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# **The Jews of Baltimore: 1810 to 1820**

By IRA ROSENWAIKE

Baltimore by 1810 had attained the rank of third most populous city in the United States, behind only New York and Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup> As was also true of its two rivals, the activity of the port set the pace for the growth of the city. The economy had been rapidly expanding with new industries starting every year and the standard of living steadily climbing. One writer has summarized the city's progress:

By the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century, Baltimore could boast of a variety of flourishing industries and a most prosperous shipping trade. The war in Europe had created a tremendous demand for foodstuffs, and Baltimore became the great export center for central Pennsylvania and northern Maryland. Shipbuilding was stimulated and swift brigs and schooners built in Baltimore yards achieved renown on all the seas.<sup>2</sup>

Over the next decade a series of dramatic events left their impact on the city. Trade was curtailed first by the embargoes preceding the War of 1812, then by the war itself. In 1814 the British attacked by land and sea and after a moment of anxiety Baltimoreans battled for survival with success. After the war, inflation accompanied the expansion of commerce, followed by financial collapse. By 1819 Baltimore, along with much of the nation, was in the grip of a severe depression. Within a few years the tide turned; Baltimore began to expand its foreign trade, capturing rich markets in the newly independent nations of South America.<sup>3</sup> The economic vicissitudes were accompanied by an incessant flow of people into and out of the city.

The Jewish population in Baltimore during the period from 1810 to 1820 was subject to considerable flux, but remained small; never numbering more than two dozen families. Yet an account of the individuals who formed the community is of more than parochial interest for they seem to have been broadly representative of

<sup>1</sup> J.D.B. DeBow, *Statistical View of the United States* (Washington: 1854), p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Albert J. Silverman, *Baltimore: City of Promise* (Baltimore: 1953), p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> See John T. Caton, "Baltimore", in Morris L. Radoff, ed., *The Old Line State* (Annapolis: 1971), pp. 192-207.

American Jewry of the time. In fact, such was the movement from city to city that they *were* to some extent, the Jews of Philadelphia, New York, and elsewhere. Of the twenty-one household heads enumerated at the 1820 census, for example, fully half are known to have lived in Philadelphia either before or after their residence in Baltimore. Others at some point in their lives spent time in Richmond, New York, and a collection of other cities and towns. Not until Elias Pollock's son Samuel married and established his own household—in 1818—was there a single family head who was a native of Maryland.

Thus there seem to be grounds for expecting that observation of Baltimore's small Jewish population might show in microcosm some patterns of physical and social mobility that reflect the national experience. "Before we can build the structure of the Jewish community in America . . ." Clifford Shipton has declared, "we need to know who the immigrants were; not selected individuals among them, but every individual in at least selected communities".<sup>4</sup> In this paper we will endeavor to identify each of the Jews who settled in Baltimore between 1810 and 1820, then summarize with a view of the population at the census in the latter year.

Although Baltimore's Jewish population was small during this period it was not homogeneous. In effect there were by this time two minute 'communities'; a few native American families, some of emerging prominence, and a few foreign born, generally struggling to make ends meet, who resided in a different sector of town, Fells Point.<sup>5</sup> The Jewish newcomers to Baltimore tended to associate with one group or the other depending on their origin.

The slow growth in numbers of the Jewish population in Baltimore between 1810 and 1820—from about fifteen families at the former date to twenty-one at the latter—might imply that the city attracted few newcomers during this period. The surprising fact is that a large number of Jewish settlers, upwards of thirty, found their way to the city in the course of the decade, but population mobility was at the same time very great. A majority of those who came to Baltimore moved on again within a relatively short span of time.

Table 1 lists, in alphabetical order, the names of men who are believed to have first made Baltimore their domicile during the

<sup>4</sup> Clifford K. Shipton, "An Americanist Looks at American Jewish History", *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* [AJHQ], LVI, 3 (March, 1967), 277.

<sup>5</sup> For a study of the Jews who had settled in Baltimore by 1810 see Ira Rosenwaik, "The Jews of Baltimore to 1810", *AJHQ*, LXIV, 4 (June, 1975), 291-320.

TABLE 1: JEWISH SETTLERS IN BALTIMORE:  
FIRST KNOWN APPEARANCE 1811-1820

<i>Name</i>	<i>Place and Date of Death</i>		<i>Year Last Listed in Baltimore</i>
Moses Abrahams	Philadelphia	1860	1822 (D)
Hillel M. Anker	Baltimore	1841	...
Levy Benjamin	Baltimore	1860	...
Jacob Berlin	Boston	1830	1818 (B)
Abraham H. Cohen	Richmond	1841	1822 (D)
Barrow A. Cohen	Portsea, England	1869	1819 (N)
Morris A. Cohen	?	?	1834 (L)
Isaac Cook	?	?	1816 (D)
Isaac DeYoung	Philadelphia	1868	1830 (C)
Michael DeYoung	On Miss. River	1854	1835 (D)
John M. Dyer	New York City	1842	1840 (D)
Gabriel Isaacs	Baltimore	1854	...
Lyon Jonas	New York City	1817	1813-15 (G)
Abraham Joseph	Philadelphia	1835	1819 (D)
Abraham Lazarus	Philadelphia	1865	1819 (D)
Isaac Lazarus	?	?	1819 (N)
Lazarus (Leonard) Levi	Philadelphia	1843	1834 (N)
Jacob Levy	New York City	1832	1820 (B)
Joseph M. Levy	Baltimore	1866	...
Victor Levy	Philadelphia	1823	1819 (N)
George Lyons	New York City	1831	1819 (D)
Mordecai Lyons	Philadelphia	1845	1819 (D)
Moses Millum	Baltimore	1830	...
John Myers	Norfolk	1830	1819 (D)
Marcus Philipson	?	?	1819 (D)
David Phillips	New York City	1861	1819 (H)
Wolf (William) N. Polack	?	?	1818 (B)
Joseph Samuel	New York City	1836	1819 (A)
Solomon H. Van Praag	New York City	1826	1820 (N)
Moses D. Van Wezel	?	?	1821 (E)

NOTE: (A) Aliens declarations  
 (B) Birth date of child  
 (C) Census  
 (D) Directory  
 (E) Baltimore Chancery Dockets  
 (G) Grinstein (citing Shearith Israel records)  
 (H) Baltimore Marriage Licenses  
 (L) Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Ledger  
 (N) Newspaper (*Baltimore American*)

decade 1811 to 1820. Doubtless there were others whose names have not been recorded. The many individuals who used the port of Baltimore while in transit elsewhere are excluded, as are visitors

to the city such as Mordecai Manuel Noah, who stayed with Levy Solomon in 1811.<sup>6</sup>

Of the men listed only four were the sons of persons who resided in America before 1800. Thus the two-to-one margin existing in Baltimore in 1810 of the "early American" families over the newer immigrant stock was steadily to be eroded. While before 1810 the older Americanized group were well-represented among the newcomers, after that date they were greatly in the minority. These four were similar in background to the majority of the 1810 community. However, they represented only a small fraction of all newcomers during the decade, who came from several scattered areas but particularly Holland. Many, perhaps most, came by way of Philadelphia.

A trio of "native" American Jews converged on Baltimore in the decade after 1810 from Philadelphia, the traditional source of the city's new blood. Mordecai Lyons and Joseph M. Levy, by an interesting coincidence, were both sons of men who had resided in Baltimore during the 1780's (Eleazer Lyons and Michael Levy), while Abraham H. Cohen was the son of Jacob Raphael Cohen, a man who served as *hazan* of Philadelphia's Mikveh Israel for over a quarter century.<sup>7</sup>

Both Mordecai Lyons and Joseph M. Levy married Christian women shortly after their move to Maryland. Baltimore marriage records indicate Lyons wed Mary Bausman in July 1812 while Levy wed Margaret Jones, October 30, 1816.<sup>8</sup> Lyons had a dry goods store at 62 N. Gay Street according to the 1817 directory; his last directory listing in Baltimore was in 1819.<sup>9</sup> Eventually he returned to Philadelphia where the city directories indicated he

<sup>6</sup> Isaac Goldberg, *Major Noah: American Jewish Pioneer* (Philadelphia: 1936), pp. 45-46.

<sup>7</sup> Actually all three were born outside the United States. Joseph M. Levy was born in England, evidently while his American parents were on an extended visit. *United States, 1850 Census, Population Schedules*, Maryland, City of Baltimore; Malcolm H. Stern, *Americans of Jewish Descent* (Cincinnati: 1960), p. 111. Mordecai Lyons was born in Surinam where his parents, who had married in Pennsylvania, resided for a time. *Ibid.*, p. 129. Since Abraham H. Cohen probably was born in 1778 (his obituary in the *Richmond Enquirer*, January 23, 1841, indicated he was then in "the 63d year of his age") he must have been an infant when his parents emigrated from London to North America early in 1779. Alan D. Corré and Malcolm H. Stern, "The Record Book of the Reverend Jacob Raphael Cohen", *AJHQ*, LIX, 1 (Sept., 1969), 27.

<sup>8</sup> Baltimore Marriage License Card File [BML], Maryland Hall of Records, Annapolis.

<sup>9</sup> For complete source data on all city directories referred to in this article see Dorothea N. Spear, *Bibliography of American Directories Through 1860* (Worcester: 1961).

was a "quill dresser" or quill manufacturer. In 1845 his obituary reported he was "in the 55th year of his age".<sup>10</sup>

Unlike Lyons, Joseph M. Levy spent the rest of his life in Baltimore. Levy was listed in the 1819 directory as a painter and glazier at the corner of Hanover and Barre. In the next directory, that of 1822, he was operating a grocery and flour store at 145 Sharp Street. Apparently this venture was not a success for in the 1824 and subsequent directories he again was reported as a painter. Joseph's brother, Uriah P. Levy, the illustrious naval commodore, was a frequent visitor to Baltimore. Among the many bequests in his will was a gift "to my brother Joseph M. Levy the sum of one thousand dollars in cash and also any mortgage I now have or may have on his house and lot in Baltimore . . . ." After a half century's residence in the Monumental City, Joseph Levy died, aged seventy-one years, on October 26, 1866. In his will he left "to the Hebrew Associations of Baltimore and Philadelphia . . . \$1,000 to be divided equally between them . . . ."<sup>12</sup>

The best known of the former Philadelphians in Baltimore was Abraham H. Cohen who, after his father's death, served Mikveh Israel as *hazan* from 1811 to 1815.<sup>13</sup> Cohen engaged in other pursuits to supplement his income, including dentistry and pharmacy which was to be his livelihood in Baltimore. At one time he attempted to enlist the support of Thomas Jefferson in promoting a company for the bottling of artificial mineral water.<sup>14</sup>

Cohen had married a Christian in 1806 and her conversion prevented a major scandal in the Jewish congregation.<sup>15</sup> However, during their residence in Baltimore, Mrs. Cohen began to "relapse" into her former faith, a development which was eventually to destroy their marriage. Mrs. Cohen's version of the story was related in her published memoirs. It is of interest to note her view of the move to Maryland:

<sup>10</sup> *Public Ledger* (Philadelphia), Jan. 20, 1845. If correct, this would make his birth year earlier than the birth date of July 23, 1792 given in Stern, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

<sup>11</sup> Abram Kanof, "Uriah Phillips Levy: The Story of a Pugnacious Commodore", *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society [PAJHS]*, XXXIX (1949), 62.

<sup>12</sup> *The Sun* (Baltimore), Oct. 27, 1866; Baltimore City Will Book, vol. 35, p. 56.

<sup>13</sup> Edwin Wolf, 2nd and Maxwell Whiteman, *The History of the Jews of Philadelphia from Colonial Times to the Age of Jackson* (Philadelphia: 1957), pp. 247-248.

<sup>14</sup> The exchange of correspondence is given in Joseph L. Blau and Salo W. Baron, *The Jews of the United States, 1790-1840: A Documentary History* (Philadelphia: 1963), vol. II, pp. 481-483.

<sup>15</sup> Wolf and Whiteman, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-238; Malcolm H. Stern, "The Function of Genealogy in American Jewish History", in Jacob R. Marcus, ed., *Essays in American Jewish History* (Cincinnati: 1958), pp. 89-90.

[In] 1816 . . . we removed to Baltimore, and there I enjoyed more peace of mind than I had for years, having access to the best society amongst the Jewish people. Nor was I restricted, as heretofore, in regard to Christian society, amongst whom I was greeted with affectionate kindness.<sup>16</sup>

A few years later, when Mrs. Cohen brought up the subject of her religious beliefs to her husband, described in her narration as "a rabbi at the head of the Jewish Church", he supposedly told her: "I cannot acknowledge a Christian wife before the world, who are looking to me for a precedent to the rising generation".<sup>17</sup>

Cohen's business venture was unsuccessful and he and his associates advertised they were "under the necessity of closing their concern. To effect which they offer for sale, their DRUG ESTABLISHMENT, consisting of a small but general assortment of every artical necessary in a retail Apothecary & Drug Store."<sup>18</sup> Soon afterward Cohen moved to New York where he served as teacher in the Polonies Talmud Torah of Congregation Shearith Israel from 1823 to 1828. Following this he became *hazan* of Congregation Beth Shalom in Richmond.<sup>19</sup> When Cohen died in 1841 an adulatory obituary in the *Richmond Compiler* was reprinted in a Baltimore newspaper:

The congregation of Israelites of this city are afflicted with a sad dispensation in the death of the Rev. A.H. Cohen, their venerable pastor, who died suddenly yesterday morning. There could be no more ardent devotion than he evinced in the cause of the Jews—of the amelioration of their political and elevation of their moral condition; and at this period, an era as it were in their history, his loss is severely felt by them.<sup>20</sup>

At least one native American Jew arrived from Virginia during this period—John Myers, of a well-known Norfolk family. His father, Moses Myers, was an enterprising merchant involved in large scale import-export dealings, who evidently sent his first-born to establish a branch office in Maryland's principal port. John Myers came to Baltimore a veteran of the War of 1812 and a well-travelled young man who had been to Europe for his business education. He was well financed, for in December 1816, not long after his

<sup>16</sup> Mrs. S.J. Cohen, *Henry Luria; or, The Little Jewish Convert* (New York: 1860), p. 75.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 89, 91.

<sup>18</sup> *Baltimore American*, Dec. 30, 1822.

<sup>19</sup> David and Tamar de Sola Pool, *An Old Faith in the New World* (New York: 1955), pp. 221, 432; Blau and Baron, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 653.

<sup>20</sup> *The Sun* (Baltimore), Jan. 25, 1841.

arrival in the city, Myers purchased from Solomon Etting for \$5,600 no fewer than seven lots on Calvert Street.<sup>21</sup>

Rebecca Gratz of Philadelphia, letter-writer of eminence, has provided us with a glimpse of Myers' life in Baltimore. She related to a close friend in October 1817:

John [Myers] had been at our house nearly four weeks, very sick, and as he was obliged to stay at home, my time was taken up, to keep him company, he came from Baltimore with the remains of a fever on him, which so affected his nerves as to alarm us, and induce us to write to his family to come up & visit him . . . he has been living in Baltimore two or three years, keeps house, and in the solitariness of bachelors-hall, had no one to take proper care of him in his illness. Accordingly he did many imprudent things while sick, and lastly traveled in the steamboat to Phil<sup>a</sup> with his fever unbroken . . . .<sup>22</sup>

The firm of Moses Myers and Sons was a victim of the Panic of 1819; bankruptcy was declared in October. With the firm's collapse John returned to Norfolk.<sup>23</sup> He must have come back to Baltimore some time later to dispose of his property, for on December 30, 1820 a deed was recorded giving all his estate and property to William H. Crawford, Secretary of the Treasury of the United States. It indicated "John Myers hath applied . . . for release from confinement under certain executions issued against him on behalf of the United States and the said Secretary . . . having granted the said discharge upon conditions that . . . John Myers should execute a Deed to the said Secretary . . . of all his property . . ."<sup>24</sup>

Myers maintained his friendship with his Maryland co-religionists after his re-establishment in Virginia. Two of the Cohen brothers had opened a branch "Lottery and Exchange" office in Norfolk in 1819, and one, Philip, married John's sister, Augusta, in 1826. Samuel Etting was one of those who visited Norfolk for the occasion; he was listed as a security on the marriage bond.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Malcolm H. Stern, "Moses Myers and the Early Jewish Community of Norfolk", *The Journal of the Southern Jewish Historical Society*, I, 1 (Nov., 1958), 6-7; Baltimore Land Records [BLR], liber WG139, p. 503.

<sup>22</sup> Morris U. Schappes, ed., *A Documentary History of the Jews in the United States* (New York: 1971), p. 137.

<sup>23</sup> Stern, "Moses Myers . . .", p. 7. A visitor to Norfolk in February 1820 described a meeting with John and his brother Samuel. "They are Jews, well informed, genteel & uncommonly handsome in the younger part of the family." "Diary of William Dunlap", *Collections of the New York Historical Society for the Year 1930*, LXIII, 519.

<sup>24</sup> BLR, liber WG157, p. 695.

<sup>25</sup> W. Ray Luce, "The Cohen Brothers of Baltimore: from Lotteries to Banking", *Maryland Historical Magazine*, LXVIII, 3 (Fall, 1973), 299; George H. Tucker, *Abstracts from Norfolk City Marriage Bonds and Other Genealogical Data* (Norfolk: 1934), p. 104.



After John Myers' death November 27, 1830, a lengthy obituary noted:

JOHN MYERS Esq., aged 42, eldest son of our venerable townsman MOSES MYERS, Esq., late Collector of the Port . . .

The subject of this notice was a native of our Borough—a gentleman of highly polished manners, liberal education, and fine talents . . . to him is due the credit of placing in his capacity of Chief Fire Warden . . . the Fire Companies, upon a permanent and efficient foundation . . . .<sup>26</sup>

Concurrent with the trickle of newcomers from Maryland's neighboring states a small stream of settlers of European birth was continuing to reach Baltimore. Among those born in Holland—the principal single area of origin of these new immigrants—were five men who remained a decade or more—Michael and Isaac DeYoung, Moses Millem, Levi Benjamin, and Leonard (or Lazarus) Levi—as well as a still larger number who stayed briefly.

Michael DeYoung had an especially interesting career. He first shows up in Baltimore in 1812, purchasing for the sum of eight hundred dollars some property in Old Town on Green Street.<sup>27</sup> In 1816 he had a jewelry shop at 65 Bond Street in Fells Point, and subsequently, for more than a decade, a comb factory and jewelry store on Baltimore Street. On February 2, 1827 the General Assembly of Maryland passed "An Act for the relief of Michael De Young, of the City of Baltimore" which stated

That from and after the passage of this act, the marriage contract between Michael DeYoung, and Mary DeYoung, is hereby declared to be annulled and destroyed, and the said Michael DeYoung is hereby declared to be divorced from his wife Mary DeYoung, as entirely and to as full extent as if the said Mary DeYoung were dead, or as if the said Michael DeYoung, had never been joined in matrimony with her . . . .<sup>28</sup>

Michael, however, had nothing against the state of matrimony for a few months later, in August 1827, he was married in New York to Amelia Morange. Two months later Michael's younger brother, Isaac, travelled to New York to marry Amelia's younger sister, Elizabeth.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> *Norfolk & Portsmouth Herald*, Nov. 29, 1830.

<sup>27</sup> BLR, liber WG102, p. 104.

<sup>28</sup> *Laws Made and Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Maryland: At a Session Begun and Held in the City of Annapolis, on the Last Monday of December 1826* (Annapolis: 1827), chap. L.

<sup>29</sup> *Baltimore American*, Aug. 18, 1827, Oct. 22, 1827.

In September 1834 Michael DeYoung's business career in Baltimore came to an end. He advertised in the local press the

Positive sale of comb machinery, presses . . . at Public Auction—The subscriber having concluded to discontinue the manufacturing of Horn Combs, had determined to sell at public sale . . . all the Machinery connected with his manufactory at the corner of Eutaw and Lexington streets, consisting in part, of one the largest and most powerful Presses in the Union, also a smaller one . . . .<sup>30</sup>

In New York, after his departure from Baltimore, Michael DeYoung had a "fancy store" in 1836. In 1839 his name appeared in a Shearith Israel list of persons in arrears for offerings, but by this time he may have already reached his new home in St. Louis. He subsequently lived in Texas, possibly New Orleans, and eventually Cincinnati. In 1854, at age sixty-three, en route from Cincinnati to California he died on board the *Tecumseh*, and was buried in New Orleans when the steamer reached that city.<sup>31</sup>

Michael's brother Isaac had enlisted in the army in January 1813, during the War against Britain, and remained in the service for five years. He probably was associated with his brother's firm for a few years but in the 1827 directory his "fancy store" on Baltimore street was at an address different from Michael's. Both men became naturalized American citizens, Michael in June 1823 and Isaac in September 1823. Isaac's official record indicates that he was born in Amsterdam and had arrived in the port of Philadelphia in April 1803. In 1830 he moved to the city where he had first landed, and made it his home for the remainder of his life.<sup>32</sup>

Moses Millem—his name has been spelled in various ways—first

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 15, 1834.

<sup>31</sup> Lyons Collection, vol. 2, *PAJHS*, XXVII (1920), 114; *New Orleans Daily Delta*, May 1, 1854; Bertram W. Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham, Mass.: 1969), p. 330. His wife continued the trip to the West where DeYoung's two famous sons, Charles and Michael, were to become founders of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. See Irving McKee, "The Shooting of Charles de Young", *Pacific Historical Review*, XVI, 3 (Aug., 1947), 271-72; Ira Rosenwaik, "The Parentage and Early Years of M.H. de Young: Legend and Fact", *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly*, VII, 3 (April, 1975).

<sup>32</sup> War of 1812 Pension File Applications, National Archives, Washington, D.C.; Naturalization Records, U.S. District Court, Maryland, book 3, pp. 69, 188. Morais reports Isaac DeYoung's birthplace as Rotterdam and his dates as 1795 to 1868; however, his death record, dated Dec. 16, 1868, gives Amsterdam as his place of birth, and his age as seventy-four years. Henry J. Morais, *The Jews of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: 1894), p. 430; Philadelphia Death Records, Municipal Archives, City Hall, Philadelphia. Isaac DeYoung's arrival in the United States as a child implies he—and Michael—came with their parents. Possibly these were the individuals described as father and mother of one Joseph deYung, whose burials in 1811 were recorded by the Hebrew German Society in Philadelphia. Edward Davis, *The History of Rodeph Shalom Congregation, Philadelphia 1802-1926* (Philadelphia: 1926), p. 14.

shows up in the Baltimore city directory for 1819 as a watchmaker at 25 Caroline in Fells Point. His declaration for citizenship states he arrived in Baltimore in August 1816. He appears to have had some degree of financial success as he was quite active in real estate, purchasing several properties including, in 1828, a lot at the corner of Fayette and Liberty streets acquired from Susan Olden (daughter of Levy Andrew Levy). At his death in October 1830 he was described as "in the 44th year of his age, a native of Amsterdam".<sup>33</sup>

Millem's brother-in-law, Levy Benjamin, also a native of Amsterdam, had reached Maryland somewhat earlier; according to his declaration he arrived at Annapolis in January 1815. In the Baltimore city directory for 1817 he is listed as a pedlar at 10 W. Fleet, F.P. and in 1819 as a laborer at 21 Caroline, F.P. In all probability, Benjamin, like so many others, was reduced to poverty by the shattering depression that wracked the nation in 1819. In any case, he seems to have returned briefly to Holland. During the summer of 1820 he came back to Baltimore accompanied, according to immigration records, by his wife and an expanded family of three children. The children were listed as S., aged five years, S., three years, and E., six months. Thirty years later the census of 1850 showed these three offspring still in Levi's household. Solomon was enumerated as 35 years, Sarah as 33 years, and Esther as 31 years; while Sarah, the middle child, was reported as born in Maryland, the others had their birthplace listed as Holland.<sup>34</sup>

Levi Benjamin gradually became economically successful. In 1824 he operated a second hand furniture store, later he was a pawnbroker, and subsequently he invested heavily in real estate and considered himself a speculator. One of the charter members of the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, his property on Harrison Street and Etna Lane for a time served as its synagogue. At his death, September 5, 1860, he was described as "in the 77th year of his age, a native of Amsterdam, Holland, but for forty-seven years a resident of this city".<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup>Declarations of Aliens 1816 to 1828, U.S. Circuit Court, Maryland, no. 1356, Washington National Records Center; BLR, liber WG196, p. 111; *Baltimore American*, Oct. 8, 1830.

<sup>34</sup>Declarations of Aliens, no. 1410; U.S. Department of State, *Passenger Arrivals 1819-1820* (Washington: 1821; reprinted Baltimore: 1967), p. 172; *U.S. 1850 Census*, Baltimore.

<sup>35</sup>Isaac M. Fein, *The Making of an American Jewish Community: the History of Baltimore Jewry from 1773 to 1920* (Philadelphia: 1971), pp. 43, 49; *The Sun* (Baltimore), Sept. 6, 1860. Baltimore Hebrew Congregation cemetery records give Benjamin's age as 81 years.

Leonard (or Lazarus) Levy (or Levi), evidently one of the less economically successful immigrants, is partly for this reason among the more difficult to identify. Although his marriage license is dated 1818 no one of this name occurs in Baltimore city directories until 1827. Of course these works were not all inclusive, and probably the compilers were most apt to miss those on the bottom rung of the economic ladder. Furthermore, when informants did not speak the King's English their listings sometimes were transformed. There is interesting evidence this may have happened to Leonard Levy. The Leonard Levy reported in the 1827 city directory at Caroline and Wilk (Fells Point) probably was the "Lazarus Levi" enumerated in Fells Point in the 1820 census, as well as the "Lamheart Levy" reported as a pedlar at 25 Caroline in the 1822 directory and the "Lambert Levy", a pedlar at the same address in the 1824 directory. He evidently was widowed by 1834, when a Baltimore newspaper reported the following marriage:

Married on Sunday afternoon last, by the Rev. Isaac Moses, Mr. LEONARD LEVY, a native of Holland, to Miss MARIA FIVELL, late of Bremen. The ceremonies were performed agreeably to the Mosaic Laws.<sup>36</sup>

Levy ultimately moved to Philadelphia where he died December 12, 1843, aged 74 years, and was laid to rest in the German Hebrew cemetery.<sup>37</sup>

For a number of the Dutch who were in Baltimore only briefly an important event in their lives occurred during their stay—their marriage in either a Jewish or Christian ceremony. Among those who married in Baltimore were Abraham Lazarus, Jacob Levy, Moses D. Van Wezel and Solomon H. Van Praag. Abraham Lazarus spent most of his life in Philadelphia but, like several other early Rodeph Shalom members, he also showed up in Baltimore, where he married Elizabeth Cohen on February 3, 1817. His sole city directory appearance was as a pedlar on Fleet Street in Fells Point in 1819. When he applied for naturalization in Philadelphia's Court of Quarter Sessions in April 1820 he was described as a "native of Amsterdam . . . born in April 1793 . . . now about 29 years [sic]". He was granted American citizenship in September 1823. Lazarus died in the Quaker City on March 14, 1865.<sup>38</sup>

Jacob Levy's story is one of relative obscurity. His marriage to

<sup>36</sup> *Baltimore American*, Nov. 13, 1834; BML.

<sup>37</sup> Philadelphia Death Records.

<sup>38</sup> BML; Naturalization Records, Philadelphia Municipal Archives; Davis, *op. cit.*, pp. 143ff. His longevity was apparently exaggerated in an obituary which referred to him as "in the 85th year of his age". *Public Ledger* (Philadelphia), March 16, 1865.

Elizabeth Joseph occurred on April 12, 1819.<sup>39</sup> Highly mobile, his name never appeared in a Baltimore city directory, but Shearith Israel records indicate his son Levy was born in Baltimore in January 1820. Later in 1820 he is listed among the dues payers of Rodeph Shalom in Philadelphia. A rather unusual entry in New York's city directory for 1827 marks his presence in that city: "Levy, Jacob, pedler, 513 Water or Grand or Cherry". In the 1832 directory his address was given as 161 Centre Street and he was still a pedlar when his death record that year revealed his age was 37 years.<sup>40</sup>

Neither Moses David Van Wezel, who was married in August 1818 to Rebecca Condley, nor Solomon Hyman Van Praag, who married Hester Barend Swaab on December 23, 1820, appeared in Baltimore city directories. However, the Van Wezel family name did show up in Baltimore's Chancery Court in 1821 when Rebecca filed a complaint against her husband and in Criminal Court where Moses was found not guilty on June 8, 1821 to a charge of "assaulting and beating Rebecca Van Weazel his wife." Van Wezel appears in New York City directories beginning with that for 1823, as a dealer in dry goods. His name is on the list of subscribers to the Elm Street Synagogue (Bnai Jeshurun) in 1827. The Van Praag in Baltimore may be identical with the "Solomon Van Pragg" who was described as "a stranger" when buried in the cemetery of Shearith Israel in New York on October 18, 1826. A native of Amsterdam, he was only 28.<sup>41</sup>

At least two Jewish marriages were performed by David Phillips, perhaps the most learned in religious law among the early Dutch Jews who settled in Baltimore. He is recorded as officiating at the weddings of Leonard Levi to Margaret Benjamin on November 27, 1818 and Victor Levy to Sarah Hollander on February 23, 1819. Two of his sons were circumcised in Baltimore by Alexander Wertheim: Philip on September 1, 1816, and Samuel on December 1, 1818. Phillips had only one listing in a Baltimore directory, as a trader at 19 Thames in Fells Point in 1817. By 1819 he was living in Philadelphia and a member of Rodeph Shalom Congrega-

<sup>39</sup> BML. Elizabeth may have been related to Abraham Joseph, see below.

<sup>40</sup> Stern, *Americans* . . . , p. 121; Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 143; New York Register of Deaths, vol. 8, Municipal Archives and Record Center.

<sup>41</sup> BML; Baltimore Chancery Dockets, 1820-21, folio 56; Baltimore Criminal Dockets [BCRD], June term 1821, case 384; Israel Goldstein, *A Century of Judaism in New York, B'nai Jeshurun 1825-1925* (New York: 1930), p. 383; Shearith Israel Registers, Births, Deaths and Marriages [SIR], vol. I, p. 125, American Jewish Archives (microfilm); New York Register of Deaths, vol. 5.

tion. He died in New York in 1861 after serving as *shammash* of Shearith Israel for almost a quarter of a century.<sup>42</sup>

Among the individuals with only brief documentation in Baltimore was Wolf N. Polack who, like Phillips, appears in records of three cities. He was plaintiff in two suits in Baltimore County Court filed in 1817. Polack subsequently resided in Philadelphia whose city directories report "W.N. Pollock" or "Wm.N. Pollock" as a storekeeper, dealer, or trader during the years 1820 through 1824; "W. N. Polack" was a member of Rodeph Shalom in 1825. Not long after, he moved to New York where he became a trustee of Anshe Chesed, a new congregation established "according to the Customs of the German Jews".<sup>43</sup> In New York's Court of Common Pleas he was the "William N. Polack . . . Dry Goods Dealer" who renounced his allegiance to the King of Holland on June 8, 1835.<sup>44</sup>

In view of the small number of individuals involved it is remarkable to note the diversity in origin of the other Jews who appeared in Baltimore during this period. Germany, England, and Poland all were represented.

Moses Abrahams, Isaac Lazarus, Jacob Berlin and John Dyer were the men known to be of German birth. As Moses Abrahams was close to fifty years of age when his presence in Baltimore is first recorded, an age well above the average for new immigrants, it is probable he spent some years elsewhere in America. He was definitely in Philadelphia in 1810—one of the signers who pledged to support the constitution of Rodeph Shalom. "Moses Abraham" was a "dealer" in Philadelphia according to the 1819 directory. In Baltimore in 1822 as "Moses Abrams" he was described as a "market dealer" at 3 Milk Lane, Old Town. Back in Philadelphia, he continues to be listed as dealer, then as broker, and last of all as gentleman. His death occurred on May 31, 1860, "in the 89th year of his age".<sup>45</sup>

<sup>42</sup> BML; A.I. Wertheim Circumcision Book, Mikveh Israel Records (photostat copy kindly provided by Dr. Jacob R. Marcus, American Jewish Archives); Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 143; Pool and Pool, *op. cit.*, p. 288. An obituary in the *New York Herald*, July 26, 1861, gave his age as 71 years and 6 months, while his death record reports 70 years and 8 months. New York Register of Deaths, vol. 35.

<sup>43</sup> Baltimore County Court, City Dockets [BCCCD], Imparances 1818, p. 266; Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 145; David de Sola Pool, *Portraits Etched in Stone* (New York: 1952), pp. 90-91. In 1838 he was among the members of this body who attempted to develop an agricultural colony, "Sholem", in Ulster County, New York. Hyman B. Grinstein, *The Rise of the Jewish Community of New York, 1654-1860* (Philadelphia: 1945), pp. 119-22.

<sup>44</sup> Naturalization Records, Common Pleas Court, New York County, Supreme Court Building, New York, N.Y.

<sup>45</sup> Wolf and Whiteman, *op. cit.*, p. 447; *Public Ledger* (Philadelphia), June 2, 1860. Moses Abrahams and his wife Elizabeth were reported as natives of Germany in the 1850 census. *U.S. 1850 Census*, Pennsylvania, City of Philadelphia. Whether Moses is identical

Isaac Lazarus, like Abrahams, is most associated with Philadelphia. Back in 1805 synagogue authorities in New York had described Lazarus as a "stranger" when they recommended him for the post of *shohet* in response to a query from Philadelphia's Mikveh Israel. In the City of Brotherly Love Lazarus, "a Subject of the Emperor of Germany", swore his intention to become an American citizen on June 2, 1806; the following year he was married to Esther Lyons, a sister of Mordecai Lyons. His first recorded appearance in Baltimore was during the September 1817 term of Baltimore City Court when he instituted suit against James W. Farrel. In December 1818 he appears in a suit against Solomon High. In May 1819 Lazarus applied for relief as a bankrupt debtor. Following his economic reversals he departed from Baltimore, heading south. He seems to have been in Richmond in 1819-1822, and is known to have made his home in Mobile by 1827.<sup>46</sup>

Jacob Berlin, a native of the Prussian capital, had married Rebecca Valentine, a daughter of the sexton of Shearith Israel, in New York in 1809. Two records exist of his residence in Baltimore: Alexander Wertheim's statement of the circumcision of Berlin's son, in February 1818, and a Baltimore County Court case the same year. Subsequently, he returned to New York where his wife died in February 1821. That city's directories indicate he earned his living as a musician. He died in Boston in 1830 where a local death notice gave his age as fifty years.<sup>47</sup>

Another immigrant, John M. Dyer (reported as a native of Mayence on the Rhine in a declaration dated March 5, 1819), remained in Baltimore for more than two decades and became actively involved with the origin of its first Jewish congregation. A federal court record indicates Dyer first landed in America at the port of Baltimore in October 1816.<sup>48</sup> He appears in the Baltimore directory in 1817 as a butcher on York Road, a trade he practiced throughout his residence in the city. Dyer brought with him a

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with the Moses Abrahams, a shopkeeper from Friburgh, Germany, who was naturalized in Charleston (S.C.) in 1799 is conjectural. Myrta J. Hutson, *Probate Court Records, Baptisms and Marriage Records, Naturalization Records, Charleston, S.C.* (Charleston: 1942), p. 27.

<sup>46</sup> Wolf and Whiteman, *op. cit.*, pp. 247, 488; Isaac Lazarus, Naturalization Petition (photostat, American Jewish Archives); BCCCD, Sept. term 1817, case 406, *Imparances* 1820, p. 157; *Baltimore American*, May 10, 1819; Herbert T. Ezekiel and Gaston Lichtenstein, *The History of the Jews of Richmond* (Richmond: 1917), pp. 88, 133; Bertram W. Korn, "The Jews of Mobile, Alabama, Prior to the Organization of the First Congregation, in 1841", *Hebrew Union College Annual*, XL-XLI (1969-70), 483.

<sup>47</sup> Lyons Collection, vol. 2, p. 75; BCCCD, March term 1818, Judicial Docket, case 12; Pool *op. cit.*, p. 404; *Columbian Centinel* (Boston), Feb. 24, 1830.

<sup>48</sup> Declarations of Aliens, no. 305; Naturalization Records, Maryland, book 2, p. 290.

family that continued to grow until 1826 when his wife Isabella died "in the 36th year of her age, leaving a disconsolate husband and seven children to deplore their irreparable loss". By this time he had acquired a number of real properties, one of which he gave to his eldest son "... in consideration of the fatherly love and affection which he the said John M. Dyer bears toward his son Leon Dyer . . ."<sup>49</sup>

In 1831 Dyer was remarried in New York to a young widow, Frances Pollock Ellis, whom he brought to Baltimore. A decade later, however, when his family had begun to break up with the removal of a son and daughter to Texas, Dyer himself departed from Baltimore, settling in New York, where he tried his hand at selling wines. This brief career was interrupted by his death on March 8, 1842 at the age of sixty-five years.<sup>50</sup>

Hillel M. Anker, one of the first Polish Jews to reside in Baltimore, was among those immigrants who achieved some degree of economic success. Based on information given in his obituary, he must have arrived around 1816. Anker and Moses Cohen (see below) were business associates during the 1820's; the 1827 directory indicates their firm dealt in dry goods and was located at numbers 3 and 5, York Avenue. After the dissolution of this partnership Anker resided on North Exeter Street in Old Town according to directories from 1829 through 1837.

Anker was a loyal contributor to Philadelphia's Rodeph Shalom. In May 1827 his payment of \$23.39 was one of the largest; in July 1829 he gave \$10.00 toward the lot for the synagogue. He did not cease to appear in Rodeph Shalom records after Baltimore had its own congregation; in September 1831 he gave \$15.18 and in September 1833, \$19.45. Anker obtained his American citizenship October 3, 1833. He was married late in life (probably for the second time) to "Hiah Knysky of Poland . . . at the Synagogue of the Incorporated United Hebrew Benevolent Society of Baltimore" on September 29, 1838 by Joseph Simpson.<sup>51</sup> Three years later,

<sup>49</sup> *Baltimore American*, Nov. 28, 1826; BLR, liber WG129, p. 756.

<sup>50</sup> Stern, *Americans* . . . , p. 4; New York Register of Deaths, vol. 13. The lengthiest account of Dyer and his family is given in Adolf Guttmacher, *A History of the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation 1830-1905* (Baltimore: 1905)—but fact and fiction are here intertwined. Among other erroneous material are the years given for Dyer's remarriage, date of death and his place of death. Information on his son Leon is presented in Ira Rosenwaike, "Leon Dyer: Baltimore and San Francisco Jewish Leader," *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly*, ix, 2 (January, 1977).

<sup>51</sup> Congregation Rodeph Shalom (Philadelphia) Cash Book 1823-1847; Naturalization Records, Maryland, book 4, p. 22; *Baltimore American*, Oct. 3, 1838.



he passed away. An obituary, quite remarkable because it mentioned the religion of the decedent, stated:

Departed this transitory life, on the 17th inst. HILLEL MOSES ANKER, in the 55th year of his age, leaving a wife and two children. The deceased was a native of Poland, born near Warsaw, from whence he emigrated to this country, and settled in this city, where he resided for the last 25 years. He died a Hebrew, in the faith of his forefathers.<sup>52</sup>

Anker's will indicated he owned two brick houses on Potter Street as well as other rental property. His estate was to be divided between his wife and "child or children as the case may be . . . Provided however that if my child or children should marry out of the Jewish faith; or die leaving no issue born in the Jewish faith then I give the whole estate to my wife absolutely . . . ." Anker appointed "James L. Ridgely sole Executor of this my Last Will and Testament and Guardian of my child or children as the case may be, by my present wife". He went on to state: "I commit my wife to his friendly counsel and advice, to protect her interests, and request that he will see my child or children educated in the Jewish faith . . . ."<sup>53</sup>

Two of the English Jews who showed up in Baltimore during the decade prior to 1820, Abraham Joseph and Gabriel Isaacs, are somewhat obscure figures. Abraham Joseph spent most of his adult years in Philadelphia, where he applied for citizenship in 1815, and only a comparatively short time in Baltimore.<sup>54</sup> He is listed in the directory for 1817 as a pedlar, at Fleet and Apple Alley in Fells Point. Perhaps the Rachel Joseph who married Moses Myer DeYoung in Baltimore, on January 4, 1820, was a sister or niece.<sup>55</sup> Abraham Joseph was involved in two suits with Andrew Levy during the September 1818 term of Baltimore City Court. The first was over the sum of \$1,000; in the second, in which Abraham's wife, Catharine, also was mentioned, the amount was \$300. Joseph was among the signers of the 1810 constitution of Philadelphia's Rodeph Shalom; he later affiliated with Mikveh Israel, and was

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 29, 1841.

<sup>53</sup> Baltimore County Will Book, vol. 18, p. 410.

<sup>54</sup> Abraham Joseph's declaration, filed Nov. 10, 1815 in the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court indicated his birthplace was London and that he was 28 years of age. Declaration Dockets, Philadelphia Municipal Archives.

<sup>55</sup> BML. This DeYoung's identification is uncertain and therefore his classification as a Baltimore resident is in doubt; perhaps he was in the city only to marry a local girl.

Poland who, according to a declaration he made on October 1, 1819, was a Russian subject. Identifying himself as a "watchmaker from London" Cohen advertised in November 1819 "that he has opened a Store at No. 23½ North Howard-st. and has for sale very good Stop and Second Hunting and Plain Silver Watches, which he has imported.—He will also repair all kinds of Repeating, Horizontal, Duplex, Lever and Plane watches . . ." <sup>59</sup>

The two men very soon moved to New York where by 1820 Samuel was listed in the city directory as a grocer and Cohen, by 1821, a watchmaker. In 1825 Barrow Cohen's refusal to make an offering for charity at Shearith Israel served as an incident that helped create a permanent split in the congregation. The ultimate result was the formation of Bnai Jeshurun, New York's first Ashkenazic congregation, with Cohen as one of the founders.<sup>60</sup> During the hearings on the Barrow Cohen case Joseph Samuel, called to testify, "stated he lived in Gosport England and was acquainted with . . . the Father of B.E. [sic] Cohen . . . for 14 years and was also acquainted with B.E. Cohen about one or two weeks before he left England . . ." <sup>61</sup> Samuel remained loyal to Shearith Israel and held the post of *shohet* in the congregation from 1828 to 1832. He died on October 25, 1836.<sup>62</sup>

Perhaps the most important document still surviving relating specifically to pre-1820 Baltimore Jewry is a record of circumcisions compiled by Alexander Wertheim. Wertheim had resided in Baltimore briefly (about 1809-10) before moving to Philadelphia; however, he seems to have returned on several occasions, sometimes for lengthy intervals. In the two years 1818 and 1819 he performed eleven circumcisions in Baltimore, a remarkable number considering there were then hardly more than a score of Jewish families in the city. Included in Wertheim's list were sons of the aforementioned Michael DeYoung, David Phillips, Moses Van Wezel, Abraham Joseph, W.N. Polack, Jacob Berlin, and John M. Dyer as well as Solomon Benjamin, Jacob Moses, and Andrew Levy.<sup>63</sup> Also included was a son of George Lyons.

George Lyons resided at 92 High Street, in Old Town, according

<sup>59</sup> Declarations of Aliens, Maryland, nos. 434, 435; *Baltimore American*, Nov. 8, 1819.

<sup>60</sup> For accounts of this event see Grinstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 41ff; Blau and Baron, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 535-39.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 538.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 656; New York Register of Deaths, vol. 10. After more than three decades in New York, Cohen returned to England where he died at Portsea on October 28, 1869. Grinstein, *op. cit.*, p. 590; New York County Will Book, liber 239, p. 159.

<sup>63</sup> Wertheim Circumcision Book. The experience of the last three men has been sketched in Rosenwaike, "The Jews of Baltimore to 1810".

to Baltimore's 1817 directory; in 1819, described as a pedlar, he was located in Fells Point. Charged with "assaulting & stabbing Frances Colmus" in 1818, his case was still on the criminal docket in November 1821, probably because of his failure to appear. Lyons had since moved to New York where Shearith Israel records indicate his wife, Catherine, converted to Judaism in a ceremony performed in April 1821. Shearith Israel records also indicate that he registered the names of his five children, including his son Hart, who had been circumcised in Baltimore (by Alexander Wertheim) in February 1818. In New York, Lyons became a clothier before his death in 1831.<sup>64</sup>

Because their residence in the Maryland metropolis was brief, or perhaps because of the compilers' omissions, some of Baltimore's Jewish residents never appeared in the city directories. Victor Levy is one such example. Just one day before he acquired a marriage license in Baltimore in February 1819, his name appeared in a local newspaper on a "list of applicants for the benefit of the insolvent laws of Maryland". Soon after, Levy tried his fortune in Philadelphia, where he died February 26, 1823 at the age of thirty-three.<sup>65</sup>

The most abrupt departure from Baltimore probably was made by another former Philadelphian, Isaac Cook. Cook had married Charlotte Amanda, a daughter of Elias Pollock, in a ceremony performed in Philadelphia by "Rev. Wolf". He soon moved to Baltimore where in 1812 the city directory identified him as a "quill-manufacturer", residing on Pitt Street in Old Town. His last listing, as a "clarifier of quills" occurs in 1816. Not long after this he seems to have absconded leaving his father-in-law to pay his debts. Cook was listed as a garnishee of Elias Pollock in two suits brought before Baltimore courts in 1817 and 1818.<sup>66</sup>

Insolvency was frequently associated with mobility. A "settler" in Baltimore whose trip was financed in a unique manner was Lyon Jonas, an aged pauper who was sent to Maryland in 1813 with \$30 by Congregation Shearith Israel on his promise not to return to New York. Jonas was a native of Poland who emigrated to London, from whence he moved to New York during the Revolutionary War. A furrier, he became dependent upon charity in his old age. Shearith

<sup>64</sup> BCRD, Nov. term 1821, case 39; Stern, "The Function . . .", p. 91; New York County Will Book, liber 67, p. 254.

<sup>65</sup> BML; *Baltimore American*, Feb. 22, 1819; Ira Rosenwaike, "Jewish Deaths Included in the Vital Records of American Cities, 1821-1829", *AJHQ*, LVIII, 3 (March, 1969), 374.

<sup>66</sup> *Baltimore American*, Dec. 31, 1810; BCCCD, Imparances 1818, p. 87, Imparances 1820, p. 38.

Israel records indicate he had returned to New York by 1815. He died in the almshouse in that city February 6, 1817 at the age of eighty-three years.<sup>67</sup>

While some individuals were absent from Baltimore's city directories for one reason or another, others who were mentioned cannot be positively identified because their listing was too incomplete. A case in point: "Cohen & Levy, watchmakers, 11 Market, F.P." in the 1819 volume. The first named may well have been the Morris A. Cohen (whose name seems to have had a variety of spellings) who was sued by "Andrew Levi [of] Bond st" in April 1821.<sup>68</sup> Later in 1821 both Andrew Levy and one Ezekiel Jacobs were in court charged with "threats of taking the life of Maurice Cohen". Presumably he is identical with the Maurice Cohen who was a pedlar residing on "Strawberry, E. side of Wilk" in Fells Point according to the subsequent directory, that for 1822, as well as with "Morrice A. Cohen" and "Moris A. Cohen" who appear in Rodeph Shalom records for 1824 and 1827 respectively. "Morris" Cohen is listed in the Philadelphia directory as a clothier in 1830; in 1831 "M.A." Cohen appears as a dealer. If later that year he was in Baltimore ("M.A. Cohen" is one of the signatures on the deed of purchase of a cemetery in 1831 by the electors of the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation) he ultimately returned to Philadelphia where he again appears in Rodeph Shalom records in 1838. He disappears from view after his listings in Philadelphia city directories in the early 1840's as "Cohen, M.A., jeweller, 172 Shippen".<sup>69</sup>

Another listing only in the 1819 directory was for "Phileipson, Marius, pedlar," at 24 Fleet street, in Fells Point. He obviously is identical with the "Marcus Philipson" who, with Hart Levi, witnessed the itemized inventory of the personal estate of Solomon Benjamin according to a document signed on May 29, 1818. He may possibly be the "M. Phillipson" who turned up as a seatholder in New York's Shearith Israel in March 1820.<sup>70</sup>

The frequent movement from city to city exhibited by many of the Jews who lived in early nineteenth century America is commonly attributed to economic circumstances. When times were

<sup>67</sup> Pool and Pool, *op. cit.*, pp. 347-48; Grinstein, *op. cit.*, p. 143; Herbert Friedenwald, "Some Newspaper Advertisements of the Eighteenth Century", in Abraham J. Karp, ed., *The Jewish Experience in America* (Waltham: 1969), vol. I, pp. 238-39; New York Register of Deaths, vol. 3.

<sup>68</sup> BCCCD, Sept. term 1821, case 51; BCRD, June term 1821, cases 281, 282. Since Andrew Levy had a directory listing of his own in 1819 it seems doubtful he was Cohen's partner; possibly it was Leonard Levy (who lacked a listing prior to 1827).

<sup>69</sup> BLR, liber WG216, p. 507; Rodeph Shalom Cash Book.

<sup>70</sup> Baltimore County Inventories, no. HH, 1817-19, liber WB 31, p. 281; Shearith Israel Trustees Book, III, March 6, 1820, American Jewish Archives (microfilm).

bad in one town or when business failure occurred, a move elsewhere was in order. In a year of major economic calamity the movement reached its peak. Such a period occurred in 1818-19 when the business world—which had boomed after the War of 1812—was virtually paralyzed by a severe banking crisis. Baltimore may well have suffered more than other American cities. The British consul summed up the situation on April 8, 1819, observing “The trade of this city was never more depressed, pecuniary embarrassment beyond anything ever before known, many failures, more expected and no one knows who to trust”.<sup>71</sup>

Thus it becomes understandable why an unusually large number of persons listed in Baltimore’s 1819 directory were missing by the time of the next publication. These included Hart Levy, Jacob Moses, Abraham Joseph, Abraham Lazarus, George Lyons, Mordecai Lyons, and John Myers. All apparently had departed by the date of the 1820 census, as had David Phillips, Jacob Berlin, Isaac Lazarus, Jacob Levy, and W.N. Polack. As a consequence, despite the appearance of a substantial number of Jewish newcomers during the decade the census revealed only twenty-one dwellings with Jewish household heads. Analysis reveals these were evenly divided between “early American stock” (eighteenth century origin) and post-1800 immigrant stock.

The deep split between the native-born and foreign-born Jews in Baltimore at this time has not escaped the attention of historians. In 1817 in response to an appeal from Congregation Shearith Israel for assistance in building a new synagogue in New York, Solomon Etting sent along with a substantial contribution a note that there were only three Jewish families in Baltimore.<sup>72</sup> Fein, in commenting on this incident, remarks, “He could live in his fashionable home on Charles and Saratoga Streets and recognize only three Baltimore Jewish families—but ignore about a hundred more”.<sup>73</sup> (Actually there were then about one hundred Jewish individuals in the city, not one hundred Jewish families.)

It would seem as if the Cohens and the Ettings, the two families whose names are interlocked with the struggle for complete religious equality in Maryland, were destined to become very nearly the only Jews of “early American” (i.e. eighteenth century) stock

<sup>71</sup> British Consular Reports, F.O. 5144, Dawson to Planta, April 8, 1819, cited in James W. Livingood, *The Philadelphia-Baltimore Trade Rivalry 1780-1860* (Harrisburg, Pa.: 1947), p. 18.

<sup>72</sup> Grinstein, *op. cit.*, p. 588. The other contributors were Levy Solomon and John Myers, Pool and Pool, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

<sup>73</sup> Fein, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

remaining in the city. Such long-term residents as Levy Solomon, Levy Andrew Levy, Elias Polock, and Isaac Mordecai, all of whom had lived in the city since before the turn of the century either died or moved away during the 1820's. Similarly, Abraham H. Cohen, one of the two "early American" arrivals of the preceding decade remaining in Baltimore at the time of the 1820 census, departed a few years later. It would appear that by the time the city's first congregation began to come to life in 1829, with the sole exception of Joseph M. Levy (married to a Christian), the Ettings and Cohens alone comprised the "early American" Jewish population.

A notable phenomenon revealed by the 1820 census was a distinct clustering by nativity and economic group—despite the relatively wide dispersal of the Jewish population throughout Baltimore. Thus, while Jews were present in seven of the twelve wards that constituted the city, five of the six households headed by men known to have a Dutch origin were in the second ward (Fells Point).<sup>74</sup> Five men, two natives of Germany and three who had resided in Baltimore before 1800, were household heads in Old Town (the third and fourth wards), an area of the city between the ship building and port activity of Fells Point and the thriving newer commerical and residential district of Baltimore situated west of Jones Falls. It was in the latter section that the wealthier families, who tended to be native Americans, resided. The households of Solomon Etting, his mother Shinah, and his son-in-law, Benjamin I. Cohen, were here in the eleventh ward. The sixth ward housed the other Cohens of Virginia, as well as A.H. Cohen, and Michael DeYoung. No other ward contained more than two Jewish families. (See Table 2).

We may consider the presence of slaves or free blacks (generally assuming they were servants) in a household as a rather crude indicator of relative wealth. There are limitations in the uses to which such data may be put, however. Probably some persons of means, because of small family size or other reasons, were without permanent help. Furthermore, though able to afford several servants, a very wealthy small family might require fewer employees than a large family of more moderate income. Such factors need to be borne in mind in any consideration of the status of an individual family. In the aggregate, data such as that appearing in Table 2 are useful in assessing the relative status of groups of

<sup>74</sup> The sixth head, Michael DeYoung, also had once lived in Fells Point; he was located at 65 Bond Street according to the 1816 directory. By 1819, however, he was at 52 Baltimore Street in the center of town, a move presumably reflecting his economic advance.

TABLE 2: JEWISH HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN BALTIMORE:  
CENSUS OF 1820

Head of Household	Number of Persons					Ward No.
	White			Black		
	Total	Male	Female	Free	Slave	
Moses Abraham	9	3	6	—	—	3
Levi Benjamin	5	2	3	—	—	2
A.H. Cohen	8	2	6	—	—	6
Benjamin I. Cohen	1	1	—	2	1	11
Judith I. Cohen	6	3	3	2	1	6
Levy Colmers	7	1	6	—	—	10
Michl deYoung	10	4	6	—	—	6
John Dyer	9	5	4	—	—	4
Shinah Etting	5	—	5	1	1	11
Solomon Etting	12	5	7	2	4	11
Gabl Isaacs	3	3	—	—	—	5
Lazarus Levi	3	2	1	—	—	2
Andrew Levy	6	3	3	—	—	2
Jos. M. Levy	4	2	2	—	—	5
Mrs. Levy	8	5	3	—	2	10
Moses Millim	4	2	2	—	—	2
Isaac Mordica	8	3	5	7	—	4
Samuel F. Pollock	3	1	2	—	—	3
Elias Polock	9	2	7	—	—	4
Abraham Schoyer	4	3	1	—	—	2
Levy Solomon	1	1	—	1	—	6
Total	125	53	72	15	9	

individuals. Of eleven “native American” households in 1820, seven contained slaves or free blacks; of ten new immigrant households, none. The conclusion as to their relative socio-economic rank seems quite obvious.

In 1820 Baltimore, despite the fact that it contained a Jewish population in excess of one hundred, was the largest city in the United States without a synagogue. Yet, a substantial share of the Jewish families *were* members of congregations—in Philadelphia. Baltimore Jewry’s experience thus is probably unparalleled; with more than enough adult males for not one but two minyanim, the religiously-oriented Jews—native and foreign-born—year after year worshiped one hundred miles away in the Pennsylvania metropolis.

Native American Jewish families were continuing members of Mikveh Israel while several of the foreign born were affiliated with Rodeph Shalom. The former is perhaps more readily understandable for two reasons. First, prior to their settlement in Baltimore, the native Americans had attended Sephardic services and apparently

they preferred to keep worshiping in this manner. Second, all had close relatives in the Quaker City and obviously visits there could combine both social and religious functions.

By 1820 the foreign-born Jews had grown to an extent permitting the holding of their own services in Baltimore; nevertheless none were held. In view of the fact that some worshiped at Philadelphia's Rodeph Shalom, it must be assumed that reasons other than a lack of religious feeling accounted for the failure of these first generation Americans to organize a local congregation. Most likely the high turnover of residents and the fluctuating economic circumstances were the principal factors. The two were interrelated; if a newcomer felt that chances of earning a satisfactory livelihood seemed to be diminishing, the prospect of migrating to a place with greater potential opportunity correspondingly increased. The mobile character of the low income group, as well as its lack of means, tended therefore to hamper the formation of a sense of community. As will be seen in a subsequent article, not until the immigrant had achieved secure economic footing, would the formation of a congregation come to pass.

#### SECOND SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORICAL MEETING

The American Jewish Historical Society and The Southern Jewish Historical Society announce a joint meeting to be held March 11-12, 1978 in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Programs will be mailed in January. For further information please contact the American Jewish Historical Society at 2 Thornton Rd., Waltham, Massachusetts 02154 or The Southern Jewish Historical Society at 133 West Franklin Street, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514