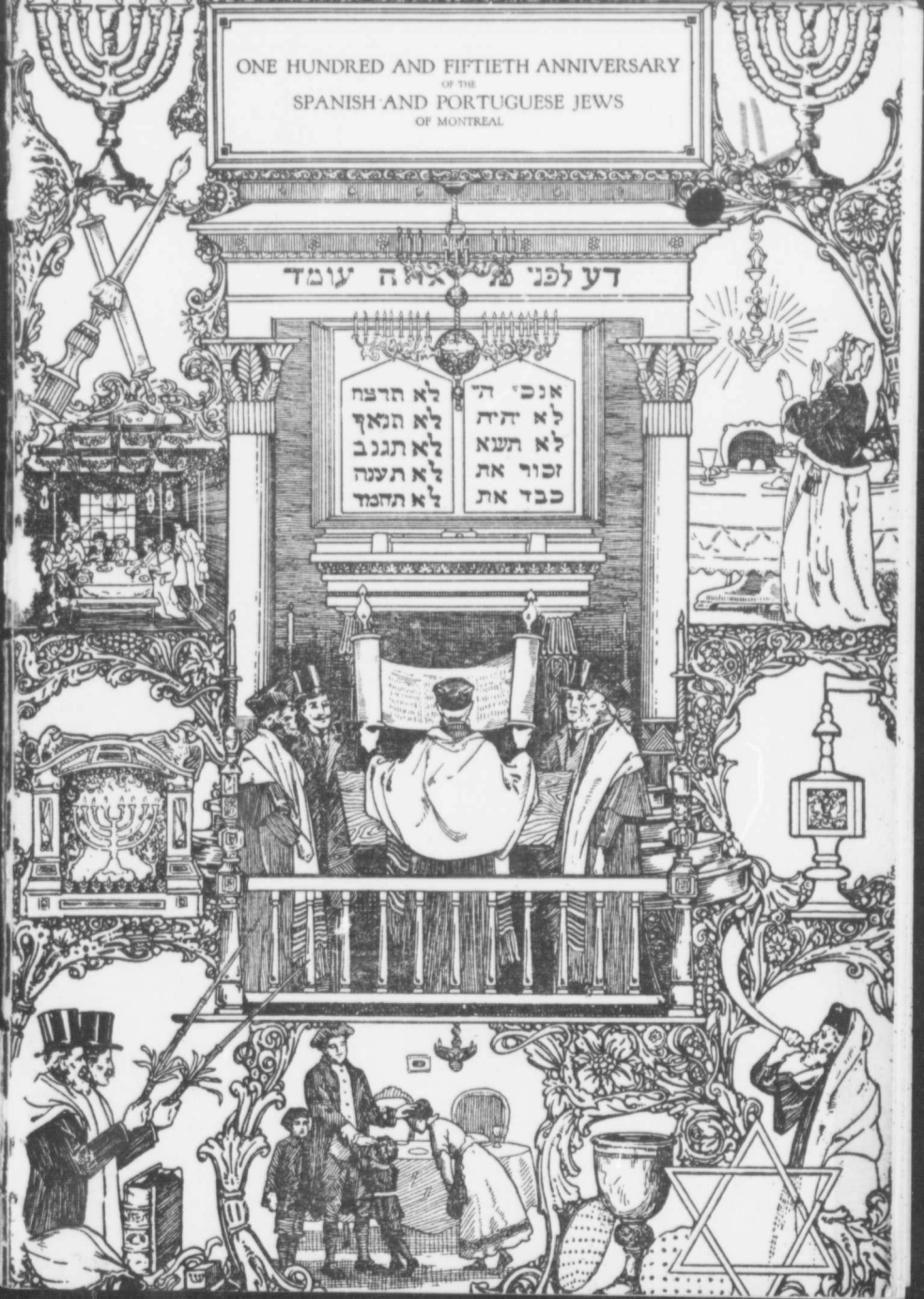


ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE
SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE JEWS
OF MONTREAL

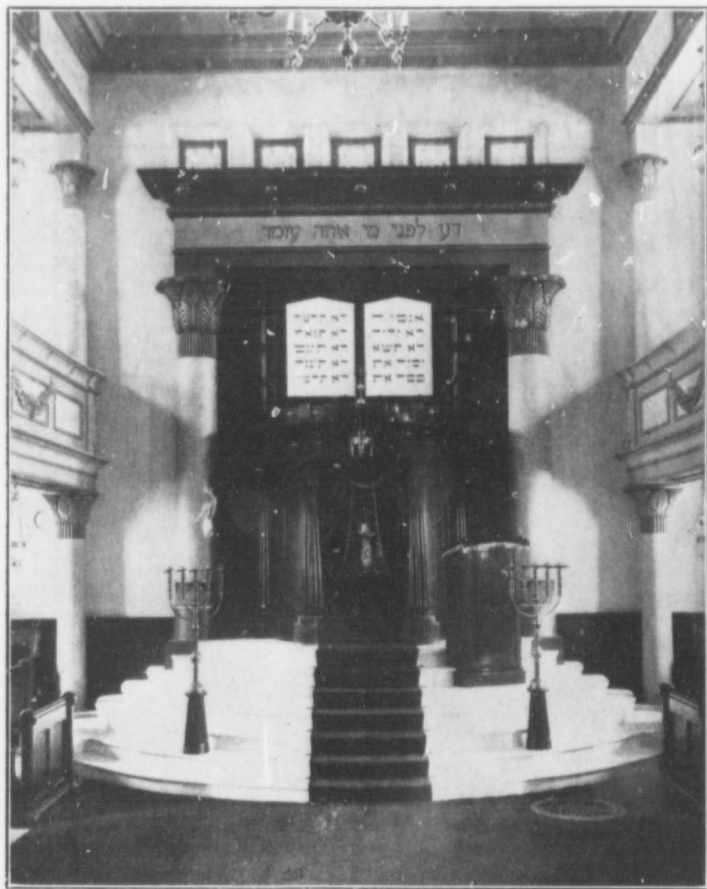
דע לפני מלאכה עומד

לא חרעה	אנכי ה'
לא הנאך	לא היה
לא תגנב	לא תשא
לא תענה	זכור את
לא תחמד	כבוד את



HISTORY
of the
Corporation of Spanish
and
Portuguese Jews
"Shearith Israel"
of
Montreal, Canada

*Published on the celebration of its
150th Anniversary in the
year 5679-1918*



THE ARK OF THE STANLEY STREET SYNAGOGUE

THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE JEWS

"SHEARITH ISRAEL"

OF MONTREAL



NE hundred and fifty years have passed since the founding in Montreal of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Congregation "Shearith Israel" ("Remnant of Israel"). More than ordinary notice attaches to the event, owing to the historical interest which centres round this congregation, for it was the first Jewish body of any kind established in Canada.

Among its founders it counts the first Jews known to have put foot in Canada, and for the greater part of a century after its organization it remained the sole Jewish congregation in the Dominion.

"Spanish and Portuguese Jews"—or, in Hebrew, "Sephardim"—they are styled. Whence comes this designation? One must search far back into history for the explanation.

When the Hebrew people began to be scattered and dispersed, one stream, separating from the others, moved westward along the shores of the Mediterranean, then under the civilization of Carthage and Rome, and, crossing the Straits of Gibraltar, settled in Spain long before either Goth or Moor had seen that fair land. And when the iron legions of Titus carried ruin and devastation into Judea and desolated Zion, many a Hebrew fugitive sought a new home in the Iberian Peninsula, where once more the shattered fortunes of his race were re-constructed and re-established amid new conditions and new surroundings. Later on, when the conquering Saracens drove the Goths to the Pyrenees, and established their rule in Spain, the Jews shared fully in their prosperity and splendor. For centuries the Omeyadian Caliphs ruled a land that was the centre of a high civilization, and the home of science, arts and letters. During the early mediaeval ages, when other parts of Europe were enveloped in ignorance, and



COMMISSARY
AARON HART



LEVY SOLOMONS



COLONEL DAVID SALESBY FRANKS

when learning was so neglected that the warlike barons could sometimes not so much as write their names, the Hebrews and the Moors were kindling in Spain the fires of knowledge, and could point with pride to their libraries and great universities, to their colleges of music, to their academies of languages, to their schools of medicine, and to their institutes of philosophy and science. It was then that there shone forth that bright constellation of great Spanish-Jewish intellects, whose brilliant achievements in science, in medicine, in poetry and in philosophy have not been surpassed in the whole range of post-Biblical Hebrew



HENRY JOSEPH,
OF BERTHIER

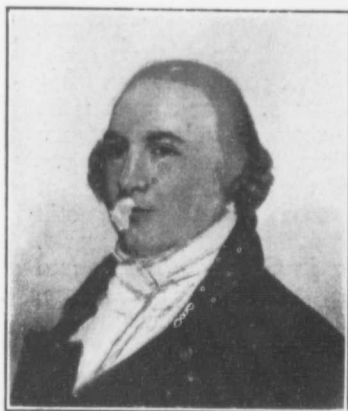
history. The names of Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Jehudah Halevi, Ibn Ezra, Alfasi and Don Isaac Abarbanel are among the very greatest that Hebrew genius has given to the world. But there is one Sephardic Jewish name that transcends all others—that of Maimonides, or Rambam, of Cordova, unquestionably the greatest philosopher whom the Jews have ever produced.

These were halcyon days for the children of Jacob, when on the banks of the Guadalquivir they shared in the dominion and prosperity of the Saracens. No narrow restrictions confined their powers. They occupied the highest social and political positions. Often they held the highest offices of state. Rank and titles were frequently accorded to them. Their synagogues vied in architectural magnificence with the mosques of their Mahometan neighbors; and the half ruins of some, long since converted to other purposes, still exist to excite the wonder and admiration of the world. The homes of their great men in Cordova, Toledo and Granada in Lucena and Seville, were models of elegance, luxury and refinement, and reflected well their affluence and culture.

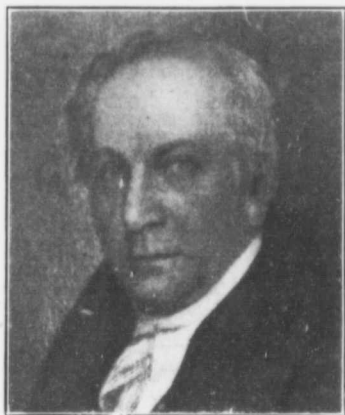
But, after centuries of prosperity, changes at length came. Spain was once more to undergo a transfer of mas-



DAVID DAVID



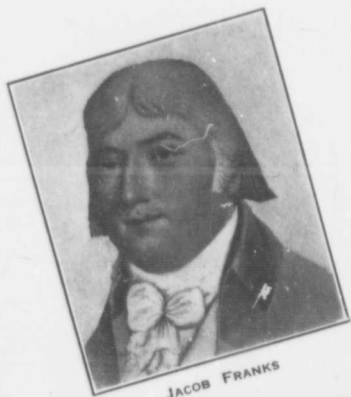
ISAAC FRANKS



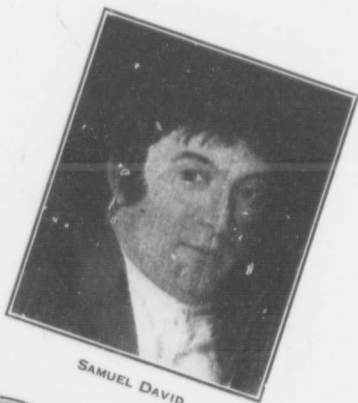
EZEKIEL HART

ters, and with it a change of policy. The Moors had again to face war with their old adversaries, the Goths and other Christian races, and during a long and tedious struggle were slowly driven into narrower and narrower confines. At length, when Granada fell, they were entirely expelled.

While the Gothic potentates were gradually wresting the northern and central provinces of Spain from the Moors, they, in many cases, continued to accord to the Jews who passed under their rule the same privileges and power as they had enjoyed under the Moors; and there were generations of Jews who enjoyed the favor and protection of the Gothic rulers of Castile, Leon, Aragon, Navarre, and other states. But with the growth of Gothic power, and the consolidation of the states into larger kingdoms, this attitude changed, and a period of intolerance and persecution set in. After destroying the last Moorish kingdom, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella turned their attention to the Jews, and decided to drive them, too, from the land which they had so long occupied and cultivated. In 1492 they issued the cruel Edict of Expulsion, by which in one moment over half a million Hebrews were expelled from their homes, and banished to foreign lands. The edict was soon followed by a similar one in Portugal. Many exiles took refuge in Italy, in Northern Africa, in Turkey and the Holy Land, and the East. Some went to Holland, where they established their famous communities in Amsterdam and in other cities of the Netherlands. They were the first Jews to re-settle in England when their great Haham, Menasseh ben Israel, induced Cromwell to favor their return; and in their venerable synagogue in Bevis Marks, London, they developed a life of faithful, sincere devotion to Jewish teachings and customs, which became an inspiration to many a Jew who found comfort and happiness in perpetuating the Bevis Marks traditions in other synagogues in other and far-away lands. Some tried to evade the Edict of Expulsion by remaining in Spain as Marranos, hoping to escape the penalty of death, imposed by the law, by pretending to adopt the dominant faith, while secretly adhering tenaciously to Judaism; practicing their rites and maintaining their synagogues in hidden and often subterranean places. Many of these Mar-



JACOB FRANKS



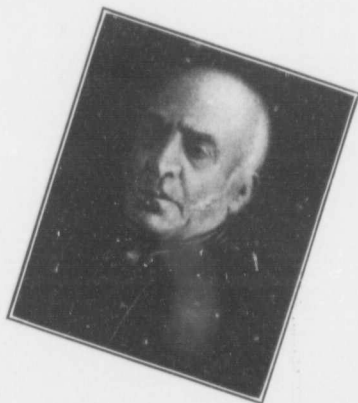
SAMUEL DAVID



MRS. FRANCES MICHAELS



MOSES JUDAH HAYS



BENJAMIN HART

ranos were ferreted out by the Inquisition, were condemned as relapsed Jews, and met the fate of martyrs, by being burnt at the stake at autos da fé. Others, after experiencing marvellous and most romantic vicissitudes, made their escape to other lands; where they could once more worship the God of their fathers openly and in peace.

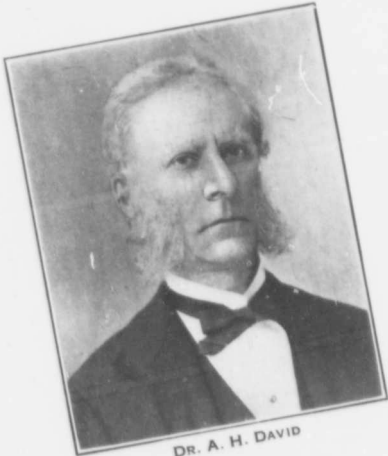
In the very year of the expulsion America was discovered, and soon colonies of Spanish and Portuguese Jewish exiles found their way to the New World, and hence it is that all the oldest Jewish congregations in America are of Spanish and Portuguese origin. They settled first in Brazil and other South American states, where they were the first to successfully cultivate the sugar cane. They came to Surinam, and there, at the "Jewish Savanna," they established homes amid rich, luxuriant, tropical plantations. They also came in numbers to Paramaribo. The story of the Sephardic Hebrew congregations of Surinam is one of the idyls of Jewish history. They drifted to the West Indies, to Barbadoes, to Jamaica, to St. Thomas and to Martinique. In Curaçao they became an important community, whose members have long been the leading citizens of that island. They were in New Amsterdam when gruff Peter Stuveysant was Governor, and here they erected a fane to the God of their Fathers and established the oldest and most important Sephardic congregation in North America—a congregation which has played a noble part in Jewish annals—"Shearith Israel," of New York. Later they came to Philadelphia, and organized famous "Mickvé Israel," and also came later to Savannah, Richmond and Charleston.

They left their footprints at Newport, where they gave inspiration to Longfellow's stanzas:

The very names recorded here are strange,
Of foreign accent and of different climes,
Alvarez and Rivera interchange
With Abraham and Jacob of old times.

And finally a small band of them reached Canada, just when the French régime was drawing to a close.

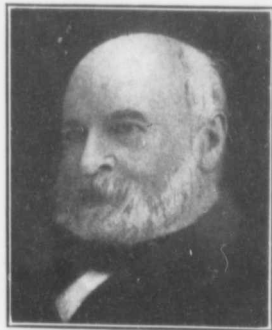
When Amherst approached Montreal, with his invading army, there was among the members of his staff, Commissary Officer Aaron Hart. And when, on its capture,



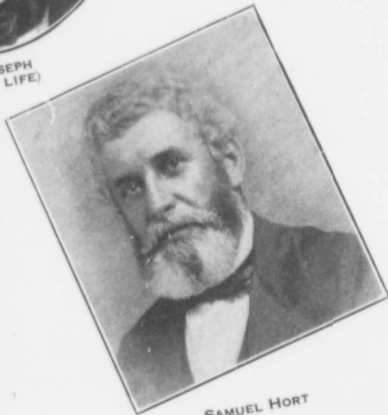
DR. A. H. DAVID



JESSE JOSEPH
(IN EARLY LIFE)



JACOB HENRY JOSEPH



SAMUEL HORT

General Amherst rode into the city, Commissary Hart was one of the officers who rode alongside of him through the old city gate. Commissary Hart afterwards joined the detachments of troops under General Haldimand, posted at Three Rivers; and when that city fell into the hands of the British he took up his residence there. After the termination of the war, he entered into various successful enterprises, and became Seigneur of Becancour and of six other seigneuries. He was born in London, in 1724, and had been in New York before coming to Canada. His wife, Dorathea Judah, was of the Judah family referred to below. When in after years Edward, Duke of Kent, the father of Queen Victoria, visited Three Rivers, he was entertained there in sumptuous style by the Seigneur of Becancour.

There also arrived in Montreal, at the time of the British conquest, Lazarus David, Uriel Moresco, Abraham Franks, Levy Solomons, Ezekiel Solomons, Manuel Gomez Simon Levy and Fernandez da Fonseca. These were among the first Hebrews recorded to have settled permanently in this country. They were soon joined by several others, among whom were Hananiel Garcia, David Salesby Franks, Emanuel de Cordova, Isaac Miranda, Jacob de Maurera, Andrew Hays, Isaac Judah, Uriah Judah and Joseph Bindona.

Several of these were connected with the army, others were merchants, and judging from the extent of their undertakings, must have been men of considerable means. In the records of land transfers, deposited in the vaults of the Court House, we find that Lazarus David was an extensive owner of real estate in Montreal and its vicinity as far back as 1767. He took an active part in public affairs, and was a prominent man in civic matters in those days. He had come originally from Wales, where he was born at Swansea in 1734, and took up his permanent residence in Montreal in 1763. Uriah Judah, Isaac Judah, and other members of the Judah family were also extensive merchants. Emanuel de Cordova, Hananiel Garcia and Isaac Miranda held military offices.

It was in 1768 that these early Jewish settlers met together in Montreal, and organized themselves into a congregation, and prepared to build a synagogue where they



EXTERIOR VIEW OF CHENNEVILLE STREET SYNAGOGUE

and their children might worship the God of Israel as their forefathers had done since hoary antiquity. "Shearith Israel" ("Remnant of Israel") was the name they adopted; and in this way was founded, just one hundred and fifty years ago, the Spanish and Portuguese congregation which worships in Stanley Street today. As nearly all these early Hebrew colonists were descended from exiles of Spain and Portugal, they followed strictly the historic customs and impressive ritual of the Sephardic Jews, and their descendants have ever since remained tenaciously loyal to the same venerable and imposing rites.

They first assembled for worship in a room or hall in St. James Street, and then after a few years they built, in 1777, the first Canadian synagogue, upon a lot of land belonging to David David, upon which he had given them the privilege of placing their sanctuary. The building was a low-walled edifice of stone, with a high red roof, and with a high whitewashed wall enclosing it. It stood on Notre Dame Street, just at the head or junction of St. James Street, adjoining the present Court House, and could be reached from either street. A tablet erected by the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society now marks the site. In the corner-stone of the building were deposited some coins, brought from Spain and Portugal, and also some thin brass plates perforated with the names of some of the founders. These were, many years later, moved to the corner-stone of their Chenneville Street building, and when a few years ago the contents of the latter were in their turn removed to the Stanley Street corner-stone it was found that several of the relics deposited in the first building in 1777 were still in a good state of preservation, notably some of the copper or brass plates bearing the names of Andrew Hays and of his wife, Abigail David, daughter of Lazarus David, and dated 1777. An inscription on vellum stated that these mementoes had been placed in the stone of the first synagogue in 1777.

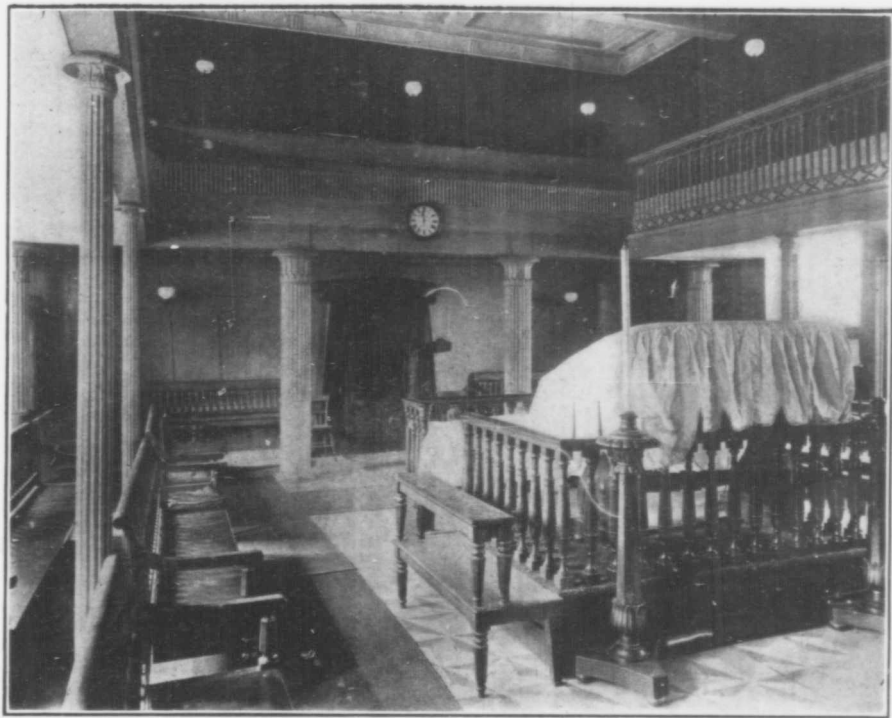
Shortly before the erection of their first building the congregation bought a lot of land on St. Janvier Street, in the vicinity of the present Dominion Square, for a burial-ground. The deed of purchase was dated 1775, and the first one interred was Lazarus David, referred to above, who died on the 22nd October, 1776, and whose remains,



INTERIOR OF CHENNEVILLE STREET SYNAGOGUE, LOOKING TOWARDS THE ARK

together with the original headstone bearing that date, were subsequently removed to the present cemetery of the congregation when the first one was closed. It still stands there, by the side of a newer one, and is the oldest Jewish grave in Canada. Lazarus David left three sons, David, Samuel and Moses, who all figure actively in records covering the later decades of the eighteenth century and early years of the succeeding century, and two daughters—Abigail, who married Andrew Hays, and Frances, who married Myer Michaels.

Until the erection of their first synagogue the congregation appears to have been governed by a very simple code of regulations, but in 1778 they drew up a regular set of by-laws, which are still preserved in old minutes of the congregation of that year, and some of the provisions of which make curious reading today. The executive consisted of a Parnas (President), Gabay (Treasurer), and three others, who were styled the "Junto." They sat apart, on a raised seat—the "Banca." All who had once been members of the Junto became "Gentlemen of the Mahamad" or Elders. They were aristocratic magnates, these "Gentlemen of the Mahamad," if we are to believe a contemporary chronicler. They could never forget that they had been Castilian dons, and they preserved their Spanish exclusiveness. They were proud of their traditions and of their blue blood, as they moved about in the powdered wigs, high collars and large ruffles of the period. They were vested with rather autocratic powers, and their privileges savor decidedly of the oligarchical methods which appear to have been a characteristic of the government of most bodies of this kind in those days. Members could be summoned before them and reprimanded, and even heavily fined, for any misdemeanor. The minutes of the 25th Elul, 5538, or September, 1778, record that on that date Ezekiel Solomons and Levy Michaels were elected respectively "Hatan Torah" and "Hatan Bere-shith," for that year, after Isaac Judah, Myer Michaels and Andrew Hays had each been fined two pounds ten shillings for refusing these offices; while Samuel Judah was fined three pounds for declining to serve as Parnas. Unlike Isaac D'Israeli, they seem to have paid these fines without a murmur. The original founders of the congregation were



INTERIOR OF CHENNEVILLE STREET SYNAGOGUE, LOOKING TOWARDS THE ENTRANCE

accorded a double vote at all meetings, and this privilege extended to their eldest son on their attaining their twenty-first year. The by-laws exacted fines for the violation of certain articles, and we find particularly heavy penalties threatened against any member who should go aught to impair the harmony of the community. One clause imposes a fine and sundry other penalties on "any person absenting himself from the House of God on any frivolous pretence," and some of the other regulations were as curious. These by-laws, long since rescinded, bear the signatures of Levy Solomons, Parnas; Uriah Judah, Gabay; David David, Abraham Franks, Andrew Hays and a number of others, and are dated "3rd day of the month Tebeth, 5539," or 1778.

In the early minutes of the congregation we find the names of a number of men who were familiar figures in Montreal society one hundred and fifty years ago; men who by their energy and initiative were helping, even in those early days, to lay the foundations of Canada's future greatness.

The congregation appears to have always maintained correspondence with the Portuguese Jews of London, and the latter presented them, in 1768, with two costly manuscript scrolls of the law, already then very old. They were sent out some time later, and are still occasionally used at services. Questions of ecclesiastical law were generally referred, in the early beginnings of "Shearith Israel," to Dr. Raphael Meldola, the chief Rabbi of England, for decision.

The first regularly ordained minister of the Montreal congregation was the Rev. J. Raphael Cohen. He came from London, and, after a short stay en route, at Quebec, arrived in Montreal in 1778, and assumed his official duties the same year. After remaining here for a number of years, he ultimately went to Philadelphia, where he was appointed minister of the Sephardic congregation, "Mickvé Israel," to whose spiritual wants he continued to minister till his death in 1810.

Although small in numbers, it is remarkable how prominent a part so many of the early members of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation played in public affairs in Canada. A very interesting example is the record

of the Franks family. They were Sephardic Jews, whose family name in Spain had been Franco and Franco-Dacosta, but after the expulsion from Spain they went to Holland and to Germany and then to England, and there the name became Anglicised to Franks. They came to America over two centuries ago, and resided in New York and Philadelphia, and a little later a branch of the family settled in Montreal. One of the most distinguished members of this family was Colonel David Salesby (or Salisbury) Franks. He is mentioned in a record of certain affairs as "a young English Jewish citizen, residing in Montreal in 1775." He had settled in Montreal in 1774. Previous to that he had been in Quebec, where he was extensively engaged in trade with the French-Canadian

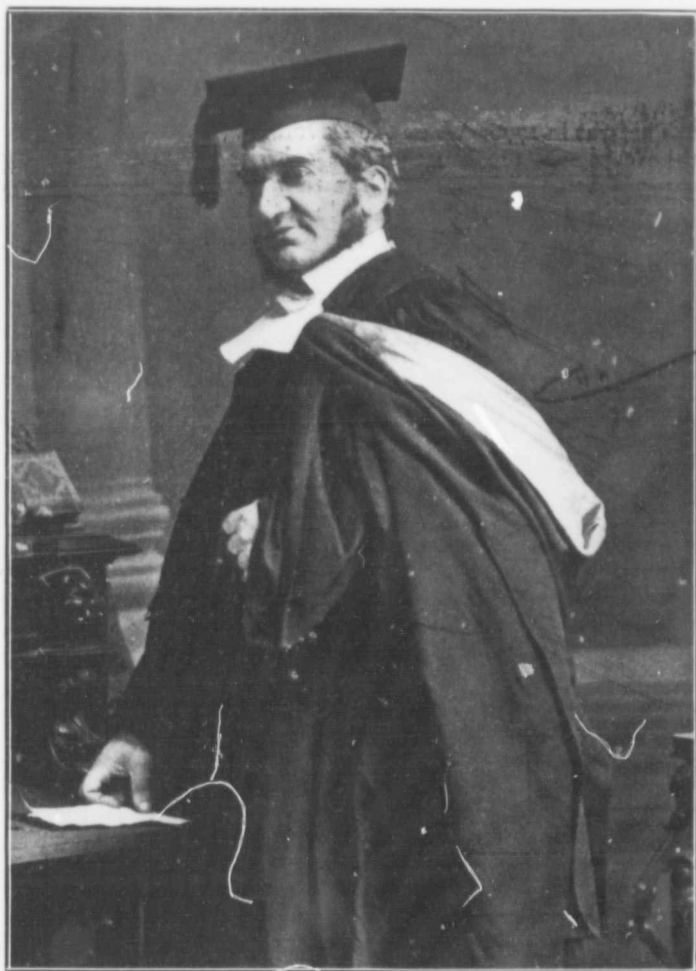


REV. DAVID PIZA



MR. MENDLES

colonists. His father, Abraham Franks, figures as a resident of Quebec in 1767, and is again mentioned as being in the ancient capital in 1775. When David Salesby Franks came to Montreal he immediately took a very active part in the affairs of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, and held office as Parnas of its Junto, or President of the Congregation, in 1775, for in those days the offices of Parnas and President were not separated as they are now. His natural proclivities led him into politics, and we find his name appended to a publication printed by B. White, London, in 1775, giving "an account of the proceedings of the British and other inhabitants of the Province of Quebec in North America, in order to obtain



REV. ABRAHAM DE SOLA, LL. D.

a House of Assembly in that province." A long list of other names, mostly of English citizens, accompany his, including Aaron Hart, Joseph Bindona and Jacob de Maurera.

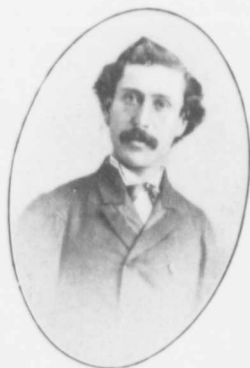
David Salesby Franks had intimate relations, both politically and in business, with the New England colonies and eventually he removed from Montreal to Philadelphia. This was in 1776. When the Revolutionary war broke out he espoused the cause of the colonists, and his strong taste for political life led him now to abandon all other pursuits for a military and diplomatic career. He plunged into public affairs, joined the Revolutionary Army and became major of a regiment. In May, 1778, he was appointed aide-de-camp to General Benedict Arnold, and was entrusted by Arnold with the carrying on of all military correspondence with General Washington. In 1780 occurred the affair of West Point, and the execution of the unfortunate André. When Arnold fled to escape the consequences of his treason to the revolutionary cause, Major Franks was arrested on suspicion, as his relations with Arnold had been most intimate. The suspicions proved to be utterly unfounded, and Franks was honorably acquitted. When Arnold escaped on board the *Vulture*, he wrote to General Washington, committing Mrs. Arnold to his care, and asking him to see that she was safely conducted to her family; and added a postscript as follows: "In justice to the gentlemen of my family, Colonel Varick and Major Franks, I think myself bound to declare that they, as well as Joshua Smith (who, I know, is suspected), are totally ignorant of any transactions of mine that they had reason to believe were injurious to the public." Immediately after his acquittal Major Franks was ordered to join the army under Washington, where he continued to serve with distinction and was raised to the rank of Colonel. In 1781 Colonel David Salesby Franks was sent by the Continental Congress on a diplomatic mission to Europe, and in January, 1784, the Congress of the United States sent him again to Europe with triplicates of the ratification of the definite treaty of peace, to be handed to Ministers Plenipotentiary. Benjamin Franklin and Mr. Jay having already set out for Paris, he followed them there. In the same year he was



SAMUEL BENJAMIN



GOODMAN BENJAMIN



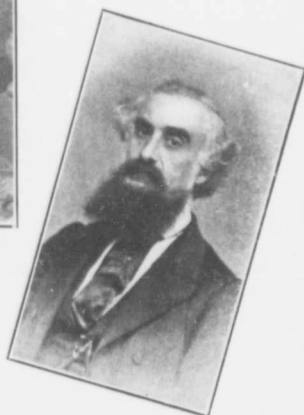
LAWRENCE LEVEY



WILLIAM BENJAMIN



JACOB L. SAMUEL



ALEXANDER LEVEY

appointed American Consul at Marseilles. He had asked Congress for an appointment in France "owing to his knowledge of the language of that kingdom and his acquaintance with the manners and customs of that people acquired by his residence in Canada and France." In 1785 and 1786 he accompanied the American agent in France to Morocco, to negotiate a treaty of peace and commerce with the Emperor on behalf of the United States. The treaty was concluded early in 1787, and brought to the United States by Colonel Franks. Washington, Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and Adams were all close personal friends of Colonel Franks. When Washington took office as first president of the United States, Colonel David S. Franks was one of the six marshals in charge of the inauguration ceremonies. There has been preserved a miniature of him painted at Valley Forge in 1777 by the famous portrait artist, Charles W. Peale. He presented the miniature to his sister Rebekah Franks, of Montreal, and it is now in the possession of one of her descendants. A reproduction of it appears in this booklet.

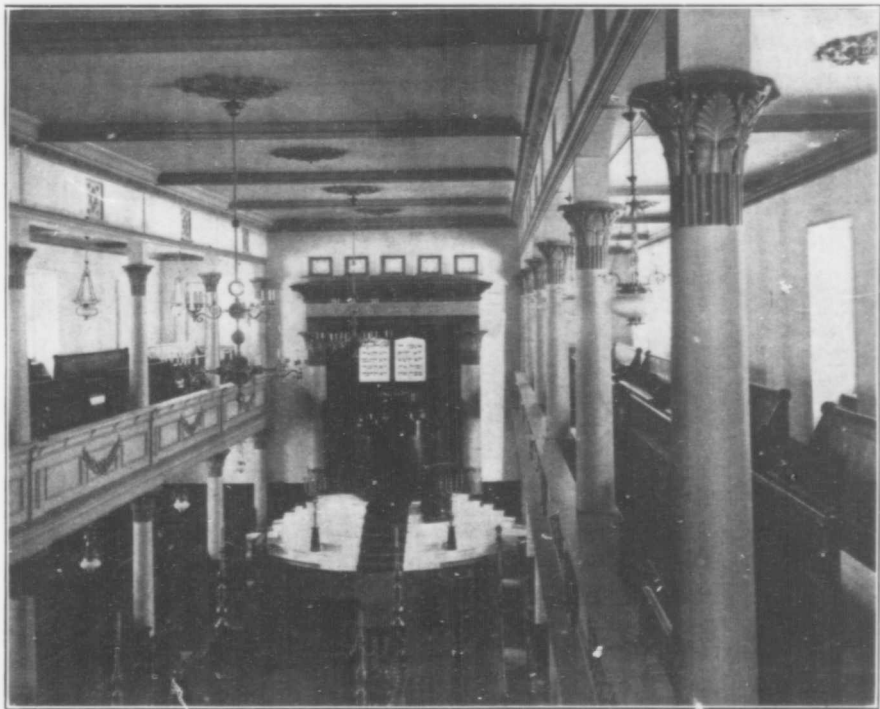
In 1778 Colonel Isaac Franks figures as confidential aide-de-camp to George Washington. He was a cousin of Colonel David S. Franks, and had a distinguished career as a military officer. He bought the house in Germantown previously occupied by Sir William Howe, and Washington made his home in it during the sitting of Congress in 1793 and 1794. Although Colonel Isaac Franks resided generally in Philadelphia he maintained relations with his kinsmen in Canada, and on one occasion was for some time in Montreal, when he was of much assistance in organizing some of the work then being undertaken in the congregation.

But there were other members of the Franks family who were utterly opposed to any severance of the relations between the American colonies and the Mother Country. This was notably the case with David Franks, born 1720, and kinsman of Colonel David Salesby Franks, David Franks, with his father Jacob Franks (who came to America in 1707 and died in New York in 1769, where he was buried in the cemetery of the Portuguese Jews) and his brother Moses Franks were appointed the chief agents of the British Crown for furnishing supplies for the



FACADE OF STANLEY STREET SYNAGOGUE

British Armies in Canada and the American Colonies during the French and Indian wars, from 1755 to 1760, and again in the following years. The official papers and correspondence of General Monckton, General Amherst and General Gage contain numerous references to the splendid services rendered by these three members of the Franks family at that time, and mention in terms of special commendation their highly efficient organization of this branch of the military service. They resided in Philadelphia and New York, but their duties in connection with the army in Canada brought them often to Montreal, where they also had a residence. Jacob, David and Moses Franks all made contributions in 1768 to the fund for the expenses incurred in establishing the Sephardic congregation in Montreal in that year. David Franks was one of the wealthiest residents of Philadelphia before the war, but his whole fortune was lost by confiscation on account of his loyalty to Britain. He was ordered to leave the United States in 1780, and to give a security of £200,000 that he would not return till after the war. He returned to Montreal for a while, and was in England in 1781. As far back as 1748 he had been a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly, and subscribed largely to the sum of £5,000 raised after Braddock's defeat. He was offered large grants of land on the Ohio in recognition of his services by the British Government, and previous to the war of the American Revolution he owned large tracts in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Indiana and Illinois. Near Fort Duquesne he founded the town of Frankstown, named after him. He had been a great social leader in Philadelphia, and his youngest daughter, Rebecca, was a reigning belle during the British occupation, and was famed for her cleverness, sprightly wit and beauty. She also possessed much literary ability. The diary of Mr. Black relates that "General Howe was in the habit of tying his horse before David Frank's house and going in to have a chat with the ladies." We read of her as queen of the famous "Meschianza" fête, given to Howe before his departure in 1778, at which Major André was a presiding genius, and of her dancing with Sir Henry Clinton at the British officer's ball at New York.



INTERIOR OF STANLEY STREET SYNAGOGUE

Other members of the Franks family remained in Montreal during the American War of Independence, and adhered loyally to Britain, notably Abraham and Jacob Franks, whose names figure frequently in the minutes of the Sephardic Synagogue of this city during the early years of its existence. Abraham Franks was born in 1721, and died in 1797. He has already been referred to, in an earlier page of this history, as the father of Colonel David S. Franks, and as a resident of Quebec until 1775, after which date he took up his residence in Montreal. He was an officer of the congregation in 1779. His daughter Miss Rebekah Franks married Levy Solomons, mentioned above among the first Jewish settlers in Canada and whose signature as Parnas of the Montreal Sephardic Congregation, in 1778, is the first one attached to the minutes of that year, as well as being appended to the code of by-laws drawn up at that time.

Levy Solomons was an outstanding figure in the first two decades of the congregation's history. He was a man of great affluence, of great benevolence and of boundless energy, one whose achievements were on a large scale. He settled in Montreal at the time of the British conquest. He had previously lived in Albany, where he retained a homestead, to which he occasionally returned, until the close of his life. He was largely engaged in traffic with the Indians and French, and his enterprises extended from Michilimackinac to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and down the Hudson River. When the trouble between England and her American Colonies began, Levy Solomons took a rather prominent part in striving to secure the removal of the causes which were separating the Colonies from the mother country, and even after hostilities had commenced and the Americans invaded Canada, there are papers which show that he clung to the hope of a friendly settlement, and that he did not desire that the Colonies should relinquish the privileges of British citizenship. When the Americans invaded Canada in 1775, Levy Solomons was ordered by General Montgomery to establish hospitals for the wounded troops, Montgomery regarding him as a former resident of New York State and paying no heed to his Canadian citizenship. This led to trouble. General Arnold's retreating soldiers appropriated without com-



VIEW OF ONE OF THE COLONNADES IN STANLEY STREET SYNAGOGUE

pensation, and General Burgoyne's officials confiscated, large quantities of stores destined for Michilimackinac. The incident however does not seem to have affected his big enterprises which continued until his death, on the 18th May, 1792. Of the offspring of his marriage with Rebekah Franks, one daughter, Rachel, married Henry Joseph of Berthier, while another daughter married Jacob Franks, the Hudson's Bay trader, whose careers are given further on. One of his sons, Benjamin, married Elkalah Seixas, daughter of Rev. Gershom Seixas, of New York.

Ezekial Solomons who was a cousin of Levy Solomons, was one of the members or the Junto of Mahamad of the Sephardic Congregation of Montreal in 1779, and his name appears several times in the congregational records as one of its active members in the early period of its history. His name is also mentioned frequently in the official records of General Haldimand. He, too, carried on extensive trade operations between Montreal and Michilimackinac, where he had built a large fortified post, and he divided his residence between, the two places. He was in Michilimackinac when it was treacherously surprised and the garrison slaughtered by the Indians, at the time of the Conspiracy of Pontiac, and he narrowly escaped with his life and returned to Montreal.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century, Commissary Aaron Hart induced his nephew, Henry Joseph, to settle in Canada. Born in England in 1775, Henry Joseph arrived in this country when yet a youth and soon became connected with the troops garrisoned at Fort William-Henry, at the mouth of the River Richelieu, where he lived for some years. Afterwards he resigned his military commission and took up his residence across the river at Berthier, opposite the Fort. Here he established one of the largest chains of trading posts in Canada, with headquarters at Berthier and branches at Quebec and Montreal. In conjunction with his father-in-law, Levy Solomons, and with his brothers-in-law, Jacob Franks and Benjamin Solomons, he extended his posts all through the then wild and thinly populated northwest; the most important of these posts being at Michilimackinac, now known as Mackinac. Records have been preserved showing that this traffic was carried on in large fleets of canoes,

often manned by Indians and French voyageurs. We read of hundreds of these boats being employed in one expedition, passing up and down on the waters of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence and carried over the portages. Henry Joseph carried the supplies for this great traffic between Europe and Canada in ocean ships which he either individually owned or chartered. He was the owner of the ship *Exwelta* and was one of the first to employ Canadian-owned vessels exclusively for direct commerce



ABRAHAM JOSEPH

between Canada and England, and hence he was one of the founders of Canada's Merchant Marine. In the war of 1812-1814 he joined the British troops near the Richelieu and saw active service, participating in the fighting in this district. He subsequently took up his residence in Montreal, where his interests now centered and grew with the advance of years, though he continued to maintain the other posts mentioned above. Henry Joseph was most

scrupulous in the observance of the tenets of his faith and took deep interest in the affairs of the Montreal Jewish community. He and his son Samuel were stricken down during the terrible cholera outbreak, in 1832. Henry Joseph was the father of Jacob Henry, Abraham, Jesse and Gershom Joseph. His eldest daughter, Catherine, married Doctor A. H. David, and his youngest daughter, Esther, married Doctor Abraham de Sola.

Two Jacob Franks, of different generations, figure in the early records of "Shearith Israel." Jacob Franks the younger, who married a sister of Mrs. Henry Joseph, was an extensive Hudson's Bay trader, as well as a partici-



G. I. ASCHER

pator in the enterprises of Henry Joseph at Michilimackinac. He was one of the founders of Green Bay, Wisconsin, where he opened up a large trading post in 1794. He fought on the side of the British in the war of 1812-14, and his home at Mackinac was pillaged by the Americans during this war. He is frequently mentioned in the Canadian Government records of that period. It is an interesting fact that John Jacob Astor was employed in the service of Jacob Franks at the beginning of his career. Jacob Franks had a home in Montreal, and passed the declining years of his life in this city. He was at one time an officer of the synagogue.

David David, the eldest son of Lazarus David, was another of the principal founders of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue. He was born in Montreal in 1764, and few men played a more prominent part in public affairs in this city in those days than he. The head of a large business and in affluent circumstances, he was noted

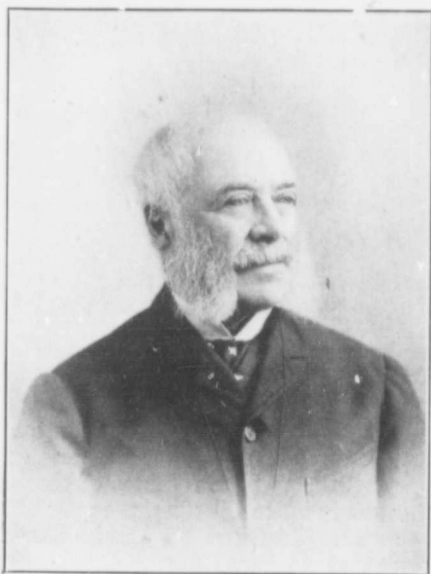


EDWIN MORRIS

for his large-heartedness, and was ever ready to assist generously every philanthropic undertaking. He figured as a director in many public institutions, and was one of the most active founders of the Bank of Montreal in 1817. He was elected a director of its first regular Board on the 27th February, 1818, and the minutes of the Bank show that he continued in office till 1824, the year of his death. It was on property inherited by David David and his brothers from their father, Lazarus David, situated on St. James and Notre Dame Streets, that the first synagogue, as described in a preceding page, was erected; and David David also contributed a munificent sum in money for the purchase of additional ground for the cemetery. He also bequeathed a substantial sum in money to the support of the synagogue, of which he was for many years an honorary officer. His brother, Samuel David, was also an active and substantial supporter of the congregation and Parnas, or President, of the Mahamad in 1800. His personal reminiscences, contained in a diary yet preserved by the David family, chronicle many events of family

interest during the period of the Napoleonic wars and of the war with the United States in 1812-14, in which latter conflict Samuel David served as a military officer.

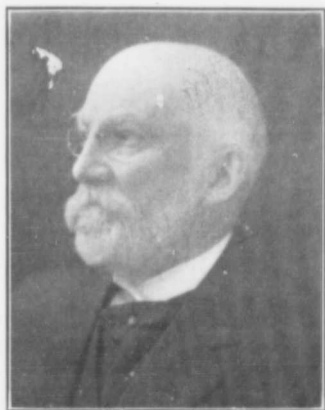
The civil rights of the Jews in Canada were not at that time very clearly defined, and the question was brought to an issue in 1807 by the election that year of Mr. Ezekiel Hart, second son of Commissary Aaron Hart, as member of the Legislative Assembly. He defeated three opponents by a large majority. When he entered the House he



JESSE JOSEPH
(IN LATER LIFE)

refused to take the oath in the usual form "on the true faith of a Christian," and he was sworn in by the clerk of the House in the Jewish form and with head covered. The majority of the members objected, and declared the seat vacant. He was once more elected by a heavy majority, but again the House refused to let him take his seat; and, after some exciting scenes, a bill was pushed through to its second reading, "to disqualify Jews from being eligible to a seat in the House of Assembly." This raised

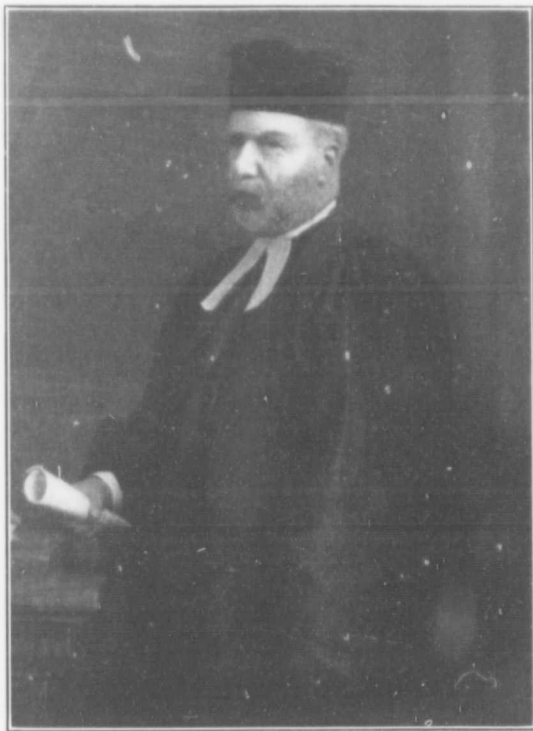
the hot indignation of Sir James Craig—then Governor—and he angrily dissolved the House before the Bill could pass. A long agitation followed, which culminated in the passing of an Act in 1831, by which the Jews were accorded the fullest civil rights in Canada, and all questions of restrictions was set at rest. It is said that the original opposition to Mr. Hart's taking his seat was due more



DR. DAVID A. HART

to the heat of political partisanship than to religious intolerance. Ezekiel Hart also distinguished himself as an officer of militia in the war of 1812-14.

As the land on which the first synagogue stood became the property of David David's heirs, after his death in 1824, the congregation decided to remove to another site. The old building was demolished and funds subscribed for a new one. Some time, however, passed before anything definite was accomplished, and meanwhile the congregation met for worship in a place off the residence of Mr. Benjamin Hart at the southwest corner of St. Helen and Recollet streets. Benjamin Hart was a son of Commissary Aaron Hart, and was a guiding spirit of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue during the earlier part of this century. He was for many years its president. In 1826 he issued an urgent appeal to its members for re-organization, as the affairs of the congregation had then fallen into



REV. MELDCLA DE EGLA

an unsatisfactory condition. Mr. Hart's appeal had the desired effect, and in 1832 the necessary steps were taken to reorganize, in conformity with the legal formalities required by legislative enactments. Through Benjamin Hart's exertions a considerable amount was raised for a new building, and among the subscribers appears the name of Moses Montefiore, "Esquire." The noble philanthropist had not yet received his titles. The munificent gift of a large sum from Mrs. Frances Michaels, sister of David David, and wife of Myer Michaels, greatly assisted the undertaking; and in 1835 the congregation purchased a piece of land on Chenneville and Lagauchetiere streets, and began the erection of a synagogue thereon. The corner



ISRAEL RUBENSTEIN



HARRIS SAMUEL



Z. AUERBACH

stone was laid by M. E. David, a grandson of Lazarus David, and the edifice was dedicated in 1838. For over half-a-century the congregation worshipped in this shrine. Its interior was neat and dignified; its facade had a Doric portico; its walls were of stone. Within this modest fane many a man and many a woman, destined afterwards to

play his or her part in influencing the course of Jewish history in Canada, received training and inspiration.

The planning and erection of the Cheneville Street building were supervised and greatly furthered by Moses Judah Hays, a son of the early Jewish colonist, Andrew Hays and of Abigail David. Moses Hays was a trustee of the congregation and attained the position of President. He was a man of restless vigour and energy. He was pro-



CLARENCE I. DE SOLA, *Parnas*

minent in municipal affairs, and to his activity was due many civic improvements. He organized Montreal's first Waterworks, and managed them. Subsequently he was appointed Chief Commissioner of Police. This office had once before been held by an Israelite—Jacob Kuhn—in 1778.

The Rev. Jacob Raphael Cohen was succeeded as minister of the congregation by Hazan R. de Lara, who retained the position until 1810. Mr. de Lara was succeeded

temporarily in the ministerial duties of "Shearith Israel" by Mr. M. Levy, and after him by Mr. Isaac Velentine. In 1840 the Rev. David Piza was elected minister, and remained with the Montreal congregation till 1846, when he was appointed one of the ministers of the Sephardic congregation of Bevis Marks, London.

During the turbulent days of 1837-38, when the country was disturbed by the Rebellion, quite a number of the members of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation participated in the struggle, and actively served on the loyalist side. Two members of the David family commanded detachments of cavalry at the battle of St. Charles, one having two horses shot under him. Aaron Phillip Hart, a son of Benjamin Hart, and an eminent lawyer, raised a company of militia, while Jacob Henry Joseph served with the troops at Chambly and the Richelieu, and was intrusted with the duty of conveying despatches between Sir John Colborne and General Wetherall at night, the papers being hidden in leather linings to escape risk of capture by the rebels. His brother, Jesse Joseph, also served in the militia. In the course of a letter to their brethren in London, dated 5th July, 1838, the president of the Montreal synagogue remarks: "The various troubles that we have experienced for the past nine months have caused us to forget all civil duties to perform military ones, and I am sorry to add our troubles are not yet over."

On the retirement of the Rev. David Piza, in 1846, the congregation elected the Rev. Abraham de Sola, LL.D., as their rabbi. Dr. de Sola came from an ancient Spanish-Jewish family, that had produced many illustrious men. Don Bartolomeu de Sola was Viceroy of Navarre in the ninth century. Another, Don Baruch de Sola, figures in the wars, fighting under the Infante of Aragon, in the fourteenth century, and he was accorded noble rank by King Alfonso IV. During its long sojourn in the Iberian Peninsula the family gave to the world many prominent statesmen, physicians, scientists and rabbinical scholars and authors. Banished by the edict of Ferdinand, in 1492, they settled in Holland. Two centuries later some of them ventured back to Lisbon, where they had connections with the Portuguese Marranos, and where they hoped to



GERSHOM DE SOLA

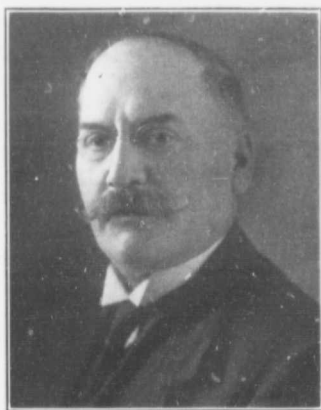


HORACE JOSEPH

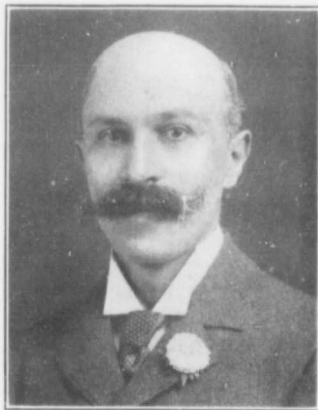
escape detection by disguising their identity. Two were detected and suffered death at the stake, but a third, Aaron de Sola, escaped to London and got back to Amsterdam in 1749. One of his sons, Dr. Benjamin de Sola, was court physician to William V of the Netherlands. Two other sons settled in Curaçoa, and one was the progenitor of General Juan de Sola, who was so distinguished as a cavalry commander under Bolivar and Paëz. He fought in the decisive battle of Carabobo, and led the cavalry in the charge at the storming of Puerto Cabello. Isaac de Sola was a celebrated Jewish author and lecturer in London in 1690. Several of his works are still extant. Dr. de Sola's father was David Aaron de Sola the scholarly senior minister of Bevis Marks, London, famed both as an author and a preacher, and whose translation of the Prayer Book remains the standard for the Sephardim of England to this day. The maternal grandfather of Dr. Abraham de Sola was Dr. Raphael Meldola, Chief Rabbi of the Sephardim of Britain, whose family was noted for its many eminent scholars, and which traces its ancestry back without a break to the distinguished Rabbi Isaiah Meldola of Castile, head of the College of Mantua, who died in 1340.

Dr. Abraham de Sola arrived in Montreal in January, 1847, and officiated in the Montreal Synagogue for the

first time on Shabbat "Bo." He continued to act as spiritual head of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation until his death in 1882. No man did more to reflect lustre on the Hebrew community in Canada than Dr. Abraham de Sola. A profound oriental scholar, an eloquent preacher, a distinguished theologian and a voluminous author, he ranked among the foremost Jewish savants of his day and acquired a reputation that was well-nigh world-wide. He was appointed professor of Hebrew and Oriental literature at McGill University in 1848 and held that position during the rest of his life, and the marked ability with which he fulfilled his duties will live in the memory of more than one generation of students. Closely associated with Sir William Dawson, he did much to build up and extend McGill, and to make it the greatest seat of learning in Canada. He was a prominent figure in most of our learned bodies, and for many years president of the Natural History Society. His whole life was one of self-sacrificing devotion to the intellectual and moral advancement of his race, for whom he labored ceaselessly. Of the many works of which he was the author, some of the most important were: "The Cosmography of Peritsol," "A Commentary on Samuel Hannagid's Introduction to the Talmud," "Scripture Zoology," "The Mosaic Cosmogony," "Philological Studies in Hebrew and the Aramaic Lan-



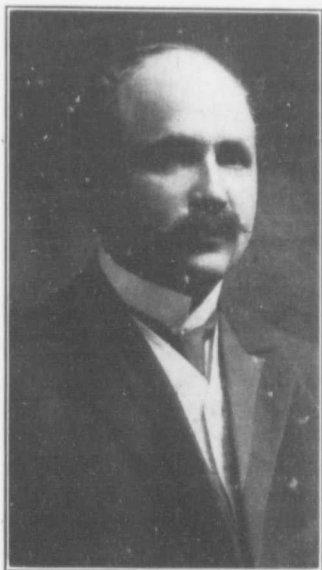
ALDERMAN RUBENSTEIN



HENRY J. DREYFUS

guages," "Scripture Botany," "Shabethai Tsevi," "The Sanatory Institutions of the Hebrews," "History of the Jews of Poland," "The Jews of France," "Saadia Ha-Gaon," etc. His address "On the Study of Natural Science," delivered before Prince Arthur, afterwards Duke of Connaught, called forth a personal letter of commendation from Queen Victoria.

In 1858 Abraham de Sola had the degree of LL.D. conferred on him by the University, he being the first Jew to receive this honor.

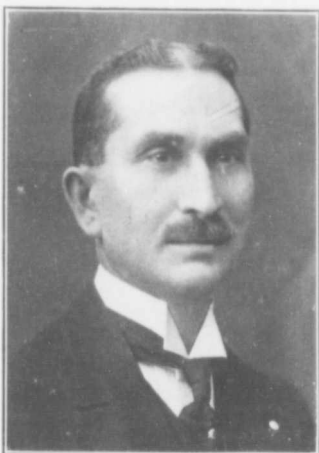


ISRAEL S. GOLDENSTEIN, *President*

In 1872, Dr. de Sola was invited by the then President of the United States, General Grant, to open the United States Congress with prayer, and the unique scene was witnessed of one who was a British subject, and not of the dominant faith, performing (with covered head, according to Jewish custom) the opening ceremonies at the assembling of Congress at Washington. This episode was regarded as the first friendly compliment extended to

England by the United States after the strained relations that had resulted from the Alabama claims, and the thanks of the British Government were conveyed to Dr. de Sola by Sir Edward Thornton, then British Minister at Washington.

Dr. de Sola lived at the time when the Reform Movement had its beginnings, and he was inflexibly opposed to its tendencies. Devotedly attached to the teachings and practices of Orthodox Judaism and to the traditions and customs of his race, Abraham de Sola spoke and wrote incessantly against the dangers of any compromise with



A. L. KAFLANSKY, *Treasurer*

the forces of assimilation. Associated with his lifelong friends, Isaac Leeser, Morris J. Raphall, Samuel M. Isaacs and Bernard Illoway, who were leaders in the Philadelphia and New York communities in those days, Dr. de Sola took a chief part in the controversies which raged at that time, and he was recognized as being, with Leeser, the most powerful and ablest upholder of traditional Judaism in America. He frequently delivered addresses in the United States, where his vigorous, convincing oratory and deep scholarship invariably attracted crowded audiences. He also reached the Jewish public constantly in the press, and par-

ticularly in the "Occident" where many a trenchant and powerful article from his pen appeared. When Leeser died in 1868, Dr. de Sola was unanimously elected to succeed him in his pulpit in Philadelphia, but he declined this and many similar offers.

Dr. Abraham de Sola took a specially keen interest in preserving with scrupulous accuracy the correct traditional rendering of the Sephardic synagogue services, and in carefully maintaining the melodies and musical



VIVIAN S. HART, *Honorary Secretary*

characteristics, and hence the "hazanuth," congregational singing and the choir, during the period of his ministry in the synagogue, were always impressive and attractive.

During Dr. de Sola's pastorate many familiar names are noticeable among the officers of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation.

Dr. Aaron Hart David, son of Samuel David and grandson of Lazarus David, frequently held the presidency and had a long career of usefulness in the congre-

gation, having served as one of its honorary officers in many capacities. The minutes from 1838, down almost to the time of his death in 1882, make constant record of his participation in the congregation's affairs. He was a graduate of Edinburgh University in medicine and also a D.C.L. Dr. David was Dean of the Medical Faculty of the University of Bishop's College and Professor at that University of the practice of medicine. He enjoyed a large practice as a physician.

Jacob Henry Joseph, son of Henry Joseph of Berthier, was Treasurer of the congregation soon after the erection of the Chenneville building and filled different offices on the Board during the early and middle Victorian period. He was one of those who organized the first telegraph line in Canada, and was partner in the Newfoundland Company that formed the last link in the first Atlantic cable. He also assisted in the building of some of the first Canadian railways, and aided in organizing two of our banks. For a long time he was president of the Montreal Elevator Co. He was offered the Liberal nomination for Montreal West some years ago, but declined, and also refused the offer of a seat in the Legislative Council, as he objected to the ties of any political party.

Mr. Jesse Joseph, who was born in 1817 and died in 1904, and who was a son of Henry Joseph, of Berthier, took a very prominent part in the affairs of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews of Montreal during his entire lifetime. He was for a long period Treasurer of the congregation and one of the largest contributors towards its support. At the time of his death he was President of the congregation. In public affairs and in social life in Montreal, Jesse Joseph held a foremost position. He was one of the organizers of and for nearly twenty years President of the Montreal Gas Company, later known as the Montreal Light, Heat & Power Company. He also organized the first street railway in Montreal and was for many years President of the Montreal Street Railway Company. He established the Montreal Telegraph Company, now known as the Great North Western. He was a director of the Banque Nationale and of a large number of other well-known public companies. He was Belgian Consul for a long period of years and was created a Knight of the



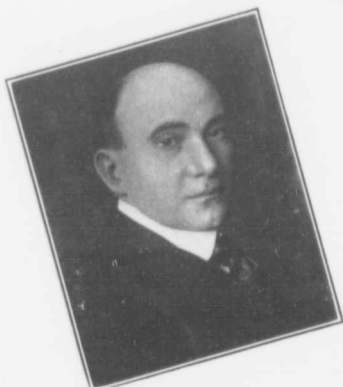
MICHAEL A. MICHAELS



LYON E. HEILIG



JOSEPH S. LEO



BENJAMIN J. HAYES



MOSES B. SIMAND

Order of Leopold, by the King of the Belgians, in reward for his important services. In 1890 he was further honored by receiving the Decoration Civique of the First Class. He was one of the most kindhearted of men, and his acts of benevolence were boundless. His home was one of the leading social centres in Montreal in the Victorian period.

Among its contributing members "Shearith Israel" also counted Mr. Abraham Joseph, who was so prominent in public affairs in Quebec. He was president of the Dominion Board of Trade, and of the Stadacona Bank,



REV. ISAAC DE LA PENHA

and director of the Banque Nationale, and of the Quebec and Gulf Ports Steamship Co., and at one time stood for Mayor of the Ancient Capital. His sons Montefiore Joseph and Andrew Joseph have also been life-long supporters of the synagogue.

Old residents of Montreal will still remember the three brothers Samuel, Goodman and William Benjamin, who were such popular personages here over half a century ago. They all were staunch members of "Shearith Israel" and occupied in turn the highest lay offices of the Syna-

gogue. Samuel Benjamin was elected a member of the City Council, and for some time was one of the most active of our City Fathers. He and his brothers returned to England during the later years of their lives.

The members of the Levey family, who were allied by marriage with the Benjamins, were also very prominent in the congregation in the early-Victorian period. Lawrence Levey was an active member of the Board, and his brother, Charles Levey, also aided as an honorary officer of the synagogue.



FERDINAND I. SPIELMAN



ARTHUR A. SANDEMAN

Edwin Morris was an active and efficient member of the Board of Trustees at this period. John Levy held one of the chief offices in the congregation in the later fifties. Simon Hart was Parnas of the congregation in 1865, and held the office for several years. Alexander Levy was one of the most zealous and capable workers who ever held office on the Board of Trustees. He was in office between 1850 and 1860.

The venerable G. I. Ascher, who lived to the patriarchal age of 96 years, was also a very familiar figure in the congregation for many decades, and one of its firm supporters. He held the office of Parnas, or Ecclesiastical Warden, for some time. His son, Isidor, graduated in law, and is a

poet of no mean order, residing in England. His volume of verses, "Voices from the Hearth," was highly commended by Longfellow.

During Mr. Piza's ministry and during the earlier days of Dr. de Sola's incumbency, Mr. Mendles was the assistant. He was a capable and popular official. Mr. Hyman Goldberg was connected with the congregation for seventeen years, 1863-1880, and will long be remembered for his many high qualities and for his faithful and loyal performance of his official duties.

The congregation always maintained a school for instruction in Judaism and in Hebrew, and at several periods during its existence it also maintained a day school for instruction in Hebrew and other subjects, and the teaching was given with much efficiency. This was particularly the case in the early days of Dr. de Sola's ministry. The day school was again revived in the last quarter of the 19th century and maintained until a few years ago. Steps have again been taken this year which will result in the opening of week day classes immediately.

The congregation also occupied itself with philanthropic work and with branches of activity which in the present day are undertaken by separate institutions; but during the first hundred years of the existence of the congregation there were scarcely any outside bodies to undertake benevolent work. Hence it was that the congregation itself had to create organizations for this purpose, and in 1848 the congregation established the Hebrew Philanthropic Society with Moses Judah Hays and Dr. Abraham de Sola as its Executive heads.

A few years later several of the young men of the congregation, including Lawrence Levey, Charles Levey, Tucker David, Isidor Ascher, Jacob L. Samuel and a number of others, held a meeting which led to their forming an organization which resulted in the establishment of the Young Men's Hebrew Benevolent Society of Montreal, now known as the Baron de Hirsch Institute.

In 1846 the Spanish and Portuguese Jews secured a new Act of Incorporation, this step having become essential, as a second Jewish congregation was formed here about that year. The new congregation proved very short-lived, and it was not until between 1858 and 1860 that a second con-

gregation was permanently established here, by the founding, at that date, of the present German and Polish congregation, which availed itself of the Act of 1846. Since then many Jewish congregations have sprung up here, the Hebrew population having been largely increased of late years by the influx of new settlers. It is of interest to note that the German and Polish congregation, now known as "Shar-ashamoyim," was mainly founded by men who had first been members of the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue, notably David, Edward and Lawrence Moss, Abraham Hoffnung, S. Silverman and L. Ollendorf and a number of others, who had settled in Montreal between 1850 and 1860, and not being accustomed to the minhag of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews they formed a separate congregation as soon as they found a sufficient number of Ashkanazim in Montreal to enable them to successfully carry out their undertaking. It is also an interesting fact that the Trustees of "Shearith Israel" presented them with a Sefer Torah to enable them to conduct their first services.

Upon the death of Dr. Abraham de Sola, the Spanish and Portuguese congregation elected his eldest son, the



ASHER PIERCE

Rev. Meldola de Sola as his successor. This was in 1882. The Rev. Meldola de Sola was earnest and fluent in his pulpit utterances, and an able and zealous upholder of Historical Judaism. Indeed, during the period of his ministry, there was no more fearless and outspoken defender of orthodoxy, and no one more vigorous and relentless in his opposition to the Reform Movement than Meldola de Sola. He published a number of pamphlets giving voice to his views, and in the Jewish press, as well as in the pulpit, he gave utterance to his opinions in no uncertain terms. He never permitted mere considerations of expediency or policy to interfere with the free expression of his deep convictions. Like his father, he was greatly interested in perpetuating the musical beauties of the Sephardic service, and the exceptionally excellent choir maintained during his term of office was the result of his indefatigable work.

During the period in which the Reverend Meldola de Sola was Minister of the congregation a new generation of workers was growing up and gradually replacing the older ones as they passed away into the silent majority. But there yet remain some of those who were already familiar figures in the congregation in the days of Dr. Abraham de Sola.

Among the senior elders today are Doctor David A. Hart, well known as a physician, who married the eldest daughter of Doctor A. H. David. One of his sons, Vivian S. Hart, is at present Honorary Secretary of the congregation, and one of the most capable, energetic and progressive of the younger members of the Board of Trustees. He is widely known as a popular and rising member of the Montreal Stock Exchange. Another son of Doctor Hart, Reginald E. Hart, has proved himself an indefatigable worker on the Campaign Committee and other committees for the advancement of the Synagogue, and recently he has achieved so much in helping to improve its welfare that he is regarded as one of the best and most indefatigable workers in the congregation.

Another of the elders of the congregation, who has been identified with it for over half a century, is Mr. Z. Auerbach, whose family came from Alsace when under French rule. His son, Marcus Auerbach, is Chairman of the

Synagogue Centre Committee. His brother-in-law, Mr. Henry J. Dreyfus, has been a lifelong supporter of the congregation, and was President of the Board for two years.

Mr. Israel Rubenstein was for over thirty years an honorary officer of "Shearith Israel," and was Parnas of the congregation when it moved from Chenneville Street to Stanley Street. He has always evinced a warm interest in its prosperity, and is at present one of the members of the Ways and Means Committee. Apart from his congregational activities, Mr. Rubenstein was for many years known for his indefatigable work as Treasurer of the Baron

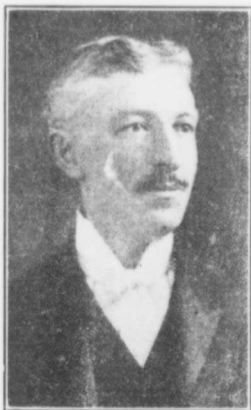


A. BLAUSTEIN

de Hirsch Institute, also as Treasurer of the First Zionist organization in Canada. The members of his family have been lifelong upholders of the congregation. One of his brothers is Alderman Louis Rubenstein, one of the best known and most popular members of the Montreal City Council. Alderman Rubenstein was, a short time ago, appointed Acting Mayor of Montreal, and his vote and influence have always been on the side of thoroughly efficient and good civic administration. Alderman Rubenstein is also one of the leading promoters of amateur athletics in Canada, and was elected a few years ago president of the Montreal Amateur Athletic Association.

The synagogue on Chenneville Street becoming no longer adequate to the requirements of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation, it was resolved, at a meeting of

its members held in 1883, to build a new and more commodious place of worship. In the spring of 1887 a lot of ground was purchased on Stanley street, above St. Catherine, and the erection of the new synagogue was at once proceeded with. The corner-stone was laid in September, 1887, and the building was completed and dedicated on August 31, 1890, with characteristic ceremonies. The Stanley street building is of Judeo-Egyptian style and is of most attractive design, presenting an imposing interior with colonnades of Egyptian pillars, between which are suspended oriental lamps. At the upper or east end is an elegant ark of mahogany and white marble, the centre



Z. FINEBERG



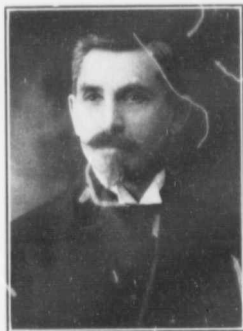
HARRIS VINEBERG

portion of which previously stood in the Chenneville Street building. The architecture and ornamentation throughout are pervaded by marked Jewish characteristics, every detail being studied to that effect.

The general design of the Stanley Street synagogue was due to Mr. Clarence I. de Sola, who acted as Secretary of the building committee and who supervised its erection and to whose perseverance the successful carrying out of the undertaking was largely due.

Clarence I. de Sola is a son of Dr. Abraham de Sola, and is the present Parnas of the congregation, an office which he has held since 1906. He has been a member of the Board

of Trustees since 1891. He has for many years devoted much time and work to all branches of the synagogue activities, and like the other members of his family evidences particular interest in perpetuating the traditional beauties of the synagogue service and in upholding its time-honored traditions and customs. Clarence de Sola has been President of the Zionist movement in Canada since its foundation twenty years ago until the present year. Through his initiative two Jewish colonies were established by the Canadian Zionists at Kastinia in Palestine. On the 29th of May, 1917, he had a very notable conference with the Rt. Hon. Arthur J. Balfour, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in which he strongly pleaded for the recognition by the British Government, of Palestine as the homeland of the Jews. The facts and arguments which he placed before Mr. Balfour at this interview played no small part in bringing about the famous Balfour declaration of the 2nd November, 1917, whereby the Jews were assured of Britain supporting their claim to Palestine as their homeland. Clarence de Sola is engaged in shipbuilding. He is director on the Board of several steamship companies, and is also President of the Ocean and Inland Transportation Company. He was for many years managing director of the Comptoir Belgo-Canadien, and established a steamship service between Montreal and Antwerp in this connection. He has been Belgian Consul at Montreal since 1904, and



MICHAEL LIGHTSTONE



ISAAC KIRSCHBERG

during the war, from 1914 to 1918, the task devolved upon him of organizing and forwarding to the battle-front in Flanders a large number of Belgian reservists, who were residing in Canada at the time of the outbreak of the war, and he had also to perform a similar service with regard to a large number of Belgians residing in the United States, who had to be embarked from Montreal during the first three years of the war, owing to the fact that at that period



REV. RAPHAEL H. MELAMED, PH. D.

the United States was maintaining a neutral attitude, and therefore could not permit the forwarding of troops from any United States port.

Early in 1890 the congregation received a new Act of Incorporation from the Provincial Parliament. The Act was drawn up by Mr. Gershom Joseph and Mr. Lewis A. Hart, both well-known members of the legal profession, Mr. Gershom Joseph who was the youngest son of

Henry Joseph of Berthier, was the first Israelite to receive the distinction of being appointed a Queen's Counsel in Canada. It was he who laid the corner stone of the Stanley Street Synagogue, in September, 1887, he being president of the congregation that year. He retired from office the next year but returned to the presidential chair later and occupied that office at the time of his death in 1893.

Mr. Lewis A. Hart also for a time occupied the presidential chair, and was for several years Treasurer of the congregation. He was for a while lecturer on notarial practice at McGill.

Mr. Louis Davis was president of the congregation when the Stanley Street edifice was consecrated, and Mr. Jacob H. Blumenthal was a member of the Board at that date. Mr. Alexander Saunders, Mr. Edward Cohen, Mr. Maurice Jacobs, Mr. Moses Gutman were all trustees of the synagogue during the second half of the past century and the names of Abraham Brahadi, Samuel Brahadi, M. Fonseca, M. Lachman, J. Garcia, S. de Lara and J. Miranda appear among its substantial supporters at that period.

In 1893 the congregation held an imposing service to commemorate the 125th anniversary of its foundation. It also held a noticeable service in 1897 in celebration of the Diamond Jubilee or 60th year of the reign of Queen Victoria. A similar celebration had been held on the completion of the 50th year of the Queen's reign.

One of the officials of the congregation at that time whose name will be remembered with respect, on account of his high integrity and conscientious performance of his duties, was Mr. A. Kirschberg.

No history of "Shearith Israel" would be complete without a reference to the loyal and indefatigable manner in which Mr. Jacob L. Samuel labored for its welfare. He came to Canada from London, England, when a young man, in 1855, and remained a zealous worker for the synagogue until his death, in his 81st year, in 1912. He was Honorary Secretary of the congregation for the greater part of this period, and in the later years of his life was elected President. He had the advantage of being gifted with an exceptionally beautiful tenor voice,

and which was heard ever leading in the choir and congregational singing during the half century in which it retained its power and sweetness.

The congregational singing in "Shearith Israel" has generally been good and whole-souled and on the high holidays inspiring, and there have been several members who were particularly distinguished by their musical rendering of the chants and traditional music, notably Gershon de Sola, the youngest son of Dr. Abraham de Sola, whose deep rich basso voice was heard both in the choir and in the chanting of the service, in which he occasionally assisted until his death in 1902.

Mr. Isaac Kirschberg is another member who has been notable for his assistance in the musical portions of the service.

Mr. Harris Samuel, whose family has been identified with the congregation for several generations, was elected President of the Synagogue in 1904, after having been a member of the Board of Trustees for some years. He joined in the congregational work in his youth, and was most loyally devoted to the synagogue throughout his life. His son, Charles Samuel, is a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. Harris Vineberg, who was Trustee of the congregation twenty years ago, is one of its senior members today. He has a long record of Jewish communal activity, especially in philanthropic work, and was at one time President of the Baron de Hirsch Institute.

Mr. Zigmund Fineberg was Parnas of the congregation in 1904-5. He was the founder and first President of the Hebrew Free Loan Society of Montreal, and was officer of several other communal organizations. Since his death in 1917 his sons have taken up his communal work and are active in Jewish affairs.

In 1908 the Reverend Isaac de La Penha was elected assistant Minister of the congregation. He had previously officiated as Hazan in New York, where he had come from Amsterdam. During the ten years in which Mr. de la Penha has officiated he has performed his duties in a conscientious and acceptable manner, and has won the regard and esteem of the members of the congregation.

We have now brought our history of "Shearith Israel" down to the present decade, and it is fitting that we should now refer briefly to those who are at present holding office in the congregation and directing its affairs. The Honorary Officers of "Shearith Israel" during this anniversary year, 5679 or 1918, are as follows:

Israel S. Goldenstein, President; Clarence I. de Sola, Parnas; Abraham L. Kaplansky, Treasurer; Vivian S. Hart, Honorary Secretary; Joseph S. Leo, Michael A. Michaels, Lyon E. Heilig, Benjamin J. Hayes, and Moses M. Simand, Trustees. The members of the Ways and Means Committee are:—Asher Pierce, Chairman; Horace Joseph, Israel Rubenstein, Ferdinand I. Spielman, Arthur A. Sandeman, Charles Samuel, and Michael Lightstone.

Mr. Israel S. Goldenstein, who is now President of the Congregation, was first elected to this office in 1906. He resigned after holding office for some years. He was again elected two years ago. His administration has been marked by efficient methods and a considerable improvement in conditions in the congregation. He is warmly devoted to the interests of the synagogue, and gives its affairs his close attention.

The Treasurer, Mr. A. L. Kaplansky is an experienced and effective worker in our philanthropic institutions as well as in the synagogue. In administering the financial affairs of the congregation he has proved invaluable.

The Trustees, Mr. J. S. Leo, Mr. Michael A. Michaels, Mr. Lyon E. Heilig, Mr. B. J. Hayes and Mr. M. B. Simand are all zealous officers who have done much to promote the welfare of the congregation. Mr. Leo is one of the best known and most efficient leaders in the Zionist Movement, of which Mr. Heilling is also a very able officer.

Mr. Asher Pierce, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, has been identified with many Jewish activities, notably in the establishment of a Jewish Colony in the North-West and in largely helping to found the Mount Sinai Sanatorium at St. Agathe, as well as in the securing of support for various Patriotic Funds during the war.

Mr. Horace Joseph, who is a son of Jacob Henry Joseph, is also a member of the Ways and Means Committee. He was Treasurer of the Building Committee when the Stanley Street Synagogue was erected, and also held office for some years on the School Committee.

Mr. Ferdinand Spielman, who is Chairman of the House Committee, and also of the Ways and Means or Finance Committee of the congregation, is a son of Sir Isidore Spielman, C.M.G., of London, and a grandson of Sir Joseph Sebag-Montifiore and a kinsman of Lord Swaythling. He was an active communal worker in London before he settled in Canada, and while there was Honorary Treasurer of the Jewish Working Men's Club, an officer of the Jewish Lad's Brigade, and Visiting Guardian of the Jewish Board of Guardians. During the war he acted as Sergeant-Instructor of McGill C.O.T.C. His father has won fame and distinction as an authority on art, and has done much to widen the world's knowledge of British artists and their work.

Mr. Arthur A. Sandeman has proved himself a valuable member of the Ways and Means or Finance Committee, and he is doing effective work to improve the congregation's prosperity.

Other officers of "Spanish Israel" include Mr. A. Blau-stein, chairman of the School Committee, and who also has a fine record of work on the Campaign Committee, Mr. H. E. Hershorn, B.C.L., Chairman of Assembly Committee, and Mr. A. Rill and Mr. A. J. Alexandor of the Club Committee. Mr. A. J. Alexandor formerly was a Trustee of the Congregation, and is one of its important supporters.

On the 29th of April of the present year, 1918, the Rev. Meldola de Sola passed away, after a lingering illness. He had officiated for the last time on the preceding Rosh Hashana. The congregation fully realized that in his death they had sustained a very heavy loss, and the officers felt that there now devolved on them the duty of taking such measures as would conserve the fortunes of the synagogue and maintain it in a manner befitting its past great record. An appeal was therefore issued by the Board of Trustees on these lines, and at a meeting held on the 5th June, 1918, plans for strengthening and developing

the synagogue were adopted, and the Parnas and President were appointed a committee of two to arrange to secure the services of a new Minister. On the 16th October, 1918, Doctor Raphael H. Melamed was engaged as the new Rabbi of the Congregation. He had officiated on the preceding Holy-days and given such satisfaction that his election was unanimous. Dr. Melamed was born in Hebron, Palestine, of a Sephardic family and received his secular training at New York university where he graduated B.A. in 1906 and won the degree of Ph. D. some years later. His studies in Hebrew and Jewish theology were pursued assiduously through many years and he graduated from the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York where he took highest honors and won the degree of Rabbi. He was the valedictorian of his year. He is a Fellow of the Biblical Department of Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate learning. He has written a work on the Yemen Text of the Targum of Canticles. In 1911 he was elected Rabbi of the Orthodox Congregation Ohel Jacob of Philadelphia, which position he resigned in 1916 to become instructor of Hebrew and Biblical literature in the Gratz College, Philadelphia. Although Dr. Melamed has only been a couple of months in office, he is showing every evidence of satisfactorily fulfilling the arduous duties of his office, and of carrying on the work of his predecessors in accord with the same spirit and principles which animated them. Already he is working very vigorously and efficiently, in conjunction with the officers of the congregation, on plans for improving the religious and Hebrew education of the rising generation; also on plans whereby a congregational centre, a sisterhood, and circles for both the younger members and for those of more mature age are being established. Dr. Melamed is a very pleasing and forcible pulpit orator, and his sermons evoke very favorable comments from those who are privileged to hear him.



N the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, the members of "Shearith Israel" promptly recognized their duty to make every sacrifice for the Empire and many of the younger men responded to the call for military service, voluntarily, without waiting for conscription. During the entire period of that terrible struggle from 1914 to 1918, members of the congregation were fighting at the front and reflecting credit on the congregation by their deeds.

We cannot undertake within the limits of this small booklet to give the names of any of the large number of members of the congregation who enlisted or who crossed the seas to go to the front. We can here only mention some of those who were in actual battle. But we hope that a complete record of all who participated in the war will be prepared and put on record after the signing of the Treaty of Peace.

Among those who offered their services immediately on the commencement of hostilities was William Sebag-Montefiore, a grandson of Sir Joseph Sebag-Montefiore, and kinsman of Sir Moses Montefiore. He had been in the British army previously, as an officer of the Fifth Lancers, but had retired in times of peace and had taken up his residence in Montreal, where he married a daughter of Horace Joseph. He became an active member of the Montreal Sephardic congregation and held office for several years on the Board of Trustees of the Synagogue as Honorary Secretary. Rejoining the army at the earliest possible moment after the declaration of war, he served on the western front in France, as Lieutenant of the Fifth Lancers, from April, 1915. He was transferred to the Heavy Artillery and promoted to the rank of Captain. Later he was appointed to the 14th Corps Headquarters' Staff with the British forces in Egypt. When the British army invaded Palestine, Captain Sebag-Montefiore was placed in command of a squadron of cavalry and he took a distinguished part in the brilliant cavalry operations which helped so materially to bring victory to General Allenby's army. The squadron under his command took part in the rapid movement northwards which culminated in the capture of the enemy's staff at Nazareth, and Captain Monte-

fiore personally captured seven of the German staff officers at the point of his revolver. He was mentioned in despatches in 1916 and again in 1917, and was decorated with the Military Cross.

Lieutenant Alexander Solomon, many years a member of "Shearith Israel," took a leading part in raising a reinforcement company of Jewish soldiers in Montreal. He crossed the Atlantic with them, as conducting officer, in 1917, and served in France with the 87th Battalion, C.E.F. He was killed in action while fighting heroically against heavy odds at the Battle of Hill 70, in August, 1917.

Captain Herbert H. Lightstone, who was for a number of years a Trustee of the Corporation of Spanish and Portuguese Jews of Montreal, is a physician. He first saw military service in the Spanish-American War, through which he served on the medical staff. During the Boer War he served with the Canadian Artillery with distinction, receiving medal with three bars. At the close of this war he returned from South Africa to Canada and retained office on the Board of Trustees in the Synagogue until 1910. At the beginning of the Great War, in 1914, he enlisted for service on the medical staff and was attached to a cavalry division. He was several times mentioned in despatches and was decorated with the British Military Cross. The French Government also decorated him with medal for his exceptionally fine work in stamping out an epidemic of typhoid in a French division. Later, he was personally decorated by King George, at Buckingham Palace, with the Distinguished Service Order. When General Rawlinson was appointed on the Supreme War Council, Captain Lightstone was appointed medical member on General Rawlinson's staff at Versailles. When General Rawlinson became Commander of the British 4th Army, Captain Lightstone was attached to the Headquarters Staff of this army, and is at present accompanying it as part of the British Army of Occupation in Germany.

Captain Herbert Lightstone is the eldest son of Mr. Michael Lightstone, who has also held office on the Board of the Congregation, and who is at present one of the members of the Ways and Means Committee of the Synagogue. Mr. Michael Lightstone has the distinction



CAPTAIN WILLIAM SEBAG-MONTEFIORE, M.C.



LIEUT. ALEXANDER SOLOMON



CAPTAIN HERBERT H. LIGHTSTONE, D.S.O., M.C.

of having had four sons in the war, the others being: Albert Lightstone who served for three and one-half years in the firing line, and who received a commission and is now with the Canadian Army of Occupation in Germany; Ira Lightstone, who crossed from France to serve in the British Army; and Gordon Lightstone, who was in the firing line with the army that advanced on Salonika, and who also saw service in Egypt and Malta.

Captain Albert Freedman, one time member of the Board of Trustees of this Synagogue, crossed the seas with the Second Brigade of Canadian Mounted Rifles in February, 1915, as a private, and performed such valuable services that he was eventually advanced to the rank of Captain. He was on the Brigade Staff and took part in a lot of the fighting at Armentieres, where he was gassed. Afterwards he was placed in the Intelligence Department, and later was made paymaster on convoys. He is married to a daughter of Lewis I. Hart.

Abraham S. Michalson, who is a brother-in-law of the present President of the Congregation, enlisted in 1915 as Sergeant in the Army Service Corps, and while serving in France was transferred to the Royal Fusileers, British Imperial Army, and received a commission in that regiment. He was frequently under fire, until first wounded, when he was returned to Dover. On recovery, he volunteered for service in East Africa, and joined the King's African Rifles in February, 1917. He went through very heavy fighting in the East African campaign and was again severely wounded in one of the actions.

Hugh Joseph, who was a son of Andrew Joseph and grandson of Abraham Joseph, of Quebec, trained in the McGill University Contingent C.O.T.C., joined the McGill Siege Battery under command of Sir Lauder Brunton, was in action in France in 1918, and is still serving there.

Lieut. Maitland Leo, of the Royal Field Artillery, is a son of Joseph S. Leo, one of the present members of the Board of Trustees of the Congregation. He saw service in the Gallipoli campaign and was in the fighting on the Doiran and Struma fronts with the Salonika Army in 1915 and 1916.

Philip Blumenthal, son of ex-Alderman Blumenthal, crossed the ocean with the Jewish Re-enforcement Com-

pany in 1917, was in the 24th Battalion under Col. Gunn, and took part in the Battle of Hill No. 70 and other engagements on the western front.

Arthur Hart, son of Lewis A. Hart, served in France on the western front in a number of engagements. In 1918 he was wounded in action.

David Ruttenberg, whose family have long been members of "Shearith Israel," served for three and one-half years in the battle line in France and took part in many engagements.

Samuel Ruttenberg, a brother of the preceding, also served with distinction for two and one-half years in France. He was wounded in action, losing an eye. He is now serving on the staff in London.

Ralph Groner was a member of the famous Princess Patricia Regiment, and took part in the battles which won this regiment undying fame. He was wounded in action and invalided.

Lieutenant Irwin Joseph Rubinovich, R.A.F., son of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Rubinovich, who are active workers in the congregation, joined the Canadian Army Service Corps in 1917. He was transferred to the Royal Naval Air Service as Flight Officer, and after going through a severe course of training at the Royal Naval College at Greenwich, and at the Chingford Aerodrome, he was sent into active service in France, and while engaged there was badly wounded in May, 1918, and confined to hospital for five months.

The members of "Shearith Israel" also did their duty in the home work of the war, in the Patriotic Funds, in hospital work and in innumerable other ways.

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We should like to have found place for a description of the present synagogue activities, and particularly of the very important part which the ladies of the congregation are taking in many branches of the congregational work, but both the time and space at our disposal prevent our attempting to do so, and we regret that we must content ourselves with the statement that in all periods of its history the women of "Shearith Israel" have played a

worthy and indeed, in many cases, a most noble part. Today the ladies of the congregation are organizing new branches of activity and are doing much to preserve those Jewish ideals which have dominated "Shearith Israel" for one hundred and fifty years.

This brief history does not pretend to give by any means a full record of the congregation's achievements, nor have we attempted to mention more than a few of those who have played a part during the century and a half of "Shearith Israel's" existence; but we hope that even this short and imperfect chronicle will prove of interest to those who are today treading the path of their predecessors in maintaining the glorious traditions of the congregation. If the story here written will but inspire not only the immediate members of the congregation but also the members of the Jewish community as a whole to preserve in their loyalty to the practices and teachings of Judaism these pages will have served some purpose.

