

**Country Jews:
Reconsidering Nineteenth-Century Alsatian Jewish Identity
in the Southern United States**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Alsatian Jewish identity in the American South is a flexible and elusive concept. Until we developed the “Alsace to America: Discovering a Southern Jewish Heritage” exhibit in Mississippi in 1997-1998, Alsatian and Lorrainer Jews [henceforth, Alsatians] who came to the Deep South circa 1820 through 1915 were mainly the subject of family memories and anecdotes. For the most part, the stories of these rural French immigrants were blended into the broader context of mid-nineteenth century German Jewish migration to the United States.¹ Perhaps it was the strong influence that Reform Judaism had on Southern communities that made the Alsatians invisible? Maybe it was their success at moving rapidly into the emerging middle class in pre- and post-Civil War America? Could their elusiveness over the past 150 years have something to do with their descendants who were not only Southern Jews, but also Cajuns, African-Americans, and White Southerners now practicing Methodist, Episcopalian, or even Evangelical Christianity? Members of these non-Jewish groups flocked to the exhibit in Jackson, much to the surprise of the exhibit’s staff, and spent hours discovering their own Southern Jewish heritage.

The facts that nineteenth century Alsatian Jewish immigrants became integrated into Southern society rapidly and that they left not only Jewish descendants but also those of other faiths and ethnicities, raise interesting questions about identity and affiliation. What was it about this group and their experience that allowed them to successfully enter the emerging middle class, despite the political and social upheavals of the nineteenth century on both sides of the Atlantic? In France, the Alsatian Jews faced many difficulties in the aftermath of the French Revolution, from restrictive local laws that impacted their commercial activities to the ideology of emancipation that promoted

secularization, to ongoing conflicts between France and Germany over their national borders along the Rhine River. In the United States, the Alsatians faced, by mid-century, economic, social, and physical hardship as new immigrants as well as the outbreak of Civil War. Yet, they succeeded despite these difficulties in making new and prosperous lives for themselves and their descendants.

Historians, sociologists, and anthropologists traditionally approached the analysis of migration and identity using models of assimilation, integration, and acculturation. Today, in light of postmodern social theory, we no longer think that nineteenth century immigrants had to give up one identity for another [*assimilation*] or that adapting to a new culture was a static process within narrow parameters imposed by the dominant social group [*acculturation*]. While intermarriage into the politically powerful group in a nation-state still holds some value as a marker of acceptance [*integration*] for minority individuals into the majority group, it may not be the only vehicle for social mobility and economic enhancement. Postmodern theorists, instead, speak of individuals and minority groups as having strategies, repertoires of multiple identities, and layers of affiliation that allow *hybridization*, a blending of the old and new selves or cultures. Identity is complex, consisting of not only local expressions with a family or regional network, but also, of larger social and political identities such as citizenship.

Rather than giving up Judaism or one's Jewish identity, nineteenth century Alsatian immigrants to the American South utilized common value systems, broader concepts of political affiliation, economic symbiosis, and shared interests to advance in their new society. The conditions that allowed them to do so included specific parameters of the nineteenth century emigration from France. Certain ideologies and their related set of expectations about living in a modern nation-state were brought by the Alsatian Jews from the Old World to the New. They recognized the value system of nineteenth century Southern culture in the United States, which was distinct from its counterpart in the Northern portion of the nation.

The Alsatian-Jews' prior experience at operating with multiple identities in France was an advantage in the American South. France was also a modern nation-state where Alsatian Jews interacted with rural, non-Jewish neighbors. Social change was not new to the mid-nineteenth century Alsatian immigrant in the United States. The process of

rearticulating and questioning traditional Jewish cultural patterns, community institutions, and identities had occurred during the emancipation in Alsace. Familiar with social change, the new immigrants relied upon kinship networks to cope with political, social and economic instability.²

II. PARAMETERS OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY FRENCH IMMIGRATION TO THE SOUTHERN UNITED STATES

Jews leaving Alsace for the United States took several routes, but the most popular was Le Havre to New York or to New Orleans. According to Fouché, 66.43 percent of the Alsatians leaving France, including both Jews and non-Jews, between 1838 and 1857 arrived in New York, while 15.38 percent entered in New Orleans. The passage to New Orleans from Le Havre was less expensive than going to New York which cost between 250 to 300 francs in 1864.³

Passengers timed their trips to New Orleans, however, for the cooler months of the year. They wanted to avoid Yellow Fever and Cholera epidemics which were common in Louisiana in the mid-nineteenth century. The trip took about seventy days by sea in the 1850s, but additional time had to be spent overland getting from one's village or town in Alsace to the port. Despite these difficulties, approximately 8,264 French immigrants arrived in New Orleans between 1820 and 1839. These numbers increased to 11,563 between 1840 and 1848.⁴ In contrast, 6.7 million Europeans arrived in the United States between 1820 and 1870.⁵

United States Immigration Records in New Orleans and New York don't specify if these migrants were Jews or non-Jews. For our purposes, though, the characteristics of the ships' logs resonate with information from the oral histories of individual Alsatian Jewish immigrants to the Southern United States.⁶ The characteristics of these immigrants were that they are predominantly male: mostly young men in their twenties, and less commonly in their thirties. They traveled alone or with other male relatives.⁷ Of the married couples who emigrated from Alsace between the years 1817 and 1869, the majority arrived in New Orleans without children. A few families also were included in these records but they constituted a small minority.

The occupations of these immigrants were indicated by officials but this data may not be accurate. New Orleans records designate 51.38 percent of the French arrivals as “merchants” between 1820 and 1839. Other professions are represented which include bakers, tailors, shoemakers, cabinet makers, butchers, hatters, watchmakers, and jewelers. Farmers were only 12.28 percent of the workers. Often people with obvious Jewish surnames were labeled as “farmers” which may have meant that they engaged in trade involving cattle or agricultural products.⁸

Alsatian immigration to the United States continued to increase as political and economic changes in France implemented in the 1830s. France at this time was still largely rural and agrarian. The majority of French Jews lived in Alsace and were used to doing business with their non-Jewish neighbors and traveling great distances as agricultural brokers and peddlers. Many Alsatian butchers were Jewish and they served a large non-Jewish clientele, so much so that Stauben relates that non-Jews had to plan ahead for Passover, when the Jewish businesses would be closed for an extended period of time.⁹ Paris was the only large city, of approximately 899,000 people, containing three percent of France’s population. “Urban” towns had less than 2000 inhabitants.¹⁰

France’s regional cultures and languages had not yet been unified, but a growing sense of modern nationalism meant that the government was establishing new institutions to centralize control and foster French unity. A primary vehicle of this process was government regulation of schools. The Guizot Laws (1833) mandated primary school education for the Jews in Alsace, although no state resources were allocated.

Reasons for emigration from France were primarily economic. A cotton crisis in 1839 began a series of economic hardships as industry was slow to expand and not able to keep up with population increases. Between 1840 and 1847, crop failure, floods, a poor grain harvest, and a corrupt, laissez-faire government allowed captains of newly emerging industry to prosper at the expense of small businessmen and laborers. By the end of 1846, there was widespread unemployment and a credit shortage. These conditions led up to the uprising of 1848 and its aftermath of military and political repression.

The Jews of Alsace experienced not only the aforementioned elements of economic instability, but also sporadic anti-Jewish riots, the worst of which followed the political

protests of 1848.¹¹ Traditional Jewish occupations as money lenders and small merchants were increasingly restricted by local laws beginning in 1808 with the “Infamous Decree” which annulled debts owed to Jews, required annual business permits, redirected residence by requiring land acquisition, and required military service. The Catholic Church added to the troubles by manipulating international events to encourage anti-Semitism, such as the Damascus Affair in 1840.¹²

The attraction that the United States held for both Jewish and non-Jewish Alsatians was its potential for economic success. Jews also had the benefit of friends and relatives in the United States, as the immigration took place from the 1820s over each decade prior to the Civil War (1860s), and then resumed in the 1870s. In the 1870s, the Franco-Prussian War and France’s resulting loss of territory in Alsace also spurred a new wave of immigration to America. The Jews of Alsace felt a strong loyalty to the ideology of French equality and brotherhood, and a great mistrust toward the Prussian government regarding their rights.¹³

III. THE OLD WORLD CONTEXT: THE PARADOX OF EMANCIPATION

Nineteenth-century emancipation of the Jews in rural France brought with it the promise of civil rights: *liberté, fraternité, and égalité*. France was the first European nation to give Jews citizenship at the end of the eighteenth century, but the Emancipation came with conditions. Jewish elites, Christian intellectuals, and anti-religious politicians debated the structure Jewish communal organization prior to the French Revolution. Louis XVI in 1784 issued *letters patent* that provided new economic opportunities for Jews and sought to minimize Jewish activity as money lenders.¹⁴ Mr. Gilbert Metz of Jackson, Mississippi, produced one of these letters that granted his ancestor the right to serve as a butcher in their Alsatian town.¹⁵

During the rule of Napoleon I, educational, communal, linguistic, and economic changes were legislated to change the position of Jews within French society. Alsatian Jews, who were known to have more of a traditional Jewish lifestyle than their co-religionists in Paris and elsewhere in France, were impacted by these laws. Social change accelerated throughout the nineteenth century, with the establishment of

consistoires, a new communal structure that merged Jewish social organization with national interests. After 1831, Jewish religious leaders were paid salaries by the state, as were their Catholic and Protestant counterparts. By the end of the July Monarchy in 1848, these national policies as well as the new forms of state-sponsored education resulted in linguistic changes and attitudes.

The Jews in Alsace prior to the mid-nineteenth century used Judeo-Alsatian, a Western Yiddish variant, for their daily activities. They were already living in an area that was also German-speaking, the Alsatian dialect of their Christian neighbors being primarily a Germanic language with French overtones. But by 1848, an increasing number of Jews had attended state-regulated primary schools resulting in facility in the French language. These schools also influenced their graduates “who were eager to prepare their children for integration into French society.”¹⁶ Alsatian Jews increasingly embraced the French language, albeit at a slower rate than their co-religionists in Paris. French language facility and these modest educational opportunities opened them to the culture of the French bourgeoisie. Yet, an undercurrent of anti-Semitism on the local level contradicted the French nation’s stated commitment to these strides toward Jewish inclusion and equality.

Emancipation of the Jews in France redefined their identity from members of a protected group, “a nation with a nation,” to that of modern citizens under a uniform political-administrative system applicable to everyone. The paradox was that local and individual anti-Jewish sentiment on the part of non-Jewish officials and political theorists challenged the uniformity and fairness of laws designed to modernize the nation. Jewish notables, leaders empowered by the national government to “reform” their non-elite co-religionists, struggled with implementing a secular system without weakening the identity and solidarity of their community.¹⁷ The French model of national identity in the nineteenth century mandated that everyone assimilate a French identity without a trace of ethnicity, although religious differences were recognized.¹⁸

IV. THE NEW WORLD CONTEXT: PEDDLING, SMALL TOWNS, PLANTATIONS HOMESTEADS, AND EMERGING INDUSTRIES IN THE RURAL SOUTH

Alsatian Jews arriving in the ports of New Orleans, New York, and Galveston made their way to the backwaters of rural, Southern communities in the Deep South in the first half of the nineteenth century. They found similarities to their Alsatian homeland along the banks of the Mississippi River in Louisiana and Mississippi. The Southern economic system was agrarian and consisted of large plantations producing cotton and tobacco, as well as homestead farms. Plantations bring to mind large mono-crop production in the fertile areas of Virginia, the Carolinas, Mississippi, Louisiana and coastal Georgia. But the Georgia Piedmont and its adjacent states, e.g., Alabama, parts of the Carolinas, Tennessee and northern Florida, saw the development in the 1840s of homestead farms.

Homestead farms were smaller than plantations and more diversified in their output than the plantations. Initially, slave labor was used but never in large numbers on the homesteads, which also utilized a few paid workers. Cottage industries like saw mills and grist mills were part of their economic activities, as were the cultivation of cereal crops, turpentine production, and palmetto processing. Produce for the household's consumption and raising cotton, too, were parts of this enterprise. In Georgia, white male overseers and managers of coastal plantations and their families settled on lands in the interior that they acquired via state land lotteries after the Indian Removal of the 1830s. Plantation land was in the hands of a small aristocracy, as it had been in France prior to the Revolution, but new opportunities were expanding for a small but rising middle-class by the 1840s.

The Southern rural context provided an environment where one of the traditional occupations of the Alsatian Jews, peddling, was welcomed. Separated by long distances, small rural settlements and plantations had few merchants for things that could not be produced in-house such as sewing notions, and household items of better quality such as imported crockery and commercially-produced textiles. Middle class culture was emerging as the South engaged in a slow climb toward urbanization and industrialization. Increasingly, the populace, even in remote areas, wanted consumer goods which the peddler could provide. Once a peddler was established and had saved enough capital,

the next step was to own a general store that sold dry goods and agricultural supplies.¹⁹ Provisions for these stores were procured in New York and St. Louis, or in New Orleans and larger, southern cities. Alsatian Jews as they became successful also established networks with relatives in France for the export of European merchandise to the United States, a pattern that non-Jewish immigrant businessmen in the United States also followed. One of the desired and a high status item was the Haviland-Limoges dinnerware, household china produced in France for the American market. Most middle-class families in the South in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries aspired to own a set of these fine porcelain dishes.

Some proprietors of the general stores by the mid-nineteenth century worked as agricultural brokers in the American South, as their wealthier countrymen had in Alsace. They advanced credit to the landholders and become intermediaries to the cotton factors in larger cities like Savannah or New Orleans. Jews became cotton factors, too, as the century progressed. Edgar Degas, visiting his relatives in New Orleans in 1872, captured some of them in his painting of the New Orleans Cotton Bourse.²⁰ The role of the Jew in the rural South as storekeeper opened many possibilities as the local economies were expanding.

Alsatian Jews became landholders, themselves, although for the most part, this happened after the Civil War. Several of our oral histories collected in Mississippi and Louisiana have a common theme. An Alsatian Jewish peddler or storekeeper, who was a good friend to an elderly local Christian landholder, eventually inherited land when the landholder died without heirs. In some cases, Alsatian Jews bought land in the rural south and set-up their own plantations as was the case with the Geismar brothers in Louisiana.²¹ This was particularly true after the Civil War, when land prices were low and storekeepers were among the very few people who had resources to barter.

During the period of the New South, in the late nineteenth century, Jewish businessmen in New Orleans, Atlanta, Savannah, Memphis, and other emerging cities entered into or financed the growing industrialization. Some Jews became the founders of banks during this period.²² Others built their fortunes in new industries, like the Godchaux family in Louisiana who developed the sugar processing industry. Godchaux Sugar became recognized as a household name well into the twentieth century

The founder of Godchaux Sugar, Leon Godchaux, exemplifies the rapid success of Alsatian Jews in the South. As Neil J. Comeaux writes, “He arrived in New Orleans in 1837 with only the clothes on his back and a few coins. Yet, at his death in 1899, he was a well respected member of society and a multi-millionaire.”²³ At age 13, Godchaux and a friend traveled the banks of the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, selling sewing notions to ladies on the plantations. In 1840, he was able to open a general store and by 1845, he acquired a clothing store in New Orleans. Finally, in 1850, he bought his first sugar plantation, the Souvenir Plantation in Bonnet Carré and changed the name of the area to “Reserve.” He kept reinvesting the profits from his businesses by acquiring more land and additional sugar plantations. He consolidated his operations, concentrating the work into one large, central sugar mill. The expansion of railroads in the area allowed the harvested sugar cane quick transport for processing on arrival, and a path to market once the final product was ready for shipping. Godchaux benefited from new forms of transportation, as well as his own savvy business acumen.

V. CASE STUDY: JEWISH LIFE IN SMALL-TOWN GEORGIA

Few of the Alsatian Jews immigrating to the American South in the nineteenth century had the phenomenal success of Leon Godchaux, who developed his own industry and lived to see its fruition. Many of the Alsatian Jews in the rural South, however, enjoyed a more modest rise into the middle-class, won respect from their non-Jewish townsmen and saw success in the businesses they established. These firms usually lasted into the mid-twentieth century for the benefit of their children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren. To fully understand their success and acceptance into hundreds of small towns throughout the Deep South, let us investigate a case study of one Georgia county, its towns, and its Jewish antebellum residents.

Washington County is located in middle Georgia. Today, it has easy access to both Augusta on the Georgia-South Carolina border, and to Macon, the center of the state. It is also not far from Milledgeville, the nineteenth century capital city of Georgia before Atlanta gained prominence. However, in the nineteenth century, these distances by horse or mule wagon would have taken at least a half-day’s journey. Sandersville, Washington County’s largest town, had only 2,023 inhabitants at its peak in 1900, according to United

States Census data. The county which includes other towns like Davisboro, Warthen, and Tennille, in 1820 had 10,627 residents. In 1860, there were 12,698 people, and by 1880, 21,964.

Of these residents, only half a dozen were Jews engaged in the running of general stores prior to the Civil War. Prominent nineteenth century Jewish businessmen in Washington County included Pincus Happ, a Polish immigrant who ran a dry goods store in Sandersville with his son Morris in 1859. Morris later moved to Macon, Georgia, a town large enough to have a synagogue, unlike Sandersville which never had any formal Jewish institutions. Pincus Happ was too old to see military service during the Civil War according to the oral histories of Washington County. He, instead, was in charge of burying the C.S.A. soldiers who fell in battles in the surrounding area, assisted by Brother Anthony, a Catholic monk who led Sandersville's Catholic congregation. They were joined in this work by the town's doctor. According to Ella Mitchell, these three gentlemen were the only men left in Sandersville during the most intense fighting of the Civil War.²⁴

Another well known Jewish family were the Hermanns: Abraham (Abe) and his cousin Isaac (Ike), from Alsace. They both served in the Civil War, volunteering with other able-bodied men of Washington County and enlisting in 1861, in the first wave of recruitment for the C.S.A. Ike clerked for his cousin shortly after his arrival in 1858, and later established his own store at Fenns Bridge near Davisboro. After the war, Abe migrated to Lexington, Mississippi. Isaac had another relative in Macon, Georgia, a married female cousin. Isaac Hermann was well known in Sandersville for his memoir about his adventures during the Civil War, a work which will be analyzed at the end of this paper. Ike Hermann, a private during the Civil War, later became a captain in the Georgia State Militia. He donated the proceeds of this book to benefit the public library in Sandersville. After the Civil War, he served on Sandersville's Board of Education for many years and helped develop the public schools. He was employed as the tax receiver for the county, as well as moving his store to the main commercial district in Sandersville. Isaac Hermann is buried with the other Washington County Civil War Veterans in a special section of the Old Cemetery in Sandersville.

Capt. Hermann had seven immediate descendants: one daughter and six sons. One of the American-born sons, Dr. Henry Hermann, was a local physician and surgeon. Dr. Hermann owned a sanatorium in the early 1900s with Dr. William Rawlings, one of the most prominent doctors in Georgia who descended from Revolutionary War heroes. The Rawlings ancestors were Southern aristocracy of the first order. They came to Sandersville in the late eighteenth century via land grants. Dr. Rawlings was known for his work at the Mayo Brothers Clinic in Minnesota, after which he returned to Sandersville. His partnership with Henry Hermann illustrates that the American-born offspring of Alsatian Jewish immigrants were often linked to the most prominent, blueblood Christian families in their southern towns both professionally and socially. In one generation these immigrant families went from being poor peddlers to accepted members of the middle-class.

Henry Paris was another immigrant whose family origins were labeled “German” in the printed sources used for this case study, but he was Alsatian.²⁵ Many of the Alsatians were labeled as “German” or “Prussian” depending upon the date when they immigrated to the United States and the changing location of the French-German border at that time. France and Germany contested their mutual Rhine River border throughout the nineteenth century well into the mid-twentieth century during World War II!

Henry Paris arrived in New York in 1872 with the wave of Jewish immigrants who fled the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War, and established himself in Sandersville in 1874. His sister was the wife of Morris Happ, and Henry became part of P. Happ and Son. Later he worked at Eastman, Georgia in 1889, with the Cohen Brothers, a firm that he eventually owned and changed its name to Happ and Paris. Henry married Isaac Hermann’s daughter, Pauline, and built a fabulous Victorian house designed by Charles Edward Choate in 1900 that still stands in Sandersville and is on the National Register.

Henry and Pauline’s daughter, Rachel Paris (b. 1902–d. 1976) was well known in Georgia as the author of *Silk Stocking Street* (1970), a collection of nostalgic stories based upon her childhood experiences in Sandersville. She donated the proceeds of her book to the library. The Sandersville Historical Society still sells it. Rachel spent her final years in Macon and Atlanta. A park in Sandersville was named in her honor.

Louis Cohen (b. 1849 – d. 1937), a native of Americus, Georgia, was another member of the Jewish community in Sandersville. He arrived in 1877, and married Annie Happ. Mr. Cohen was a very important resident of Tennille and Sandersville, beginning his career with Pincus Happ. He served on the school board for thirty years, eleven of which he was president. He also became mayor of Sandersville. His leadership was responsible the implementation of many modern innovations to the area in the late nineteenth century such as the telegraph, the first cotton warehouse, .train service, mills, and a cotton ginnery. In the twentieth century, Mayor Cohen brought electricity, telephone service, a town sewage system and water works to Sandersville. Toward the end of his life, Cohen developed a banking business and owned a jewelry store. He was buried in the Jewish section of Atlanta’s famous Oakland Cemetery. His son, Ed Cohen, built the Cohen-Tarbutton house in 1904 in the same style as the Macon home of his relative, Morris Happ. This fine home was later owned by a Georgia Governor, Thomas W. Hardwick.

Finally, a prominent and well respected citizen of Sandersville was Major Mark Newman, a native of “Prussian Poland” from the city of Posen (today, Poznań). He came to Sandersville in 1845, enlisted in the 48th Georgia Regiment in 1861, rising to the rank of adjutant. He served as Ordinary of Washington County from 1881 to 1903, worked as a Probate Judge, and insured that veterans and widows received their pensions from the county. Unlike the other Jews in Sandersville who were all related, Major Newman married a non-Jew from a prominent Christian family, Miss Ann Ainsworth. They had two sons, J.D. and I.W. who were merchants in Sandersville. Major Newman built a cottage in 1855 in Greek revival style. In 1989, the home still was owned by the Newman family.

VI. INTERPRETING NINETEENTH CENTURY JEWISH LIFE IN SANDERSVILLE AND WASHINGTON COUNTY

Washington County’s nineteenth century Jewish residents pursued strategies that allowed the new immigrants to adapt quickly to a foreign land. The first pattern was that the Happ, Cohen, Hermann and Paris families were related to each other by marriage or by blood. This kinship network was also a trade network whereby relatives fresh from Europe were taken into existing businesses of the earlier immigrants. The firms

expanded and acquired additional resources in both capital and personnel. The earliest Jewish residents in Washington County were engaged in commerce, e.g., they were dry goods merchants and agricultural brokers.

In the late nineteenth century as new industries emerged, people like Louis Cohen took advantage of opportunities. Bringing new inventions to Washington County not only had economic benefits for Mr. Cohen and his family. He was responsible in large measure for modernizing Sandersville and Washington County so that residents had municipal services and utilities. Non-Jewish residents acknowledged this fact in their local histories. Major Newman and Mayor Cohen were regarded as among the most popular public servants in the history of the county.

Another pattern is that these Jewish families, including Alsatian and the “Prussian Polish” immigrants, entered the middle class relatively quickly. They were home owners, even in the 1850s. By the early twentieth century, they and their children owned some of the finest houses in Sandersville. These houses were built by the best architects, and one was so grand that a former Georgia governor eventually made it his home. Jews were recognized as members of the bourgeoisie in Sandersville. One of them, Major Mark Newman, married a non-Jew who was a member of the old Washington County aristocracy, gaining full acceptance into the old guard. No doubt his fine record of service in the Confederate Army and his personal reputation opened the door into upper class society.

The Jewish residents of Washington County were civic-minded. Isaac Hermann and his granddaughter donated the proceeds of their books to help the public library. Mark Newman was known for his concern for war widows, veterans, and orphans. Isaac Hermann and Louis Cohen spent long years serving on the city’s school board. Pincus Happ and Isaac Hermann also endowed prizes for outstanding scholarship for students in the public schools. Newman, Hermann, and Cohen served in public office or as employees of local government. Pincus Happ, as an elderly man, nonetheless made sure that his Christian neighbors who fell in battle had proper burials during the Civil War. Newman, the Hermann cousins, and others served with their Christian neighbors in the Civil War., and they were among the first to enlist.

Thus, living in an area where Jews were rare, the few who made Washington County their homes in the nineteenth century demonstrated to their Christian neighbors that the community was better off by their presence. Their contributions were many, both in business and in civic development: supporting the library, volunteering for military service, developing the school system and public works. Since there was no synagogue or Jewish communal association, Washington County Jews channeled their charitable works into activities that benefited the larger community.

Jews in Sandersville and its neighboring towns maintained their sense of Jewishness through their families and ties to larger Jewish communities elsewhere in Georgia. Cities like Atlanta, Savannah and Macon had synagogues, Jewish cemeteries and communal institutions; while Sandersville, Tennille, and Davisboro did not. But the kinship networks that maintained Jewish identity in these towns also benefited economic activities. Family networks were trade networks, too.

The case study of Sandersville and Washington County also illustrated the integration of Alsatian Jewish immigrants with both their co-religionists and their Christian neighbors. The Happ family had a Polish origin but they married into Alsatian Jewish families. We don't know the origin of Louis Cohen's family. He was a Georgia native, from Americus in the southwestern portion of the state, who moved to Sandersville after marrying Annie Happ. The Paris and Hermann families were from Alsace and represented two different migrations: (a) the Hermanns being antebellum immigrants and (b) Henry Paris fleeing the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War, arriving in Sandersville during Reconstruction.

Major Mark Newman's family was from another European border area: the Prussian-Polish border. This border was hotly contested during the nineteenth century. The Polish-origin Jews in Sandersville had German language and Yiddish in common with the Alsatian Jews, but their dialects would have been quite different. Both groups of immigrants occupied a similar economic niche as middle-men: peddlers, merchants, and agricultural brokers in their old countries as they did in the new one, the American South.

Modernity at the end of the nineteenth century presented new opportunities for commerce and for public service. In terms of economic activity and civic contributions, the Alsatian Jewish immigrant success story was pretty much the same in nineteenth

century small southern towns as it was for Jews coming from other places in Europe. Perhaps the real key to understanding the Alsatian Jewish story was their ability to blend in so thoroughly with their neighbors and to adapt to the social system that they found in rural Georgia and elsewhere in the American South.

VII. FITTING INTO THE SOUTHERN SOCIAL SYSTEM: ETHOS, HONOR, REPUTATION, AND PUBLIC OPINION

While the activities of the Washington County Jews speak loudly and illustrate the speedy integration of these foreign immigrants into their nineteenth century New World homes, it is only through memoirs that we hear their voices and get some idea about the complexity of their adaptation. Captain Isaac Hermann's *Civil War Memoirs* which were published toward the end of his life in 1911, clearly illustrated the convergence of nineteenth century French and Southern ideals.²⁶

Hermann enlisted in the army of the Confederate States of America with twenty-one of his neighbors in 1861, less than three years after his arrival from France in Washington County. The Washington Rifles were transported by train to Virginia where they joined other Confederate troops. In this new context, thrust into a sea of soldiers who did not know him, Hermann calls upon his French identity, rather than being identified as a Jew in public. Recalling this event, he wrote: "The writer being a Frenchman, a rather scarce article in those days in this country, elicited no little curiosity among the members of the First Georgia Regiment." Other soldiers came to his tent to get a glimpse of this curiosity. Finally Major U.M. Irwin invited him to address the crowd, stating: "Well, I told some fellows we'd brought a live Frenchman with us. I suppose those fellows want to get a peep at you." Hermann addressed the group: "Now all of you will know me, Isaac Hermann, a native Frenchman, who came to assist you to fight the Yankees."²⁷

The Alsatian Jews had an advantage, as did the Prussian Jews, in being able to select their identity in unfamiliar social contexts from a repertoire of identities. Obviously foreign, these immigrants called upon their European identities to encapsulate and explain their "otherness" to native Southerners, rather than risk being identified as Jews. Their close friends and regular clients in their own southern towns knew that they were "Israelites." In the antebellum South, anti-Semitic incidents were not the norm, but the

potential for danger was always there. The South was a culture having an ethos of honor and violence, to quote the famous work of Bertram Wyatt-Brown.²⁸ But in the mid-1860s as victory began to elude the Confederate forces, incidents of Judeophobia occurred.²⁹

Rapid anti-Semitism, public expressions of nativistic sentiment, lynchings and beatings of Jews in the South were more frequent in the early twentieth century than in the nineteenth. For example, in the 1910s through the 1930s, the Klu Klux Klan revitalized and became active in local politics. Tensions brewed in the early twentieth century over rapid industrialization and increased urbanization. These social and economic changes gave rise to anti-Jewish actions as part of a broad spectrum of anti-foreign riots in places like Atlanta, which had an anti-Greek riot in 1924, and the beatings of industrial leaders in Gainesville, Georgia, during the early 1930s.

These types of activities did not occur against nineteenth century Jews, as a rule, although anti-Semitic rhetoric was present. For example, the famous landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead, touring the south in the 1850s, made disparaging remarks about Jews. He noted that they had “swarmed in nearly every southern town and few among them were men of no character.”³⁰

Painfully aware of these issues from their own experiences with Emancipation in France and Germany and from the anti-Jewish riots following the 1848 Revolution, nineteenth century immigrant Jews in the American South felt the need to demonstrate their loyalty to the Confederate cause. Rabbi M. J. Michelbacher delivered a famous sermon that supported the C.S.A. on March 27, 1864 in Richmond, probably for the benefit of his non-Jewish neighbors. His speech promoted Southern Jewish loyalty and patriotism. The sermon was published in English and widely distributed.³¹

Given the potential for anti-Jewish sentiment, which was always an undercurrent of European culture, so much the better for the immigrant Jew to take a French identity. The French were admired by the elite Confederates. France was looked upon as a civilized country with a rich culture. Napoleon I was regarded as a military strategist equal or greater than von Clausewitz.³² The American South had a successful commercial relationship with France, prior to the Civil War, when Southern cotton was exported to Alsatian factories. These commercial relationships continued via Mexican

ports during the Civil War. Confederate leaders went to France to try to raise money for the war effort.

One lesson from the early nineteenth century emancipation of the Jews in France and Germany was that non-Jewish intellectuals expected Jews to prove their worthiness to be included as members in the nation. During the American Civil War, immigrant Jews, north and south, demonstrated that they had learned this lesson well by enlisting in both the Blue and the Gray forces.³³ An irony of this volunteer effort was the fact that many of these young men had fled forced military conscription in France and Prussia, a strong push factor that brought them to America. In Alsace, a common folk art decoration in Jewish homes in the nineteenth century was the *Shiviti* wall plaque that had one's military lottery number on it. The *Shiviti* were supposed to protect the owner from being selected for conscription.³⁴

No such new talismans were developed in the material culture of the immigrant Jews during their American experience in the nineteenth century. They were happy to serve with their Christian neighbors to prove their loyalty, demonstrate their gratitude, and partake of the *communitas*, the sense of belonging that the war effort, although difficult, engendered in the local community. As we learned from the case study of the Washington County Jews, being a veteran of the Civil War brought new opportunities for public service in local government in the late nineteenth century. It further integrated the Jews into their southern towns.

Returning to Isaac Hermann. He parlayed his French identity into an exciting and dangerous mission for his unit. Hermann was not a model soldier by our, contemporary standards. He demonstrated time and again that he was insubordinate with some of his superior officers, particularly Capt. Howell. But these incidents also demonstrated his keen understanding of the value system of Southern honor. Young men like Hermann, of any religious persuasion, had to prove themselves in southern society through a series of challenges to more powerful men, as well as demonstrate their generosity and not go against public opinion. The poetics of southern manhood required that adult males build their reputations by verbal sparring matches, fisticuffs, and even dueling if they risked the possibility of public humiliation. In a society that was slave-owning, a white male's

power was measured by his control over his slaves, his family and other white males. The inverse goal of this process was to avoid public humiliation at all costs.

Hermann risked public humiliation several times when his superior officers had him arrested for leaving his unit. He apparently left his unit with authorization due to injury or illness sustained in the field, but communications were poor. Military police were on the lookout for deserters. Hermann not only outsmarted superior officers by eluding detention. He actually physically fought with one of them, having learned boxing in Alsace at a local military installation adjacent to his primary school. Wisely, he followed these actions with published explanations in local newspapers and spread his story through gossip networks, too, to redeem his reputation.

Public opinion was very important in the South. It could damage or enhance a man's reputation. In contrast, demonstrating characteristics of generosity and courage could enhance a man's honor. Hermann brought packages and news from the relatives at home to his neighbors serving in the Confederate forces. He secured food and medical supplies for the Confederate troops from local Southern farmers. But it was his French identity that most enhanced his reputation, by allowing a courageous demonstration during the war.

Hermann pretended to be a French merchant who was trying to reach New Orleans. This ruse enabled him to spy on Northern installations and return to the Confederates with information about the strength and numbers of the enemy. The most daring tale of these spy missions, however, was not published in Hermann's *Memoirs*. It was, instead, passed down to his descendants through family folklore.³⁵ In this unpublished narrative, Hermann was captured by a Northern unit and discovered to be a Confederate spy. He was sentenced to death by firing squad the next morning. While he was awaiting his fate that night, he noticed his tent being guarded by only a lone sentry from New Jersey. Having hidden a small pistol in his boot that the Yankee soldiers did not discover, Hermann shot the sentry and stole the soldier's much larger revolver. He escaped into the night and returned in triumph to his Georgia unit. After the war, his fellows presented him with an ebony cane, engraved on its gold cap to commemorate Hermann's daring escape, at their reunion in Sandersville.

One might easily discount this narrative. Hermann exaggerated and fabricated some of the adventures in his published *Memoirs*, case in point being his fictitious meeting with Judah Benjamin. However, in 1997, the Paris family in Jackson, Mississippi, produced both the small pistol, a size easy to conceal in a man's boot, and the larger, Northern-issued revolver that played key roles in the story. These weapons were of the right vintage and make to be plausible artifacts from a real event. The ebony cane, also, was lent for the "*Alsace to America*" exhibit in Mississippi. Hermann most probably refrained from writing about the event in his *Memoirs* because he had killed the sentry, at point blank range, to make his escape. While such violence was acceptable in the Southern world view, it may have been personally painful to preserve in print.

A final unusual aspect of Hermann's wartime experience was the fact that he never mentioned being Jewish or observing any Jewish rituals, yet, the majority of people in the *Memoirs* who extend hospitality to him were obviously Jewish. They had Jewish surnames like Rothschild. Hermann praised the good care they provided him. His commanding officers and the military doctors sought these families to assist Hermann when he fell seriously ill with fevers and a heart condition in the field, as well as when his foot was seriously injured. These circumstances required periods of extended recuperation.

We can interpret the presence of so many Jewish families in *Memoirs* to two things. First, I think it was a subtle way of letting Jewish readers know that Hermann was also Jewish. He could not say so openly because in the nineteenth century, this was not something that Jews in the South or in some places in Europe would have openly proclaimed except to close friends and regular customers. The Emancipation dictated that one take a national and not an ethnic identity in public contexts. Ethnicity was most properly expressed at home, in the family.

Secondly, as Bertram Wyatt-Brown noted in his work *Southern Honor*, hospitality obligated the visitor, unless money was exchanged between strangers. With family, on the other hand, no such obligation ensued. Families were supposed to entertain and provide care as needed for their relatives.³⁶ Hermann had few relatives in Georgia, at the time of the Civil War, but apparently no one else in other places in the south. The Jewish families who helped him are documented in his narrative because they acted as a kind of

“fictive kin.” They were not actually related to him, but they served the same function as real family members would have. Hermann’s Christian officers and fellow soldiers recognized the “kinship” of these other, foreign-born Jews with their friend Isaac Hermann. Thus, both Jews and non-Jews in the southern context, saw the Jewish community as a kind of family network rather than as an organized community with formal institutions like synagogues. In the mid-nineteenth century, church or synagogue affiliation was not widespread in rural areas. Wyatt-Brown noted that “only a fifth to a third of all Southern whites before the Civil War were churchgoers.”³⁷ It was acceptable in the Southern world view to utilize kin or strangers as substitute kin for assistance. By extension, trade networks among Jewish families were sanctioned, too. It fit into the Southern ethos of honor and social protocol.

Hermann also shared a kind of “kinship” with non-Jews. First, there were his fellows from Washington County. They became strongly bonded via their Civil War military service. Second, Hermann related a story in his *Memoirs* about giving food to a captured Northern soldier. This man cried out while in a boxcar stopped at a railway station on his way to incarceration at the infamous Andersonville Prison in South Georgia [near Jimmy Carter’s hometown of Plains, outside of Americus].

The Northern soldier identified himself as a Mason and implored any fellow Mason who might hear his cries to give him a bite to eat, as he had not eaten for several days and was at death’s doorstep. Hermann, also a Mason, took heart and purchased a dinner from a Christian lady for this Mason, handing it to him in the dark of night. The dinner plate came wrapped in a cloth napkin having a distinctive blue border. Hermann could not see the Northern soldier’s face.

After the war, Hermann again encountered the Yankee soldier when he went to New York to purchase supplies for his store. The wholesaler, who was not Jewish, learned that Hermann lived in Georgia. This provoked an outburst, where the New Yorker called Georgia a “hell-hole” because of his time spent at Andersonville. The wholesaler told Hermann that the only redeeming feature of his time in the state was at a railway stop where a Confederate fellow Mason took pity on him and provided food. Hermann recognized the story and asked the wholesaler if he remembered the blue-bordered napkin. He did, they became fast friends and transacted business with a good discount

for the Sandersville merchant!³⁸ Masonic brotherhood, then, was a link between Jews and non-Jews in nineteenth century America. Masons were usually civic-minded leaders of their communities. In Sandersville, the first newspaper and the original public library both shared space in the Masonic building as they were getting established.

VII. CONCLUSIONS: THE ALSATIAN JEWISH EXPERIENCE IN THE SOUTH

What can we learn from the nineteenth century experiences of Alsatian Jews in the rural American South? Were their life accomplishments and their strategies different than that of other nineteenth century, European Jewish immigrants? For the most part, the Alsatian Jews blended into the social system with their co-religionists from Europe as well as with their non-Jewish, Southern neighbors. German and French Jews may have already been relatives in the old countries due to changing political and military rivalries along the borders. They shared similar experiences and cultural practices in rural Alsace and southern Germany in the Old World. French and German Jews occupied the same economic niches, performed the same services, and dealt with more non-Jews frequently in their country contexts along the Rhine River. They were more conservative and traditional at the beginning of the nineteenth century than their brethren in elite circles of large cities like Paris. But the nation-building strategies of the centralized French government of the 1830s brought sweeping changes in language, law, education, and the economy that pushed the Alsatian Jews out of their comfort zone and into the modern world, giving even the poorest among them middle-class aspirations.

It was the American South that actualized these aspirations. Hard work and innovative thinking within a time frame of twenty years or less moved these immigrants securely into the middle-class. Living in the American South, however, changed religious observance because it became impractical to keep orthodox strictures when one traveled long distances on the open road, from plantation to plantation or from small settlement to small settlement.³⁹ Unlike Alsace, where a Jewish peddler might be able to return home for Shabbat, the best the Alsatian Jewish immigrant in the Deep South could hope for was a friendly reception at a plantation or an occasional sojourn in New Orleans or Jackson, Mississippi. Kin networks provided a refuge from the difficulties of the immigrant's

work life, as well as a vibrant trade network that moved whole families up the ladder of economic success. The same families were the heart of Jewish observance and ethnic affiliation. It was not until the late nineteenth century, when new Jewish immigrants increased in number that towns like Selma, Alabama, developed formal, Jewish clubs, synagogues, and their own cemeteries.

In conclusion, the Alsatian Jewish immigrants of the nineteenth century were not that different than their fellow Jews in the South. But they had the experience of the French Emancipation which gave them a strong orientation to civic-engagement and a drive to demonstrate their good citizenship as a participant in the nation-state. It also gave them an alternate identity, that of the “Frenchman,” which could lessen the risk of anti-Semitism among strangers. Being of Alsatian Jewish origin became a prestige identity in the American South given the innovation, success, and tireless industry of these immigrants.

¹ This author was fortunate to have served as Project Director and Chief Curator at the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience for the “Alsace to America” exhibit. The remarkable staff included historians, architects, designers, film production crews, marketing professionals, curatorial assistants, interns and volunteers. Planning for the exhibit took place during 1997. The exhibit opened in Jackson with related sites in Utica and Natchez, Mississippi in 1998. An abbreviated version of the exhibit was reconstructed at the Henry Jacobs Camp in 1999, where it remained for several years. To Ms. Louise Glickman and the museum’s board members, this author expresses her gratitude for the many contacts that were made with the descendants of Alsatian-Jewish immigrants who made the exhibit and my continuing research possible.

² A number of good studies exist on the topic of the Emancipation of the Jews in France. See Esther Benbassa’s *The Jews of France: A History from Antiquity to the Present* (Translated by M.B. DeBevoise, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Michael Brenner, Vicki Caron and Uri R. Kaufman (eds.), *Jewish Emancipation Reconsidered: the French and German Models* (London: Leo Baeck Institute, 2003); Jay R. Berkovitz’s *The Shaping of Jewish Identity in Nineteenth-century France* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989); Vicki Caron’s *Between France and Germany: the Jews of Alsace-Lorraine, 1871-1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988); Arthur Hertzberg’s *The French Enlightenment and the Jews: the Origins of Modern Anti-Semitism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990); Paula E. Hyman’s *The Emancipation of the Jews of Alsace: Acculturation and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991) and *The Jews of Modern France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); and Frederic Cople Jaher’s *The Jews and the Nation: Revolution, Emancipation, State Formation and the Liberal Paradigm in America and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

³ See Nicole Fouché, *Émigration Alsacienne aux États-Unis, 1815-1870* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1992), p. 160.

⁴⁴ See Carl A Brasseaux, *The “Foreign French”: French Immigration into Louisiana* (Lafayette: The Center for Louisiana Studies / University of Southwest Louisiana) in *Two Volumes. Volume I: 1820-1839* (1990) and *Volume II: 1840-1848* (1992).

⁵ See Jacob Lestchinsky, “Jewish Migrations 1840 -1946” and “Jewish Population in the Nineteenth Century” in Louis Finkelstein’s *The Jews: Their History, Culture and Religion* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1960 edition; original 1949) pp. 1520-1531.

⁶ This author interviewed approximately 20 families between 1997 and 1998 in Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Tennessee. Additionally, she participated in the oral history research with Drs. Mark I. Greenberg and Hanna Griff funded via a grant from the Louisiana Humanities Council. Transcripts of the later interviews are housed at the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life in Jackson, Mississippi.

⁷ See Carl A Brasseaux, *The “Foreign French”: French Immigration into Louisiana* (Lafayette: The Center for Louisiana Studies / University of Southwest Louisiana) in *Two Volumes. Volume I: 1820-1839* (1990) and *Volume II: 1840-1848* (1992).

⁸ Both Fouché and Brasseaux notice inconsistencies in these records.

⁹ See Stauben, *Scenes of Jewish Life in Alsace*, translated by Rose Choron, (London: Joseph Simon Pangloss Press, reprinted 1991 from articles published as a newspaper serial in 1857 through 1859).

¹⁰ See Brasseaux, *The “Foreign French,” Volume II*.

¹¹ See Vicki Caron, *Between France and Germany*, p. 119.

¹² The role of French Jewish leaders in Paris regarding international political events in Syria in 1840 raised serious questions about the nature of the Jewish Emancipation. If the Jews were actually French like the Catholics, why was their leadership intervening on behalf of co-religionists in Damascus and in the issue of Mehmet Ali’s Egyptian invasion of Syria? While this was a concern of the elites in Paris, the trickle-down was felt elsewhere in France. See Brasseaux, *Ibid.*, and Benbassa, *The Jews of France*.

¹³ See the work of Anny Bloch [her surname is also listed as Bloch-Raymond], “Mercy on Rude Streams: Jewish Emigrants from Alsace-Lorraine to the Lower Mississippi Region and the Concept of Fidelity,” *Southern Jewish History*, Volume 2 (1999) pp. 81-110, and also, “Enemies Abroad, Friends in the United States: Jewish Diaspora from Alsace-Lorraine vs. Jewish Diaspora from Germany in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.” Working Paper from the Dickson College Symposium: “Diaspora, Movement, Memory, Politics and Identity,” November 16-17, 2002. Available at *Columbia International Affairs Online (CIAO)* [<http://www.cionet.org/wps/bla01/bla01.html>].

¹⁴ Paula E. Hyman, *The Jews of Modern France*, p. 19.

¹⁵ These letters patent opened new professions to Jews, as evidenced in Daniel Stauben's *Scenes of Jewish Life in Alsace*, edited and translated by Rose Choron (London: Joseph Simon Pangloss Press, 1991). Stauben's book originally appeared as a serial in a French newspaper between 1857 and 1859. Freddy Raphaël and Robert Weyl also mention the occupations available to Jews in *Juifs en Alsace: Culture, société, histoire* (Toulouse: Edouard Privat, 1977).

¹⁶ Paula E. Hyman, *The Jews of Modern France*, p. 53.

¹⁷ Esther Benbassa, *The Jews of France*, pp. 78-85.

¹⁸ See Catherine Collomp, "Immigrants, Labor Markets, and the State, a Comparative Approach: France and the United States, 1880-1930." *The Journal of American History*, Volume 86, Number 1 (June 1999), pp. 41-66.

¹⁹ For a global perspective on Jewish peddlers in the American South, see Hasia Diner's "Entering the Mainstream of Modern Jewish History: Peddlers and the American Jewish South," *Southern Jewish History*, Volume 8 (2005) pp. 1-30.

²⁰ Degas' painting, "*La bourse de coton*" is one of 30 works he produced while visiting his uncle in New Orleans. Degas' mother was French Creole, born in New Orleans, and many of his relatives lived there. The original painting is owned by the Musee des Beaux Arts in Pau, France. Degas was not Jewish, but several of the men inspecting cotton on the table in this painting were.

²¹ Oral history interviews with Florette Geismar Neuwirth, New Orleans, 1997 and 1998. The author's personal notes.

²² Elliott Ashkenazi documents these families in *The Business of Jews in Louisiana, 1840-1875* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1988).

²³ This quote is extracted from Comeaux's book, *Down among the Sugar Cane*, and appears on the website of the Godchaux Reserve House Historical Society, [<http://www.stjohnparish.com/grh/leon.htm>].

²⁴ Ella Mitchell, *History of Washington County* (Atlanta: Cherokee Publishing Company, 1973, a reprint of the 1924 original).

²⁵ Material for this case study comes from oral history interviews with LeRoy H. Paris, II, in Jackson, Mississippi in 1997 and 1998, the author's personal notes, as well as from two, published histories by non-Jewish residents of Washington County, one of which was produced by the local historical society, and the other was written by the daughter of German Christian immigrants to Sandersville who became a beloved teacher in the school: Ms. Ella Mitchell. See Mary Alice Jordan (ed.) *Cotton to Kaolin: a History of Washington County, Georgia, 1784-1989* (Sandersville: Washington County Historical Society, 1989), and Ella Mitchell, *History of Washington County* (Op. Cit.). Leo E. Turitz and Evelyn Turitz, *Jews in Early Mississippi* (Second Edition, Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1995) contained information about the Paris and Herman[n] families in Lexington, Mississippi. Like many of their Christian neighbors in Georgia, individuals from these families migrated to Mississippi after the Civil War where land was less expensive. Finally, the Georgia State Division of Historic Preservation had information about the nineteenth century homes of some of Sandersville's most prominent Jewish residents.

²⁶ See Isaac Hermann's *Memoirs of a Veteran who Served as a Private in the 60's in the War between the States / Personal Incidents, Experiences and Observations* (Lakemont, GA: CSA Press, reprint 1974; original 1911).

²⁷ Hermann, *Memoirs of a Veteran*, pp. 13-15.

²⁸ See Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982) and its abridged version, *Honor and Violence in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

²⁹ See Bertram Wallace Korn in *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1951) and "American Judaeophobia: Confederate Version" in Leonard Dinnerstein and Mary Dale Palsson's (editors), *Jews in the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973, pp. 135-155).

³⁰ Paraphrased from Dennis C. Rousey, "Aliens in the WASP Nest: Ethnocultural Diversity in the Antebellum Urban South," *The Journal of American History*, Volume 79, Number 1 (June 1992) pp. 152-164.

³¹ Rev. M. J. Michelbacher, "A Sermon Delivered on the Day of Prayer, Recommended by the President of the C.S. of A., the 27th of March, 1864 at the German Hebrew Synagogue Bayth Ahabah." (Richmond: MacFarlane and Fergusson). Robert N. Rosen in *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2000) documents Rabbi Michelbacher's role in maintaining the morale of Jewish Confederates and the widespread patriotism of the Southern Jews in the War.

³² See Charles P. Roland, *An American Iliad: the Story of the Civil War* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky / McGraw-Hill, 1991).

³³ Jews served in the military of both the North and the South during the Civil War. See Lawrence M. Ginsburg, *Israelites in Blue and Gray: Unchronicled Tales from Two Cities* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 2001).

³⁴ See Raphaël and Weyl's *Juifs en Alsace*, op. cit., for examples of these wall hangings.

³⁵ The narrative was recounted to this author by LeRoy H. Paris, II, of Jackson, Mississippi in 1997, and appears in the author's private notes.

³⁶ Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor (Op. Cit.)*, pp. 333-337.

³⁷ Wyatt-Brown in *Southern Honor*, xviii.

³⁸ Isaac Hermann, *Memoirs*.

³⁹ Orthodox or traditional synagogues were only present by the 1870s and 1890s in places like Atlanta, Charleston, New Orleans and Memphis. They were the exception, rather than the rule, with the majority of synagogues affiliating with Reform Judaism by the early 1900s.