The Jews of Brighton, 1770–1900*

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As far as I can ascertain, the Jewish Historical Society has had no previous paper on the subject of the Jews of Brighton, nor is there any reference to Brighton in the Index of the Transactions of this Society compiled by the late Albert Hyamson. This is unusual in view of the links between the Society and Brighton. In this room are housed the collection of Hebraica of Levy Salomons—father of Philip Salomons, a past president of the Brighton Hebrew Congregation—which were presented to the Guildhall Library, London, in 1845 by Philip Salomons. Claude Goldsmid Montefiore, one of the founder members of the Jewish Historical Society and a past President, was a grandson of Sir Isaac Lyon Goldsmid, who was closely associated with Brighton and Hove and whose portrait was recently presented to this Society. I have also been stimulated to give this address by the remark of Cecil Roth in his book The Rise of Provincial Jewry that the measure of success of this work will be not the degree of agreement but the degree of contradiction that it may stimulate.

Brighton prior to 1770 consisted of seven principal streets and less than 600 houses, the number of inhabitants in that year being approximately 2,500. Thanks to Dr. Russell, sea-bathing became popular from 1750 onwards, and in the year 1783 occurred the first visit of the Prince Regent, subsequently George IV. The town’s population grew by leaps and bounds and by 1821 the number of inhabitants was over 25,000, and the houses had increased to just under 4,000. Between 1830 and 1840 there was a temporary lull in the expansion of the town, but the advent of the railway in 1841 laid the foundation for its continued expansion during the rest of the nineteenth century. It is also as well to remember that during the Napoleonic Wars the only communication with France was through Dieppe and Brighton and that this was so up to 1848.

* Paper delivered to the Society on 6 March 1968.

The first recorded Jew in Brighton was Israel Samuel Cohen, 1766–1767, who was a member of the Great Synagogue, London, and was later known as Israel Samuel, silversmith and toy man, of 22 East Street, also a lodging-house keeper. There is, however, a local legend of Jacob Harris—a Jewish pedlar—who in the year 1734 committed murder at the Royal Oak, Ditchling, near Brighton, was hung at Horsham, and his corpse suspended for many years from a gibbet outside the Royal Oak, where there was a post for many years known as Jacob’s Post. It is said that if you can get a splinter from the post and carry it around with you you will never get toothache. Dr. Snowman, of Tel Aviv, has in his possession the prayer-book of one Abraham Benjamin, of Brighthelmstone in Sussex, inscribed ‘his book 1770’. This is believed to be a Barmitzvah present to Abraham, for it subsequently records the birth in 1810 of Elizabeth Benjamin, Abraham Benjamin in 1812, and the death of Phoebe Benjamin in 1821. Richard Cumberland’s play ‘The Jew’, the first play to depict Jews in a more sympathetic light, was performed at the Duke Street Theatre, Brighton, on 15 October 1794, directly after its initial success at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

The foundations of the community were laid by one Emanuel Hyam Cohen, a native of Niederwerren, near Munich, who came to England in 1782, settled in Brighton that year, and married from among its residents Hannah Benjamin and begat ten children. He was a man of education and ability and was an associate of Moses Mendelssohn. He had some outstanding children, whom I will refer to later. Emanuel Hyam Cohen kept a school for boys in Artillery Place until 1816, which is mentioned in local guide-books of this period. He taught Hebrew and German, and Louis Cohen, when laying the foundation-stone of Middle Street Synagogue in 1874, referred to his early schooling at this establishment. He also served as Shochet, but never made a
financial success and died in 1823 leaving very little to his children. The earliest synagogue and school was reputed to be in Jew Street, where the early pedlars gathered. I have examined guide-books from 1769 onwards and the first reference to a synagogue is in Crawford's Guide of 1792. The County Archives at Lewes have the Land Tax records of Bright-helmstone complete from 1770 to 1820 and the first reference there to Jew Street is in the year 1789, when three dwellings are recorded. Jew Street is described as being part of New Street (now Bond Street) and the Borough Surveyor has informed me that there is no indication on the early maps of the location of the building used as a synagogue, but this is understood to have been at the southern end.

The second synagogue was in Pounes Court, named after the builder, off West Street, approximately opposite the site of the present Odeon Cinema. It is clearly indicated in guide-books and is specially marked in Marchant's Plan of Brighthelmstone of 1808. It is my belief that this synagogue was quite likely a room in a house occupied by Jews. To support this theory, I note that the Land Tax assessments name Isaac Levy and Abraham Benjamin as occupying houses in Pounes Court. In 1822, the house occupied by Abraham Benjamin is referred to as 'late Benjamin' with no mention of Isaac Levy, but in the following year there is no reference at all to 'late Benjamin'. Bearing in mind that this is the year in which Devonshire Place was acquired, the absence of any further reference to Jewish occupation is significant. I have not been able to trace any papers of the Congregation relating to the period of Jew Street and Pounes Court, although Cecil Roth and a Mr. J. H. Cohen, of Rottingdean, have referred to them. The minutes of the Congregation from 1824 onwards are, however, available and I will deal with them later.

The names of the following pre-1800 inhabitants are known from the Land Tax assessments:

Abraham Benjamin, Isaac Levy, Emanuel Hyam Cohen, Moses Jacob Cohen, Solomon Myers, Mrs. Samuels, and their families.

All of these are described as lodging-house keepers, and it was not uncommon in this period of popularity in Brighton for the local tradesmen to carry on that additional occupation. Circumcisions were carried out by Myer Solomon, of the Western Synagogue, and Rabbi Leib, of Portsmouth. Brighton was popular with London Jewry and indeed a report in the Lewes Advertiser in 1801 blames the large increase in the importation of 'Hams' into Brighton on the demand for this product by Jewish visitors. The Rev. Solomon Herschell was a frequent visitor to and friend of the Congregation and Cecil Roth has made reference to him. In 1805 the local papers recorded a contribution of £10 from the Jews' Synagogue to the Patriotic Fund, which compares with £50 from the Chapel Royal, the most popular local church. Coach traffic increased between London and Brighton, as many as 60 coaches a day running in the 1820s. In 1816 it was reported that some Jews started 'The Eclipse' to run from Brighton to London in six hours or pay penalty of carrying passengers free. The horses galloped all the way—on one journey the coachman broke three whips and in one week fifteen horses died. Crowds used to turn out en route to see the coaches, which ran without accident for three months until the drivers were summoned and fined for furious driving. Maria Basevi, mother of Benjamin Disraeli, lived in Hove before her marriage in 1802 to Isaac D'Israeli, and Jacob Montefiore, of Australian fame, was born in Brighton in 1801 and not at Bridgetown, as stated in the Jewish Encyclopedia.

In the surrounding countryside were the Brandon family, who resided at Findon—outside Worthing—and made various gifts to the Congregation; the minutes record the gift of silver bells in 1825. In 1828 the synagogue was broken into and the silver bells and other valuables were stolen by one Samuel Povey, who was sentenced in December 1828 at the Lewes Assizes to seven years' transportation for these offences. The following names appear among the list of subscribers to a History of Lewes and Brighthelmstone, by Paul Dunvan, published in 1795: Mr. Abraham Morris, of Seaford, and Mr. Abraham Soper, of Lewes.

1 See The Rise of Provincial Jewry, p. 225.
Baxter's guides for 1822 and 1824 record numerous Jewish names and I have listed them in an appendix. Their trades range from general dealers, fruiterers, watch and clock makers, parasol makers, to auctioneers and pawnbrokers.

Local guide-books continued to give the site of the synagogue as Pounes Place until 1826, when the first reference is made to Devonshire Place. The President in 1824 was Solomon Nathan Berncastle—originally a watchmaker in Lewes—Secretary, Levi Emanuel Cohen (elder son of Emanuel Hyam Cohen), Elders, David Woolf (jeweller), Saul Charles Aaron (auctioneer), Hyam Lewis (pawnbroker), Henry Solomon (employed by the Commissioners), Jacob Michael Silverston (jeweller). The Congregation's minutes record discussions on improvements at Devonshire Place during the years 1824 and 1825, and Levi Emanuel Cohen, Saul Charles Aaron, and Henry Solomon were appointed Trustees for the new building. The guide-books describe the synagogue as 'a small building set back from the road' and it was reported to hold 50 people but apparently had a ladies' gallery. In November 1836, the Congregation appointed David Mocatta its architect for the purpose of enlarging the synagogue and constructing a burial hall, it having purchased the ground of the synagogue in that year. The work was completed in 1837 and eventually the property comprised a residence, synagogue, two-storey workshop and schoolrooms, the whole occupying an area of nearly 4,000 square feet. I have not been able to discover the activities of the workshop, but this is probably the only synagogue in the United Kingdom to have one. The building was disposed of in 1876, after the erection of Middle Street. It is still standing and is at present occupied by a firm of chemists. The words 'Jews Synagogue 5598' are still discernible at the top of the building.

Emanuel Hyam Cohen, the founder of the Congregation, had four sons and six daughters. The eldest son, Levi Emanuel Cohen, was described at the age of 13 as a prodigy and competent to teach at his father's school. On the death of his father in 1823, he undertook the responsibility of bringing up the family.

Apart from teaching languages, he contributed to the local press, acted as theatre critic, was prominent in the affairs of the Congregation and was a much-admired Reader in the synagogue. In 1827 he was sufficiently esteemed locally to be able to raise funds for a new paper, the Brighton Guardian, and became its manager and editor. However, his policy was too radical for the original subscribers, and as the result of an appeal to friends and his 'own people' he assumed complete control in 1828. His name appears on the Printing Press Register, kept under the 39th Act of George III for preventing troublesome and seditious practices, on 19 June 1828, and that of his sister Rosetta on 26 August 1835. During his 35 years as editor he was abused, ill-treated, excessively snubbed, turned out, and spat by the magistrates, assaulted by actors and others, arraigned by the King for libel, conspired against and burnt in effigy. In 1827 he crossed swords with a local magistrate and die-hard, one Sir David Scott, when he refused to be summoned as a special constable on the grounds that he was a Minister of Religion. Cecil Roth has referred to this incident but incorrectly states it was Emanuel Hyam Cohen, Levi's father, who had died in 1823. In 1827 there were riots between the landsmen and the fishermen, and as a result Sir David Scott swore in over 90 special constables to deal with the disturbances. Sir David was concerned lest all the congregation would claim exemption as lay ministers. Later Sir David turned him out of court when he attended as a reporter on the grounds that he had refused to apologise to Sir David for personal insults. Cohen had in earlier years referred to the magistrates as 'crabbed, nervous, passionate, fiery mouthed, vain and bombastical justices—the bare sight of them turns one's feelings bitter'. Levi Emanuel Cohen and his brother-in-law, Henry Solomon, later Chief Constable, were also regularly ejected from the local theatre for hissing actors and in 1823 he was publicly assaulted by an actor. A summons for assault, taken out by Cohen, was heard before his old friend Sir David Scott and was dismissed. The celebrated trial for libel in 1833 of Rex v. Cohen is outstanding in the history of journalism in this country. This was
the period of general unrest and rick fires, and Levi Emanuel Cohen was convicted of libel for attributing the frequent occurrence of incendiary fires to the severity of the local magistrates, in a report in the Brighton Guardian from a correspondent at Horsham. He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, to pay a fine of £50, and to find sureties for three years. Chelmsford Gaol was chosen as the place of imprisonment by the magistrates, but in spite of this handicap he successfully conducted the Guardian from prison. He defended himself 'with considerable ability and with very great propriety and decorum', but certain magistrates referred to him as a 'pestilent fellow'. Protests to the Government in the House of Commons were rejected. Sir David Scott later became involved in a Parliamentary inquiry into a pension granted to him by George IV for allegedly saving his life. It was said that the events were exaggerated and not true. The pension was withdrawn and this, together with the appointment of magistrates of more liberal opinion, led to Sir David leaving Brighton.

Cohen was the first responsible local reporter in Brighton and at the time of the Reform Bill had reporters at Rye, Hastings, Chichester, and the Isle of Wight. The circulation of his paper rose to over 60,000. In the first fifty years of the life of the Newspaper Society, the organisation of proprietors of the provincial press, Levi Emanuel Cohen was one of only two Presidents who filled that office for two years in succession, and in 1844 he represented the Society in talks with the then Chancellor of the Exchequer. Levi Emanuel Cohen introduced the Jewish Chronicle to Brighton and represented the Congregation at the conference in 1845 for the election of a Chief Rabbi. He lived the life of a recluse, never married, and died in 1860. He was succeeded as editor by his brother Nathan, who was an expert printer, whose setting and type were copied by numerous other papers. Billposting was then in its infancy, but Nathan developed this form of printing and Cohen's Posters achieved considerable local reputation.

His brother-in-law, Henry Solomon, is equally interesting. Originally a watchmaker, he was in the service of the Commissioners of the town for 23 years, 16 of them as Chief of Police. The Town Clerk was kind enough to allow me to examine the records of the Commissioners and from this and other local information it would appear that he entered their service in 1821. In 1822 he was appointed Inspector of Post Horse Duty at a salary of £50. On 17 August 1825, he was appointed Inspector of Hackney Coaches, Bathing Machines and Pleasure Boats, and was given an additional £25 a year. In December 1826, he was also appointed Inspector of Nuisances, and in March 1827 Inspector of Gas Lights, for which he got an additional £10 per annum. In 1838, when the office of Chief Constable of Brighton was first instituted, he was appointed to it, the police forces consisting of a Chief Officer, two superintendents, one night constable, and 24 watchmen.

During this period, Henry Solomon was an active member of the Congregation, one of its Trustees, and at the time of his murder in 1844 a Vice-President. He had ten children. His salary when he died was approximately £200 plus £80 perks, but he lived right up to his income, as at one time the Congregation paid the expenses of the funeral of two of his infant children. He had his local enemies and at times allegations were made that he was in league with the 'thimble and rig men' at the racecourse and other unsavoury characters. Solomon was attacked in his office in the evening of 13 March 1844 by an unbalanced youth, who had been apprehended by one of the constables for stealing a carpet. Solomon was struck on the head by a poker which the youth had picked up in the office and died the next day. The murder caused a sensation not only in Brighton but throughout the country. Thousands of persons lined the route of the funeral, and the whole of the police force and town dignitaries were present. John Lawrence, the murderer, was taken to Lewes, passing the funeral procession on the way. At his trial at Lewes three jurors were replaced by the Judge, as they were Jews, and Lawrence was sentenced to death and publicly hanged at Horsham on 6 April, less than a month after the murder. A public meeting was called to raise money for the family
of Henry Solomon. The Queen sent £50, the local Commissioners gave £500, a circus gave its entire receipts for one night, the Congregation £52 10s.

But this does not end the story of the Cohen family. Abraham Cohen, another son, emigrated to Australia, arriving at Port Macquarie in 1835. He had ten children, the most famous being Henry Emanuel, who became the Hon. Henry Emanuel Cohen, the first Jewish High Court Judge in New South Wales and a Cabinet Minister. Another son was Nathan, virtually the founder of Tamworth, New South Wales, and its Mayor. Nathan’s daughter is still alive and celebrated her 100th birthday on 27 August 1967. She is Mrs. Ida Cohen, M.B.E., and she is a member of the Australian Jewish Historical Society. Another daughter of Abraham Cohen, Fanny, married Benjamin Benjamin, who became Lord Mayor of Melbourne and was knighted. Many other famous figures in Australian Jewry are descended from our original founder.

Hyam Lewis was another prominent Jewish citizen of this period. He was born in Prague in 1769 and became an endenized citizen in November 1816. He was active in the community but at times had his differences with Levi Emanuel Cohen, who was his brother-in-law, and other members of the Congregation. He was elected a Commissioner of the Town before 1814 but did not serve until 1822. In 1827 he received 126 votes in the election, the highest being 158 and the lowest 16, which is some indication of his local standing. He was also at times a Director and Guardian of the Poor and was one of the members of the Police Committee set up in 1838 under the Municipal Corporation Act. Israel Finstein has referred in his book *A Short History of Anglo-Jewry* to various early Jewish representatives in local government, the earliest date being given as 1830, but it would now appear that Hyam Lewis is the first known elected Jewish local government representative. Hyam Lewis was a silversmith and jeweller and opened the first pawnbroker’s shop in Brighton—this was in Ship Street Lane—and the Town Commissioner’s minutes record its purchase in 1810 in connection with a road-widening scheme. His shop was subsequently in Ship Street. Hyam Lewis died in 1851, aged 82, and in spite of his long service to the town as an outstanding Commissioner and to the Jewish community I have been unable to trace any obituary notice in either the local press or the *Jewish Chronicle*.

His shop passed to his son Benjamin and is described in 1854 as ‘Lewis and Son—Jewellers and Watchmakers and Goldsmiths to the Queen’. Benjamin Lewis’s daughter Leah married Lewis Coleman Cohen, of Birmingham, in 1854, and the late Lord Cohen of Brighton is a direct descendant of this family. Benjamin took a great interest in the Congregation and in turn his son Lewis Lewis was President of Middle Street for 35 years, being largely instrumental in raising funds for its erection. H. B. Lewis carried on this tradition until his death in 1928. Cecil Roth has stated that Isaac Bass was one of the town’s Jewish Commissioners, but this is incorrect, as he was a well-known local Quaker and a close friend of Hyam Lewis.

The 1819 Jury List has no Jewish names, but the 1836 list has thirteen, the first three on the roll being Jews: Saul Charles Aaron, Judah Isaac Abraham, and Laurence Abrahams. Local Jewish residents were occasionally in the news in the 1830s, particularly a Mrs. Abrahams, who was charged with causing an affair by engaging twenty Irishmen to evict one of her lodgers. A dispute between two lapidaries was described as ‘Diamond cut Diamond’ in the local press. In March 1843 at an inquest on the body of Hannah Dale, aged 14–15 years, a servant of the Jews’ Synagogue in Devonshire Place, a warrant was issued for the arrest of the Minister and his mother on suspicion of having poisoned the maid. Both were released at the resumed inquest and a verdict of ‘death by poisoning administered under unknown circumstances’ was returned, but the mother was censured for not aiding the girl. Mother and Minister departed from the town shortly after.

To return to the affairs of the Congregation, in 1824 plans were made to raise £300 to purchase the ground on which the synagogue was built in Devonshire Place, and a Committee of Three was set up to revise, amend, and enlarge the existing laws, the new laws being
adopted on 1 May 1825. I have seen Cecil Roth's copy of the Rules (the copy originally belonged to Hyam Lewis), and Brighton and Liverpool were the first communities to publish their laws in English and Hebrew. In 1826 Thomas Read Kemp, the builder of Kemp Town and local Member of Parliament, presented land for use as a burial ground, previous burials having been in London. To raise funds for enclosing the ground and erecting an Ohel, a tax of 2s. per week per member for one year was imposed on the Congregation. Levi Emanuel Cohen and Mr. Berncastle lent £50 interest free and Moses Mocatta £25—but only for four months. Problems arose over the guarding of the cemetery during the period of 'body-snatching' and members failing to carry out their roster had—in addition to the normal tax on meat of 1d. per pound—an extra tax of 2d. per pound imposed and 1s. per poultry. Any person found buying meat on behalf of the offenders was liable to a fine of £5. Records show that a bathing machine was used as a sort of 'guard-room' for those maintaining watch. The Congregation in 1827 and 1828 again found themselves in financial difficulties and, through the good offices of the Rev. Dr. Herschell, obtained a loan of £100 from N. M. Rothschild, but the funds of the Congregation had to be pledged as security.

The minutes record the story of the Daniel Eliason legacy. Daniel Eliason, related to the Goldsmids and former partner in the bullion merchants Mocatta and Goldsmid, left in his will the interest on £600 3% Stock to be paid to the Congregation after the death of his 'relict'. In 1835, the Congregation made representations to Isaac Lyon Goldsmid, executor of Daniel Eliason, to the effect that, as the income they received from the interest was less than the rent they had to pay for Devonshire Place, could they please have the £600 3% Stock so that they could dispose of it and buy the land. The executor agreed and the proceeds of the stock were used to buy the land and construct a house at the burial ground. However, in 1837 the Congregation were again in financial difficulties and negotiated a loan of £300 from Moses Mocatta. Saul Charles Aaron, a former President of the Congregation, wrote to Moses Mocatta and objected to the loan on the grounds that the Daniel Eliason legacy should have been used to abolish the 'meat tax' of 1d. a pound on all purchases of kosher meat, and that he, having eleven dependants (including seven children), found it a hardship, as he required between 25 and 30 pounds of meat per week. He threatened to sue Isaac Lyon Goldsmid for illegally transferring the £600 stock. The Elders satisfied Moses Mocatta and received the £300 and poor Mr. Aaron continued to pay the tax to cries of 'Is this fair?' 'Is this Hebrew brotherhood?' The meat tax was not abolished until 1892.

Then there is the curious affair of the Shochet, one I. M. Isaacs, who in 1836 was visited by one of the elders of the congregation after lunch and discovered to be drinking coffee with milk. He was dispatched to London to be re-examined as a Shochet by the Rev. S. Herschell, who conveniently failed him, the Shochet having taken five months after his arrival in London to report to Dr. Herschell. In July 1843 the jewellery shop of a congregant, one Mr. Moseley, was broken open and robbed on a Friday night. The local paper reported that Mr. Moseley being of the Hebrew persuasion did not return to the shop until the Saturday evening, when he found that the door, in which there were two locks, had been opened by means of a skeleton key, part of which remained in the lock.

The reports and accounts of the Brighton Hebrew Philanthropic Society, established in 1846, have recently been discovered in the files of the Brighton Reference Library. In its first year 183 applicants received relief, amounting to £22 18s., the next year 382 received a total of £42 0s. 2d., but by this time the Society had a surplus of £50. There were 43 subscribers, the list being headed by Sir Isaac Lyon Goldsmid with 10 gns. and the Marquis of Bristol 2 gns. By 1850 relief had been given to 1,500 persons and in 1853 the approximate rate of relief was seven persons per week. The rules laid down that there was to be an anniversary dinner in the month of Av. This Society is still in existence but is now known as the Brighton and Hove Board of Guardians.
Owing to the popularity of Brighton as a holiday resort it was found that the synagogue in Devonshire Place was too small to accommodate visitors, and in April 1860 a committee was formed to make recommendations. The Franco-Prussian War also led to a temporary increase in the local Jewish population through many Jewish refugees arriving from the Continent. Many donations were promised on condition that the new site would be in a central position in Brighton. Eventually 66 Middle Street was purchased and the freehold secured from the Lord of the Manor for a nominal sum.

The architect was Mr. Thomas Liason, who had a large practice in Brighton and was employed by Sir Francis Goldsmid in his Wick estate, Jewish architects declining to submit designs. The foundation-stone was laid on 19 November 1874 by Louis Cohen in the presence of a large number of Jewish visitors from London, the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway having arranged a special train. The consecration took place on 23 September 1875 and was extensively reported in the local press. The music was composed by the famous Mombach, who conducted the choir, and a harmonium was specially used in the synagogue. Although a reasonable sum was raised it was not until 1895 that the mortgage on the synagogue was paid off, Samuel Montagu assisting the Congregation to do so.

In the latter part of the century, the synagogue benefited considerably from the generosity of the Sassoon family, who had settled in Brighton and Hove. Many improvements were carried out, stained-glass windows installed, and the synagogue was the first in the country to have electric light. Baroness Rothschild and Hannah Rothschild gave the congregation a magnificent pair of candelabra in memory of Baron Rothschild. Sir Moses Montefiore presented the Congregation with a Sefer Torah which had been executed by a renowned scribe, one Rabbi Sebi Hirsch of Wilna, the last three words being written in by Sir Moses; it is still in use. The synagogue is also unique in having two stained-glass windows dedicated to the memory of the Jewish wife of an English Prime Minister—that is, Lady Rosebery, formerly Hannah Rothschild. The Rothschilds maintained their connection with the Congregation until the days of the late James de Rothschild. Anna Louise Cohen and Lucy Cohen, daughters of Isaac Cohen and granddaughters of Levi Barent Cohen, who both lived at Adelaide Crescent, Hove, were generous supporters and regular worshippers at the synagogue. Both Samuel Montagu and the Rothschilds co-operated in raising funds for Brighton, a rare case of agreement between these protagonists.

In November 1879 a branch of the Anglo-Jewish Association was formed in Brighton at Middle Street. Among those present at the opening were Baron Henry de Worms, Sir Benjamin Phillips, Baron George de Worms, Alfred Hoffnung, Israel Davis, Elia D'Avigdor, David Mocatta, and Alfred Henriques. The meeting was controversial and there was a considerable correspondence in the Jewish Chronicle. In 1880 the Chief Rabbi, Dr. Nathan Adler, took up residence in Hove at 36 First Avenue, where he died in 1890. Two of his daughters were married at Middle Street. In 1836 the Congregation had declined an invitation to join the Board of Deputies, as it was too small, but in 1879 it was decided to send a representative and Samuel Montagu, later Lord Swaythling, was its first elected Deputy. Fierce controversy raged over resolutions to abolish repetition of Musaph Amida on Sabbath and Festivals but no change took place. In 1889 a Brighton Jewish Mutual Improvement Society was formed.

The Goldsmid family maintained close links with the Congregation, Sir Isaac Lyon Goldsmid advising the congregation on many occasions and assisting it financially. His example was followed by Sir Francis and Sir Julian and Elim D'Avigdor, and Miss Caroline Goldsmid's name appears frequently in the list of offerings in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Sir Isaac was prominent in local affairs and was a Director of the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway. In 1830 he purchased the remainder of the Wick estate from Thomas Read Kemp for £55,225 and subsequently developed Adelaide Crescent but did not complete this until 1850. Development then took place in the area known as Palmeira
Square. Sir Isaac was appointed a member of the Brunswick Square Commissioners for life and when the enlarged Commission met took the chair at its first meeting, Sir Francis completed the development of the Wick estate and after his death in 1878 his nephew Sir Julian succeeded to the title and lived and died at No. 4 Palmeira Square. Both Sir Francis and Sir Julian unsuccessfully contested the Borough of Brighton as Parliamentary candidates.

Philip Salomons, the brother of Sir David, and father of the renowned inventor Sir David Lionel Salomons, was admitted a member of the Congregation in 1849 and was elected President in 1855. He was at times in dispute with the Congregation over the use of his private synagogue at 26 Brunswick Terrace, but this was resolved after some acrimonious correspondence. Israel Davis frequently attended this synagogue and has described it in his writings. The building is still standing and can be recognised by the 'pepperpot' on its top. Philip's granddaughter, Miss Vera Salomons, is still alive and living in Jerusalem and two years ago corresponded with the Congregation for information regarding this building. Sir David Lionel Salomons was actually born at No. 18 Brunswick Terrace and participated in the opening of Middle Street by carrying one of the Sifrei Torah and presiding at the dinner at the Royal Pavilion in the evening. Hyamson has dealt extensively with this family in his book *David Salomons*, and our Society has published recently a book entitled *David Salomons House*. The scrolls, Ark, and appurtenances of the private synagogue are now in the possession of Rabbi Sassoon, of Letchworth. Philip Salomons was appointed a Sheriff of Sussex in 1852 and his wife Emma filled the place of Lady Mayoress of the City of London when her sister-in-law fell ill.

Cecil Roth has dealt with the Sassoons in his book *The Sassoon Dynasty*, but has made no mention of their close connection with Middle Street and the many benefactions the synagogue received. Visitors to this beautiful synagogue will recall its Eastern splendour. Reuben Sassoon was the most generous of the family and only a few years ago his daughter, Lady Boyle, who had retained her membership of the Congregation, left £500 to the synagogue. Sir Edward Sassoon took an active part in local politics and was Chairman of the Queen's Park Ward of Brighton. Baron Henry de Worms represented Adelaide Ward in the Hove Urban District Council and was for 21 years Chairman of the East Hove Conservative Association as well as being a local magistrate. Alfred Henriques also served as a magistrate in Hove.

Jacob Montefiore, who was born in Brighton in 1801, was, together with his brother Joseph Barrow Montefiore, a pioneer in the development of Australia, and the town Montefiore there is named after them. Jacob was one of the first Royal Commissioners appointed for the Government of South Australia and when he returned to Brighton took an active interest in the affairs of Middle Street. His daughter Emma married Philip Salomons, and this is another interesting link between the development of Australia, particularly New South Wales, and Brighton Jewry. Emanuel Aguilar is recorded in an 1839 Directory as living at 23 Hampton Place, Brighton, and his niece, Grace Aguilar, the famous Jewish woman writer and novelist, was a frequent visitor and wrote part of *The Spirit of Judaism* while at Brighton in 1837. Grace Aguilar died in 1847 but, incredible as it may sound, I recently visited a niece of Grace still alive and sound in Hove, the daughter of the youngest member of the family. Lieutenant-General Sir George Charles D'Aguilar, K.C.B., born a Jew, retired to 30 Brunswick Square, Hove, and is buried in the old Hove Parish Church in Church Road, the date of his death being 21 May 1855. The Old Parish Church is also of interest as being the church of the Basevis and Lindos after their conversion, with numerous plaques inside to their memory.

Moses Mocatta, brother-in-law of Sir Moses Montefiore, who had assisted the Congregation on numerous occasions, died at his residence at 122 King's Road, Brighton, on 17 September 1857, and his son Benjamin also died at Brighton on 24 December 1865. Moses Ricardo, brother of the economist David Ricardo, was a resident of the town for over 50 years and lived in Montpelier Road. He had no association
with the community but interested himself with local scientific societies and Societies for Educating Working Men. There are numerous roads in Hove with names of particular Jewish interest: Goldsmid Road, Montefiore Road, D'Avigdor Road, Julian Road (after Sir Julian Goldsmid), Osmond Road (after Sir Osmond Elia D'Avigdor Goldsmid), Somerhill Road, Somerhill Avenue and Court (after the Somerhill Estates of the D'Avigdor Goldsmids), Palmeira Square and Avenue (after the Portuguese title of Sir Isaac), and in its heyday in the 1890s the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway had engines named Goldsmid, Rothschild, and Jonas Levy.

Brighton has always been popular with London Jewry, a popularity which has at times aroused considerable comment. The relationships of the resident Jewish population with the other citizens of this area were generally good, but at times it was necessary to reply vigorously to attacks. One such attack occurred in March 1838 and was made by the editor of the *Brighton Patriot*. A reply simply signed 'A Jew' appeared in the *Brighton Herald*, which pointed out that in a town of 40,000 there were no Jewish beggars, drunkards, suicides, or prostitutes. Similar attacks in the 1850s were also dealt with. There has always been a history of religious dissent in Brighton and in 1866, as against 25 established churches, there were 37 dissenting places of worship, and this must have assisted to establish the remarkable degree of toleration shown in this town to its early Jewish inhabitants. The beach pedlars and hawkers in the latter part of the nineteenth century were mainly Jews, and elderly members can recollect that one of the Ministers paid the hawkers not to peddle their wares on the Sabbath, on condition that they deposited their trays, etc., in his house at the back of the synagogue. Another well-known and esteemed member of the Congregation left his jeweller's shop in North Street to his sons on condition that it was closed on Sabbaths and Festivals—the sons promptly bought the shop next door, knocked down part of the dividing wall, and installed a connecting door, so as to open on Sabbaths and Festivals.

The record of those making offerings in the nineteenth century includes L. H. Ettinhausen, the grandfather of our present Honorary Secretary, and many interesting characters such as Gesundheit and Son, Schampagne, Koppel Tom, Rygor's brother from Russia, an Indian Gentleman, Rachman Toeg from Shanghai, and Zaquista from Portugal. The minutes record responses to appeals for help during the nineteenth century, ranging from the Blood Libel at Damascus in 1840 to the Russian pogroms, a reminder of the constant sufferings of Jewry. The Congregation still found time to assist many new provincial and London congregations, such as Sheerness, Nottingham, Canterbury, Leicester, Great Yarmouth, Norwich, Swansea, North Shields, Edinburgh, Manchester Sephardi Synagogue, Southwark, and Hammersmith.

This small community, which had only grown to just under 100 resident Jewish families in 1900, has played an important part in Anglo-Jewish history, which has been previously neglected. Other famous names recorded in its archives, as well as those mentioned above, are well known to members of this distinguished society: Isaac Poligno, the Gubbays, the Guedallias, Dr. Louis Loewe are among them, besides so many more up to our own day with a worthy record of civic and other achievement.

APPENDIX

Land Tax Assessments Records—County Archives, Lewes

*Pre-1800 Brighthelmstone names:*

1780—Isaac Levi, East Cliff Lane.
    Abraham Benjamin, do.
    Solomon Myers, Middle Street.
1791—Israel Samuel, North Street.
    Isaac Levi, Knabb.
    A. Benjamin, Russell Street.
1795—Isaac Levi, West Street, in house owned by Stephen Pounes.
1798—Mrs. Samuels, North Street.

1800 onwards:
1808—Mrs. Moses, Middle Street.
   I. Cohen, Middle Street.
   Isaac Levi, West Street, Pounes Court.
   Abraham Benjamin, do.
1814—I. Cohen, for Montefiore, East Cliffe Lane.

The Brightelmstone Directory 1799, by Edward Cobby, 2nd edition:
Israel Samuel, silversmith and toyman, 22 East Street.
Isaac Levy, West Cliffe.
Emanuel Hyam Cohen, 37 Ship Street.
Abraham Benjamin, 1 Russell Street.
Moses Jacob Cohen, 2 Little Castle Square.
(All above lodging-house keepers)

Baxter’s Stranger in Brighton, 1822 and 1824 editions:
A. Abrahams, general dealer, of 8 St. John Street.
G. Behrens, musician, of 86 North Street.
Mr. Cohen, professor of languages, 25 Devonshire Place. (This was Levi Emanuel Cohen)
Joel Joseph, fruiterer, of 81 St. James Street.
Philip Levi, Bloomsbury Place.
Mr. Moses, watchmaker, and Mrs. Moses, boarding-house keeper, both of 32 St. James Street.
Henry Solomon, Inspector of Post Horse Duty, of 9 Charles Street.
Jacob Michael Silverston, jeweller and watchmaker, of New Road.
David Woolf, watch and clockmaker, of 2 King’s Road.
Hyam Lewis, pawnbroker, of 31 Ship Street.
Isaac Aaron, umbrella and parasol maker and ladies’ feather manufacturer, of 74 Church Street.
Saul Charles Aaron, auctioneer, of 15 Princes Street.
Moses Mocatta, of 77 King’s Road, and Moses Ricardo, of 61 King’s Road, are described as not in trade.

In 1839 the following additional names appear:
Emanuel Aguilar (uncle of Grace Aguilar).
Mrs. Da Costa.
Abraham de Paris.
Moses Solomon Defflis.
Isaac Lyon Goldsmith.
Benjamin Mocatta.
Joseph Pechchio.
Nathaniel Davis.
Benjamin Davis.
Samuel Simmons.
Woolfe Simmons.
Solomon Cohen.
Jacob Bing.
Alfred Alexander.
Samuel and Joseph Joel.
William Napthali.
Nathan Hyam.
Lewis Lyon.
B. Berliner.
Rev. Abrahams.
M. Moseley.
Moses Abraham.
J. Baum.
Benjamin Asher.
David Spector

Parish of Brighthelmstone, Jury List for 1836:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Princes Street</td>
<td>AARON, Saul Charles</td>
<td>Auctioneer</td>
<td>Poor Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple Street</td>
<td>ABRAHAM, Judah Isaac</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James Street</td>
<td>ABRAHAMS, Laurence</td>
<td>Pawnbroker</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarence Place</td>
<td>COHEN, Levy Emanuel</td>
<td>Printer</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting House Lane</td>
<td>COHEN, Solomon</td>
<td>Confectioner</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Lion Street</td>
<td>DAVIS, Benjamin</td>
<td>Brewer</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James Street</td>
<td>HYAMS, Nathan</td>
<td>Jeweller</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship Street</td>
<td>LEWIS, Benjamin</td>
<td>Pawnbroker</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regency Square</td>
<td>PAREZ, Joseph</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>London Road</td>
<td>PHILLIPSON, John Bradshaw</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montpelier Road</td>
<td>RICARDO, Moses</td>
<td>Esquire</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Road</td>
<td>SILVERSTON, Jacob</td>
<td>Watchmaker</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting House Lane</td>
<td>WOLFE, Aaron</td>
<td>Broker</td>
<td>do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acknowledgment is given to the valuable help and assistance given to me in the research necessary for this lecture by the staffs of the Reference Libraries of Brighton and Hove, especially for making available to me old directories, local newspapers, and various files of unclassified cuttings.