

SHEALTIEL GAZETTE

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF THE FAMILY NETWORK



Thessalonika scene of 1917

HISTORY

The line of King David

The *Responsa* record

Tombstones of Thessalonika

GENEALOGY

Origins of the North Sea family

—how the Saltiels became Sealtiels

“...Saltiel, Shmaltiel...”

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159 new-found households, Second

Reunion, & “Open door” responses

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Next issue—December 1995

The next issue will be published towards the end of December 1995. As well as articles of family reminiscence and history, it is intended to include a special report on genealogy, a review of family matters and a diary of forthcoming events.

Special feature—The line of David: We will publish responses from the family and scholars to the issues raised by Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen's article initiating debate on the hypothesis of the family's descent from the line of David.

ORGANISATION



THE FAMILY

The current family has three known lines: from the North Sea ports, the Levant, and the Danube valley, with links between them certain but as yet undocumented. All are the descendants of one or more Sephardi—that is Spanish Jewish—families, expelled from Iberia over the period 1492-7. We are variously known as Chaltiel, Chartiel, Saltiel, Sealtiel, Sealtiel, Shaltiel and Shealtiel, all derived from the Biblical שאלתיאל, generally translated as “asked of God”.

SHEALTIEL GAZETTE

The *Gazette* is an outgrowth of the *Magazine* published by Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen at the reunion in Amsterdam which first brought us together in August 1994. It is intended to be published and printed on an occasional basis—that is two or three times per year—in London, England.

It is distributed to subscribing members of the family and *gratis* to libraries and scholars, as well as to others with a professional interest in our subject matter.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Gazette* is to act as an international medium of communication between members of the family; and to support the re-establishment of ties between us. For the time being, the *Gazette* is being edited by Miles Saltiel, who welcomes contributions of all kinds, including material enabling us better to understand our own history, that is personal reminiscences, as well as genealogical or historical material.

We are not, however, to be only backward looking. The *Gazette* is intended also to be the forum for the exchange of family news, advice of forthcoming events of interest to members of the family, and reports of newly discovered members or branches of the family; as well as for the organisation of co-operative endeavours.

MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION

As the *Gazette* very much relies on contributions from members of the family, we look forward to continuing to hear from you. The *Gazette* welcomes text and illustrations that relate to any aspect of the

family, its history or its members; as well as opinionated articles and personal reminiscences of any kind. The Editor will acknowledge—but does not undertake to return—material.

It is particularly convenient to receive files by E-Mail via the *Gazette's* mail-box on COMPUSERVE on 100605,2677. For those unconnected to the Internet, please help by sending material intended for publication on a 3.5 inch disc, either in ASCII text, or formatted for Word for Windows 2.0/6.0 to the address below.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual fee is £20. Please remit ***in UK funds*** to the address below.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor welcomes letters from readers, whether or not members of the family. Please write to the address below. If intended for publication, please mark accordingly.

PUBLICATION

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Software Desktop published in Microsoft (MS) Word for Windows 2.0/6.0 ® and Coreldraw! 3.0 ®.

Clip-art Material may include graphics based on clip-art © New Vision Technologies Inc.

TrueType® fonts

Body text	Monotype (MT) Plantin™.
Title	MT Old Style Bold Outline™.
Greek	MS Symbol™.
Hebrew	Biblescript, © Galaxie Software.

The copy deadline for the next issue is 15th November 1995.

SHEALTIEL
GAZETTE

Editorial

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A NEW ISSUE of the *Gazette* is a good time to reflect on the achievements of the last five months. We have more than doubled the number of family households known to us to nearly three hundred. Advances have been particularly marked in France, Greece, Israel, and the United States. Also over this period, innumerable pedigree charts have been registered with Ed Motola. Congratulations and thanks to those whose efforts have borne such rewarding fruit. We are also continuing our examination of records copied by the Mormons to their Salt Lake City archive. So overall a highly satisfactory few months. The only disappointment might be that we have failed to organise a New Year's card in time for this autumn. I do hope that someone will come forward to develop something along these lines for next year.



HISTORY SETS THE TONE of this issue. We publish a preliminary investigation by Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen into the most ambitious theme so far emerging out of the renewal of family ties: the claim that we are descended from the house of David. We also include Moshe Shaltiel's first report of references to the family name in the *Responsa* and his return to the Thessalonikan funerary records. The *Gazette* plans to enlist an editorial panel of academic specialists in Jewish history to support the increasingly scholarly character of our material. We go on to a couple of articles prompted by genealogical investigations: the second instalment of Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen's reconstruction of the early years of the Dutch family from the archival record, including speculation about the origins of the North Sea branch of the family; and Jackie O'Callaghan's account of how her genealogical studies led her to the family.

Then to less academic contributions, including an interview with a resident of turn of the century Thessalonika; accounts of childhoods twelve thousand miles apart; recollections of a celebrated family scamp; and a more self-examining piece by George Cassuto. We close with the *View from Gloucester Square*, where I report how a business trip led me to the remnants of the camps at Auschwitz.

INTRIGUING LINKS EMERGE out of these articles. Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen reads the reference to "hen" in signature of the owner of the Shealtiel *Haggadah* as "noble"; Moshe Shaltiel reminds us of another possibility in his remarks about the links between the medieval families using the names Shealtiel and Hen. Other writers show how both Dutch and British families kept up the street-trading whose London faction made Alie Saltiel a local councillor. This last article closes on a piece of roguery with hints at links with the New Zealand of the following memoir. And we have a couple of links between the generations, with articles from Lawrence Saltiel (father) and Jackie O'Callaghan (daughter); and the celebration of the life of Daniel Shaltiel by his son.



THIS ISSUE is going out to all paid-up subscribers; as well as *gratis* for one issue to those newly discovered since the last copy. We have responded to requests by binding the directory of family members separately and restricting its circulation to the family. I hope that those newcomers who missed last year's Amsterdam reunion are able to capture something of its flavour from the accompanying supplement. Finally, special and heartfelt thanks to Aviva Goldschmidt, without whom there would have been neither this international *Gazette* nor the recently published French edition.

HISTORY

May we claim descent from David?

This preliminary examination by Vibeke Sealtiël Olsen of the fragmentary record of Jewish history concludes that there is merit in claims that the Shealtiel family has a Biblical origin; and is intended to initiate a debate on these matters.

I OFFER THIS as an opening contribution to a debate on the lineage of the Shealtiel family, in the hope that it will challenge readers to search for information to support or rebut my preliminary conclusion that the evidence is consistent with a link to the line of David.



IN CHILDHOOD I was told that the surname of my grandmother, Jacoba Sealtiël, was of Biblical origin. It was a great thrill for me to look in the Bible and see that this was true. It made me proud; who else but my grandmother had a name with such origins? When I renewed contact with my Dutch cousins, I learned that they shared my pride, expressing it in phrases like: “Our family are the descendants of King David”; and “My workmates call me ‘The King’, because our family name is mentioned in the Bible”.

When I started corresponding with Miles in 1993, I wrote that our family descended from the Biblical prince, Shealtiel. Miles doubted that there could be any realistic proof of kinship between a Biblical figure and a family in the Diaspora. His challenge stung me, and I determined to prove him mistaken.

Since then, I have made investigations to test the hypothesis that the family bears its name because of a direct link with the Biblical Shealtiel. The results have led me to develop an argument with three strands. First, that there are uncontested examples elsewhere of authentic family links over such a period. Second, that the continuity of post-exilic claims of descent

from the line of David should be taken seriously and may represent evidence in and of itself. Third, that the Shealtiëls have long made claims of this kind, which were apparently recognised in Medieval times.



THE FIRST difficulty to be faced by any modern claim of descent from the line of David is the immensity of the period. Incontestably, it would be extraordinary for an authentic bloodline to survive the approximately 130 generations since Zerubbabel, son of the original Shealtiel, returned from exile in 536BCE. Extraordinary, but not impossible. Such links have endured in both gentile and Jewish history. In gentile history, the Chinese family of Kung has an unbroken 2,500 year lineage. They are the descendants of Kung Fu-tse, or Confucius, who died in 479BCE, that is just three generations after Zerubbabel’s return. In Jewish history, the titles of two hereditary castes of Temple servants—the Cohens and the Levis—transmuted into family names, withstanding the generally prevailing patronymic usages and surviving to this day, that is for around three quarters of the period we are considering.

An associated difficulty is the turbulence of Jewish history. Turbulence has been no stranger to China, however, but the Confucian legacy was so momentous that those concerned exerted themselves to preserve and document their blood-link to the sage. descent from the line of David would be the most eminent in the Jewish tradition. We may surmise that an authentic lineage would command similarly intense commitment. In this light, I conclude that the length of the period is no bar.



THE DUTCH CLAIM OF descent from the line of David has respectable precedents. The record shows that from ancient times, such a descent has been claimed in the Diaspora. To address at the outset the principle of such claims, the issue of authenticity is both central and problematic. We are entitled to be sceptical about Babylonian or medieval claims reported to us at second or third hand. On the other hand, we should balance our scepticism with a recognition of the general historical reliability of much of the Jewish tradition. Many of the Biblical accounts of historical (as opposed to revela-

tory) events have been confirmed by the archaeological record, or corroborated by independent documentation from neighbouring peoples. This suggests that the Biblical authors were far from fanciful about historical matters.

When we come to the post-Biblical period, we may fear that the trauma of exile could have undermined such standards, the stresses of the Diaspora perhaps creating an appetite for reassuring myths. We must acknowledge that Jewish history has not been free from such episodes, in particular from false Messianism. The history of the early Diaspora offers no grounds for such concerns, however, with Jewish energies devoted to intellectual rather than imaginative synthesis, and a reassuring weight consistently placed on a disputatious and sceptical outlook. Other things being equal, moreover, such everyday material as the *Responsa* documentation may be taken as reliable for reports incidental to the matter under dispute.

Turning to specifics, descent from the line of David was the traditional claim of the Exilarchs, the hereditary leaders of the Jewish community of Babylon. No doubt the claim served a legitimating purpose, but it could also have been based on documentary or oral material which has failed to survive. So far, I have found no reference to Shealtiel from this period, but the documentation surviving is so sketchy that lacunae have little probative force. (*Editor's note: Moshe Shaltiel has told me that the Responsa documentation—see the article following for his first report—shows continuous references to historical persons bearing the name in the Diaspora.*)

Claims of noble, if not Biblical, descent recurred in medieval Spain. I quote from *Ashkenazim and Sephardim* by J. Zimmels.¹

An interesting parallel to the theory that the Sephardim derived their origin from the Jews in the south of Palestine is furnished by the beliefs which were current in the Middle Ages and in the centuries following that the Jews of Spain were the descendants of the noblemen in Jerusalem. These statements were meant to prove the nobility of the Sephardim....(op. cit. p 3)

The organisation of families bearing the names of famous ancestors was, as Nachmanides pointed out, customary also among the Mo-

ammedans. In Spain, the importance attached to nobility before the expulsion assumed such proportions that some people on being called up to the Torah refused to read the portion if the man who was to follow them was not of the same high rank as themselves...One can see already from this statement how great was the emphasis laid on nobility of birth by the Sephardim. (op. cit. p 280 ff.)

Towards the close of the Middle Ages there arises the explicit claim of descent from the line of David. Some Sephardic Jews stated that they were “of the seed royal and of the nobles”, or that they “had a tradition that they were of the Tribe of Judah and of the seed royal”. Other Jews made sarcastic remarks directed

“Claims of descent from the line of David go back too far into Jewish and family history to be dismissed out of hand”

...against those Sephardim who claimed superiority on account of their noble birth...(op. cit. p 283 ff)

Zimmels continues:

We also find some families claiming to be descended from Biblical personages or from famous scholars in the Middle Ages, and even claim to descent from the house of David is found. (op. cit. p 285).

Naturally, this proves nothing in and of itself. Those concerned were evidently self-aggrandising and may have become self-deluding. Alternatively, they too may have had access to documentary or traditional material which justified their claim. I also detect some probative weight in the apparent evidence that contemporary criticism was directed towards the social ambitions of the pre-Expulsion claimants rather than the authenticity of the claims themselves.

So to conclude on this score, I would argue that claims of descent from the line of David in post-Exilic Jewry need not be dismissed as unreliable. The evidence of continuous—albeit intermittent—such claims may, moreover, reflect the existence of confirmatory material now lost to us.



WE HAVE NO DIFFICULTY locating Shealtiels in this chain of events. The Jewish community was in continuous occupation of Babylon into the modern period and was a principal source of Jewish settlement for Islamic Spain. This provides the route over which a link would ex-

tend into the Sephardic cradle of our own family.

We may take it that the modern Shealtiels are the descendants of the series of namesakes emerging in medieval Catalonia. This included several prominent figures. The tombstone from Monzon de Campos, Palencia states that Rabbi Shemuel bar Shealtiel, who died on 27TH August 1097 bore the title *haNasi* (Hebrew: prince, leader). On grounds of prudence, let us decline the implication that the title *haNasi* denotes a royal descent per se. Even so, we should note that the local community attributed conspicuous distinction to the first person so far known to bear the name in the post-Biblical period. The professions attributed by the record to other medieval Shealtiels also denote distinction, including treasurers to the King of Aragon, Rabbis and physicians. Presumably other unrecorded Shealtiels had more modest stations, but we have no way of knowing what the balance might have been.

WHAT WE DO KNOW is that in due course the medieval family itself claimed noble, if not Biblical descent. I refer to Zimmels, op. cit. page 3.

Among the Ashkenazim as well as among the Sephardim there were some families which claimed a certain nobility by comparison with the rest of their countrymen. While, however, among the former this nobility attached to certain localities, among the latter this nobility was inherent in the families themselves...In Spain, aristocracy attached to certain families regardless of their place of birth and residence. Thus the following families were considered to be of high rank: Albalia, Abulafia, Albargeloni, Alfachar, Alnaqua, Benveniste, Ibn Ezra, Ibn Migash, Shaltiel, Sasson, Nasi, Falag and Ibn Giath...

The *Shealtiel Haggadah* provides confirmation of continuity into the early post-Expulsion period of both the family's tradition of medical practice and its claim to nobility. The owner identifies himself as: "Abraham hen ben Ja'udah Ha Rofe ben Emanuel ben Ja'udah LeBait Shealtiel". "Ha Rofe" means "the physician"; and "hen" is here read as "noble" rather than a reference to the Hen family.

Further post-Expulsion confirmation of the continuity of claims to Biblical origin may be found in the archival registrations of tax exempt families in the sixteenth century Otto-

man capital Constantinople. At the beginning of the century, Rabbi Shealtiel was the *Kakhya* (intermediary) between the Sephardic Community and the Ottoman authorities in Constantinople. Traditional sources suggest:

...that he was appointed to relieve the Rabbi of some of the burdens of office and to protect members of the community in their dealings with the government and with other groups in the Ottoman society. In fact the [*Kakhya's*] own interests and those of his associates often came first. (*Epstein* 1980, p 63 ff.)².

Epstein goes on to report that:

Jews who were among the important functionaries of the court and palace, and those who made special contributions to Ottoman life were often granted exemption from taxation for themselves and their descendants. This tradition dates back at least to the mid-fifteenth century and continues during the sixteenth century and

afterwards. (op. cit. p 183 ff.).

Adjacent in the tax register to a group of exempt families identified by name is another exempt group, apparently a family of physicians and annotated as descendants of David. According to Epstein:

...there is no indication so far who the scion of the family, to whom the exemption must first have been given, may have been. (op cit. p 183 ff.).

I am tempted to combine our knowledge of the tradition of physicians within the family and the position of *Kakhya* Shealtiel—who would have had no difficulty arranging a fiscal exemption—to sustain the conjecture that the family noted as descendants of David were also descendants of the *Kakhya*.

To conclude, there is no difficulty in locating persons bearing the name Shealtiel within the communities in which claims of descent from the line of David arose; and by the medieval period the record seems to show that the community at large recognised the claim of our forbears to noble, if not Biblical, descent.



I DO NOT claim that an authentic link has been proven at this stage. This said, I take the view that a reasonable reading of the record makes it premature to reject the hypothesis. The evidence from both gentile and Jewish his-

“It seems that medieval Jewry recognised the claim of our forbears to noble—if not Biblical—descent”

tory rebuts the view that we should dismiss a link merely on the grounds of the period of time. Early claims of descent from the line of David need not be seen as unreliable and their subsequent reiteration may be self-confirming. And there are Shealtiels involved in related traditions from at least medieval times. In his speech at the reunion dinner, Moshe referred to a family tradition told to him by the scientist Shmuel Shaltiel: "*Shaltielim son Reyes*"—The Shaltiels are of royal stock. I would like to believe—and I suggest that I have reasonable grounds for such belief—that this is a faint echo into our own time of an ancient tradition to which our family is heir.

It may be that others of us have family traditions which reflect our noble origin. I would be happy to hear from you on this score, welcoming support, rebuttal, and any additional information. Contributions to the debate will be published in the following issues of the *Gazette*.

Notes

1. J. Zimmels, "Ashkenazim and Sephardim: their relations, differences, and problems as reflected in the Rabbinical Responsa", London, Oxford University Press, 1958.
2. Mark Alain Epstein, "The Ottoman Jewish Communities and their Role in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries" *Islamkundliche Untersuchungen Band 56*, Freiburg, Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1980

Editor's response

I do not the least wish to rain on anybody's parade, but I do feel a responsibility to ensure that a debate of the kind opened up by Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen is conducted in a manner which brings no discredit to the family.

The author is right to characterise me as sceptical, but I should acknowledge that her article touches on issues which go beyond my capacity to edit them with authority.

In consequence I intend to convene an informal panel of qualified historians to advise me in these matters and will obtain a response to this article from one of their number. Those considering contributions to this debate should note that their material may be forwarded to one or more panel member, who will be asked to act in the capacity of academic scrutineer.

To avoid misunderstanding, the expenses arising will be to my account, rather than a charge to the Gazette.

M.S

The record of the *Responsa*

This article by Moshe Shaltiel draws attention to a celebrated reference to Shealtiel and associated families in the Responsa literature of exchanges between medieval rabbinical authorities.

ON THE NEVER-ENDING trail of the Shealtiels' imprint on history, I find I have struck pay-dirt, indeed a whole mother lode. I am speaking of the *Responsa*¹, the monumental collection of letters between medieval rabbinical scholars. This contains exchanges and commentaries on rulings by the religious authorities of the day, both formal *Beit Dins* (religious courts) and individual Rabbis whose learning had marked them out as authorities. The *Responsa* offers a comprehensive picture of the everyday preoccupations of the communities out of which its exchanges arose.

A researcher can spend his life and never master this mountain of knowledge—until recently available only in the form of dozens, if not hundreds, of unindexed volumes. The student's difficulty is all the more if he is looking for a name rather than a subject. To my great good fortune, some years ago the Bar Ilan University in Israel launched the *Responsa Project*. This will compile the *Torah*, *Mishnah*, *Talmud* and *Responsa* onto CDs enabling computer-based searches. The benefits of this project to researchers are self-evident. As for my own agenda it will enable me to "surf" through history for the Shealtiel footprint. Since Miles is ready to go to print with the next *Gazette* (why he named the first one number two is a mystery to me) I have chosen one sample from the *Responsa* to share with the family:

The Barcelona ban of 1305 CE

THE BEGINNING OF the fourteenth century caught the Jewish community in Spain exposed to a rapidly changing world. Cultural trends, availability of different teaching, many translations of foreign studies, and the daily communication with the "outside world", caused anxiety among the leadership of the Jewish community who saw the perils in what they saw as the "Hellenisation" of our people. The concern was that the younger generation would steer away toward the lure of "the outside". They felt that the youth should be "immune" until ready to face the outside world.

On the second Saturday in *Av* (August 4) with the consent of the entire community, Chief Rabbi Shlomo of Barcelona and his *Beit Din* (court) declared a ban on any "outside" studies whether of nature or of theology. Exempt from the ban was the study of medicine. This ban applied to everyone under the age of twenty-five and was to expire fifty years later.

The gravity of the situation and the reluctance of the leadership to limit studies is expressed clearly by the lengthy explanation (three different legal papers—almost of apology) the date chosen to declare the ban—Saturday before the ninth of *Av*, the day of the destruction of the Temple and a day always held in awe—as well as the inclusion as signatories of a substantial list of famous rabbis and scholars.

Twelve of the thirty-six signatories of the Barcelona Ban are Shealtiels² or families known to have used the Shealtiel name such as Hen (cited in the *Haggadah*), Hasdai and Sheshet (also cited in the *Haggadah*).



LOOKING BACK FROM the perspective offered by today's distance of almost seven hundred years, we may well admire the tolerance and wisdom of the leadership of the day. Their combination of determination and humility shows up well in the light of the earliness of the times and the severity of the perceived threat. Their restraint also bears favourable comparison with the methods of the Catholic church in parallel circumstances some two hundred years later: inquisition, confiscation, pogrom and finally expulsion—all in the name of God and the defence of religion.

Notes

1. The case law developed after the *Talmud* was completed and sealed.
2. The name appears as *Ben-Shealtiel*. We understand that the *Ben* was dropped in Thessalonika around 1600 CE

The tombstones of Thessalonika—II

These notes by Moshe Shaltiel supplement the analysis he presented in the last issue.

MY STUDY OF the Thessalonika tombstone, published in the previous *Gazette* attracted responses which add to our knowledge of family history:

1534 CE—Tombstone of Rabbi Shlomo Levi (paid for by Delicia, wife of Chasdai Shaltiel):

Cousin Leila Abravanel from Bellevue, Washington, was reading the study to her ninety-four year old father Alberto Saltiel when he started laughing: (in fact, I heard he is still laughing). Yes, he says, it is true. Delicia paid for the tombstone and she was the wife of Chasdai. The reason he is sure: he is their nephew. Well, how can he be her nephew you ask? Simple: Rabbi Levi died in 1534, but his tombstone was in bad shape and in 1870 the late Delicia paid for a *new* tombstone to an *old* grave. This shows how careful we have to be while tracing our family.



ON JUNE 23RD 1995, I received a call from Alex Carasso-Saltiel of Argentina, (no, he does not know Santiago, but will call him) who received a copy of the *Gazette* from his mother and recognised Rabbi Sadi as his great-grandfather. Raina Molcho, a Thessalonika cousin and historian, confirmed that our elders in Thessalonika remember Rabbi Sadi as a *Dayan* (religious judge) and that he is related to my branch of the family. On his way to Paris, Alex was to attend the French reunion planned for the weekend of June 24TH by cousins Christine and Jacques Saltiel. He promised to give Philippe Saltiel his family chart, so we could incorporate it into our family tree.

New family line

A PROFESSOR AT Bar Ilan University who I questioned about *Figo Loco* referred me to Jaco Hendeli from Jerusalem. Curiously the same Jaco attended the first Israeli family reunion that Gila and I hosted just a few days before at our Jerusalem residence. He came as a guest of Raoul Saltiel of Tel Aviv (from the Han Bechor branch). Jaco said his grandfather told him that they, the Hendeli family, belonged to the *Figo Loco* synagogue. That seemed strange as we know that the *Figo Loco* was a synagogue exclusive to the Saltiel family. Jaco was sure about his information and he even wrote about it in a book that he published some years ago.

During the conversation, Jaco told me that his family name is really a Hebrew-Aramaic name Hen-De-Li which means “my Hen” or “my grace”. He had considered once changing it back to the name Hen but that President Shazar of Israel, and a noted historian convinced him not to do it because of the uniqueness of the Hebrew-Aramaic combination. Now, of course, the mystery is solved: the Hen family is associated with ours: we know of several instances where the name is suffixed with the addition “of the house of Shaltiel”¹. In this light, we are delighted to welcome Jaco Hendeli as a fully-fledged Shaltiel.

Notes

1. See *Shealtiel Haggadah* and *Responsa study*.

GENEALOGY



The origins of the family—how the Saltiels became Sealtiels

In this article based on genealogical material found in the Amsterdam archives, Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen speculates about the origin of the North Sea branch, and presents her reconstruction of the evolution of the Dutch family, together with some surmises about links between family lines.

BEFORE 1992, WHEN the investigation into the origin of the Amsterdam Sealtiels started, the Dutch family generally believed that our forebears came directly from Portugal. This was based on the fact that the family was part of the Sephardic congregation of Amsterdam, whose full name in Dutch was *De Portugees-Israëlitische Joodse Gemeente van Amsterdam* (The Portuguese-Israelite Jewish community of Amsterdam). Many members of this congregation were descended from so-called *Marranos* or “New Christians”, who had lived in Spain or Portugal under Christian cover, reverting to Judaism in the sixteenth or seventeenth century on their arrival in Amsterdam or other western European cities.



AFTER OUR REDISCOVERY of the Saltiels of Mediterranean origin and their possible links with the Sealtiels of Western Europe, there is an alternative to the hypothesis of direct Portuguese origin. This is that the forebears of the Dutch Sealtiels were not *Marranos*, that is they had not been baptised and had never lived in Portugal. On this view, the family would have left Spain before or during the expulsion of 1492, and gone to live in other Mediterranean countries, which they could reach by ship from the ports on the coast of Catalonia, in which most medieval references to Shealtiels occur.

In the following years, the record shows Shealtiels in Rhodes, Hania (Crete), Constantinople and Thessalonika. Saltiels lived in the latter from the sixteenth century onwards, but the decline of trade which occurred in the seventeenth century may have caused members of the family to leave. Whereas some Saltiels went to live in the Balkans, we may surmise that Saltiels engaging in finance emigrated to

the imperial capital and financial centre, Constantinople. Such dealings were conducted with Jews and Christians from both Western Europe and other Mediterranean countries. The Isaac Saltiel of Constantinople of whom we have a record, was a broker, so explaining his presence in the Ottoman capital. His dealings with the English merchant company, Thomas & Son, would give him the opportunity to organise emigration to London.

On this view, his presumed son Eliau was probably born in Constantinople, and emigrated to London as an infant, or was born in London after the arrival of his parents.

Eliou Saltiel is mentioned for the first time in the registers of the *Nota dos Consertos*, the poor relief fund of the Sephardic Congregation of Amsterdam. When Eliau Saltiel had his bans published in Amsterdam in 1760 he was said to be “of London”. Eliau could write his own name, but on his Ketubah of 14 Tishrei 5522 (1762), his surname spelled wrongly in Hebrew as סלתיאל, instead of שאתיאל. This suggests two possibilities: firstly, that Eliau was not able to read the Hebrew characters (or he did not care about these matters); and secondly, that the Sephardic congregation of Amsterdam had no knowledge of the Saltiel family, and of the Biblical origin of our family name.



DAVID, THE OLDEST son of Eliau’s second marriage, was born in November 1773 while Sara, Eliau’s first wife, was still alive. She and her children may have been living in the same house as David and his parents. When David was *Bar Mitzvah* in 1783 (21 Adar 5546), he was given *tephillin* (phylacteries) and *tsitsit* by the Sephardic Congregation, enabling

him to fulfil his religious obligations. He used the *tephillin* for three years before the congregation gave him new ones (3 Sivan 5549). David seems to have been pious, and his connections with the *Esnoga* (Sephardic synagogue) must have been close. David's father died when he was only seventeen years old, and David had to find a living in order to be able to support his mother and younger siblings.

TWO YEARS LATER, in 1793, David was working as a servant of the *Esnoga* of Amsterdam. In the month of November, he had his bans published with Gracia Levy Montezinos. Gracia was the daughter of Isaac de Joseph Montezinos and Debora Da Silva Rosa. Gracia was twenty-five years old and David stated that he was twenty-six years old, but this was not true. David and Gracia married in the *Esnoga* in the year 1793 (20 Kislev 5554). At the time of his marriage, the Biblical origin of the name had been noticed and it was spelled in a way that reflected this. Unlike his father, David was literate and one of the servants of the *Esnoga*. In his signature, he writes the name as "Sealtiël". Like many another Saltiel and Sealtiël—past and present—David would have been proud of his claim (discussed in the first article in this issue) to be a descendant of King David and the Biblical Shealtiel. The dieresis (the two dots similar to an umlaut over the "e", denoting a separately pronounced syllable) on the suffix "-iël", conveys his wish to acknowledge the Hebrew origin of his name.

After their marriage, David and Gracia lived at the "Sonnehofje" (Sun Garden) in Marken, a minute's walk from the *Esnoga*. The "Sonnehofje" was one of forty-six narrow alleys on the Marken Island, each being too narrow for two people to pass each other. The area was overbuilt with slums and each house was split into several apartments: damp basements, tiny backyard dwellings and dark rooms under the roofs, which were inhabited by the poorest families in return for a few cents weekly rent. In one of these houses, their first son, Eliau, was born on 6 April 1794. The child was named after David's father.

In 1795 David was given a *tallith* (prayer shawl) from the poor relief fund of the Sephardic congregation, as his financial situation did not allow him to pay for this kind of expense himself. Their second son Isaac was born in 1797. The child was named after the recently de-

ceased father of Gracia. David and Gracia's first two daughters were named after their paternal and maternal grandmothers Deborah and Ester. Both the girls died as babies.

Between the years 1797 and 1813, David and Gracia lived in Marken, where they had seven daughters and another son, before their youngest son Joseph was born on 28 October 1813. Gracia gave birth to a child about every two years, but she and David also suffered the loss of five of their babies. The surviving children were a source of happiness to their parents. David sent all his sons to school, where they studied the Jewish religion, and learned reading and writing in Dutch.



IN 1796, THE JEWS of Holland were granted civil equality but, though no occupation was any longer closed to the Jews, most of them kept in the line of business they had been in for generations. The daily life was affected by the massive immigration of poor Ashkenazi Jews, causing increasing competition in business and fervent religious disputes between the two groups. From 1814 onwards, the use of Yiddish was prohibited in schools and synagogues. The daily use of the Dutch language eased the assimilation of the Ashkenazi Jews into Dutch society. In the early nineteenth century, most Jews in Amsterdam spoke Yiddish with some Dutch words mixed in, except the Sephardic minority who continued speaking Portuguese among one another until well into the nineteenth century.

There was a massive presence of Portuguese Jews in the *Esnoga* of the Sephardic Congregation of Amsterdam. The Congregation was very wealthy and well known and its members boasted of their noble origin. After the wealthy Portuguese merchants had arrived in Amsterdam from the seventeenth century onwards, these former "New Christians" directly returned to Judaism and joined the "Portuguese Jewish" (Sephardic) Congregation of Amsterdam.

THE SEPHARDIC CONGREGATION of Amsterdam strengthened the pride of its members of being Sephardic and gave a monetary gift when Sephardic Jews married each other, rather than marrying an Ashkenazi. The Sephardic Jews of Amsterdam had their own expression for this pride. The *Grandezza* of the Sephardic Jews of

Amsterdam was well-known and, until 1940, the Sephardic Jews looked down upon the Ashkenazi Jews.



As the son of an eastern immigrant, it may be supposed that David spoke Ladino with his family and, as a servant and member of the Sephardic synagogue of Amsterdam, he had to use the Spanish language also for prayers and during sermons in the *Esnoga*. Unlike the other Sephardic Jews of Amsterdam, David would probably not have spoken Portuguese in his daily life, and this might have affected his social intercourse with the Jews of Portuguese origin.

David Saltiel's family was one of the poorest of the Sephardic families of Amsterdam, though his function as a servant of the *Esnoga* was considered honourable.

The inherent prestige of this function would have made David and his family respected by the Portuguese Jews of Amsterdam. Unlike the children of the hawkers, the sons of David were not obliged to help their father with his work, and they went to school together with the children of the Portuguese Jews.

They must have learned to speak the Portuguese language through these contacts, and hence the children of David Saltiel assimilated and became known as "Dutch-Portuguese Jews". Indeed, in subsequent times members of the Sealtiel family have claimed—we now believe erroneously—that our family was of directly Portuguese origin. It was the children of David Saltiel who were the first to sign official documents with the adjusted family name "Sealtiel", instead of the original "Saltiel".

Map of Jewish Quarter, Amsterdam

In 1813, David's daughters Luna and Rachel were eight and six years old, respectively. We may picture them playing with their baby brother Joseph. Their older brothers Eliau, Isaac and Benjamin were aged nineteen, sixteen and ten, respectively, at that time. The family had left their home at the corner of the Leproosengracht on the Vlooyenburg Island, where so many of their infant children had died. They went to live in the Rapenburgerstraat no. 55, where their five children would stay healthy. After that, Gracia gave birth to no more children.

WHEN JOSEPH REACHED school age in 1819, his mother was fifty-two years old and the rearing of children was becoming a heavy duty for her. Gracia happily let her daughters, Rachel and Luna, help her to take care of the house and the family. Gracia and David were happy and proud when their second son Isaac married Ribca Montezinos in 1819. After their wedding, Isaac and Ribca went to live in the Korte Houtstraat in Vlooyenburg. In November 1820 Gracia and David became grandparents for the first time when Isaac and Ribca had a baby daughter. The child was named Rachel Gracia, after her grandmothers.

It seems that the oldest son, Eliau, regularly travelled to The Hague for his work, as it would have been there that he met Clara Drievet, an Ashkenazi girl. Eliau and Clara got engaged. They were married in The Hague, where their first daughter, Gracia, was born in 1823. Eliau was a hawker. After the death of their daughter in 1827, Eliau and Clara moved back to Amsterdam, where they lived in the Lange Houtstraat in Vlooyenburg.



THE MARRIAGE OF ELIAU to an Ashkenazi girl is likely to have been something that neither David nor Gracia would have welcomed but, with the fate of his brother Isaac in mind (see the article "Founding Father" in VOL I, NO 2), David seems to have been reconciled to the choice of his oldest son. David would have helped Eliau and Clara when they returned to Amsterdam, probably asking his acquaintances if they could offer his son work.

In 1825 David's mother died at the age of eighty-six. Ester had been a widow for thirty-five years. She had been a point of focus within the family, respected and loved very much by her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who had often visited her. The whole family was very sad about her decease. Her great age was probably seen as a sign of the grace of God, might and good fortune.

From 1825 onwards, Benjamin was the only son who lived with his parents, after most of his siblings had married or left home. He probably had difficulty making a living for himself in Amsterdam. It seems that he must have become fed up with his lack of prospects. Inspired by the example of his uncle Joseph, in 1826 Benjamin decided to emigrate to Hamburg. He arrived in Hamburg

in September and asked the Sephardic Congregation for permission to settle. It took three years before he was accepted as a member of the Sephardic Congregation. In June 1829 the Congregation gave notice that they accepted him as a member "as they had not heard any complaints about his behaviour", and on condition that his uncle Joseph de Eliau Saltiel would guarantee him with 200 Mk Crt immediately and 2 Mk Crt each week thereafter. Benjamin married Jehudith Goldschmidt in Hamburg on 15 July 1829. Subsequently, Benjamin and Jehudith lived at Neuen Wall in Hamburg. Benjamin made a living as a vendor of lottery cards.



THE YOUNGEST DAUGHTER of David and Gracia, Rachel, was a source of serious problems in 1829. She had left the house of her parents, and had become pregnant, though she was unmarried. In October 1829 Rachel gave birth to a daughter, without mentioning the name of the father. Rachel must have been very ashamed of what had happened to her, and the birth of her daughter was not registered within the Sephardic Community. The civil registration of her child was done by two of her neighbours. This may be because Rachel had not confessed to her family that she was pregnant, or that her family refused to have contact with her because of the scandal. The two neighbours of Rachel did not know how to

***"The Hamburg Synagogue
accepted him as they had
heard no complaints of his
behaviour"***

spell her family name correctly, hence Rachel's daughter was given the name Rachel David Sealtille. Rachel was too sick or too exhausted to correct the erroneous registration, or maybe she did not care. One month later the child died. The civil registration of the death was made by her "cousin", Isaac Nabaro, a thirty year old hawker. It is possible that he may have been the natural father of the child. The expression "cousin" was used frequently at civil registration to express an unofficial relationship, and no Nabaro is known to have been married to a member of the Sealtiel family.

A year later, one day before her twenty-third birthday, Rachel was married to Juda Cassuto, who was a student of the Jewish religion. Rachel and Juda had three sons and three daughters. The children must have been relatively healthy, as only one of their infant sons died. Rachel herself could not have had a strong constitution. After fifteen years of marriage, she died in 1845 at the age of thirty-eight, leaving Juda to care for their five children aged between three and thirteen years old.

I do not know what happened to Luna, the youngest daughter of David and Gracia. There is no record that she married or died in Amsterdam, and the Sephardic Congregation only has the record of her birth in 1805. Luna does not appear in the municipal registration of 1851, so she must have left Amsterdam by then. It might be that Luna married and lived outside Amsterdam, or that she emigrated to another country, but Amsterdam has no archive of emigrations before 1851.

AS THEIR CHILDREN were founding and raising their own families, David and Gracia had become elderly people. In the years from 1820 to 1837, they had witnessed the birth of five children from Eliau and Clara, eleven children from Isaac and Ribca, and four children from Rachel and Juda. Meanwhile, they had learned of the birth of three granddaughters in Hamburg. Of his twenty-three grandchildren, sixteen were still alive in 1837, when David died at the age of sixty-four. Until his death David stayed in his home in the Kerkstraat 116. He was buried at the Sephardic cemetery in Ouderkerk a/d Amstel. His wife and children paid for a tombstone to be placed on his grave.

In September 1838, the youngest son Joseph married Abigael Benavente, and subsequently a grandchild, David, was born in 1839. Gracia was probably very happy about these events, unlike that of the decision of her son, Eliau, and his wife, Clara, to move back to The Hague, as we may take it she would have preferred to be closer to her grandchildren. Gracia survived her husband by five years, dying at the age of seventy-five in January 1842. On her tombstone were engraved the names of Eliau and Benjamin, her two sons who had left Amsterdam. Her other two sons Isaac and Joseph stayed in Amsterdam, their situation being satisfactory enough for them to settle down in their new country.

***“Close contacts continued
between the families that
emigrated and those
staying in Amsterdam”***

Hence, the Sealtiel line continued in Amsterdam through the descendants of Isaac, Joseph and Rachel, who carried on the name—spelled variously as Sealtiel and Sealtiel.

Most of the family was very poor, but family ties were strong, and they would give help to each other whenever necessary.



CONTACTS WERE KEPT up between the families that emigrated and those that stayed in Amsterdam. These contacts must have existed until the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1889, when Joseph David Sealtiel and Abigael Benavente celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary, they placed a newspaper announcement informing all their family, living inside and outside Holland, of the celebration. Another example is seen in a German letter from Herman Sealtiel to David Shaltiel in 1966. Herman owned a *Siddur* (prayer book) with the name “Samuel Sealtiel” printed on it. He believed that it had belonged to an unknown uncle of his father. He was right as the owner can only be Samuel Sealtiel, *shammas* at the *Esnoga* from 1883 until 1942. As a boy, the father of Herman must have occasionally travelled from Hamburg to Amsterdam to visit his second cousins and the rest of the Dutch family. But by 1966, family ties between the Sealtiel branches in Amsterdam and Hamburg were lost and Herman mistakenly concluded that the Dutch Sealtiels were no kin.

By then, any memory of the Mediterranean origin of the family had also long disappeared from the Dutch family, and today there are no Sealtiels who speak the Ladino language.

Saltiel, Shmaltiel...

...a Jew by any other name...

...would be easier to spell

How Jackie O'Callaghan's interest in genealogy drew her to the discovery of her family.

I MAKE NO APOLOGIES for the irreverent title. Jews have survived by their ability to laugh at themselves. Born a Jew and a Saltiel, I reserve those rights.



“**T**HAT'S S.A.L.T.I.E.L.” We had to spell it every time. My surname caused me untold misery as a child—nobody had heard of it, or could pronounce it, let alone spell it. I got called “Saltpot” and other would-be witticisms (not yet having learned the art of self-raillery), and was glad my married name was rather more user-friendly. I now wish, husband or not, that I had held on to the original, because it is a name to be proud of, and there are probably less than two thousand of us on the planet.

Genealogy, having licked at my thoughts for years, finally bit me in my mid-forties. I read that it tends to happen at this age for some reason; with the possible exception of lifelong devotees such as Cousin Vibeke! I acquired an unquenchable thirst for knowledge of my ancestors. Like many people, I regretted not having quizzed my late grandparents about the “olden days”. My mother always talked about her own family, so I assumed that there was nothing else to learn about the Saltiel side. I was wrong. My address book has doubled to prove it.



I KNEW THE TASK of tracing my forebears would be difficult because of the way Jews have dispersed around the world. On a working holiday visit to Israel in 1990 (helping to restore the Botanical Gardens in Jerusalem), I had been told that “Shaltiel” was a very old and respected name, and also that of a distinguished General. The “iel” suffix, I was informed, meant, “my ruler is God”—as in Daniel, Gabriel, etc. The Museum of the Diaspora in Tel Aviv, albeit on a hurried visit, yielded nothing at that time. I was puzzled, and determined to find out more.

First stop was St. Catherine's House in London, which records births, marriages and deaths in England from 1837. I was glad the name was not common, then, for although I did have to manhandle numerous gigantic tomes off the shelves before I found a Saltiel, where they were recorded, there was only ever one per quarter-year volume—no wading through dozens of similar titles! (There was, too, on seeing my own birth entry, that odd feeling that among all the millions of entries, there one was, in black and white...) I ordered a copy of Elias (Alec) Saltiel's—my grandfather's—birth certificate. Its arrival in the post was like a birthday itself. It showed his parents' names, occupations and the address where he was born.

I WAS HOOKED. My father, Lawrence (Lorrie), always said that his grandfather's name had been Ralph and that was all he knew. I was delighted to find it was in fact Raphael. I had always loved that name and had I known at the time, I might have used it for my son Mark's middle name (even if Raphael did desert his family to go to the USA...). I searched backwards from Elias's birth, and I ordered a copy of Raphael's marriage certificate, which revealed that his father was also called Elias and, as I suspected, was already dead at the time of his grandson's birth, because of the Jewish custom of not naming children after the living (a usual pointer in Jewish genealogy if you have no other information.)

Raphael, aged twenty-two, had married Gertrude de Roode, aged twenty-one. Her parents were David, a tailor, and Clara, who could not apparently write her name because a cross appears on the appropriate place. They were married from 14 Dock Street, White-chapel on 5TH June, 1884 in the Registry Office, which makes me wonder why they did not marry in the synagogue. Was Gertrude not Jewish after all? Was she pregnant? Elias arrived on 21ST April 1885, so that does not seem likely. Raphael's birth was not recorded at St. Catherine's, so I reluctantly concluded

that he had indeed been born abroad. Saltiel was, I knew, a Sephardic name—so had they come from Iberia? Would I have to go there to find out? (I did not know, then, that they had fled five hundred years ago!) My time and resources were very limited. That, I thought sadly, was that. Wrong again.

I RARELY SAW my Aunt Betty, widow of my Uncle Henry (Lorrie's brother), but we spoke on another matter and she told me (I should have asked her sooner if she had any information) that Saltiel, though not common, is better known in Holland and that many Jews had come from there—as cigar makers—in the nineteenth century. This sounded promising, but a search through Dutch records did not seem very practicable either!

Shortly after that she told me about Vibeke and Miles and sent me a copy of the "Shealtiel" booklet produced by the latter, with the genealogical table showing the descendants of Elias of Amsterdam, my great-great-grandfather—cited on Raphael's marriage certificate.

I was astounded. My family had always seemed small, especially compared to my husband's crowd of relatives (for which I rather envied him). I only knew of my parents, grandparents, and a handful of aunts, uncles and cousins. Now, here I was, a few days later, talking on the telephone to a real live cousin (Miles) I never knew existed. My astonishment was complete when I discovered that Raphael had had several siblings, one of whom, Abraham, had twenty children, and another, Rebecca, had about fourteen. So, suddenly I was part of a huge family too.

F IRED WITH ENTHUSIASM, I looked up all the Saltiels in the UK telephone books (barely a dozen, and only eight of whom I did not know), and sent them copies of the booklet, the genealogy tables and news of the planned reunion. I got immediate excited replies from several, all related (Abraham's line). Many of them attended the Reunion, and I was pleased to have played a part, albeit small, in getting everyone together. From one or two, though, there was nothing, despite a follow-up letter and a stamped addressed envelope. It takes

great self-discipline to accept that while most people are enthusiastic about discovering their forebears, a few just do not want to know. It is frustrating too, because they could have valuable information. We must find ways of approaching and persuading them, even if they do not wish to be involved with the family, to let us have what they know of its history. Any ideas?

There was further information from Vibeke on the Amsterdam Saltiels, and I was fascinated by the lovely Spanish names: Monteiro, Querido, Delafuente... A cousin from New Zealand, another keen genealogist, told me at the Reunion that Raphael would have been named after his maternal grandfather, David de Raphael

Montezinos; a romantic name indeed! I discovered too, that if (when) I next visit Israel, I can tell them I am related to the distinguished General, David Shaltiel.



THE REUNION ITSELF, as whoever was there would probably agree, was a whirl of activity tempered by a sense of unreality. A cousin summed it up in his video interview: we had spent our lives with this odd name that nobody had heard of, then suddenly here was a large hallful... one could not get used to seeing so many Saltiels at once (lovely though they all are!).



RETURNING FROM AMSTERDAM, having met relatives and namesakes from all over the world, I was anxious to discover whatever else I could—time, cost, work and numerous other interests permitting. It seemed that as our eighteenth century forbears had had so many children, there must be parallel lines in existence, and Vibeke and others have endorsed this through their exhaustive researches. A lot of it has indeed been done—but one likes to think one could be instrumental in discovering the missing link, or a line hitherto unexplored. The children of Rebecca "Aunt Becky Cole" prove elusive—Cole is a common name—so perhaps I shall adopt that as my goal.

Looking through Census records on microfilm is not everyone's idea of fun, but it is fascinat-

“My family had always seemed so small, especially compared to my husband's crowd of relatives”

ing to see the actual entries, carefully handwritten (or tiredly scrawled) by the enumerators of the time. I have worked on two modern censuses myself, calling at every house and having to record each and every person living there, so I can sympathise with whoever did the same in the crowded slums of nineteenth century London, full of immigrant families with language difficulties—perhaps it is not so very different now.

HISTORY UNFOLDS AS you search the Censuses at ten-year intervals. I found Elias with his family in 1871, his name spelled “Ellis Soltiel” (QED!) His son, Abraham, appears in 1881, married and with the first three of his children (his name is spelled “Sentiel”—it is remarkable that the name stayed intact despite this). In 1891, he has another four children (name correctly spelled). We must wait until 2001 to see the rest! His address at the time is the one appearing on my Grandpa’s birth certificate, so Alec was born in his uncle’s house. (Another piece in the jigsaw, as it were—little details like this put the whole thing into context and make it a story of “real” people, instead of just names and dates.)

I have yet to find where Raphael lived, or Emmanuel, the other brother. Aunty Becky Cole does appear with six children in 1891, but that is as far as it goes. If anyone would like

copies of the entries, let me know. Immigration lists are my next target, to find out when Raphael and Emmanuel emigrated to America, and hopefully where they landed.



THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE has shown me how little I knew of my Jewish heritage—indeed I have learned a great deal from the various accounts of Jewish life and customs written by those who have contributed to the *Gazette* and the talks and family books shown at the Reunion. My own children have not so far shown a great deal of interest—they are busy forging their own lives, and have in fact been more involved with their father’s relatives than with mine. My daughter has hung her three Reunion posters on one side of her hall, however, with the Irish “O’Callaghan” crest on the other, which evokes much interest from visitors to her flat! Perhaps when they are older they will begin to look at their origins, and I hope to give them enough information so they do not regret not asking for it, as I did. This is where it is not only the most senior members of the family who can help—if everyone writes down their memories, even the “little things” like, well, the colour of the wallpaper etc., it will help towards creating a fascinating—and potentially very valuable—slice of social history.

ORAL HISTORY



Memories of Salonika

A resident of Thessalonika during the earliest years of the century who has requested to remain anonymous responds to questions from Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen.

Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen:

Were you born in Salonika? What do you remember about this city?

Respondent:

Yes, I was born in Salonika in 1906. I spent my childhood there, but made many trips to France (especially during the Græco-Turkish war of 1911-12): to Marseilles where two of my father's brothers lived and to Paris where my mother's brother lived.

What do I remember about Salonika? My answer is that it was "sunny", both literally and figuratively.

For me, the year consisted of three months of cold, snowy, windy winter and nine months of summer, sometimes windy (the Vardar wind), but always bright and warm. Everything that now makes tourism so successful in Greece. The sea during the day, and even at night when the boatmen sailed along the coast extolling the merits of the boats and proposing a sail. Family gatherings and get-togethers with friends, without any distinction of age or generation, where in the cool of the evening, in restaurant gardens or at home, ten or fifteen people sat around and visited long into the night.

"Sunny" also figuratively. Of course, children living in a sheltered atmosphere couldn't know there were difficulties for some parts of the population, problems which must have existed here just as elsewhere. They felt comfortable in this stable atmosphere and unconsciously appreciated: family, religious festivals, charitable activities.



V.S.O:

When did your family move to France, and why?

R:

When? In July 1919 right after the First World War.

Why? My father died in 1916. In 1917, the fire which devastated Salonika also destroyed our

ancestral house. My mother¹ no longer needed to stay in Salonika. She decided to move, with my two sisters and myself, close to our family in France.

However, this "why" raises interesting questions when applied to large-scale migration (in which other Saltiels took part) that occurred in the 1920s. Leaving a country after a pogrom or in fear of a pogrom needs no explanation. However, for the "Israelites"², which was the term used then instead of Jews³, of Salonika who led a peaceful and prosperous life, why? One could only say "perhaps" because...

OK then, perhaps because in Greece, as before in Turkey, there was a state religion and you were not really Greek if you weren't Orthodox. The policy with regard to different nationalities was not one of integration but simply of association; consequently, legislative representation was based on separate electoral colleges. No matter how peaceful and prosperous life was, we remained in a category apart (like Roman Catholics and others) and, in any case, our status was not "inferior" in Salonika, which had a Jewish majority.



This majority was passionately interested in the emancipation of their fellow Jews in Western countries. The French Revolution and its Declaration of the Rights of Man, the Dreyfus affair (the French officer condemned for espionage, then totally exonerated) were closely followed by the Jewish newspapers.

The major newspapers were in French: *L'Indépendant* and *L'Opinion*. In this town you could here Judeo-Spanish (Ladino) dating from before the Inquisition, Greek, Turkish and, in the port, snatches of conversation in all dialects. But the principal foreign language, more important than English, Italian and German, was French.

This was due to the education acquired at the Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Mission Laïque Française. When learning a language, you also learn its culture; it's not just your mind which is educated but also your heart which is won—especially during a war and its dangers. From the teacher's standpoint, this could be considered intellectual "colonialism". From the student's standpoint, it's simply intellectual "naturalisation".



Under these conditions, you can imagine the friendly and enthusiastic welcome given to the allied troops, including a large French contingent, when they debarked at Salonika in 1915 to form the Eastern front. This front was located well north of the town, but the town itself and its surrounding were inundated with soldiers.

In addition to sympathy, there was business. These tens of thousands of soldiers had to be fed. The port was booming and local production was entirely bought up. The army suppliers were euphoric. For three wonderful years, the people of Salonika felt perfectly at home in the language they spoke and in the relations they had with these very welcome newcomers. Then in 1917, a fire fed by the Vardar wind destroyed most of the town. But most importantly, at the end of the 1918 hostilities, the military forces which had contributed so much to the economy and the life of Salonika and its region began to withdraw.



FINDING HIMSELF with less work, or no work at all, speaking fluent French, English or Italian (even though with a typical local accent), at ease in Western secular culture, not bound by a nationality that in any event he did not really possess, and having, like anyone living in a port (especially a Mediterranean port), friends or even family at the other end of the voyage, all this explains why our man in Salonika arrived in Marseilles.

He debarked in a country which had just come out of a particularly deadly war. In 1919, France was counting its dead: one and a half million! Consequently, the birth-rate in the years to come suffered greatly from the lack of young men. The immigration policy, and later the naturalisation policy, were forced to take this into account. This policy included as a

mandatory requirement knowledge of the language and assimilation of the customs of the host country. The former pupils of the good teachers of Salonika were ready! Ready were they also, just twenty years later (from one war to the following one of 1939-45) themselves or their children, when serving in the French army.

Those who believe in historical determinism will recall too that the fourth Crusade, halted in its advance, created the Latin Kingdom of Thessalonika (1204 to 1224). It left behind a "quartier Franc" and a route to the Adriatic. They will also remember that after leaving Spain, Sephardic Jews followed the Mediterranean coasts and lived for a long time in France, as shown in the local French archives.

So in answer to your question "Why did you come to France?", you can see that there are lots of reasons which, considered separately or as a whole, underlie personal reasons.

V.S.O:

Do you remember your grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins? What did they do and what profession did they have?

R:

I did not know my Saltiel grandparents. They died before I was born. However, I knew my Saltiel uncles. The first three worked in the family business, which already existed in the mid-nineteenth century. What I remember is that, financially speaking, there was a common fund everyone could use, including married sisters who were having money problems.

The charitable works of the first brother, Benico, the patriarch, was the family's contribution to the Salonika community. He was devoted to social and hospital charities. His death, worthy of his life's commitment, came during a meeting of the board of administrators of the Hirsch Hospital. The second brother, Jacob, was, like Zevilon, the driving force of the company. He was a bachelor and had only two loves: his work and fishing just before daybreak with the local fishermen.

The third brother, Nico, married Marianne Polacco of Smyrna, and had four children. I am their youngest child. Unhappily, he died before I was ten. He was in charge of foreign business. He was the one who negotiated an association, before the end of the nineteenth century, with the British Whitall dynasty in the Near East. The company traded in tobacco,

leather and hides, as well as certain other local products. In addition, we also offered services such as maritime shipping, representation of insurance companies and settlement of maritime disasters (Lloyds). This office and its branch office in Athens stopped operating in 1976 when my brother Edwin N. Saltiel died.

The fourth and fifth brothers, Isaac and Sam, had followed the Salonika-Marseilles route I already mentioned, and were already settled in Marseilles well before 1900. They also dealt, independently, in leathers and hides. Isaac married one of his nieces and had a daughter. Sam married Caroline Cittanoua of Tunis; they had two sons, Maurice and René, and a daughter, Yvonne. René had two children, Caroline and Bernard. Yvonne married Claude Weil and also had two children, Marie-Claude and Edouard. And then there were the grandchildren. For them, as for my own descendants, Salonika is just a far away reference from the past.

V.S.O: How did they dress?

R: The uncles, aunts and cousins whom I knew well all dressed in Western style. The men, as well as the women, paid great attention to the way they dressed, often buying their clothes in Italy, France or England (one of my cousins, who was well known for his sense of humour, used to say he had to go to London because he needed a raincoat.) Of course, the dress of some people was more "folkloric".

A picture is worth a thousand words: here is a photo of a painting showing the street of Salo-

nika in 1917 [*Editor's note: this picture is on the front page of this publication.*] From left to right you find: a British general, an Orthodox pope, a woman in Jewish dress, a Serb officer, a French officer (rather portly as he should be), a vendor the newspaper *L'Opinion*, a *palikar*, a sailor (British?), a Greek officer, a Macedonian peasant, the back of a *salep* (hot drink) vendor, a Jew still wearing a Turkish fez, a vendor of *L'Indépendent*, two fashionably dressed women, a soldier and a nurse from a Commonwealth country, and a Military Policeman.



AFTER THE POPULATION changed from Turks to Greeks from Asia Minor, after the fire which devastated the town in August 1917, after the departure of many inhabitants at the end of the First World War, after the profanation of cemeteries, and especially after the Holocaust, the Salonika we knew is no longer to be found the Thessalonika of today. It is now dispersed throughout the world, but living happily in the countries which responded to the Amsterdam appeal in 1994. The White Tower is still there, however, together with the monuments so typical of Byzantine art. The new Thessalonika is very beautiful and continues to play its historical role as an international marketplace.

Notes:

1. Not born in Thessalonika
2. Reference to the religion
3. Reference to the ethnic group

Books in review—Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen

Farewell to Thessalonika: portrait of an era.
Leon Sciaky, London 1946.

After reading the personal reminiscences of a member of our family who was born in Thessalonika, you might be interested to know more about daily life at the beginning of this century. You will find such an account in this charming, beguiling story of the author's youth. The intense and romantic description of the city's former atmosphere went right to my heart. On page 37, there is a reference to "Saltielico (little Saltiel), the Moneychanger"

The Jews of Barcelona 1213-1291: regesta of documents from the Archivo Capitulare.
Yom Tov Assis, Ginzei Am Olam, Jerusalem, 1988.

This reproduces documents in Spanish, as examined by graduate students of Medieval History.

There are references to Shealtiels in the following documents: Numbers

18, 36, 60, 61, 71, 117, 213, 239, 277, 295, 326, 328, 346, 368, 380, 386, 387, 402, 442, 450, 476.

There are also several documents which mention the name Graciá (identical to Gracian?)

***Die Juden in Christlichen Spanien* by Fritz Baer, Erster Band, Berlin, 1929.**

Documents are reproduced in Latin and Spanish, with comments in German. There are references to Shealtiels in the documents, which cover the period from 1121 to 1429 BCE, on the following pages:

9, 22, 24, 34, 35, 87, 208, 239, 295, 408, 451, 452, 499, 543, 705, 809, 861, 1011, 1017 and 1020.

Petticoat Lane childhood

These recollections of Lawrence Saltiel tell the tale of one branch of the British Saltiels in the East End of London around the First World War.

I AM THE SON of Elias Saltiel of London. My earliest recollection is of being taken down into the boiler room of the local school to shelter from the Zeppelin raids that were directed against Britain during the first World War. By which you will know that I am an octogenarian, my birth date being April 1914.



MY NEXT RECOLLECTION is of my father coming home from the war and giving me a penny with Queen Victoria's head on it. At this time, we were living in Morgan Street in the Bow district of East London. Eventually we moved to a house in the Mile End district, but after a while we moved again to a flat upstairs to a butcher's shop in the area known as Petticoat Lane where I spent most of my childhood.

I attended the local primary school (Gravel Lane) in the City of London, and at the age of eleven I sat for the Preliminary examination of the Junior County Scholarship. I was successful so I went on to sit for the Final examination of the scholarship. Again I was successful with the result that I was awarded a place at the local Central school (Jews Free School) which catered for those who, like myself had been awarded a scholarship, which, in those days was worth the princely sum of thirty pounds.

The school was divided into two sections, a Technical section and a Commercial section. With the agreement of my parents I chose the Technical section, and have never regretted it. We were instructed in sciences, electricity, chemistry, physics, mechanics, technical drawing, woodwork and metalwork, in addition to the normal school subjects. The normal school leaving age was fourteen years but we stayed till sixteen.

I LEARNT MY RELIGION at the Spanish and Portuguese Hebrew School (*Sha'arei Tikva*—Gates of Hope). My Bar Mitzvah was celebrated at Bevis Marks Synagogue in April 1927. My instructor in this and other religious matters was a gentleman by the name of David

Beuno de Mesquita, a thorough gentleman in every respect.

MY PARENTS SUPPORTED me in my school work, particularly my father who augmented my school instruction by teaching me the basic principles of radio communication, the vagaries of mechanical devices and the principles of perspective observation in freehand and technical drawing. It was my father's encouragement and instruction that inculcated in me my love of technical matters which has served me well in my professional life. By contrast, he also taught me to box, which was very useful in later years as a counter to any attempts at bullying directed toward me because I was so quiet. My mother was a hardworking, forthright person with a strong sense of family loyalty. I have a sister two years my senior. I had two brothers, David and Henry, both of whom are sadly deceased. David was killed at Salerno whilst Henry succumbed to a rare brain disorder.



UPON LEAVING SCHOOL, after attempting a few ordinary jobs, I entered into a four year apprenticeship as an optician, in which profession I have spent most of my working life. I did, however, spend some nine or ten years in the electronic industry being involved in the development of semiconductor devices (transistors etc.) and later in the development of cathode ray tubes for use in domestic television. Both of these periods would not have been possible without my earlier introduction to general science and of course my father's interest and encouragement.

I met my wife on a train on the way home from a day at Southend on Sea, in Essex. We were married about a year later, in August 1940, and by the grace of God and Renee's tolerance, we are still together after fifty-five years of happy married life. We have two daughters: Jacqueline Elizabeth, who is a freelance artist and works part-time as an interviewer in market research, and Carole Anne, who is a senior lecturer at the local Sixth form College.

[Jackie has two grown-up children: Mark (twenty-seven), a skilled motor cycle engineer, and Shaun (twenty-five), a credit controller with an international finance house].

My war service was initially with an Infantry unit, but in 1942, I was transferred to the Royal Engineers as an instrument mechanic, again thanks to my early education.



AT EIGHTY-ONE, I AM, of course, retired. I live in the county of East Sussex, in the Bishopstone area of the town of Seaford. My interests are writing short stories, making wooden toys for my eleven year old grandson, photographing the horticultural successes of my wife, who is an expert gardener; a little drawing and painting; and repairing or trying to repair our own domestic appliances. I am in good health apart from the usual disabilities attendant upon the octogenarian. Finally and most important, I am fiercely proud to be a Saltiel.

Between two faiths

*The following account of the religious Odyssey of **George Cassuto**, is an essay in the uncertainty of an assimilation initiated by the desperate circumstances of the Netherlands under occupation.*

ON APRIL 7TH 1941—I was eleven years old—I was told that we were Jews. That day remains stamped in my memory, because it was the day that my father was rounded up by the Nazis.



HE WAS ARRESTED at home, because he was chairman of the parents committee of my school in the Hague, the city where we lived. “And why can Dad not be in the parents committee?” I asked my Mum when I had come from school to find that my father had gone. “Because Jews are no longer allowed such a function,” she answered. “But we are not Jews, are we?”, I retorted. “Yes. We are”, she said. And so she told me about our origin and the direction she and her husband had chosen, after they had married.

They had stood under the *chuppah* in the Portuguese synagogue in The Hague and a few years later they had left for the Netherlands East-Indies (now Indonesia). For twenty years they had lived there. Dad worked in the education and instruction of the future Indonesian government-officials. They lived the lives of non-Jews. My father had been raised in an assimilated family, and my mother, although coming from an orthodox background—her father a *Mohel*, her grandfather a rabbi—had totally conformed to her husband's lifestyle.

AFTER TWENTY YEARS in Indonesia we returned to Holland to find ourselves stigmatised

as Jews by Hitler and his hounds. After three weeks of imprisonment my father was released by the Nazis. Presently the persecution was intensified, and I began to realise what it meant to be a Jew. As a family we survived these hard times: we were hidden at many successive addresses by brave people. I myself was hidden by pious Christian people—both Roman-Catholics and Protestants. During the years after the war I fell into a welcoming congregation. I joined this Protestant church and became a minister. I still had no idea about Judaism and the Jewish way of life. I accepted the Christian doctrines without comment. Meanwhile I had married a Dutch Christian girl, who proved to be interested in Judaism. After I had been a Protestant minister for fifteen years, she asked me “How can a Jewish boy like you be a Christian minister?”



HER QUESTION NETTLED me and made me think about myself and my identity. And I felt the urge to plunge into the study of the Jewish way of thinking and living, and the history of my people. Decisive was the making of acquaintance of great Jewish thinkers and writers such as Martin Buber, Rabbi Leo Baeck, and the more contemporary scholars such as David Flusser and Shmuel Safrai, professors of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, experts in the field of the history of the time of the Second Temple and the New Testament.

I was thrilled to find out that the words and works of the rabbi of Nazareth fell within the

setting of the Judaism of the day and that the Gospels are revisions and adaptations by later, mostly anti-Jewish, Christians. I also found out that the Christian churches had sprung from the organisation by the Roman empire, led by Constantine the Great, who made the Christian congregations from all over the world convene in the city of Nicea, Turkey, in 325 AD, where they accepted the first important Christian dogmas, and cut the last tie that connected the Christian church with its Jewish origin: it was henceforth forbidden to celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus, which had taken place on the days of Peseta, on a date during the *Pesach*-festival. The Christians should observe a new date, fixed by the council of Nicea: the first Sunday after the first full

moon after March 21ST! That became the date of the Christian Easter. From then onward Judaism and Christianity were two separate religions.



AS A MINISTER, I began to teach the Jewish setting of the person and the work of Jesus of Nazareth. But increasingly I was impressed by the devastating effect of Christianity on the Jewish people and its history. After years of reflection, I decided to lay down my ministry and to leave the Church, and to be “just a Jew”. But I do not yet know if I would feel at home in the Synagogue. I am still looking for my place.

A street-wise politician

In these recollections, Dennis Sealtiel recounts episodes from the free-wheeling career of Councillor Alie Saltiel, elected to be the representative of the street-trading interest of the pre-war East End of London.

THE SAGA OF ALIE [*deriv. Elias—Editor*] Saltiel of no. 85 [85 Brunswick Buildings, in the East End of London] should open with a tale much told by my mother, for all of its apocryphal flavour. After his election to Stepney Council, his own mother was said to have sat gazing at him, sighing, “My son, the Councillor.”

My earliest story of him is of being thrown out by his father for not earning his keep. His mother’s part in that was supposed to be throwing food out when he called up to her as soon as his father had gone to work. That sounds amusing but unlikely: first, it was unnecessary since his father was away from the flat; and second, Rebecca had little enough food to spare at a time when a Bank Holiday picnic for the younger children meant taking a bottle of water and bread and sugar to Finsbury Square. That must have been the nearest open space. There was a park fairly close, but this was “Itchy Park”, a haunt of dirty old men. Alie probably called in for breakfast when the coast was clear, before going on to carry on any business he had on, such as running bets for street bookies and helping market stall holders.



MY COUSIN RALPH tells me the “Vote for Saltiel” campaign was a Jewish street-trader’s racket, as they wanted their own voice on the

council. First choice was Ralph’s father, Manny (*deriv. Emanuel, my grandfather—Editor*). Ralph says Manny declined the honour. This may have been that Manny did not see himself narrowly as a Jewish trader and did not depend on Sunday in the Lane [*Petticoat Lane, where Manny’s granddaughter, my cousin Elaine, is the third generation of the family to run a Sunday stall. Also the childhood home of Lawrence Saltiel, see above—Editor*]. He also worked the Caledonian Market and travelled to Epsom for events like the Derby. For whatever reasons, he preferred to stay out of politics. Instead, Alie was called upon to become the market men’s mouthpiece on the council.



I FIRST HEARD about Alie’s influence from my younger brother, Ron. He wanted to join the boy’s club run by Basil Henriques in the East End. Henriques tried to dissuade him on the grounds of the distance he would have to travel from Paddington. The name Saltiel, however, even though disguised as Sealtiel, worked wonders. As soon as Henriques discovered that Ron was the nephew of Councillor Saltiel, he brought out the red carpet.

Basil Henriques himself was best known as the juvenile magistrate sitting at Toynbee Hall. He had a hand in much that went on in the Jewish community in the East End. The battle in

which he was engaged side by side with Councillor Saltiel concerned the Sunday Trading laws in the thirties. Henriques condemned it as religious discrimination. Jews were forbidden to trade on Saturday and were now to be denied doing so on a Sunday.

I heard the next part of the story from the fascist who was the inevitable man-in-the-next-bed in a hospital in North Wales in wartime. According to him, Henriques could be relied upon to have a hand in anything likely to benefit his fellow Jews. In this instance, a compromise was reached which held till recently, so that trading was only in the mornings. A lot of people cried "Not fair" but it all died down over the years.



IN LATER LIFE, Councillor Saltiel, or ex-councillor as he then was, was supported by Eve and Sadie in the old family flat, No. 85. The girls were seamstresses in the fur and tailoring trades respectively. In those days neither could have been very highly paid, although Eve claimed years later that she did better than Sadie, having to put up with fewer days "laid off" and, according to Eve, "always getting a good wage."

They kept the spare money—I'm sure it wasn't their savings, as my mother told the story—in a teapot or suchlike on the mantelpiece. The temptation was too much for Alie. As my mother told it, he staged a robbery and went off to enjoy himself on the proceeds. Whether this brought forward the end of his cosy life in the family home I'm not sure. It eventually ended with Sadie's marriage to Sam and Eve's subsequent move to live with her brother, Manny.

I only remember Alie as an old man with a bald head and dark glasses, usually waving a walking stick about. I remember him coming to see my mother in our house near Regents Park, complaining of his innumerable ills. One arm was numb. "They stick pins in it and I can't feel them." He was diabetic and I think losing his sight. I remember him saying, "I told them 'Don't bother with what's wrong with me. Just tell me what's right with me.'" I believe he was hoping my mother would take pity on him and let him move in with us. My mother was far too wary of him to allow that.

ALIE ENDED IN A hospital in Bedford. I seem to remember it being at the beginning of the

war, but Sam and Sadie have corrected me on that, telling me it was before the war. He wrote to my father, "Don't come to visit me and spend ten shillings or so on fares. Send me the money instead, so that I can buy some shoes." He died soon after and had no need for shoes. My father went to his funeral. I remember him reporting afterwards, "so that it wouldn't be entirely a pauper's grave, we..." Regretfully, the mist of failed memory blanks out the end of the sentence. I assume they marked the grave in some simple fashion. I don't remember whether the burial was in Bedford or London.



"He had a gambler's attitude to life, never taking it too seriously"

HIS MARRIAGE WAS not talked about in the family. From what I can gather, his wife suffered from mental illness after

the birth of her son. Today, it would probably be called postnatal depression and treated with pills. In those days, it could have been taken as insanity. Once certified, especially in the case of a young mother and possible danger to her child, there was a scant chance of escape from the system. Young Jack Saltiel was fostered in Grantham and fathered a family there.

At the brunch table in Amsterdam, Sadie Berman (*née* Saltiel) told Sandra [*Woodhouse*] of her grandfather. Sandra had never known him, since he died in 1939 or 40. Sadie was telling of Alie's involvement in street betting in its illegal days and of his own love of betting on the horses. It seems he had a gambler's attitude to life, which he never took too seriously. Sandra sat shaking her head and saying "Just like the boys," meaning her brothers.



I WILL CLOSE by touching on one of the shadier episodes in Alie's career. He found himself involved in disposing of goods obtained through a long firm fraud and I gather was determined to keep Manny out of the action. My own father was more closely involved and I heard the story from him. It nearly ended in disaster. My mother told me that her mother-in-law, Rebecca Saltiel, hinted many years later that the only ones to made anything out of it were Mick and Hannah. They seem not to have been implicated in the original scheme and went off to New Zealand shortly afterwards. It sounds like they were well out of it.

Kilbirnie days

In this extract—reprinted with permission from Donald Saltiel's autobiography—we read a vivid account of the pioneering life of a small town in New Zealand in the years after the First World War.

MY FATHER WAS BORN in 1892 to Abraham and Rebecca Saltiel, *née* Valencia. My mother came from Birmingham and her maiden name was Harlow, her family name being Cockerill of Doncaster. They met on a ship named the *Corinthic*, a vessel of the Shaw Savill line. The *Corinthic* was engaged, along with many other vessels, in bringing immigrants to New Zealand. So my mother and father met aboard the *Corinthic*; I know that much, but there is also something of a mystery, in that my mother was coming out to be married to someone in Auckland—we never found out who. Was she engaged or indentured as a servant? Nobody knows. Anyway, when the young Ralph Saltiel left the *Corinthic* at Wellington, so did she. Two years later they were married.

They arrived in Wellington in 1912 and they were married in November 1914 at St James Church, Taraniki Street. It is a bit hazy between 1912 and 1914, but I think my mother worked as a waitress at the Bristol Hotel, because one of the witnesses to the marriage was a lady who was a waitress there, and the best man was also an employee of the Bristol Hotel. He may have been a barman or a bouncer, I do not really know, except that he turned up again in 1915 as godfather to the newly arrived Donald Saltiel.



AFTER THE MARRIAGE, my mum and dad went to live in Kilbirnie. They started out in two rooms in a house on Seatown Road, Evans Bay, just by Brownlies' Timber Mill. The two rooms faced directly onto the beach at Evans Bay. There was nothing between those two rooms and the seashore; perhaps that is why I have always loved the sea so much. On 26TH September 1915, I was ushered into the world—almost on the seashore as it were.

I have no more memories until the age of three which would be 1918 and the arrival of my sister Joan. I can remember my mother being in a big double bed and a midwife being there, and my dad and I being shooed out of the room at six o'clock in the evening. I can well remember the midwife making me a boiled egg for my

tea, it was underdone and had all that wobbly stuff inside it. I've hated undercooked eggs ever since. That day was the 20TH of September 1918, and the place, our new semi-detached house, 23A Onepu Road, Kilbirnie.



OUR FORMER NEIGHBOUR—Brownlies' timber mill—was a focus of Kibirnie life. The steam whistle set everybody off at 7.30 in the morning and again at 4.30 in the afternoon. Once I was old enough to venture out on my own, I used to walk around to the mill and stand in the doorway of the boiler room and watch the huge steam engine fed by wood waste, pounding up and down in a slow rhythmic movement. It drove every piece of machinery in the mill by means of shafting and belts—there was no such thing as individual motorised units as we use today.

I used to watch the coopers making wooden barrels by hand, hammering the iron hoops down over the staves with a very heavy "coopers hammer". It had a big head and a short handle. Sometimes one of the men would hand me a the hammer and say "Have a go." It would drop out of my hands—too heavy for a small boy!



ON THE CORNER of Onepu Road and Seatown Road was Lamberg's Sand and Gravel Yard. This was served by tip drays drawn by draught horses. Each driver took great pride in his horse's harness, keeping it well oiled and the brasses polished. I can still recall waking up to the rhythmic "clip clop" as the horses set out along Onepu Road on their way to the sand quarry at the end of Lyall Bay.

Sunday morning at the stables was a meeting point for some of the local men as all of the drivers used to groom their horses and polish harnesses etc. There was a hand operated hair clipper of which we kids used to "take turns" at turning the handle while the head stableman trimmed the horses' manes and tails. If some of the kids needed haircuts, they were clipped

also. The big secret, of course, was a large wickerwork covered jar which contained beer! Horror of horrors! Beer in a “dry area” and what’s more, “drinking” on Sunday. I vividly recall my mother coming down to fetch my father and me for Sunday dinner. I got a “clip over the ears” for having my hair shaven off, that is, a “prison haircut” and my father got the “rounds of the table” for condoning a “prison cut” on his little boy and setting a bad example by drinking on a Sunday and “in front of the children too.” h

I was never again allowed to go and watch the horses on a Saturday morning! I have in my mind a vivid picture of the Lamberg’s later getting their first motor lorry, a chain drive Thornycroft with a brass radiator and the driver resplendent in leather leggings and peak cap! This was the start of the demise of the horse-drawn drays as the internal combustion engine took over.



KILBIRNIE HAD THREE BLACKSMITHS and I used to pass one on the way to school. The forge would be going and he would have a horse in there and he would be belting away at a piece of hot metal, and shape it round into a horse-shoe shape, put it up against the horse’s shoe, a couple more bangs, and it was made. Then he would nail it on and the nail would come through the horse’s foot, out the shallow part and he would clinch that off a little bit and then bend it over and the shoe would never come off. If you were lucky, he’d get one of these horse nails, put it on the anvil, on the small anvil’s pointed end tap it with his hammer, and bend it round, and you had a ring with the tapered head of the horse’s shoe nail as the focal point of the ring. Many of these I had but subsequently lost.



ALSO ON THE WAY to school was Dillon’s, the corner grocers. A school-boy could save a few precious moments by rushing through the store to cut the corner off—as long as Mr. Dil-

lon did not see you. He was an old-fashioned grocers and it was a treat to see him at work. When I went there with my mother to pick up the groceries, he’d lay a sheet of brown paper on the counter, pack the groceries into an oblong kind of parcel, almost symmetrical, wrap it round with a quick flick of the paper, then bind it round with twine, twirl the twine around his fingers, and a quick flick and snap, the twine used to break off and you had a lovely oblong parcel to carry your groceries home in, much more satisfying than the plastic bags we have today.

Biscuits were in barrels, butter was in blocks, bacon was in huge rolls. Customers would come in and have so many slices of bacon, or so much cheese, and he would cut the cheese off with a great length of wire fastened to two clothes pegs and pull the wire through the cheese.

A great source of broken biscuits too: a penny-worth would last you all morning.

Mr Dillon used to deliver grocery orders with a two wheel cart on high wheels, pulled by his trotter, a horse called Josie Dillon, named after his daughter, Josephine. At the end of the round, he would set the horse at a trot and she would trot all the way home—about two miles. That is how he trained her to race as a “trotter”. Many a ride I had on that cart! There are still trotting horses with the “Dillon” name racing today.



IWOULD COME HOME to the welcoming warmth of the coal range—an Orion I think it was. My mother was always home and she used to bake her own bread. I can still recall coming into the kitchen to the lovely smell. Soup was another winter speciality and there was always a large pot simmering away on the side of the stove. To be cold and “little boy hungry” was a sure bet for a cup of hot soup, and a slice of warm bread. At other times, there would be chestnuts or peanuts in their shells roasting, all with their own special aroma. The kids will do well if they find warmth like that kitchen today.

***“I have wonderful
memories of coming home
from school to the lovely
warmth of a coal range”***

Out of Egypt

*A celebration of the life of Daniel Mochon Shaltiel—who left Egypt to become a Zionist in pre-independence Palestine, where he founded his business and family—by his son also named Mochon, but better known as **Moshe Shaltiel** to those of us in his new found family.*

DANIEL SHALTIEL WAS BORN in Tanta, Egypt in 1914. His father, Mochon Yosef Saltiel left Thessalonika in 1875 and settled in Tanta, a small town between Cairo and Alexandria. He remembers a rich Jewish life, prosperity and friendly relations with Christian and Moslem neighbours. Tanta had the largest Jewish community in Egypt, because of its proximity to the cotton growing areas. The Thessalonika Jews, with their expertise in textiles, became the leading figures in the city, representing one fifth of the total population.

The family used to go out on weekends to the country, spending the entire day in the fields and buying their food from the local *Falachin* (farmers) whom they knew by name. Daniel remembers a totally different Egypt to the one he sees today. The old one that he still dreams about was cosmopolitan, tolerant and a place where different cultures were complementary, not contradictory, to each other.

When Daniel was twelve the family moved to Cairo. This was a city of two million people, half of whom were European, principally Italians, Greeks, Germans and English. The city had become a centre of commerce in the 1890s, after the opening of the Suez Canal. As the country was still nominally part of the failing Ottoman empire, it attracted the Jewish community in Turkey and Greece to the prospects of new opportunities.



DANIEL WAS GIVEN THE conventional upbringing of the Sephardic upper middle class: Jewish primary education (*Alliance Israélite*), Italian high school, and higher education overseas.

But Daniel broke the mould, became a Zionist and moved to Palestine against his father's wishes. It was not that simple to accomplish. While waiting for a visa, Daniel started a business. He entered the field of cosmetics manufacturing and distribution. Among his first customers were his old friends, the *Falachin*. While in high school, Daniel had worked for a

German Jewish manufacturer of cosmetics. He requested his employer fire him so he could become an independent distributor. At that time, this was unheard of. To give up a secure job for an idea nobody had tried yet—to sell cosmetics to the *Falachin*. Yet Daniel was so successful that his boss offered him a joint venture. The nineteen year old refused and went on his own.



AT ABOUT THAT TIME, Daniel's father, Mochon, became depressed over the death of Leon, the youngest son of his first marriage, and he ceased to be able to take care of his family. He transferred his assets and business to his older son Yosef, Daniel's half brother. In return, Yosef promised to take care of the family. Daniel denies it, but it seems as if Yosef could not support the family as promised. Daniel will only go so far as to say that his entrepreneurial spirit came not only from a desire to succeed but also from the need to support his mother and younger siblings. As Daniel prospered, his older brother, a pharmacist, quit his job to join him.



DANIEL BECAME INVOLVED with the Zionist movement to prepare himself for his still awaited *aliyah* (emigration to Palestine). He joined the *Maccabi* sporting club and became captain of the basketball team and a champion boxer. The young Zionist group eventually realised that they would not be granted the promised visa, and they decided to emigrate illegally to Palestine.

The group travelled to Alexandria and paid ten pounds each to the hashish smugglers to take them to the shores of Palestine. The smugglers agreed, but the boat got lost at sea—the smugglers were consuming the better part of their merchandise and were in another world most of the time. Our heroes, the young Zionists, knew next to nothing about sailing. Daniel, however, knew a lot about fighting and man-

aged to convince the captain to forego the drugs for a few days.

The next morning they saw a beach in the distance, without knowing where they were, they jumped from the boat and swam ashore. Luck was with them as it was a shore near a *kibbutz*. They were home. Daniel loves to tell how they saw some Arabs on the beach. He told his friends to let him speak as he knew the Palestinian dialect. He talked and talked until one of the local Arabs said in a perfect Egyptian dialect "I do not understand what you are trying to tell me but if you are looking for a Jewish *kibbutz*, it is right here, behind the hill!"

Our braves ran to the kibbutz, which received them warmly, hid them for a few days then passed them on to *Mikve Israel*, the first agricultural school in Palestine. The Jewish organisations that oversaw the illegal immigration invited them to stay at the school—not as students, but as labourers. They had to work full time in return for board and lodging and were to be taught Hebrew. Who could have refused such an offer? And that is how upper middle class boys from Cairo became daily field workers overnight.



DANIEL MET TWO other Shaltiels: our Dr. Saltiel from Paris, and the late Aaron Shaltiel from Tel-Aviv (a cousin of Henry, Martin's father). Of course, these Shaltiels were fully fledged students at the school. Both Moïse and Daniel have confirmed to me that the tuition was equal to a year's wage of a skilled worker.

Being a Shaltiel, Daniel didn't like the sound of day labour, so he made a deal with the person hiring the labourers. Daniel contracted to take on the work, so that the supervisor would concern himself with how many people he would need to hire daily. Daniel would take care of the details and would get paid only if the work was done—and done well! Daniel became a general contractor. His deal was pay by results: so much money per tree or per yard. With this incentive Daniel and his friends needed no outside help. By the end of the first month they were making twice as much as before and Daniel bought himself a horse. What they did not know was that Daniel was earning

more than Dr. Krause, the managing director of the entire school.

Several months later Daniel was riding his by now famous horse when Dr. Krause asked him to help him show the place to some dignitaries. Daniel was slim, handsome and blonde at that time and was looked upon as the classic Israeli. The problem was that he hardly spoke Hebrew. To his luck, the dignitaries spoke three or four languages, none of them Hebrew. Daniel impressed them because he was fluent in every language they spoke. In the middle of the tour, the Middle East regional manager of the oil company, Socony Vacuum, introduced himself. He asked my father for his name and

surprised him by asking if he was related to his best friend Mochon Saltiel from Thessalonika, who was by then a wealthy retired businessman living in Cairo. Daniel had to admit that he, indeed, was the famous black sheep who

had refused to go to university and moved to Palestine. A week later Daniel left *Mikve Israel* and became assistant to the general manager of the Tel Aviv branch of Socony.



THE ZIONISM OF THE young Sephardim from Cairo was not always that of an idealist such as Theodore Herzl, founder of modern Zionism. Daniel and his pals may have dreamt about returning to the land of the patriarchs, but they had also heard the stories about the young *Hahutzim* (pioneers) from eastern Europe, especially those of the opposite sex. Friends who came back to visit Egypt had told them all about those beautiful blondes wearing shorts and working on the fields. Secure at his new job as an executive, young Daniel started spreading his wings. Shortly he became one of the most sought after young bucks in Tel-Aviv: a young man on the go; Palestine boxing champion—though do remember the population of the entire country was less than quarter of a million; and Captain of the Socony Vacuum basketball team. He said that since he was not good enough for the Maccabee team he started his own, and since he was the boss he was the Captain. And the girls...



***“The Zionism of the young
Sephardim from Cairo
was not always that of
an idealist ”***

HE MET CHANA AT a restaurant across from his office. She was also a new immigrant, but from Poland. Chana was meeting her brother San'e for lunch and Daniel fell in love. San'e was a Yeshiva student for whom the Rabbis predicted a brilliant future. Instead he became a Zionist, moved to Palestine and then obtained the best job possible. With all his education, he was employed cleaning the stables of an oil company that was in competition with Socony. Suddenly he found many reasons to befriend San'e, the sanitation worker from a

competing company who could speak only Hebrew, Polish and Yiddish. But Daniel, who believed that he could speak Hebrew well enough, became a friend of San'e.

Years later my uncle San'e told me that Daniel started the conversation in a language so bizarre that he decided to try and help this poor fellow who was probably lost. One year later Daniel married Chana and a year to the day after that, January 26, I was born—the first Israeli in two thousand years born to our family.

*Daniel Shaltiel and companions
at Kibbutz Mikve Israel,
shortly after his arrival in Palestine*

Daniel Shaltiel and his granddaughter Simone at Amsterdam Reunion, August 1994



THE POLITICAL SITUATION in Palestine was becoming dangerous. Riots against the Jewish population were on the increase. This time the haters of the Jewish people found different Jews, the *halutzim* (pioneers), organised for self defence, with a convincing response. They knew that the British authorities would not come to their help. Daniel did his share, starting by hiring only Jews to work at the oil facilities, which meant that all his *Mikve Israel* friends became employees of Socony Vacuum overnight. He would also supply free gasoline for the fleets of *Haggannah* and the *Irgun*.

All these activities made Daniel a popular figure in the Jewish community. However, this also made him unemployed because, after a while, the management of Socony Vacuum realised that Daniel's stories about burglaries were just that—stories. Daniel always said that difficulties only created added incentive and this, in the end, was the starting point of his greatest successes. Unemployed, he convinced my uncle San'e to quit his job and together they bought a horse and wagon and started selling oil.

At that time the profits were in kerosene but Daniel, a natural merchant, convinced his brother-in-law and partner to sell low margin industrial oil. With his name, Shaltiel, Daniel had an easy time winning a dominant share of the market. At the forefront of the economic expansion of Tel Aviv were *Sephardim* like Yosef Shaltiel, who built the famous house of Shaltiel in Tel Aviv, which provided reception halls, the profits of which were for poor relief; Leon Shaltiel (father of Shmuel Shaltiel from Herzliya, Israel); and the Carassos. These families owned buildings throughout Tel-Aviv. Although they did not know how they were related to Daniel, they felt that he was the right man to supply them with their oil.



OVER THE NEXT FORTY years Daniel built a prosperous business and a distinguished reputation. Daniel devoted much of his time to

public service. He was the president of *Egyptian Jews of Israel* and other organisations that helped the needy. He took it upon himself to guarantee a job to every Thessalonikan or Egyptian who needed one. One evening he heard the singing of a new immigrant that just got a job through him. The next day my father agreed to back him and took him to the largest record manufacturer in Israel to record a song. His new friend, Matityahu Niso Dario, quickly became one of Israel's most popular singers.

Another typical story is how he caught a youngster stealing. He took the kid to his parents and gave him and his gang the choice of either joining a sports club or of being taken to the police. The next day, since there was no sports club they would choose to join, Daniel rented an old building and he, with the gang and their parents, rebuilt the place into a fully equipped

sports club. Naturally, this included boxing rings. The only thing I disliked about it was that whenever I came home from my military service I had to go to the club and work.



IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO tell everything my father has done. But his life is full, happy and, most importantly, content. He has three children, nine grandchildren and one (plus one on the way) great-grandchild. Daniel participated in our first reunion in Amsterdam and is active in the family organisation. Fluent in at least seven languages, he was able to help out by translating between almost all the tongues he heard.

My father is in the ring again—at the age of eighty-two he is in the toughest battle of his life, against a lung tumour. Chemotherapy with pills has not helped and now he is to be tested to see if he can take more aggressive therapies. Being the man he is, his first question to the doctor was “How long do I have?” The answer was eighteen months. I know Daniel's courage will spur him to fight this battle to win and I am sure letters and notes from our extended family will do a lot to lift his spirit. God willing, Daniel will be with us at the Thessalonika reunion in 1997.

“He convinced my uncle to quit his job and they bought a horse and wagon and started selling oil.”

“Open door”

*Once again, we are including these proposals by **Thea Rønsby-Veltkamp** for arrangements for exchange visits between youngsters (and the not so young) in the family from around the world.*

Many of our adolescent sons and daughters want to see the world, which can be of great value for their education and personal development. Would you like to help by making a permanent **Open Door** arrangement and give the young people in the family hospitality on their travels? The purpose is to give our youngsters overnight accommodation and hospitality, and show them those aspects of your domestic environment that could be of interest to them. If you are willing to open your home for the young ones that might plan to visit your country, please use the form at the bottom of this page. Thank you.

Many older people have an active life, for all that they have stopped their professional activities. Several of them want to travel and see the world, now when they have more time to realise themselves. Whether you are retired yourself or not, are you willing to open your door and receive older members of the family in your home, give them overnight accommodation and hospitality, when they might visit your country? If so, please use the form at the bottom of this page. Thank you! So far we have had very positive reactions towards the scheme, for example:

“I am very delighted to hear of your “Open door” project and am writing to say that I am excited to participate. Please sign me up!”

“I find the idea of exchanging visits in the family very exciting and would like to support it by opening my home to members of the family...”

The addresses of those who have kindly volunteered so far are below. We will republish the list in the next issue of the *Gazette*.

✂ **Cut here** -----

Please reply to: Thea Rønsby, Tuse Naes Vej 14,
4300 Holbaek, Denmark,
Phone 00 45 53 46 20 84

I am willing to open my home for young members of our family. YES NO
I am willing to open my home for travelling people of older age: YES NO

Name: _____
Address _____

Places to stay for younger members:

Elaine Marcus
11 Kenwood Gardens
Gants Hill
Ilford, Essex
England

Thea Rønsby
Tuse Næsvej 14
4300 Holbæk
Denmark
Phone: 53461084

Aron Saltiel
Heinrichstrasse 131
A-8010 Graz
Austria
*(especially younger people,
also for longer stays)*

Alice Saltiel-Marshall
Box 2301
Canmore, Alberta T0L 0M0
Canada

Peter and Nel Oosterbaan
Boomstede 38
3608 AB Maarssen
Holland

Lynette Grave
171 Doon Street
Waverley, Dunedin
New Zealand

Places to stay for older members:

Alice Saltiel-Marshall
Box 2301
Canmore, Alberta T0L 0M0
Canada

Thea Rønsby
Tuse Næsvej 14
4300 Holbæk
Denmark
Phone: 53461084

Peter and Nel Oosterbaan
Boomstede 38
3608 AB Maarssen
Holland

Lynette Grave
171 Doon Street
Waverley, Dunedin
New Zealand

FAMILY MATTERS



Local volunteers

Social Our local volunteers are our most immediate connection to the family network we are building. They help maintain local records and to promote local family spirit. Examples of such activities may include:

- Organising national or local social events.
- Receiving newly discovered members of the family.
- Recording births, *brisses*, Bar Mitzvahs, marriages, and deaths.
- Soliciting personal advertisements & announcements for the *Gazette*.

We will include reports from time to time in future issues.

Outreach Our volunteers have distinguished themselves over the last four months in an extraordinary campaign to extend our network. We have more than doubled the number of known members of the family. Local efforts have borne particularly plentiful fruit in France, Greece, Israel and the United States, as illustrated by the table below

Known family households			
	At last issue	New-found	At this issue
Argentina	1	1	2
Australia	3	-	3
Austria	2	2	4
Belgium	1	1	2
Canada	5	1	6
Denmark	3	-	3
France	13	59	72
Great Britain	21	0	21
Greece	2	16	18
Israel	17	57	74
Malaysia	1	-	1
Mexico	3	-	3
Netherlands	21	-	21
New Zealand	5	-	5
Spain	1	1	2
Switzerland	2	1	3
Turkey	1	3	4
United States	23	17	40
	125	159	284

The figures above exclude known family households which have asked to be left off the list, as well as households known but as yet uncontacted in Italy and Germany

Subscriptions About one half of the 125 households known at the time of the last issue have now subscribed. All of these, together with the 159 newly known households will receive this issue.

Contact points

Australasia	
Lynette Grave	+64 3 454 4780
Britain	
Betty Saltiel	+ 44 1203 675 491
France, Spain, Switzerland & Austria	
Maurice Saltiel	+ 33 1 49 30 22 34
Greece & Turkey	
Telis Nahmias	+30 31 269 011
Israel	
Moni Shaltiel	+ 97 2 9 656 295
Netherlands & Belgium	
Rob Sealtiel	+ 31 51 502 1121
The Americas	
Moshe Shaltiel	+1 708 498 8884

Genealogy

Ed Motola +1 801 322 2544

Ed Motola is the registrar of the genealogy of the family. He is currently engaged in an intensive collaboration with other members of the family to fortify our understanding of missing links. The *Gazette* plans to publish an interim report of the findings in a future issue.

General appeal: Ed has asked the *Gazette* to repeat the following three appeals.

- i) Would those of you to whom he gave computer generated pedigrees at the Amsterdam reunion please check the charts and send corrections to him. He will return a corrected print-out to you.
- ii) Would those of you who have not sent genealogical information to him, please do so. This will enable him to establish links to other parts of the Shealtiel family. He will return to you a pedigree chart taking your own line back as far as it will go.
- iii) Would all members of the family please also send to him material concerning the female line, so that this too can be traced. This will enable us to put the Shealtiel family in its historical context. Here too, Ed will return to you a pedigree chart taking your own line back as far as it will go.

Ed's address is:

246 South 600 East
Salt Lake City, UT 84102
USA

Telephone + 1 801 322 2544
Fax + 1 801 359 4212

He is on mountain time, that is at most times of the year seven hours behind UK time; eight hours behind Continental Europe Time.

Special Projects

New Year's card

Several cousins have proposed that we produce a greetings card with a family motif or design

Second appeal for volunteers: In due course there may well be an annual cycle of advertising designs for vote, advertising for orders and so on. What we need now is for someone to take the ball, with a design based—say—on the Shealtiel Haggadah, and run with it. Any takers? Please contact the Editor or your local volunteer, as listed above.

Other projects

The *Gazette* will include reports in future issues on our plans to publish a facsimile edition of the *Haggadah*, on summer fellowships, and on the organisation of the family archive.

Exchange visits

Thea Rønsby-Veltkamp + 45 53 46 20 84

Thea Rønsby-Veltkamp wishes to thank those who have responded to her appeal for her "Open Door" scheme. Please see the panel at the bottom of page twenty-one and contact her, as follows:

Thea Rønsby-Veltkamp
Tuse Naes Vej 14
4300 Holbaek
Denmark

Family history

Vibeke Sealtiel Olsen + 45 36 45 66 30
Moshe Shaltiel +1 708 498 8884

You will see from the articles in this issue that Vibeke and Moshe have shown all of their customary energies in tracing historical links. Your contributions to these matters will be warmly welcomed by them or by your Editor.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Second International Reunion

Moshe Shaltiel +1 708 498 9994
Telis Nahmias +30 31 269 011

Considerable progress has been made for a Thessalonika reunion to coincide with the city's festival as "European City of Culture" in 1997. Special features currently under consideration include:

- A "tall ship" voyage from Barcelona to Thessalonika to commemorate the journeys made by our forbears at the time of the Expulsion.
- A series of musical recitals by those members of the family so inclined who are concert performers
- An exhibition of pictures and sculptures by those members of family so inclined who are exhibitors.
- A Holocaust memorial to be presented to the City by the family.

If you have comments or additional proposals, or wish to play a part in the organisation, please contact

Telis Nahmias
13 Alexander the Great Street
54640 Thessalonika
Greece; or

Moshe Shaltiel
1901 Raymond Drive
Northbrook, Illinois 60062
USA

Gazette & Administration

Miles Saltiel +44 171 262 6498
E-MAIL COMPUSERVE 100605,2677

This is simply to publish this paper as the principal medium through which the family communicates and conducts its continuing business. It is by no means carved in stone that the current incumbent should be the Editor for ever more.

In any event, he will welcome all comments, proposals, letters (for publication or otherwise), book reviews, articles and illustrations. All will be acknowledged. Please see *Organisation* on page 2 for details.

FIVE MONTHS AGO I was able to record my pleasure at the members of the family who had looked me up while passing through London. Now I must apologise to all of you who tried to do so over the last few months, only to find that I was either away on business or otherwise unable to catch up with you. In particular, to Olivier Saltiel of France; Teresa Saltiel of Lafayette, California; Alberto Carrasso of Buenos Aires; and Moshe Shaltiel of Rehut, Israel, my heartfelt regrets that I missed you and my apologies if I seemed out of it. To those of you who may be coming to London later in the year, please keep trying.

I have simply been hard at it. In my professional life, I am an analyst of the emerging stock markets of Eastern Europe. This has kept me increasingly on the move over the past few months, with ten trips beyond the former Iron Curtain since January. Exciting and satisfying though I find my work, it is also hard pounding. No-one need have too much sympathy for stockbrokers, but these days at least I am earning my corn.



IN MAY, MY BUSINESS took me to southern Poland. I found myself with half a day free in Krakow. The ancient capital of Poland is an hour by car from the provincial centre of Oswiecim, known to us better by its German name—Auschwitz. The time had come for the journey to the heart of darkness.

Anger lends its own distortions in these matters. One friend had told me of her horror at the permanence of buildings of Auschwitz-I. But these were former barracks laid down decades earlier by the Austrians. This said, her point is well made by the extent of Auschwitz-II. This 570 acre plain contains three hundred buildings and once accommodated 120,000 prisoners—a city as populous as Oxford. And what could be more ominous than that even as they abandoned the camp, the Nazis were building on an extension.

Another friend objected to the expository reconstructions, in particular to restoration of the rail line for last year's fiftieth anniversary. This is too fastidious for me: after all, the odd refurbishment can hardly detract from the authenticity of the whole and may serve to grab the attention of the less imaginative visitor—particularly the young, who were much in evidence.

I used to hear objections to inadequate recognition by the Poles of the central aspect of the murder of the Jews. This seems to have been amended.

There were some other sur-

The view from Gloucester Square

prises. The commentary refers to 1.5M murders at Auschwitz; I seem to recall growing up with a figure of three million. This doesn't seem an attempt to minimise matters; to the contrary, there is plentiful material identified as "evidence of crimes", presumably to rebut the deniers.

Something is made of the murder of the Gypsies, which is just as well given the hostility now prevailing in the region. The memorial to resistance focuses on a revolt by female prisoners, rather than the better known but more morally equivocal mutiny by the trusties.

At Auschwitz-II there are newly erected plaques in dignified black marble, with commentary in Polish, English and Hebrew. Earlier memorials—in the ugly concrete of socialism—also included German and Russian. I had no doubt, however, of the unaffected outrage shown on the film made by the Ukrainians who liberated the camp.

LOOKING BACK, I recall my disquiet as we drove to the camp and the dissonance of the tomfoolery of the kids on the tour bus in front. Perhaps because I went with a Polish colleague who had been before as a schoolchild, I got something of local sensibilities. They had no garden party themselves, but

their losses have been accorded moral juniority. This leads to thoughts about the undignified and disagreeable character of the competition for victimhood.

THE SINGLE GREATEST UPSET was the room of prayer shawls. It was agonising to see these tokens of devotion, once so delicately hand-worked and now the involuntary discards of unknown owners. I had not known that the storage area was called "Kanada 2" and the area under construction "Mexico". Presumably the notion was that the core camp was the US. Whose macabre joke was this?

IHAVE ALWAYS FOUND concentration camp art disquieting and the exhibition at Auschwitz is no exception. It may be said that it comes out of some mightily disquieting circumstances, but I also find myself upset by the imbalance between the weight of the artists' outrage and their incapacity to express it. One of the most unfortunate pieces of such art—this presumably not the work of a survivor—is the hideous memorial on the site of the demolished crematoria. Naturally it is concrete. This recalls the least satisfactory aspect of the site, the lack of a dignified place to pay our respects to the dead. We walked the rail line out.



SO HOW TO DEAL with the Spast? I offer only the commonplaces that we owe it to ourselves to be alert, without condemning ourselves to an eternity of hatred or paranoia. Nor should we be consumed by our anger. And how to deal with the malefactors? Even if it is beyond most of us to feel too brotherly towards the post-war Germans, I don't see what more they could have done: they acknowledged their guilt and made restitution. And the world moves on. Right now it is putting me where I am to address the legacy of the subsequent round of miscreants: seeing what may be done to clean things up humanely and in a businesslike fashion.

Miles Saltiel

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Hurn

Donald Saltiel from Whakatane, New Zealand announces with pleasure the birth of his eighth and ninth great-grandchildren.

Braden Phillip was born on 2ND March 1995 to Phillip (second son of Kaye Hurn) and Cheryl.

Jeremy Peter was born on 25TH March 1995 to Richard (eldest son of Kaye Hurn) and Jennifer.

Danon

Aliza Danon (Saltiel) celebrated her *Bat Mitzvah* at the Eretz Cultural Center in Reseda, California on Sunday 21 May, 1995. She read from the Torah and chanted her portion of the Haftarah wonderfully. Her Rabbi congratulated her on her dedicated and studious preparation and delivery.

The gala reception, dance and buffet were attended by many Shealtiels: proud parents Sam Danon and Anita Danon (née Saltiel), brother David and twin sisters, Gina and Rebecca, grandmother Celia Saltiel (née Navon Saltiel), uncle Albert Saltiel, second cousins Ed and Pepe Motola (Saltiel) and Ed's five children, Ed's mother Corina Handel (née Saltiel), Jacob and Natalie Shaltiel of San Diego and Liesl Erman (Saltiel) of Santa Monica.

Mazel Tov!

Bernie Sealtiel: letter from Sara Sealtiel

My family and I would like to express our appreciation for all the cards and letters we received. We have received 25 pieces that I am going to try and answer, but it will be a while so I am thanking everyone this way.

My husband, Bernie Sealtiel, died April 19, 1995 of colon cancer. After being in the hospital for 20 days, I took him home on April 14 and with the help of Hospice, we took care of him. We were all here—children and grandchildren.

I hope at the next reunion I will be able to come and meet my husband's extended family.

Thank you again.

Sara Sealtiel

Hagganah: appeal for family memoirs

Kaye Hurn would like to here from anyone who was actively involved with the *Hagganah*, the Jewish underground organisation in pre-1948 British-occupied Palestine. Her address is:

27B Rewarewa Place
Matua, Tauranga
New Zealand

Saltiel

Congratulations to Donald Saltiel, of Whatakane, New Zealand, on his forthcoming eightieth birthday.

Corrigenda

The title beneath the picture on page eleven of the last issue of the Gazette contained several errors. The corrections are:

- Three — Rachel Cohen, whose mother was a Saltiel
- Five — Haim, generally called Haimaki (Greek nickname) Cohen, husband of Rachel...
- Six — Jacob Cohen, father of Haimaki

Lederman-Blinder

The birth is announced of Roy Marcel (Moshé) in Bogota, Columbia on 31ST March 1995, son of Laure Blinder and Jaime Lederman, grandson of Minneke Blinder-Sealtiel of Antwerp, Belgium

Photos for "membership cards"—an apology

The editor has sent the following letter to all subscribers:

I am writing to you on behalf of Moshe Shaltiel and myself.

You will recall that when you sent in your subscription, you enclosed a photograph to be made into a card signifying your membership of the network we are forming. A few weeks ago, I made up a package of all the photos I had received and sent them to Moshe in Chicago so that he could get them laminated with the reunion photo. Unfortunately, somewhere between my desk and his, we have lost track of the package.

I am very much aware that some members of the family have concerns about security. To set to rest any disquiet on this score, let me reassure you that the package containing the photos contained no information which would enable a third party to locate the persons depicted.

Nonetheless, the loss of photos is a blow and Moshe and I are very sorry for the inconvenience to you. We would like to try again and, with this in mind, may I ask you to go to the trouble of repeating the operation, if you would like to do so. If you did not send a photo the first time round, we would be delighted if you would send us one now.

To simplify matters this time round, would you please send your photo directly to:

Moshe Shaltiel
1901 Raymond Drive
Northbrook, Illinois 60062
USA

Once again Moshe and I are very sorry for this misadventure.

published by

Miles Saltiel

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