaac's sons were present at the original founders' meeting, though Isaac himself did not attend. However, he was sympathetic to the idea of Jewish reform, and in fact laid the foundation stone of the new Synagogue when it opened in Robert Owen's old chapel in Burton Street in Bloomsbury. Isaac had long been an admirer and close friend of Owen and his work on the New Lanark project, offering welfare schemes to workers in the Scottish mills. He was, as well, in contact with Elizabeth Fry, interesting himself in penal reform. The Synagogue also set up a kosher butcher nearby, run by Isaac's

personal *shochet*. It was soon closed down by the Chief Rabbi who was unable to sanction any action by the Reform movement. Isaac also left a large sum to the congregation when he died, though he remained a member of the orthodox Great Synagogue.

Another legacy was the large sum of £3,000 left to University College, specifying that a part of it be used to maintain Chairs of Hebrew and Geology.

The Annual Report of 1860 recognised 'the important services which the Baron rendered to the College at its Foundation, and during the many years of his zealous and active cooperation as a Member of the Council and Committee of Management.'

When the University established the North London Hospital (later University College Hospital) he became its first Treasurer. His son, Francis, who inherited the Baronetcy after Isaac's death, later succeeded him.

Isaac's lifelong devotion to the causes of Jewish emancipation, educational reform and welfare schemes for the poor, were continued by several of his children. Francis, his second son, was called to the Bar in 1833, the first Jew to become an English barrister. He entered Parliament as MP for Reading, was a founder of the Jewish Free School and was generous in his gifts to good causes, both Jewish and non-Jewish. He too married a cousin.

Another of Isaac's children was a daughter, Anna, who followed the family tradition of working for better conditions for those around her. She was particularly interested in improving women's education and allowing them to go to college. She founded girls' clubs and schools, was a translator and lecturer, publishing several books including a volume of poetry. One lecture was called *What Girls should Learn, what Mothers should Practise, and how Husbands should help them*.

In 1849 Isaac bought a large estate near Tonbridge, Somerhill estate, which once covered 6,500 acres. He passed the house to his second son, Frederick, in 1859 and then it went to Frederick's elder son, Sir Julian, in 1866. Today, the house is the second largest in Kent, after Knole, covering about two and a half acres and

with about 270 rooms. On the death of Sir Julian, and in accordance with Sir Isaac's will (to pass the house through male heirs), the house went to a grandson of his aunt Rachel, who was married to Count Solomon D'Avigdor. It is now a school (see *the Quarterly*, October 2012).



Isaac Lyon Goldsmid died at his home in Regents Park on 28th April, 1859, and is buried in the cemetery of the West London Synagogue at Balls Pond Road, Dalston, in London.

Philippa Bernard

The 43 Group



In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, Britain's fascists, led from the shadows by the pre-war fascist leader Sir Oswald Mosley, sought to resurrect fascism in Britain. As part of this work, they began holding outdoor meetings on street corners around London, often focusing on areas with large Jewish populations. London's Jews came under attack once again, as many were harassed by gangs of fascists, and Jewish properties were attacked and vandalised.

Outraged that the British state was allowing this to happen, and the Jewish establishment was barely kicking up a fuss, Jewish veterans who had just returned from fighting Nazism in Europe, realised that their days of fighting were not yet at an end.

In February 1946, while driving for a drink in Hampstead Heath, four young Jewish ex-servicemen - the former Hurricane ace Alec Carson, Gerry Flamberg, Len Sherman, and Morris Beckman - witnessed a rally by the British League of Ex-Servicemen and Women. Pretending to buy a copy of their pamphlet, *Britain Awake*, Sherman abruptly knocked two fascists unconscious by banging their heads together. As the crowd scattered, an elderly German Jew stayed to shake their hands.

In March 1946, Morris Beckman called a meeting, and in April of that year, forty-three Jewish ex-servicemen gathered at Maccabi House, and vowed to fight the rising fascist threat, even if it meant using violence. This was the birth of the 43 Group. They chose the name from the number of people in the room.

Many of those who attended the meeting were decorated war heroes - holders of Military Medals, DSO's, DFC's and one VC. They were revolutionary radicals who had seen the horrors of the Shoah with their own eyes and would stop at nothing to prevent that evil from gaining power at home. By the end of April, over 300 people had swelled the Group's ranks. Despite disapproval from communal organisations, money began to roll in from prominent Jewish businessmen, and by July 1947 it had a budget of one million British pounds in today's money - and 500 members.

It is important to note that the government did not help the members of the 43 Group, so they took on the burden themselves. The Labour government was sympathetic but, in the end, did nothing to address the regular beatings and rallies in Jewish neighbourhoods. The Board of Deputies of British Jews' attitude towards the rallies was, according to members of the 43 Group, 'turn the other cheek'. So, they had to take matters into their own hands.

The Group was led by Gerry Flamberg - a paratrooper who was his battalion's boxing champion - along with Geoffrey Bernard, a former army captain. Jonny Wimborne, who was still a member of the Merchant Navy, was head of intelligence, while Reg Morris, an ex-guardsman whose good looks had seen him work as a stand-in for the film star Stewart Granger, was its field commander. Harry Bidney, a former officer who had served in Burma, led the group's notoriously violent East End section. Many famous people, such as hairdresser Vidal Sassoon (see page 12) were part of the 43 Group, and celebrities giving financial support included comedian Bud Flanagan and boxing promoter Jack Solomons. Members of the film industry taught disguise methods for secret raids on fascist properties, whilst Jewish cab drivers provided free transport.

As befitted a group run by former soldiers, the campaign against the fascists was to be fought with military discipline and precision, although the Group had an iron rule of never attacking police officers.

It was decided that they would regularly heckle fascist meetings, physically remove speakers who were spouting hate, and sabotage the fascists by placing undercover agents in their organization.

Leaders in different areas of London were chosen for their courage, their physical strength and their ability to bring others into the fray. Word of the 43 Group continued to spread, and suddenly there were hundreds of volunteers, all wanting to challenge the fascist Black Shirts. The younger members of the group needed to be taught proper methods of self-defence.

When violence ensued, the police then broke up the fascist rallies as a disturbance of the peace. Many Jews were arrested at these events and went to court where they were freed or fined; fines were paid by philanthropists, and lawyers representing the 43 Group never took fees.

Over a period of five years, using spies inside the British Fascist Party to gather intelligence about their plans and rallies, the 43 Group prepared violent 'warm welcomes' for them, in places like Ridley Road in Hackney. Veteran Jewish soldiers would rush in and force their way to the speaking platforms at the rallies, turning them over and causing enough chaos to stop the meetings taking place. One group of fascists who had been harassing Jews in north London found themselves drenched in the paint that they'd been using to daub anti-Semitic graffiti.

The Group also operated a wider surveillance and spying operation and had managed to infiltrate a number of individuals into the fascists' ranks. One blue-eyed, blonde-haired young Jew, today only identified as 'Ben,' managed to charm his way into Mosley's inner circle



and become part of his security detail. Ben fed back daily reports and helped the Group to burgle documents from Mosley's country estate.

Sometimes the fascists' tactics were marginally more sophisticated. In December 1947, John Preen, a Mosley supporter who had been interned in the war, faked a shooting and managed to get Flamberg and Wimborne charged with his attempted murder. The Group, which always paid its members' legal costs, hired Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe, a former Nuremberg prosecutor and future Home Secretary, who got the case dismissed. Newspaper coverage of the case helped the Group's membership to surge to 2,000 members.



Flamberg & Wimborne after their acquittal.

In those days the true enormity of the Holocaust was not widely known, and as the full picture began to emerge it had a profound effect on the community. Jewish ex-servicemen in particular carried a 'sick sense of shame', Beckman said, because no Allied action had been taken to prevent Nazi operations in the death camps. This consciousness was emerging at the same time as walls in London were once again being daubed with swastikas.

After encountering their first post-war instances of physical resistance, London's fascists dropped their respectable veneer. Rather than hiding behind slanderous phrases, the seasoned repertoire of Hitler salutes, 'Heil Mosley' chants, and renditions of the *Horst Wessel Lied*, the Nazi anthem, returned. In the face of constant physical attacks in their communities and workplaces, fascist anger grew increasingly frenzied. A bomb was pushed through the door of Gerry Flamberg's home, while two 43 Group commandos beat unconscious a young

fascist who had stitched razorblades into a flat cap and charged through Stamford Hill slashing people's faces.

On the streets, confrontations intensified. Tightly organised 43 Group units would form human 'wedges' at rallies, pushing through fascist security to attack the stage. On Sunday, 1 June 1947, these skirmishes came to a head in Ridley Road, a market area of Hackney known for its vibrant Jewish life. The fascists' decision to demonstrate here was particularly provocative as it had been a favoured site of Mosley's British Union of Fascists in the 1930s.

The 43 Group organised for the 'Battle for Ridley Road' with military precision. Commandos were given maps of the surrounding streets with entry and exit points for ambush attacks. With police backing, the fascists hugely outnumbered the 43 Group. But they nonetheless infiltrated the audience in front of the stage and, when fascist leader Alexander Raven Thomson began to speak, they started heckling. With a new layer of youth rejuvenating its ranks, the Group felt a sense of impending victory. Broader political developments were encouraging. Printworkers' unions began to refuse to print fascist material, while both workers and union officials pressured the government to take action against Mosley.

both workers and unions officials pressured the government to take action again Mosley

Ridley Road was the high point of a two-year period where the 43 Group had broken up around fifteen fascist meetings a week. A description of scenes by Morris Beckman recalls the intensity. 'A young fascist about eighteen years of age appeared in front of me and called me a "Fucking Jew bastard", catching my left thigh with a nearly well-aimed kick. I hit his nose square on, and it spurted blood ... I kicked his backside as hard as I could, and he staggered off. A hard blow landed smack on my right ear and completely

unbalanced me. For a moment, I was dazed, disorientated. My assailant was about to close and finish me off when Sam grabbed him around the neck and pulled him to the ground. Then Sam jumped on him. The genial, good-humoured Sam said, 'I'm just breaking the bastard's ribs, so he won't attend any more.'

The 43 Group disbanded in April 1950. However, with a re-emergence of the British Nazi party in the early 60's, a new group was formed. Known unofficially as the 62 Group, it was made up of war veterans and younger Jewish National Servicemen. Both the 43 and 62 Groups were the forerunners of today's Community Security Trust (which we feature on page 19). No lists or archives of the 43 Group were kept, as some of their activities, such as breaking into fascist stores, warehouses and printing presses were technically illegal.

Although not part of the 43 Group, two members of Westminster Synagogue were involved in the anti-fascist movement. Leo Bernard and Lewis Golden had joined AJEX, the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women. At a meeting of the fascists in Nottingham, infiltrated by AJEX, Leo was pushed off a platform while trying to interrupt a ranting speaker.

A commemorative plaque honouring this legendary Group of Jewish anti-fascists was unveiled in London in February of this year. It is fixed outside what had been the main and secret headquarters of the Group, at No. 4 Panton Street.

The plaque was organised by AJEX archivist Martin Sugarman, and financed by Jerry Klinger of the UK branch of the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation.

Sugarman said that the plaque reminds us that when anti-Semitism, fascism and racism rear their ugly heads, we must all take action to stop them.

Claire Connick

A Wandering Jew



Benjamin of Tudela
19th century engraving

Don Quixote shames me from one of my bookshelves, in a fat volume through which I have made too little progress to broach another, intriguingly nicknamed *The Jewish Don Quixote: The Wanderings of Benjamin III*, by the nineteenth century satirist Mendele Sforim, 'grandfather of Yiddish literature'. Number three, because as Benjamin II, some years before, one Israel Benjamin published an account of his travels into Asia in search of the lost tribes. Both honoured number one, who set out from Spain seven centuries before them - Benjamin of Tudela, perhaps the greatest Jewish traveller since Abraham. His *Sefer Masa'ot* (Book of Travels) told of his journey through Europe, Asia and Africa, from a date between 1159 and 1163 until 1172-3, a century before Marco Polo set out.

Benjamin was born in about 1127. He studied *Halachah* and was a formidable linguist. His father's name was Jonah, and that is more or less all we know of him. We have only the historical context to suggest his motives.

Tudela was the second city in Navarre, on the southern edge of the western Pyrenean foothills where they drain into the Ebro, the Roman Iber which flows east to the Mediterranean and divides the peninsula from Europe. Many walkers followed the river upstream - and still do - to join the pilgrimage route, 'El Camino' to Santiago on the Galician coast, an example to the young Benjamin of distance travel. He would have read Eldad ha-Dani, a ninth century Jewish

merchant who travelled through Africa and wrote exciting accounts too fanciful for historical importance, as well as Ibn Khordadbeh's descriptions of the Radhanite merchant-travellers. Commercial travel was not uncommon for Jews who could journey between far-flung communities with a common language and cross the Christian-Muslim boundary.

He was a contemporary of Maimonides and Averroës in a multicultural golden age when Islamic Spain held 90% of world Jewry. For three centuries, the city of Tudela was largely autonomous under Islam and its *Juderia*. It had its own office of weights and measures and had attracted a community of five hundred who prospered as artisans, merchants and physicians.

Then the Emir of Cordoba made it his bridgehead in the conflict with the Cross, only to be driven out by Alfonso I (The Battler of Navar) a few years before Benjamin was born. Alfonso would unify much of Spain. He died while Benjamin was still a child. He left inadequate pretenders and prudent Jews prepared to depart. However, they were offered improved rights and permission to live *intramuros* while Muslims were despatched to a suburb. The threat of new danger may have been enough to have propelled Benjamin in middle age to undertake the risks of the road and the sea. He would return to Castile, but never again to live in Tudela.

He set out in the aftermath of two crusades which had devastated Jewish populations. Now Alexander III was Pope and protector of Jews, Frederick I was Holy Roman Emperor and made Jews his royal property, and Byzantine Emperor Manuel I had a Jewish physician (as Benjamin tells us), and control of Anatolian Cilicia. With the Levant ruled by the Crusader states, Benjamin could reach Jerusalem without leaving Christendom. His notes of Jewish populations suggest that he was reconnoitring for a land of refuge, but he may simply have meant to record the remnants of communities who were now safe to visit.

A manuscript anonymously redacted from his notes was brought to print in

the mid-sixteenth century in Constantinople and widely read as Sephardic heritage. The Latin translation in 1575 was source of many re-translations, although some later editions exhibited an anti-Jewish polemic, lamentable in the light of his complimentary descriptions of churches and mosques, Pope and Caliph. He visited more than three hundred cities, and his work stands out in the twelfth century as a socio-historical document. He identifies community leaders and scholars, and is careful to credit his sources, providing colourful descriptions in clear and fluent Hebrew of place, history, political organisation and way of life, especially in the five great cities where he spent much time: Rome, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Baghdad and Cairo.

Some extracts from Marcus Adler's 1907 translation provide a flavour of Benjamin's account, beginning overland from Saragossa via Barcelona to Marseilles, *a city of princely and wise citizens possessing two congregations*, one in the castle, the other on the coast. He sailed to Genoa, a walled city where each house had a tower from which the inhabitants fought. They built galleys and were at war with the *mighty men* of Pisa. By land again to Rome, he found two hundred Jews who *occupy an honourable position and pay no tribute*, amongst whom Rabbi Jechiel, *a handsome young man of intelligence and wisdom has the entry of the Pope's palace as steward of all that he has*. He describes palaces, catacombs, *sights beyond enumeration*, and two bronze columns in St John in the Lateran brought by Titus from Solomon's temple which exude moisture upon 9th Ab (said the local Jews).

He saw petroleum gatherers in Sorrento, cloth dyers in Brindisi, an Otranto community of five hundred but only one in Corfu across the straits. He found two thousand in Thebes, *the most skilled artificers in silk and purple cloth throughout Greece*. In Thrace, *entirely lawless Wallachians* would sweep down from the Bulgarian mountains, but they *give themselves Jewish names... call Jews their brethren and... refrain from killing them* (robbery allowed). He tells

of unequalled trade riches in Constantinople, more palaces, a jewel-encrusted golden throne, Greeks on horseback clothed like princes (Jews might not ride), and Emperor Manuel's Christmas entertainments in the Hippodrome. But there were also street beatings and a divided Rabbinate. Karaite Jews were confined to a suburb. Greeks were *as women who have no strength to fight* and employ mercenaries against the Seljuks.

After a long voyage to Cyprus, he re-joined the mainland at Korykos, below the Taurus mountains, to go by land to Jerusalem. He marvelled at subterranean waterways in Antioch, beautiful Tyrrian glass and the remains of gilded idols. His identification of towns, caves and cemeteries throughout Palestine, with biblical text or later commentary, would be invaluable in consolidating disparate sources into a coherent regional map and history.

He first entered Islam in Damascus. There was *no building in the world* like the magnificent mosque called 'The Synagogue', where *a wall of crystal glass of magic workmanship* refracted sunlight to show the hour and day of the year. In Aleppo (Syria) he admired the palace of Nuraddin, whose conquests had brought safety for travellers, and in Mosul he provided an early accurate description of ancient Nineveh.

There is a scalar increase in his Jewish population counts in Iraq which seem implausible, fifteen thousand in Hatra

(ISIS set about bulldozing its ruins in 2015), ten thousand in Okbara abandoned when the Tigris changed course, forty thousand in Baghdad led by Daniel 'Prince of the Captivity' (leader of the Exiles).

He is full of praise for the Caliph. He was *kind to Israel... knows all languages* (including Hebrew) *and is well versed in the law of Israel*. The vast palace grounds housed the Caliph's brothers and family in luxury but in chains due to the traditional method of usurpation. There were hospitals, dispensaries, and an asylum for the demented *driven insane by the great heat in the summer*. At Babylon, Benjamin writes of Nebuchadnezzar's palace infested with snakes and scorpions, ashes of the fiery furnace, and the stricken Tower of Babel with structural detail and measurements.

Before reaching the Persian Gulf, its pearl fisheries and the five hundred Jews on the trading island of Kish, he documents communities of Tayma and Khaybar, Jewish oases in Arabia once conquered by Mohammed, who married the dead Khaybar commander's wife, and complained of belly-ache from her lamb stew.

Their described hostility and inaccessibility probably meant that he did not visit, but he purports to have continued east to Samarkand, Cochin and China, whereas scholarship suggests that he did not persist beyond Isfahan or cross the Oxus, but recounted hearsay. His

descriptions are over-coloured, some shown to be legend, but return to sobriety on his return journey.

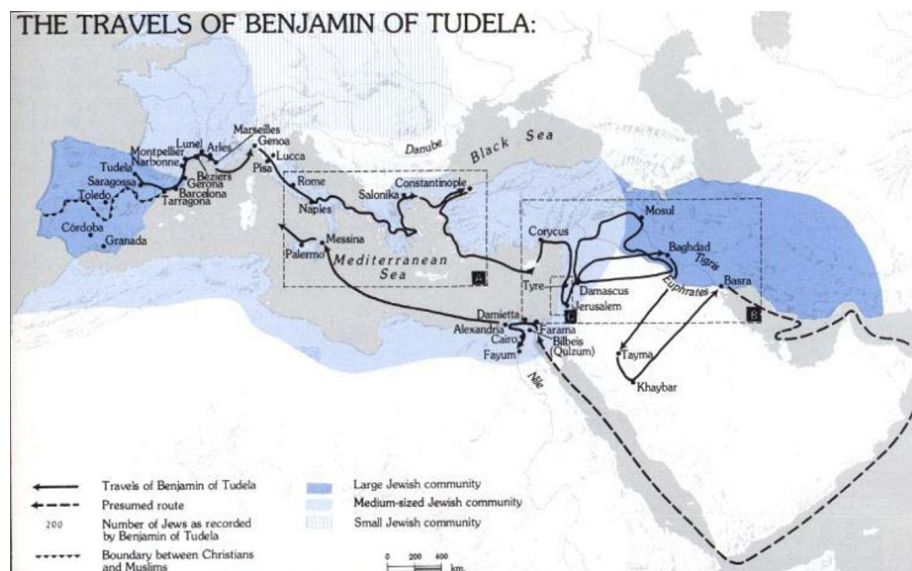
He rounded the Arabian Peninsula and Yemen and crossed Eritrea and Sudan to enter Egypt in 1170-71 to which Saladin, the new Vizier, had brought order. He explains the annual flood and irrigation system, and his descriptions of Jewish life in Alexandria and Cairo are much valued. He makes the first mention of Ethiopian mountain-dwelling Jews later identified with the Kingdom of Simien or Beta Israel from the fourth century, and referred to as Falashas. He recounts more hearsay of the Jews of Europe and Russia whom he clearly did not visit, but provides an attractive portrayal of Palermo, probably his last sojourn on the way back to Castile.

There are endless curiosities in Benjamin's account, some quite bizarre, such as how Daniel's coffin came to be suspended above the river in Shushan, (Susa, city of Ahasuerus). It is a primary source on the Hashishim living independently in the Persian mountains, and gives details of the 'false Messiah' David Alroy, who escaped Persian prison by magic and invisibility and roused the Jews to liberate Jerusalem, until killed in his sleep by his father-in-law.

The account of precursors of Genghis Khan, the Ghuz who inflicted serious defeats on Persia – *they worship the wind... live in the wilderness... on uncooked meat... have no noses but two small holes... and are very friendly towards the Israelites* – may explain the Prester John myth possessing European Christianity after the Crusades.

Whatever his motivations, Benjamin was immensely courageous to have travelled in those times, the definitive 'Wandering Jew' who knew exactly where he was going.

Jonathan Footerman



Forgotten Soldier

Saloman (Sally) Noach (1909-1980)



Imagine finding out that your late father was a war hero. That is what happened to Lady Irene Hatter. Irene, who was born in Holland, first learned a little of this when chatting to some Dutch people whom she met in Israel. It turned out that they were among the many people whose families had been saved from the Nazis by her father. Nearly forty years after their father's death Irene, and her brother, Jacques Noach, who still lives in Holland, decided to retrace his steps and uncover the truth behind their father's wartime exploits and they gradually uncovered the amazing story of Saloman Noach's bravery.

Sally Noach's refusal to tell his family about his actions during the war, meant that his children had little idea of his massive rescue operation in Lyon in the early 1940's. A box of memorabilia discovered by Irene and Jacques, included thank-you letters sent to Sally by grateful survivors from places as far-flung as Jamaica, Suriname and Lisbon.

Eventually, the two siblings were able to put together a film, *Forgotten Soldier*, which is regularly shown in schools and other organisations around the world. It was vividly created from archives and documents, and from letters and photos which came from stowed-away suitcases of families and their offspring, whose lives he had saved. As Irene and her brother learned from so many people, 'if it had not been for your father we would not be here today'.

Sally had never spoken of his experiences and after the war there was a general reluctance to talk about the horrors; his children had been discouraged from asking questions. Why was he so reluctant to talk about what he did during World War II? Was he, as some claimed, a profiteer, running the Black Market in Vichy France? Why did he come to the attention of Queen Wilhelmina of Holland and fall out with the Dutch political elites? What is the meaning of the hundreds of letters from survivors around the world, claiming that he had saved their lives? There was also a disturbing undercurrent of anti-Semitism in Dutch politics. Sally identified the negative attitude of officials towards refugee Jews, many of them young engineers, doctors or officers, trying to get to England to contribute to the war effort.

Jacques carried out extensive research into the 'Sally Noach File' and discovered some shocking revelations about the 'support' the London-based Dutch government provided to Dutch refugees. If it had been down to the Dutch civil servants, all Dutch refugees would have immediately been sent back from France to occupied Holland. There were also clear signs of a 'politically correct' form of anti-Semitism. Sally was discredited by the Dutch government and referred to as 'uncivilised'. The Dutch Consul-General in France, Ate Sevenster, articulated it clearly: 'Jewish refugees are the lowest class'.

Unlike the great Swedish diplomat, Raoul Wallenberg, Sally had no backing from a powerful family, nor from the Red Cross. He was always at personal risk and could have been snatched from the street, imprisoned or worse. Perhaps at the heart of this story is Sally's tragic knowledge that he could not save his own parents, who were murdered in Auschwitz.

Born in December 1909 in the Dutch town of Zutphen, Salomon (Sally) Noach was one of six children. He left school at the age of twelve after a row with a teacher. He worked for a butcher, and as a bellboy and then as a waiter. When his family left for Brussels in 1927, he became a

travelling textile salesman with his brothers and his father. Life for the Noach family was tranquil.

This all changed in May 1940, as the German *Blitzkrieg* swept through Belgium and the Netherlands. Sally boarded a train to Toulouse and joined what became known as the 'Grande Exode' – the six million people desperately fleeing Hitler's advancing forces. He was unable, however, to persuade his parents to leave with him.

After a short stay in a village in the Pyrenees, Sally made his way to Lyon. Thanks to its position in France's southern unoccupied zone – which was ruled by Marshall Pétain's collaborationist Vichy regime – it became a magnet for refugees. Within weeks, its Jewish population of 4,000 had swollen to 40,000. With its reputation for lawlessness, the city became known as the 'capital of the resistance', a place from which it was possible to escape eastwards to the Swiss border, or south to the frontier with Spain.

He escaped from invaded Belgium on the last train to reach unoccupied France. In Lyon, Sally found the Dutch consulate. Fluent in Dutch, French and English, he volunteered to be a translator. The offer was gratefully accepted by the Consul, Maurice Jacquet, who spoke only French. Sally thus became a diplomat, and the first point of contact for the Dutch refugees – many of them Jewish – who were by now overwhelming the mission.

Sally also took a role as interpreter at the military court and began to build useful friendships with sympathetic officials among Pétain's *gendarmes*. A gregarious and jolly character, he used his business contacts to persuade prominent textile merchants to provide much-needed cash for the consulate's 'fighting fund' to assist refugees.

But Sally Noach was no ordinary Dutch diplomat and he used a combination of extraordinary bluff and bravery to rescue imperilled Jews. With great *chutzpah* and under the cover of working for the Dutch Consul, he repeatedly walked into prisons, hostels, factories and police stations demanding the release of people who, he

claimed, were Dutch nationals. He would forge 'safe passage' papers for anyone he could – once filling in and stamping hundreds of documents at one sitting.

He had incredible belief in what he had to do, so in 1942 when the Nazi oppression was getting more savage and 2300 people were rounded up and imprisoned, Sally went to the jail, demanded to see the guard, and with invented names and forged documents got 'his' people out, saving 430 of them from deportation. There had been no intervention from the Dutch authorities and it was only Sally's force of personality and contempt for rules which had enabled him to cheat the Nazis.

What do you mean by taking my Dutch people, I am the Consul

In August 1942, as the Nazis' net grew ever tighter around the Jews of Vichy France, a Dutch diplomat walked into Lyon's Palais de Justice and successfully demanded the release of 118 prisoners being held there. The following day, this same Dutchman - Sally Noach - appeared at the Stade des Iris on the outskirts of the city. He had received a tip-off from a police source pointing it out as the place where all the remaining Jews from Vichy's holding centres were being detained. Most of these spoke only Polish and Yiddish, and he spoke neither. However, using mime and sign language, he managed to make himself understood. He gave people made-up names and fake personal details, and he went on writing until he ran out of papers.

He wasn't beyond elevating his position either. One survivor recalled him berating the French police with the words, 'How dare you take my people. What do you mean by taking my Dutch people, I am the Consul.' Another remembers him successfully freeing prisoners with the words: 'I am the Dutch Consul. Is there no more respect for diplomacy? I need my

people.' The detainees were issued with his false papers registering them as Dutch and thus securing their freedom and escape from near-certain death.

Soon after his Palais de Justice stunt, Sally realized that it was time for he, himself to flee. 'Leave, now, Sally, before it's too late,' Jacquet urged him. He followed the route he had helped others to tread, through the Pyrenees to Spain, and from there to Portugal and safety. A military seaplane then carried him from Lisbon to Poole in Dorset. From there, he was accompanied by police to London and interrogated by British intelligence. When a cigar-smoking Dutch refugee and carpet salesman, arrived in Britain in the middle of the second world war, British intelligence officers doubted his claim to have secured the release of hundreds of imprisoned Jews in southern France. Finally, they were impressed by what they heard. 'A shrewd, patriotic Dutch Jew, who did extremely good work in the south of France and helped hundreds of people to escape,' an officer reported. 'He's politically totally trustworthy.'

Two or three months after Sally left France, Klaus Barbie, the Butcher of Lyon arrived in that city and oversaw the deportation of many more Jews to death camps. They included Maurice Jacquet, the official at the Dutch Consulate who had aided and supported much of the impromptu rescue work.

With the film *Forgotten Soldier*, Irene and her brother have solved some of the mysteries that had puzzled them and have proved the truth of his story. In making the programme, they tracked down some of the estimated 600 people who were saved by Sally. The film is narrated by Zoe Wannamaker and Henry Goodman. It was shown at Kent House in May 2019.

The film credits Sally with saving 600 people. The real number is probably much higher, as that figure includes only those whose names are known. An archivist working on the film, indeed, believes he probably rescued at least 1,500 people. Paul Goldin, producer of the documentary, said: 'The particularly sad thing is that Noach was then ostracised by many in the Dutch



Identity documents forged by Noach

community in London, and disbelieved by the British authorities. Like Noach, those involved often did not want to talk about the Jewish resistance, especially if they had not been able to protect their own family.'

Sally Noach returned to Amsterdam in 1947, where Irene and her two brothers were born. The Dutch government recognised his achievements in 1969. He did break his silence, but only briefly.

In 1971 – two years after he had been honoured by the Dutch Royal Family with the highest award the House of Orange can bestow – he published a short memoir and gave an interview to Dutch TV. 'I read it but not really fully taking it in,' Irene recalls. But when he was nominated for a medal that had been awarded to those who helped Dutch citizens during the war, the government refused. It was only finally granted after his death.

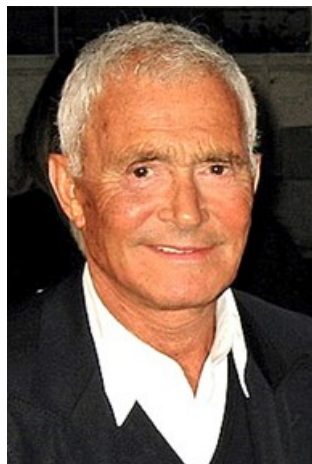
Sally Noach, the 'Dutch Schindler', died on March 30, 1980.

If you would like to watch the film, especially if you missed it when it was shown at Kent House, use the link below, and the password - **forgotten**.

Claire Connick

<https://app.shift.io/review/62cbfbb9d8eb9623745cd032>

A Celebrity Crimper



In the twentieth century the idea of the Jewish hairdresser was far from uncommon. Some of the great names in international hairdressing were Jewish, with Vidal Sassoon the most famous example.

Vidal Sassoon was born on January 17, 1928, in Hammersmith. His parents were Sephardi Jews. His mother, Betty (Bellin), came from a family of immigrants from Spain, and his father, Jack Sassoon, was from Thessaloniki, Greece. They lived in Shepherd's Bush.



With his mother and his younger brother, Ivor

However, Jack Sassoon deserted the family when Vidal was three years old. As a single parent, his mother found it impossible to cope and when Vidal was five, she placed him in a Jewish orphanage, attached to Lauderdale Road Synagogue. Vidal was very unhappy

there and when he could, he ran away to a relative of his father in Shepherd's Bush. She contacted Jack Sassoon who came and took him straight back to the orphanage where he was later joined by his younger brother, Ivor. They stayed there until Betty remarried in 1940, when Vidal and his brother went back to live as a family with her and their stepfather, Nathan Goldberg. Nathan turned out to be a wonderful parent and Vidal came to love him as a father.

The children of the orphanage were sent to the local primary school, which was Catholic. Not surprisingly they were the subject of much name-calling. At the beginning of the War, the school was evacuated to Holt, Wiltshire and his parents moved there too.

After their return to London, Nathan got Vidal, aged twelve, a job delivering newspapers. This allowed him to give some cash to his mother and provided him with a little pocket money. He left school at the age of fourteen. His mother, who had always felt he should be a hairdresser, dragged a reluctant Vidal to Adolf Cohen's salon, which was next to a gasworks in Whitechapel. She asked about apprenticing her son to him. Cohen told her the fee he required, and the amount was so huge that a dejected Betty was forced to leave the shop. Sassoon said he was relieved as he was more interested in playing football than becoming a hairdresser. However, as they left, Vidal opened the door for his mother and politely tipped his hat to Cohen. The hairdresser was so impressed with youngster's manners, that he called the two back inside and told them he would waive the apprentice fee entirely and took the lad under his wing.

In 1946, his parents were holding Zionist meetings in their home, and he was sent out into the streets to make sure that people only attended a few at a time, so as not to alert the neighbours. The view of the need for a Jewish homeland began to impress itself on his own mind, and after Israel declared Statehood in 1948, at the age of twenty, Vidal joined the *Haganah* (which shortly afterwards became the Israeli Defence Force) and he fought in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.

At the age of seventeen, despite having been too young to serve in the war, Vidal became the youngest member of the 43 Group, (see page 6). After the Group disbanded three years later, however, Sassoon's fight against anti-Semitism continued. In 1948, he travelled to Israel where he joined the Israeli Defence Force as a member of its elite Palmach group during the War of Independence.

In his later years, he said that he joined the force because 'I thought if we don't fight for a piece of land and make it work, then the whole Holocaust thing was a terrible waste. But this way at least we got a country out of it.' It is interesting how many of those post-war hairdressing stars were Jewish. Vidal says that he would have given up hairdressing if he had stayed in Israel. However, he had to return to London to support his mother after Nathan suffered a heart attack; a telegram had arrived from his mother saying 'Nathan ill. Come home and earn a living'.

It took several attempts for Vidal to get himself taken on as a trainee with the leading hair stylist of the day—Raymond. 'The first time, I walked in and asked the receptionist if I could see the governor - I was still a bit Cockney then - she said 'You'll have to learn English first, it's the language we speak here'. Vidal eventually managed to get a position training with Raymond Bessone, popularly known as Mr. Teasy-Weasy.

Raymond had put glamorous hairdressing on the map and during the fifties did shows on television. Sassoon credited him with teaching him how to cut hair and went so far as to say he would never have achieved success



Vidal & Ivor Sassoon

without his training and influence. Infact, he became so fond of Raymond that when his daughter, Amber, died in a tragic car accident, Vidal flew from America, where he was then firmly based, in order to attend her funeral.

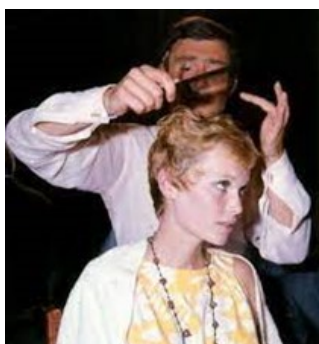
Vidal Sassoon's rise to fame and fortune evolved over many years and several set-backs but he opened his first salon in 1954 with a clear idea of what hair shouldn't be like.

He insisted that his employees should look very professional at all times, and used to send them home if their shoes were not properly polished. He would often rebuke clients with a slap of the comb if they touched their hair while he was in the middle of cutting it. He had little patience with clients who protested that they wanted a cut a certain way, rather than the style he decided they needed.



Mary Quant's 5-point cut

He became hairdresser to a variety of famous people, including clothes designer Mary Quant whose miniskirt designs were perfectly balanced by his "five-point" bob haircut, and actress Mia Farrow whose 'urchin cut' was made famous in her leading role in Roman Polanski's film, *Rosemary's Baby*.



Mia Farrow's Urchin Cut



Vidal and his mother, Betty

Over the years, his client list also included Jane Fonda, Goldie Hawn, Helen Mirren, and Twiggy. He opened his first New York salon in 1965 and it went on to become a string of international salons. Not only did he become a stylist for celebrities, but he became a celebrity himself.

Sassoon had moved to Los Angeles in the early 1970s, looking for a chemist to formulate his hair-care products, and had decided to move there permanently. After his stepfather died, he moved his mother there, where she enjoyed attending parties given by her son, and mixing with Hollywood celebrities. Nevertheless, Sassoon remained true to his British roots, and he continued to support his Chelsea football team his whole life.

Sassoon supported a wide number of charities and causes, including the Boys & Girls Clubs of America and Performing Arts Council of the Music Center of Los Angeles. He also financed the establishment of the Vidal Sassoon International Centre for the Study of Anti-Semitism and Related Bigotries at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1983. In addition, his foundation provided support for educational pursuits on a need-basis in Israel and elsewhere. He was active in supporting relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina.

He married Elaine Wood, in 1956 but the marriage ended in 1958. In 1967, he married his second wife, actress Beverly Adams. They had three children: two daughters, Catya and Eden and a son, Elan, and they adopted a fourth, David. Sassoon and Adams divorced in 1980. His third wife was Jeanette Hartford-Davis, a dressage champion and former

fashion model; they married in 1983 and divorced soon after. Catya became an actress; she died from a drug-induced heart attack. Vidal's younger brother, Ivor, died in 1976, at the age of forty-six.

Sassoon was appointed CBE in the 2009 Birthday Honours.

In 1992 Vidal married designer Ronnie (Rhonda) Holbrook, with whom he lived happily in Los Angeles, California, until his death.

When Vidal Sassoon died on May 9, 2012, at his home in Los Angeles, his family issued the following statement:

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Vidal Sassoon CBE, who died this morning at his home in Los Angeles surrounded by loved ones. The 84-year-old hairdresser was born in 1928 and sadly lost his battle with leukaemia today. He became the most celebrated hairdresser in the world having begun his career as an apprentice during the Second World War, going on to revolutionise an industry through his iconic haircuts, salons, schools and product lines. He will be greatly missed by his wife of twenty years Ronnie, and his children, grandchildren, family and friends.



Proudly displaying his CBE

Claire Connick

The Warburg Institute



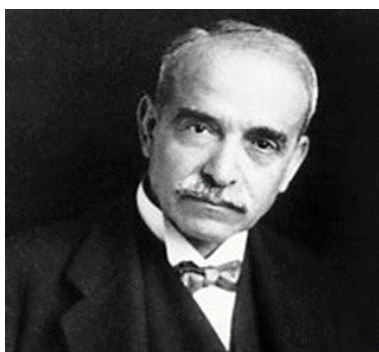
The majority of people, if questioned as to what and where is the Warburg Institute, would know little if anything about it. And yet the Institute is one of the most important, universally renowned research centres for cultural history in the world, located in the Bloomsbury area of London. Its focus is the study of the arts and the role of images in culture, concerned mainly with the histories of art and science and their relationship with superstition, magic and popular beliefs.

It was a German Jew, Aby Warburg, who started the collection at his home in Hamburg. He came from the wealthy family of Warburg bankers, taking their name from the small town of Warburg where the family had settled originally, coming from Italy in the seventeenth century. The firm was founded in Hamburg by Moritz Warburg and his brother. Moritz and his wife Charlotte had seven children, of whom Aby was the eldest, and brought them up in an observant Jewish home. But Aby rebelled against his home environment, refusing to obey his parents' wishes that he become a rabbi or a doctor or a lawyer. His interests lay in a more cultural direction; he insisted on studying art history, and came to an agreement with his brother Max to forfeit his right, as the eldest son, to lead the family firm, in return for Max

agreeing to provide him with any books he should ever wish to own.

Aby studied in Bonn, Munich, Strasbourg and Florence, immersing himself in the Renaissance and its art. His dissertation at the end of his studies was on Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus* and *Prima Vera*. With almost unlimited funds at his disposal, Aby began assembling the books and paintings that were later to form the basis of the Warburg collection. He was interested in the influence of ancient culture on modern art and established his library in 1909. He decided to turn it into a research centre, together with a friend, Fritz Saxl, but it was not opened to the public in Hamburg until after the First World War in 1926.

While in Florence, Aby had studied not only the paintings of the Renaissance, but the artists themselves, their home influences and their way of life, all of which he was to use in his assessment of the period, travelling also to America and investigating native art, music and dance. His institute in Hamburg was affiliated to the University of Hamburg, but as the Nazi influence grew in Germany, he and his fellow directors decided in 1933 to move the Institute to London, becoming the only institution saved from Nazi Germany to survive intact in Britain today. It became one of the primary work-places for Jewish refugee scholars.



Aby Warburg

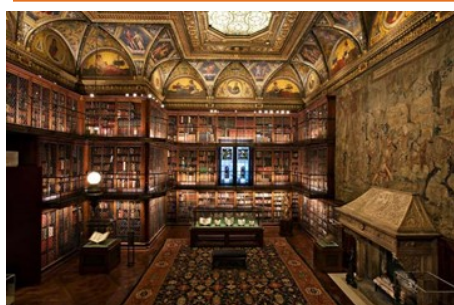
The Institute explains its precepts: 'Aby Warburg conceived a programme of illustrating the processes by which the memory of the past affects a culture, above all by analysing the pivotal role of

images. The paradigm he chose was the afterlife, revival, survival or renewal of 'antiquity' on modern European civilization in all its aspects- social, political, religious, scientific, philosophical, literary and artistic. Maintaining its independence, including from anti-Semitic currents in German academia, became essential for Warburg's scholarly identity'.

the only institution saved from Nazi Germany to survive intact

The Warburg family, together with Samuel Courtauld and Lord Lee of Fareham, financed the operation and the Centre was transferred to Thames House on the banks of the Thames, near Lambeth Bridge. It was moved twice more, first to the Imperial Institute buildings behind the Albert Hall and then to its present home in Woburn Square as part of the University of London, with whom it became associated in 1944. It is now a founding Institute of the University's School of Advanced Study.

Within the Library are some 350,000 volumes; they are mostly on open shelves available to anyone who wishes to consult them. The rarer more valuable items must be ordered up and brought to the reader. However, the reference system is not always easy to understand as it follows Aby's own system of classification. He divided human history into sections: Action, Orientation, Word and Image and the Institute has used his guidance. The 'image' section includes a large collection of photographs, pictures of paintings, sculpture, prints and drawings. These have been arranged in a system drawn up by, among others, Rudolf Wittkower and Edgar Wind. It includes the archive of *The Image of the Black in Western Art*. All Aby's working papers are held here, together with those of many distinguished art historians, such as Ernst Gombrich who was for some years Director of the Institute.



The Library

As well as its work in the field of art history and research, the Warburg Institute offers degrees in the subject. Students can sit for Master of Arts degrees in Cultural and Intellectual History, in Art History, Curatorship and Renaissance Culture, and in Philosophy. The emphasis of these programs is on developing interpretative skills in a number of different academic subjects, which follows from the Institute's interdisciplinary mission. Considerable attention is devoted to improving language skills and knowledge of primary sources.

In an account of the Institute, the *New Yorker* described it as The World's Weirdest Library: 'At first, the library of the Warburg Institute, in London, seems and smells like any other university library: four floors of fluorescent lights and steel shelves, with the damp, weedy aroma of aging books everywhere, and sudden apparitions of graduate students wearing that look, at once brightly keen and infinitely discouraged, eternally shared by graduate students, whether the old kind, with suède elbow patches, or the new kind, with many piercings'.

Many would agree with the *New Yorker's* view. The Institute has been a sanctuary for those scholars who have no academic home, particularly those whose work sits outside traditional structures. Its approach to the afterlife of the past has always embraced multiple traditions, from Greek and Latin to Hebrew and Arabic; and its commitment to cultural memory includes not only the history of art and literature but food, folklore and magic.

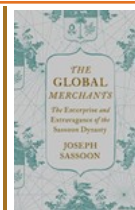
The Institute welcomes a number of research projects, but it is possible to become an 'occasional student'. International students registered for a

PhD in their own country can join the Institute as an occasional student. It also welcomes those who are not currently enrolled on a PhD programme, but who are professionals whose work relates to academic considerations of culture and art history. Occasional students pay a monthly fee and receive an academic mentor and access to the Library, Photographic Collection, and Archive. They are encouraged to attend open lectures, seminars and colloquia and to become part of the Institute's international research culture. The research projects vary widely. Recently published papers include *Astrolabes in Jewish Culture*, *The Damned in Hell in the Frescoes of Venetian-dominated Crete*, and *Francis Bacon, the Medicine of the Mind and Natural Philosophy in Early Modern England*. The Institute also runs an active programme of lectures, talks and conversations, almost all of which are free and open to everyone.

Programmes in 2023 will combine online events with in-person sessions

Programmes in 2023 will combine online events with in-person sessions in the Warburg Institute Lecture Room, or in Senate House. Last year the Institute embarked on a major redevelopment of the building under the title of 'Warburg Renaissance'. This will restore the Institute's original mixture of discovery, display and debate, and open its holdings and expertise to new audiences. The £14.5m renovation will enhance the Institute's academic resources and teaching spaces and create new facilities for special collections, exhibitions, and events.

Philippa Bernard



THE GLOBAL MERCHANTS
by
Joseph Sassoon

Published by Allen Lane
2022

Hugh and Marion Sassoon were founder members of the Synagogue; their daughter Sarah Von Halle remains a member. A new book on their extensive family by a distant kinsman is therefore of interest to the community.

The story of the family has many common themes: flight from a city where imposition of the law was arbitrary; success generated by the hard work of a network of brothers and sons; a family rift, and a decline in the family fortunes; parts of the family retaining a strong Jewish affiliation with associated philanthropy, others not. The distinctive 'twist' is that the city of origin was Baghdad, the wealth created in India from activities there, and trade (including in opium) with China and the Middle and Far East before Britain became home.

Professor Sassoon's familiarity with Judeo-Arabic, in which the family initially corresponded, enables him to give a strong sense of the early development of the family firm with appropriate extracts from letters between its members. However, this focus sometimes leaves the reader searching for more external context and numbers to obtain a fuller understanding of the extent of the enterprise. Some intriguing topics - a Bombay tram ticket for Jews' use on Saturdays and holidays, a petition for Jewish judges in India not to have to sit on Shabbat, the relationships of the immigrant Baghdadis and longstanding Bene Israel - are raised but not pursued.

There are many interesting members of the Sassoon family, both male and female (including Rachel Beer, rather neglected here).* This new book provides an introduction to them. But although weaker on the founders in Baghdad and Bombay, an older book, *The Sassoons* (1989) by Stanley Jackson brings those who settled in Britain more vividly to life.

Edward Glover

**but featured in our July 2011 issue*

Alexander Korda (1893-1956) Filmmaker & spy



If Winston Churchill had not decided on the political career that enabled Britain and her Allies to win the Second World War, he might have been almost as well-known as a screen writer. His friendship with Alexander Korda was hardly known at the time, but the late Prime Minister was greatly enamoured of the film industry. The film rights of one of his most famous works, the four-volume *History of the English Speaking People*, were sold to Korda for £50,000 (about £2 million today), but the film was never made.

The three Korda brothers, all eminent in the film industry, were the sons of a Hungarian Jewish family. Their original name was Kellner. Alexander, born in 1893, was Sandor Kellner, but he changed it on the death of his father, when he began writing film reviews to support the family. In the years before World War II he was making films in the country of his birth, editing screen magazines, writing film scripts and directing early silent films. He was turned down for service in the First World War because he was short-sighted, a failing which never seemed subsequently to trouble his career. By the time he was in his early twenties he had established his own film company, Corvin Films, and in the rapidly growing silent film industry he was already well known in Hungary.

He left the country in 1919 to work in Vienna and never returned. In Austria he

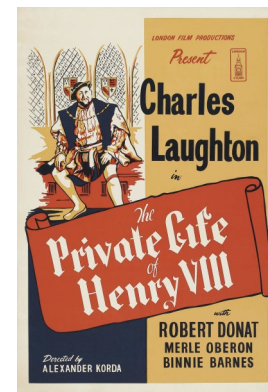
continued producing successful films, moving on to Germany where he starred his wife, Maria Corda, as the lead in most of these early silent films. When eventually he moved on to America to make talkies, Maria could no longer star in his films because of her strong Hungarian accent, and they were divorced.

The Korda family moved to Hollywood in 1926 where Alexander joined the studio of First National, one of America's leading companies. His first talkie was *The Squall*, starring the young Myrna Loy, but he was unhappy with the Hollywood studio system. He joined the Fox Corporation on a handsome contract, but quarrelled with his bosses, demanding more autonomy in his work, and left America for France. In 1931 he made several films there for Paramount, but decided to go to England, where he set up his own company, London Films.

In 1935, Korda took a 165-acre site known as 'The Fisheries' near the village of Denham in Buckinghamshire, and built Denham Studios, designed by architects Walter Gropius and Maxwell Fry. At the time it was the largest facility of its kind in the UK. The studios were known by various names during their lifetime including London Film Studios (after Korda's own company), and merged with the Rank Organisation's Pinewood Studios (Pinewood is just four miles south of Denham). Film makers were said to prefer Denham as a location, leading to Pinewood Studios being used for storage during the Second World War.

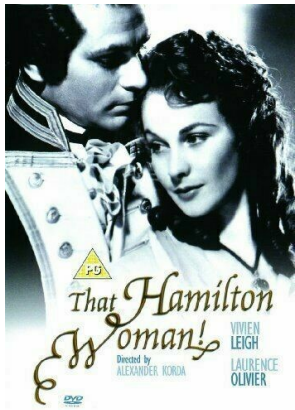
Some of the greatest films ever to be made in Britain were made in these studios, including *The Thief of Bagdad*, *49th Parallel*, *Brief Encounter*, *Great Expectations* and *Hamlet*. The actor, Bernard Miles, said that 'when the technicians, the electricians and carpenters and so on, on the floor, who had been watching a scene filmed, applauded, you knew it was good, because they'd seen the best.' An American description of the studios said it was, 'not only the most up-to-date of all the world's studios, but a complete community in itself, with a foundry and blacksmith's shops, and unusually good dressing and bathroom accommodations.'

In 1933 one of Korda's greatest hits was *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, starring Charles Laughton. It was nominated for the Academy Award Best Picture, and Laughton received an Oscar as Best Actor. In the following years the studio produced many of the exciting, romantic and swashbuckling films which have lasted well. Among them were *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, with Leslie Howard, *Moscow Nights*, starring Laurence Olivier, and *Things to Come*, written by H.G. Wells.



It was under Korda's influence that some of the great partnerships of leading producer/directors in the film industry were born. Emeric Pressburger and Michael Powell joined forces, Carol Reed and David Lean founded their careers, and fine actors such as Ralph Richardson, Merle Oberon (whom Korda later married) and Valerie Hobson established themselves.

One of the most successful films of this pre-war era was *Fire Over England*, the story of the Spanish Armada, with Flora Robson as Queen Elizabeth I. It starred Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh, their first film together. Such was Leigh's success that she was chosen as Scarlet O'Hara in *Gone With The Wind*. By now the films were rolling out, some very successful, others less so. Korda ran into financial difficulties, as he was often careless of the vast budget needed for many of the films. One huge hit was *The Four Feathers*, directed by his brother Zoltan, though the vast settings and huge cast he demanded, added to his money worries. The studios at Denham had to be merged with the neighbouring Pinewood complex, to become part of the Rank Organisation.



Concerned about his family in Hungary, with the Nazi threat growing greater, Korda went back to Hollywood, where he was forced to take the half-finished *Thief of Bagdad* to be completed. In America he again produced some of the best films of the period, including *That Hamilton Woman*, with Leigh and Olivier, soon after they had married. It was their only film together as a married couple. The film was intended to parallel the current situation in Europe and to serve as propaganda at a time, before the attack on Pearl Harbour, when America was still formally neutral.

Korda returned to England in 1943, but had already been knighted by George VI, the first film director to be so honoured. He bought a controlling interest in British Lion Films and produced and directed some of the leading films of the war period, such as *Perfect Strangers*, with Robert Donat and Deborah Kerr.

One side of Korda's life which has been little explored until recently was his relationship with Winston Churchill. Churchill had always been fascinated by story-telling and was completely entranced by the film industry.

While making *The Four Feathers*, Korda used an episode from Churchill's early life on the screen, though he needed to mobilise the British army regiment in Khartoum as extras, calling upon 1574 natives, 1578 horses, 300 camels, and ten mules to recreate the battle of Omdurman in blistering Technicolor. The two became good friends and in 1934 Korda signed Churchill up as historical advisor and screen writer. By the time war broke out and Churchill became Prime Minister,

he was still somewhat obsessed with the cinema. He was reported to have watched the Hamilton film eight or nine times, most famously with President Roosevelt aboard the new battleship, *Prince of Wales*. Each time Nelson died, Churchill cried. A witness to the performance in the battleship's wardroom noted that he took a handkerchief from his pocket 'and wiped his eyes without shame'.

The US had yet to enter the war, and Korda was investigated by the Senate, querying his motives for such a film made in America. Churchill was urging Korda to ask America for help, and in 1942 the US did come to the Allies' aid.

It was Colonel Claude Dansey, who had served with Churchill in the same regiment during the Boer War, who had introduced the two men. Dansey had become head of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service in Rome, and the general conclusion by later writers is that Korda himself was ideal material for a spy, enjoying intrigue, manipulating people and being a good linguist. In 1937 Dansey arranged with Korda that London Film Productions would provide cover for his agents in Europe, an arrangement which lasted throughout the war years. The secret agents were able to work in European capitals while pretending to be screenwriters or film researchers.



The Third Man

Another of Korda's films, *Q Planes*, starring Laurence Olivier, Ralph Richardson and Valerie Hobson, told the story of British aircraft disappearing with secret equipment, a spy story concerning an unnamed enemy, though obviously Germany. However, in 1938 a real Wellesley bomber had disappeared while on a test flight over the Channel. A search

was started, and parts of the wreckage were found. The Germans were warned that Britain knew about the plane being brought down, and Lord Vansittart of Denham, a friend of Korda and Head of the British Secret Service, persuaded him to make *Q Planes*, partly financed by the Service.

But Korda's involvement with espionage did not stop there. In 1949 Korda produced what the British film Institute called 'The Greatest British Film of all time', *The Third Man*, starring Orson Welles. It had links with the cold war and the struggle between intelligence services, and spying themes run through it. It is set in Vienna, whose bombed-out ruins were a major centre for spies. The film's history is itself a story of spies. All major figures involved had a background in intelligence, from the author Graham Greene to the figure of Harry Lime, whose real-life model was the KGB mole Kim Philby. These must surely include the producer, Alexander Korda.

It was Korda who originally suggested locating the film in Vienna, a city he knew well. Its situation as a centre of post-war intrigue was perfect for the dramatic qualities of the film. He had maintained close relationships with the Anglo-American intelligence services, especially during the Second World War. He made German shooting locations available to British agents for training purposes and, while location scouting in North Africa, helped the Allies prepare the Normandy landings. His role as a British spy was never openly revealed to the public until after the war, but writers examining his life have shown that he was of vital use to those running the secret war.

Alexander Korda died of a heart attack in London at the age of sixty-two and was cremated at Golders Green. His Jewish background was never a practical element in his life, but he was always aware of it, strongly concerned about the Holocaust, anti-fascism, British rearmament, the need to end US isolationism, and the plight of the refugee.

Philippa Bernard

Progressive Judaism - a Historical Perspective



Rabbi David Marks

Most of our readers will know by now of the proposal to merge the two branches of Progressive Judaism - Reform and Liberal. Westminster Synagogue has always, since its inception in 1957, maintained its independence, even though it springs from the original Reform congregation - the West London Synagogue of British Jews.

Often known from its situation as Upper Berkeley Street, that congregation was born in 1840, when twenty-four distinguished members of the London Jewish community met at the Bedford Hotel to discuss the formation of a new synagogue. Most of them were wealthy, aristocratic Jews - both Ashkenazim and Sephardim. They wanted a synagogue that would be nearer to their homes in the Western part of the city, where they could have more English in the Services, where decorum could be improved and where they could walk comfortably to Services on *Shabbat*.

Their first Rabbi was David Marks, who had led the Liverpool orthodox community, but who felt very much the same regarding Services, and who was happy to come south to lead the newly formed congregation. Daniel Mocatta, from one of the old Anglo-Jewish families and who had been present at that first inaugural meeting, was appointed Chairman. Most of the early members lived in and around the Bloomsbury area, so the first Synagogue was in Burton Street, the old chapel that had been run by Robert Owen, the philanthropist and early socialist.

The early ideas and motivation for a new Jewish form of worship came originally from Hamburg where the *Haskalah* - the Jewish Enlightenment - had influenced the community to include more prayers and the sermon in the vernacular. At West London the English rivalry between Sephardim and Ashkenazim was removed by calling the Synagogue 'British' to show that all members were on a level footing, using the Sephardi pronunciation, and with a new prayer book. Many had been members of the principal Sephardi Synagogue, Bevis Marks, or in the case of the lesser number of Ashkenazim, the Great Synagogue.

At both places of worship, decorum had been almost non-existent, the sermon was in Hebrew as was the rest of the Service - incomprehensible to many of those present - so the new congregation was a breath of life, a 'Beacon of Light', as David Marks put it in his opening sermon.

After two more homes, West London built a splendid new Synagogue on Upper Berkeley Street near Marble Arch, where it still worships. The architects were Davis and Emanuel, both members of the congregation.



Claude Montefiore

The synagogue was consecrated on 23rd September, 1870. The *Jewish Chronicle* called the building 'magnificent - a monument of architectural ability and artistic taste.' Membership increased rapidly and before long two other synagogues, Manchester and Bradford, joined West London to form what eventually became the Association of Reform Synagogues in Great Britain. However in the early years of the twentieth century some members of West London were already feeling that the Synagogue was still too orthodox for their liking. They wanted more of the service



Lily Montagu

to be in English, particularly the Psalms and the Haftarah, and after some heated debate this was done. One member, whose family roots had been set in Reform Judaism from the beginning, was Claude Montefiore. He had wanted to become a Rabbi but his wife's death turned him away from the idea, and in 1902 he established the Jewish Religious Union, the precursor of Liberal Judaism. His partner in the new enterprise was Lily Montagu, the daughter of Lord Swaythling. The immediate object was to hold Sabbath afternoon Services in which English was used as well as Hebrew, musical instruments were permitted and men and women could sit together - something which West London refused to countenance until the 1930s. The first public service was held on 18th October 1902 at the Great Central Hotel in Marylebone Road, London. Claude Montefiore's allegiance to both groups prompted him to say that when he was buried, his body should be cut in two and one half buried as a Reform Jew and the other as a Liberal.

West London offered the use of their Berkeley Street building to the newly formed Union for Services on Saturday afternoons, but were very dubious about its arrangements: women sitting with men and even taking part in Services, the increased use of English and of musical instruments, as well as their Minister, the



Rabbi Israel Mattuck

Rev. Morris Joseph, joining its committee. They made their feelings known, and the Union turned down their 'very kind offer.'

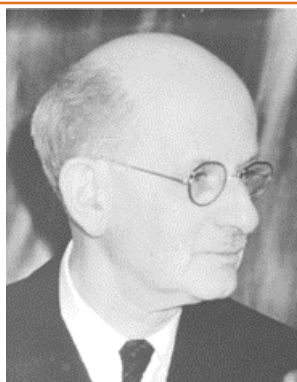
The Union was composed of several branches of Judaism, not only those on the left, but by 1909 it had added to its intentions the words, 'For the Achievement of Liberal Judaism' and had begun to look for a permanent home. In 1911 it appointed Israel Mattuck as its first Minister (those in charge were known as the three Ms – Montefiore, Montagu and Mattuck). By 1915, the congregation had 416 members, reaching 784 in 1921. A permanent building in St John's Wood, with a capacity of 1,400 people and designed by architect Ernest Joseph, was dedicated on 13th September 1925.



Rabbi Leo Baeck

Both branches of Progressive Judaism continued to flourish, side by side, each with its own prayer book, Ministers and Services. The Liberals brought men and women together at all Services, with more English in the Services and included the participation of women, something which the Reform Movement gradually adhered to. One particularly important and much revered figure in both movements was Rabbi Leo Baeck, who had led Jewish prisoners in Theresienstadt during the Holocaust. He became President of the Liberals, was often to be seen at Upper Berkeley Street, and was the moving figure behind the Leo Baeck College, the joint seminary set up in his name to train rabbis for both associations.

Another Rabbi, vital to the cause of Progressive Judaism, was Harold Reinhart, who came over from America as Senior Minister at West London, in 1929. One of his greatest achievements was to rescue a number of Reform rabbis from Germany,



Rabbi Harold Reinhart

not only saving their lives and those of their families but giving to the Reform movement in Britain able and scholarly men to lead congregations here.



Rabbi John Rayner

One German child, arriving on a Kindertransport, was John Rayner, later to lead the Liberals.

These two branches of modern British Judaism have continued to flourish side by side, with further congregations growing up in both camps. In the early days it would have been anathema for most members even to have considered amalgamation, but just as they both came into being, causing horror among their orthodox co-religionist, so times have changed as they do continually, and the future prosperity of both may well lie in their coming together in peace and friendship.

Philippa Bernard



Some time after the disbanding of the 43 and the 62 Groups (see pp 6 & 7), the Community Security Trust was formed. It was registered as a charity in 1994 and its mission is to provide safety, security and advice to the Jewish community in the UK. It was founded by Gerald Ronson, who had been an active member of the 62 Group,

The organisation's philosophy is that the Jewish community is responsible for its own security. It works closely with police services around the country and is recognised by government and police as a unique model of best practice.

The CST provides security advice and training for Jewish schools, synagogues and communal organisations and gives assistance to those bodies that are affected by anti-Semitism. The organisation also assists and supports individual members of the Jewish community who have been affected by anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic incidents. It advises and represents the Jewish community on matters of anti-Semitism, terrorism and security and works with government and international bodies.

Jewish communal self-defence is very different now from how the 62 Group did it. But the principle of intelligence-led, self-organised communal defence remains the bedrock of CST's work.

When there is a religious festival, a wedding, a *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*, a charity function or other Jewish gathering, you will see people with earpieces, - all volunteers - standing quietly alert and keeping us safe. We owe them our deep gratitude.

Claire Connick



A House in Roehampton



An early photograph of Roehampton Village

Tunnels were often used as places of safety by Jews hiding from persecution in the twentieth century, but who knew that a tunnel was built for safety by a British Jew in south London in the late eighteenth century?

Benjamin Goldsmid, the son of Aaron Goldsmid, was born in London in 1755. Not only was he an extremely wealthy young man, trading on the Stock Exchange, but he married into another rich Jewish family, the Solomons.

After living in a small house in Stamford Hill, the Goldsmids purchased a country home on the outskirts of London, in Roehampton. Here in 1798 Benjamin built a magnificent estate, stretching 150 acres across Roehampton Lane, which, unlike its present manifestation, was still an unmade road.

There was also a small synagogue within the building, together with a *Sefer Torah*

The area was notorious in the eighteenth century for the highwaymen who assaulted travellers along the main route into London, so Benjamin created a tunnel under the road, to enable his family to cross from one part of the estate to the other in safety. The tunnel still exists though it is very overgrown.

A local resident, Mary Calwell, describes her attempt to explore it:-
'We found it almost at once just to the left

of the main entrance, close to a War memorial for nuns of the Sacred Heart, and their families who died in, mainly, the first world war.

By the side of this is a sort of hole in the ground, and under an arch of 'rustic' stonework, a rather unsavoury grotto. There was a good deal of rubbish, which was squelchy underfoot and, as we didn't want to wade in this, we took some photos and didn't go any further'.

The huge estate included an artificial lake and a small farm. Here Goldsmid produced food for the Chief Rabbi, as he grew the corn to make the Chief Rabbi's Passover Matzah. It was a magnificent property, gloriously furnished. One account describes it 'with vestibules of beautiful and expensive marble pavements, a rich library, a noble dining-room, a choice gallery of paintings, gorgeous drawing rooms, unique stables, grounds laid out with admirable taste and judgment, and a



Entrance to the tunnel photographed by Mary Calwell

terrace and lawn, where art and nature seemed to vie with each other to gratify and bewitch the beholder. Brilliant illuminations on public occasions rendered it a fairy palace.' There was also a small synagogue within the building, together with a *Sefer Torah*.



Grove House today



Benjamin Goldsmid portrait by Sir William Beechey

Benjamin was a close friend of some of the leading members of society, among them William Pitt, Lord Nelson and the Duke of Cambridge, whom he entertained royally at Roehampton. He was of a 'very melancholy disposition', suffering from gout and very overweight, so much so that he had to have a silken cord above his bed to pull himself up when he woke. Such was his depression, that he eventually hanged himself by the silken cord.

After his death his widow, with her seven children, converted to Christianity. The house was sold and what is left of the estate now belongs to the Convent of the Sacred Heart, and to Digby-Stuart College - part of Roehampton University.



*An old print;
'The seat of Benjamin Goldsmith Esq.
ROEHAMPTON, SURREY'*

Philippa Bernard



Origins of some Jewish Surnames

Other than aristocrats and wealthy people, Jews did not get surnames in Eastern Europe until the Napoleonic years of the early nineteenth century. Most of the Jews from countries captured by Napoleon – Russia, Poland and Germany – were ordered to get surnames for tax purposes. After Napoleon's defeat, many Jews dropped these names and returned to 'son'; names such as MENDELSON, JACOBSON, LEVINSON etc.

During the so-called Emancipation, Jews were once more ordered to take surnames. In the late 1700's in Austria, the Emperor Joseph made Jews take last names. This also happened in Poland in 1821 and in Russia in 1844. It is probable that some of our families have only had last names for 175 years or less.

In France and the Anglo-Saxon countries, surnames went back to the sixteenth century. But, Sephardi Jews had surnames stretching back centuries.

Spain, prior to the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, was a golden place for Jews. However, they were expelled by Isabella in 1492, the same year that Columbus left for America. The earliest American Jews were Sephardim.

In general, there were five types of names. People had to pay for their choice of names, but the poor had names assigned to them.

Type 1. Names that were descriptive of the head of the household:-
HOCH (tall), KLEIN (small),
SHEIN (good looking),
GROSS (large),
SWARTZ (dark or black),
WEISS (white),
KURTZ (short).

Type 2. Names describing occupations:-
COHEN (Rabbi),
LEVI (chazan),
BURGER (villager),
HOLTZ (wood),
HOLTZKOCKER (woodchopper),

GELTZCHMIDT (goldsmith),
SCHNEIDER (tailor),
KREIGSMAN (warrior),
EISEN (iron worker),
FISCHER (fishmonger).

Type 3. Names from place of residence:-
BERLIN, FRANKFURT, DANZIG,
OPPENHEIM, DEUTSCH (German),
POLLACK (Polish), BRESLAU,
MANNHEIM, CRACOW, WARSAW

Type 4. Bought names.
GLUCK (luck),
ROSEN (roses),
ROSENBLATT (rose paper or rose leaf),
ROSENBERG (rose mountain),
ROTHMAN (red man),
DIAMOND,
KOENIG (king),
KOENIGSBERG (king's mountain),
SPIELMAN (player),
LEIBER (lover),
BERG (mountain),
WASSERMAN (water dweller)
KERSHENBLATT (church paper),
STEIN (stone).

Type 4. Assigned names (usually undesirable):-
PLOTZ (bursting),
KLUTZ (clumsy),
BILLIG (cheap).

Joel Lerner

At the Grave of Hans Rosenfeld: The Airborne Cemetery at Oosterbeek September 19th 2004

Each blade of grass is in its place
every clod groomed to look its best.
The elm and birch that ring this space
stand easy waiting for their guests.
I run my fingers over your white stone
and trace the outline of the star.
The shield that guarded David's throne
In times of peace and times of war
It gives the lie to the yellow brand
worn by those herded like cattle.
Let no-one say Jews did not stand
against their murderers in battle.
You fought to free your countrymen,
to cast out an overpowering evil.
A mind that gripped them like an iron
vice, forged on some diabolic anvil
Hope and harmony have knit together
the scars of battle this town bore.
Though it seems to take forever
time can heal the wounds of war.
About us fields give up their wealth,
though all the power of the fertile earth
cannot quicken the bones beneath.
No Spring disturbs the sleep of death.
But from God's treasury coinage spills
in blonds and ochres, all the fruitful
hues.
The children of the town arrive - joy
fills
the cemetery and our faith renews.

Jeremy Solnick

January 2012
(revised March 2023)



The Mayor of Wandsworth visited Nightingale House recently, and was introduced to our Poetess, Colette Littman. No longer able to see, she was delighted to be allowed to trace the beautiful mayoral chain with her fingers.

We are delighted to welcome three little girls into the Westminster Family. Rabbis Benji and Leah now have a daughter, Jules, and Rabbi Thomas and his wife, Renée, have twin granddaughters, Florence and Alice. We rejoice in the babies' safe arrival and look forward to meeting them all very soon.



Jules Stanley



Florence & Alice
Salamon

The CST (see page 19) takes care of the Jewish community's safety but Kent House also has its own system of health and safety. An alarm system is in place to warn everyone if there is a fire or other danger. If it is necessary to evacuate the house, people should leave quietly and gather in Rutland Gardens going away from the main road and down towards the embassy at the at the bottom of the road.

If danger threatens from outside, a different-sounding alarm will be heard. People should remain where they are, the doors will lock, and staff and/or stewards will keep everyone informed. Anyone on stewarding duties who is concerned about strange visitors calling at the house, should keep the front door closed and call either Peter or Jun. There is a panic button in the entrance hall and there are others throughout the building.



Valery Rees writes:

Another wonderful issue of the Quarterly. It is full of really interesting things, beautifully presented as always. Colette's poem is one of her best. But every page has something special. Well done!

Editors: **Philippa Bernard and Claire Connick**

Please submit letters and articles for the Westminster Synagogue Quarterly to the Synagogue office or e-mail to editor@westminstersynagogue.org

CREDIBILITY

**Man is gifted with great credibility
Credibility born of insecurity streamlining life
Credibility born of fear irons out its complexities
Credibility born of helplessness deals with its ambiguities
Credibility provides every solution
The magic which rationalises the irrational
Which refutes death's irrefutable reality
The power which changes terminal life to eternal life
Which adapts life's infinity to man's finality
The miracle which reduces the unknowable to man's grasp
Which adapts images of life to life without images
The utopia which changes chaos to order
Credibility man's saving lifeline
Helping to resist death's irresistible dominance
Credibility life's extra dimension
Credibility God's gift to man**

Colette Littman





Westminster Quarterly

Planning Your Diary

Contacting the Synagogue

Selichot

Saturday 9th September

Erev Rosh

Hashanah

Friday 15th September

Rosh Hashanah

Saturday 16th September

Kol Nidre

Sunday 24th September

Yom Kippur

Monday 25th September

Erev Sukkot

Friday 29th September

Sukkot 1st Day

Saturday 30th October

Erev Simchat Torah

Friday 6th October

Simchat Torah

Saturday 7th October

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GENERAL ENQUIRIES		admin@westminstersynagogue.org T: 020 7584 3953 Ext 114
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