

**The Journal of Sierra Leone Studies – October 2017.**

**Editor: John Birchall**

Welcome to The Journal of Sierra Leone Studies. This is the first Journal dedicated solely to Sierra Leone to have been published for a long time.

We hope that it will be of use to academics, students and anyone with an interest in what for many is a rather 'special' country.

The Journal will not concentrate on one area of academic study and invites contributions from anyone researching and writing on Sierra Leone to send their articles to: **John Birchall** for consideration.

Prospective contributions should be between 3500-5000 words in length, though we will in special circumstances consider longer articles and authors can select whether they wish to be peer reviewed or not. Articles should not have appeared in any other published form before.

The Editorial Board reserves the right to suggest changes they consider are needed to the relevant author (s) and to not publish if such recommendations are ignored.

We are particularly interested to encourage students working on subjects specifically relating to Sierra Leone to submit their work.

Thank you so much for visiting The Journal and we hope that you (a) find it both interesting and of use to you and (b) that you will inform colleagues, friends and students of the existence of a Journal dedicated to the study of Sierra Leone.

**Editorial Board:** Professor Arthur Abraham, Virginia State University, Peter Andersen, Abdul Bangura, American University, Saidu Bangura, Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, John Birchall, Professor Tucker Childs, University of Portland, Christine Corcoran, University of Chicago, Lorenzo D'Angelo, University of Milan, Ade Daramy, Nigel Browne-Davies, Queen Mary University of London, Lisa Denney, Overseas Development Institute, London, Luisa Enria, University of Bath, Melbourne Garber, Dave Harris, Bradford University, Professor Ian Hancock, University of Texas, Professor Adam Jones, University of Leipzig, Katrina Keefer, Trent University, Professor Paul Lovejoy, University of York, Canada, Dr. Nemata Majeks-Walker, Gary Schulze, Professor Suzanne Schwarz, University of Worcester, Joko Sengova, Isatu Smith, Chairperson Monuments and Relics Commission, Dr. Richard Wadsworth, Njala University, Professor Alfred Zak-Williams, University of Central Lancashire

## **Content**

**Jewish Merchants in Sierra Leone, 1831-1934 by Nigel Browne-Davies**

**The 1793 Sierra Leone Journal of Isaac Dubois by Jonathan Howard**

**From the Archives of the Journal of Sierra Leone Studies: Madam Yoko: Ruler of the Mendi Confederacy by M.C.F. Easmon (with the Editor's Note)**

## Jewish Merchants in Sierra Leone, 1831-1934

By Nigel Browne-Davies

The Colony of Sierra Leone and the territories neighbouring the Colony attracted a diverse range of African and European merchants and traders in the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> European merchants established trading depots in the Colony and spread out into the hinterland to trade with Africans from the indigenous ethnic groups.<sup>2</sup> Although Sierra Leone had a relatively small European population in comparison to some other outposts in the British Empire,<sup>3</sup> a small number of European and American Jews settled in Sierra Leone and the territories neighbouring the Colony.<sup>4</sup> Some of these Jewish merchants had extensive commercial enterprises in the hinterland and were among the European pioneers who extended British imperial influence into the hinterland and gained substantial wealth from their endeavours.<sup>5</sup> However, although these Jewish merchants were an important segment of the European population that pioneered European commercial activities in some areas of the hinterland, the presence of Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone and its hinterland is a largely neglected area of Sierra

---

<sup>1</sup>Porter, Arthur, *Creoledom: A Study of the Development of Freetown Society*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 106-107. Fyfe, Christopher, *A History of Sierra Leone*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 144-7, 226, 307-8. Fyfe, C.H., 'European and Creole Influence in the Hinterland of Sierra Leone Before 1896', *Sierra Leone Studies* (New Series), Number 6, (1956), pp. 113-23. In the nineteenth century, Freetown, the principal city of the Colony of Sierra Leone, was a cosmopolitan centre which attracted African, European, and American merchants who sought to trade in the vast territories adjacent to the Colony.

<sup>2</sup>Davidson, John, "'Creole' or 'Sierra Leonean' Some Evidence from 1898," in Jones, Adam, (Ed.), Mitchell, Peter K., (Ed.), *Sierra Leone studies at Birmingham 1985: proceedings of the fourth Birmingham-Sierra Leone Studies Symposium*, 13th-15th July 1985, Fircroft College, Birmingham, (Birmingham: Centre of West African Studies, University of Birmingham, 1987), pp. 5-13. Fyfe, C.H., 'European and Creole Influence in the Hinterland of Sierra Leone Before 1896', *Sierra Leone Studies* (New Series), Number 6, (1956), pp. 113-23. Principally these indigenous African ethnic groups were the Bullom, Mende, Temne, Susu, Nalu, Baga and the Vai.

<sup>3</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 203-4, 226, 438.

<sup>4</sup>Fyfe, C.H., 'View of the New Burial Ground', *Sierra Leone Studies*, (New Series), Number 2, (June 1954), p. 86. Fyfe 'European and Creole Influence in the Hinterland,' *Sierra Leone Studies* (New Series), Number 6, (1956), pp. 119-120.

<sup>5</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 226, 612. Jolles, Michael, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, (London, Jolles Publications, 1998), pp. 249-253. For example, Nathaniel Isaacs, Louis Solomon, John Myer Harris, and Lionel Hart were some of the more successful Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone.

Leonean history. It is the aim of this article to examine the activities of Jewish merchants and their descendants in the hinterland and Colony of Sierra Leone between 1831 and 1934.

It is the purpose of this article to highlight the activities of the small number of Jewish merchants who settled in Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century and their descendants. These merchants had an important role in promoting legitimate trade and in extending the sphere of British influence to outposts in the hinterland that were previously characterised by participation in the slave trade.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, the descendants of these Jewish merchants often had no less important roles in the development of Sierra Leone. Although this paper provides a broad overview of individual Jewish merchants and their descendants, this article primarily focuses on the Harris and Solomon families in Sierra Leone and the activities of five Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century: Nathaniel Isaacs, Philip Lemberg, John Myer Harris, Louis Solomon and Lionel Hart.

---

<sup>6</sup>Fyfe, C.H., 'View of the New Burial Ground, *Sierra Leone Studies*, (New Series), Number 2, (June 1954), pp. 85-90.

## Historiography

The role of Jewish merchants, colonial officials, and settlers in colonial Africa has been examined in some scholarly publications.<sup>7</sup> Scholars have perhaps particularly focused on the role of Jewish merchants and officials in the development of South Africa.<sup>8</sup> However, publications such as Selena Axelrod Winsnes' *A Danish Jew in West Africa: Wulf Joseph Wulff Biography And Letters 1836-1842* and Ernst Oppenheim Nobis' *To remember me by: first crusade through Holocaust: facts, fragments, lore and legends* have highlighted the role that some Jews had within the colonial strata in West Africa and the fortunes of their African progeny.<sup>9</sup> Winsnes examined the diary of Wulff Joseph Wulff, a Danish Jewish colonial official in the Gold Coast and the fortunes of his descendants in Accra. Ernst Oppenheim's *To remember me by: first crusade through Holocaust: facts, fragments, lore and legends* focused on the ancestry and relatives of Wulff Joseph Wulff with some information on the fortunes of the Wulff family and their various septs in Ghana.<sup>10</sup>

However, although there have been several studies focusing on the activities of individual or collective Jewish merchants in West Africa, few, if any of these studies have focused exclusively on Jewry in Sierra Leone. Although the activities of Jewish merchants such as John Myer Harris and Nathaniel Isaacs were extensive in the southern region of modern-day Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers of the modern-day Republic of Guinea, these merchants have featured more in studies on

---

<sup>7</sup>Arkin, Marcus, 'In the Footsteps of Nathaniel Isaacs: A Bird's Eye Overview of the Economic History of KwaZulu-Natal Jewry,' *Jewish Affairs*, Volume 56, Number 3, (Spring 2001), pp. 24-35.

<sup>8</sup>Arkin, Marcus, *South African Jewry: A Contemporary Survey*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 57-63.

<sup>9</sup>Winsnes, Selena Axelrod, *A Danish Jew in West Africa. Wulf Joseph Wulff Biography And Letters 1836-1842*, (Ghana: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2013), pp. 22-13.

<sup>10</sup>Oppenheim, Ernst, *To remember me by: first crusade through Holocaust: facts, fragments, lore and legends*, (United Kingdom: Nobis, 2000), pp. 109-112. Oppenheim, Ernst, 'Ernst Oppenheim Collection: 1861-1999 (Bulk: 1986-1992),' URL: <https://archive.org/details/ernstoppenheimco01oppe>. 'Marriage-Steinwehr-Wulff,' *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, 24 March, 1900, hereafter the *S.L.W.N.* Carl Wulff, a telegraphist, and a son of Frantz W.J. Wulff, who was the son of Wulff Joseph Wulff, married Anna (Hannah) Henrietta Steinwehr, the Sierra Leonean daughter of Herr Seigmond Aaron Steinwehr, a German merchant and a Sierra Leonean mother.

Liberian and South African history than in Sierra Leonean historiography.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, Jewish merchants such as the Hart brothers and Solomon brothers are largely overlooked in scholarly works on Sierra Leone. Thus, the contribution of Jewish merchants to the development of legitimate trade in Sierra Leone has been largely overlooked by modern scholarship.<sup>12</sup>

Christopher Fyfe, perhaps the most pre-eminent historian of Sierra Leone in the twentieth century, was probably the first scholar to detail the activities of Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone.<sup>13</sup> Fyfe's articles published in *Sierra Leone Studies*, 'European and Creole Influence in the Hinterland of Sierra Leone Before 1896', and 'View of the New Burial Ground,' both briefly referred to the important role and activities of Jewish merchants in developing legitimate trade in the hinterland.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, in Fyfe's seminal work, *A History of Sierra Leone*, he acknowledged the role of Anglo-Jewish merchants in trade in West Africa.<sup>15</sup> Fyfe's *A History of Sierra Leone* provided further details on the activities of Jews in Sierra Leone such as Nathaniel Isaacs, Philip Lemberg, and John Myer Harris.<sup>16</sup>

John Davidson's unpublished dissertation, 'Trade And Politics In The Sherbro Hinterland, 1849-1890,' examined the role of Europeans in trade and politics in the Sherbro region from the middle to late

---

<sup>11</sup>Arkin, Marcus, *Jewish Pioneer, Traveller Extraordinaire: A Reappraisal of the Life and Times of Nathaniel Isaacs*, Volume 54, Number 3, (Spring 1999), pp. 57-63. Arkin, Marcus, 'In the Footsteps of Nathaniel Isaacs: A Bird's Eye Overview of the Economic History of KwaZulu-Natal Jewry,' *Jewish Affairs*, Volume 56, Number 3, (Spring 2001), pp. 24-35. 'Harris, John Myer,' Dunn, D. Elwood, Beyan, Amos Jones, Burrowes, Carl Patrick, *Historical dictionary of Liberia*, (Second Edition), (United States: Scarecrow Press, 2001), p. 160. Scholars have examined the role of Nathaniel Isaacs in South Africa and John Myer Harris remains an important, if not infamous, figure in Liberian historiography. However, both Nathaniel Isaacs and John Myer Harris are largely neglected in Sierra Leonean historiography although both Isaacs and Harris were influential merchants in Sierra Leone and the Republic of Guinea.

<sup>12</sup>Deveneaux, Gustav H. K., 'Sierra Leone and South Africa,' in *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Volume 57, Number 4, (Sierra Leone), (1987), pp. 572-3. Gustav Deveneaux did examine the importance of Nathaniel Isaacs to Sierra Leone, although his article was not intended as a review of the contribution of Jews to the development of trade in Sierra Leone.

<sup>13</sup>Fyfe, 'View of the New Burial Ground,' *Sierra Leone Studies*, (New Series), Number 2, (June 1954), p. 86. Fyfe, 'European and Creole Influence in the Hinterland,' *Sierra Leone Studies* (New Series), Number 6, (1956), pp. 119-120.

<sup>14</sup>Fyfe, 'View of the New Burial Ground,' *Sierra Leone Studies*, (New Series), Number 2, (June 1954), p. 86. Fyfe, 'European and Creole Influence in the Hinterland,' *Sierra Leone Studies* (New Series), Number 6, (1956), pp. 119-120.

<sup>15</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 226.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 239-40, 307-8, 324.

nineteenth century. Davidson highlighted the role of Jews such as Nathaniel Nathan in pioneering legitimate trade in the Sherbro in addition to the role of John Myer Harris in promoting legitimate trade in the Sherbro and the Gallinas.<sup>17</sup> Davidson also mentioned some of the activities of merchants such as the Hart brothers in his wider survey of trade and politics in the Sherbro.

Adam Jones' seminal publication, *From slaves to palm kernels: A history of the Galinhas country (West Africa), 1730-1890*, on the Gallinas region assessed the development of the slave trade in the Gallinas region and the transition from the participation of Europeans and Africans in the slave trade to legitimate commerce in the region. Jones' work examined the activities of John Myer Harris, perhaps the most influential Anglo-Jew to settle in the hinterland of Sierra Leone in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>18</sup> Jones provided an overview of Harris's activities in the Gallinas during the nineteenth century.<sup>19</sup>

Raymond Smyke's valuable studies on Momolu Massaquoi and Nathaniel Varney Massaquoi provided some important information on the relationship between the Hamelberg, Harris, and Lyons families, perhaps three of the most prominent and closely interrelated Sierra Leonean families of Jewish descent.<sup>20</sup> Raymond Smyke, a scholar focused on Liberian history, wrote an article entitled, 'Nathaniel Varney Massaquoi (1905-1962): A Biographical Essay,' in which he briefly examined the life of Nathaniel Varney Massaquoi, (1905-1962), a son of Julia Cecilia Harris and grandson of Nathaniel Harris I, the younger brother of John Myer Harris. Smyke provided a study of the Harris family in his publication

---

<sup>17</sup>Davidson, John, *Trade and politics in the Sherbro hinterland, 1849-1890*, (PhD. Thesis. The University of Wisconsin, 1969), pp. 96-8.

<sup>18</sup>Jones, Adam, *From slaves to palm kernels: A history of the Galinhas country (West Africa), 1730-1890*, (*Studien zur Kulturkunde*), (Germany: F. Steiner, 1983), pp. 105-7. 126-135. Adam Jones was among the first historians, if not the first historian, to write a history of the slave trade and legitimate commerce in the Gallinas region.

<sup>19</sup>Jones, *From slaves to palm kernels: A history of the Galinhas country (West Africa), 1730-1890*, (*Studien zur Kulturkunde*), (Germany: F. Steiner, 1983), pp. 105-7. 126-135. Jones also referred to some of Harris's activities in the Sherbro and in Britain.

<sup>20</sup>Smyke, Raymond J., *The First African Diplomat: Momolu Massaquoi (1870-1938)*, (United States: Xlibris Corporation, 2005), pp. 167-178. Smyke, Raymond J., 'Nathaniel Varney Massquoi (1905-1962): A Biographical Essay,' *Liberian Studies Journal*, Volume XVII, Number 1, (1992), pp. 47-9.

entitled, *The First African Diplomat: Momolu Massaquoi (1870-1938)*.<sup>21</sup> Smyke expounded upon the interlocking ties of the Hamelberg, Harris, and Lyons families in his studies and provided important biographical details on John Myer Harris and Nathaniel Harris I.

In addition to studies on Sierra Leone and Liberia that have examined the activities of Jewish merchants and their descendants in Sierra Leone, there are several studies on Anglo-Jewry that have provided important information on the family histories and ties of Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone. Perhaps the most important studies on Anglo-Jewry relating to Sierra Leone are David Spector's article on Brighton Jewry and Michael Jolles' monograph on Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac and Nathaniel Isaacs.<sup>22</sup>

David Spector's seminal article, 'Brighton Jewry Reconsidered,' provided some salient information on John Myer Harris and his descendants in Sierra Leone.<sup>23</sup> Spector succinctly highlighted the commercial activities of John Myer Harris and the article was perhaps the first scholarly work to trace the activities and roles of John Myer Harris and his descendants in Sierra Leone.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, oral history provided by a grandson of John Myer Harris allowed Spector's article to reflect upon the contributions and legacy of Harris's descendants in modern-day Sierra Leone.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup>Smyke, *The First African Diplomat: Momolu Massaquoi (1870-1938)*, (United States: Xlibris Corporation, 2005), pp. 167-178.

<sup>22</sup>Spector, David, 'Brighton Jewry reconsidered,' *Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions Of The Jewish Historical Society of England*, Volume XXX, 1987-1988, pp. 110-1. Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, (London, Jolles Publications, 1998), pp. 22, 55-6, 245-253. Arkin, 'Jewish Pioneer, Traveller Extraordinaire: A Reappraisal of the Life and Times of Nathaniel Isaacs,' *Jewish Affairs*, Volume 54, Number 3, (Spring 1999), pp. 57-63. There are other studies that also refer to Nathaniel Isaacs and aspects of his mercantilist pursuits in Sierra Leone.

<sup>23</sup>Spector, 'Brighton Jewry reconsidered,' *Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions Of The Jewish Historical Society of England*, Volume XXX, 1987-1988, pp. 110-111.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 110-1. Spector outlined the connections between Brighton Jewry and Sierra Leone through the commercial activities of John Myer Harris. Spector's article was probably the first to refer to John Myer Harris's African wives, children and grandchildren in Sierra Leone. Spector was also perhaps the first to highlight the legacy of John Myer Harris in modern-day Sierra Leone and to emphasise the connection between the British and Sierra Leonean descendants of Harris.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 110-1. Some of the contributions that Spector attributed to the descendants or relatives of John Myer Harris in Sierra Leone were achieved by distant relations of the Harris family or members of families that the Harris family had intermarried with during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.



Michael Jolles' ground-breaking publication on three notable Anglo-Jewish figures entitled, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, provided perhaps the most comprehensive overview of the family histories, interlocking ties and activities of Anglo-Jewry in Sierra Leone.<sup>26</sup> Jolles devoted a chapter on Nathaniel Isaac's activities in Sierra Leone and he also provided some salient information on Jewry in Sierra Leone.<sup>27</sup> Jolles publication examined the interlocking ties between the Isaacs, Lyons, Solomon, and Hart families, all of whom had scions who settled as merchants in the hinterland or Colony of Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century.<sup>28</sup> Thus, Jolles' study provided an overview of the family background and activities of these Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone in the nineteenth century.<sup>29</sup>

The purpose of this article is to contribute to the current historiography on Jewry in Sierra Leone by providing a comprehensive overview of the activities of Jewish merchants and their progeny in Sierra Leone. This article first examines the economic drivers and patterns of trade in the hinterland and Colony of Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers of the modern-day Republic of Guinea and the transition from the slave trade to legitimate commerce in these regions. This article then provides an overview of the early Jewish businessmen in the Colony of Sierra Leone and their activities in the Colony and neighbouring territories. This article then traces the activities of perhaps the five most influential Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone and their descendants in Sierra Leone. Furthermore, the role of these Jewish merchants in promoting legitimate commerce in the hinterland of Sierra Leone shall be thoroughly examined in this article. This article shall assess the activities of Jewish merchants and their descendants in Sierra Leone by examining newspapers, private genealogical charts, birth, marriage and death

---

<sup>26</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, (London, Jolles Publications, 1998), pp. 22, 55-6, 245-253.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid. pp. 245-253.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid. pp. 277-8,

<sup>29</sup>Ibid. pp. 249-253. However, Jolles did provide information on some of the African-born children of Nathaniel Isaacs.

records, and by utilising the oral history provided by some of the Sierra Leonean descendants of these Jewish merchants.

### **Trade and Commerce in the Colony and hinterland of Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers**

The Jewish merchants who traded in the hinterland of Sierra Leone and the neighbouring territories in the early to late nineteenth century, settled in regions with a distinct pattern of trade with Europeans that had been largely driven by the slave trade. The hinterland of Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers of Guinea in contrast to the Colony of Sierra Leone had distinctive forms of trade and commerce that is perhaps reflective of the unique circumstances in which Europeans settled to trade in the Northern Rivers, and the hinterland and Colony of Sierra Leone.<sup>30</sup> Although early European agents of mercantile companies in the seventeenth century engaged in trade for camwood and other local commodities, the slave trade was one of the most significant economic factors in Euro-African trade in the Northern Rivers and the hinterland of Sierra Leone during the precolonial and early colonial era.<sup>31</sup> A unique trading pattern developed in the hinterland of Sierra Leone and in the Northern Rivers which, although largely reflected in the slave trade from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, also formed the basis for transactions involving legitimate commerce by Jewish businessmen and other merchants in the nineteenth century.<sup>32</sup>

The Colony of Sierra Leone, founded as a settlement for the repatriation of peoples of African descent from the Americas, contributed to the development of legitimate trade in the territories near

---

<sup>30</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 141-2.

<sup>31</sup>Mouser, Bruce L., 'Trade and Politics in the Nunez and Pongo Rivers, 1790-1865,' (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1971), pp. 21-6. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 7-12, 254-5.

<sup>32</sup>Mouser, Bruce, 'Accommodation and Assimilation in the Landlord-Stranger Relationship,' in Swartz Jr., B. K., (Ed.), Dumett, Raymond, (Ed.), *West African Culture Dynamic*, (The Hague-New York: Mouton, 1980), pp. 495, 500-501. Mouser, 'Trade and Politics in the Nunez and Pongo Rivers, 1790-1865,' (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1971), pp. 21-6. Dorjahn, V.R., Fyfe, Christopher, 'Landlord and Stranger: Change in Tenancy Relations in Sierra Leone,' *The Journal of African History*, Volume 3, Number 3, (1962), pp. 391, 394-7.

the Colony in the nineteenth century.<sup>33</sup> The introduction of legitimate trade was bolstered by or actively promoted by the founders of the Colony of Sierra Leone and their colonialist successors. The efforts of the British Navy to suppress the slave trade served to undermine the slave trading operations in the hinterland of Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers. Furthermore, the Colony attracted European shopkeepers and served as a base for the import and export trade that enriched the African and European mercantile class of Freetown during the nineteenth century. Thus, although some Europeans, and indeed colonists of African descent, continued to participate in the slave trade, legitimate commerce was also attractive to some Europeans, including Jews, who settled in the Colony as merchants and shopkeepers.<sup>34</sup> However, Jewish and other European merchants seeking to engage in legitimate commerce in the Northern Rivers and the hinterland of Sierra Leone had to promote this form of trade in areas that had been economically driven by the slave trade.

#### **Patterns of trade and commerce in the hinterland of Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers**

Some of the earliest Europeans who traded in modern-day Sierra Leone during the sixteenth century settled in the Sherbro region of southern Sierra Leone which was mainly populated by the southern Bullom or Sherbro people and later by the Mende ethnic group.<sup>35</sup> Commerce and trade between Europeans and Africans had long existed in the Sherbro region and dated to the period of Portuguese voyagers in the fifteenth century.<sup>36</sup> The English mercantilist companies such as the Gambia Adventurers and the Royal African Company established operations for camwood in the seventeenth

---

<sup>33</sup>Mouser, 'Accommodation and Assimilation in the Landlord-Stranger Relationship,' in Swartz Jr., B. K., (Ed.), Dumett, Raymond, (Ed.), *West African Culture Dynamic*, (The Hague-New York: Mouton, 1980), pp. 503-4.

<sup>34</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 141-2, 198. Furthermore, the unique trading pattern that had existed for centuries in the hinterland of Sierra Leone was not necessarily applicable in the context of the commercial environment or business relations in the Colony of Sierra Leone.

<sup>35</sup>Gorvie, Max, *Our People of the Sierra Leone Protectorate*, (Africa's Own Library, Number 6), (United Kingdom: United society for Christian literature, 1944), pp. 18-21, 21-4. Abraham, Arthur, *An Introduction to the Pre-colonial History of the Mende of Sierra Leone*, (United States: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), p. 140. The Mende settled in the Sherbro region in the eighteenth century.

<sup>36</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 1-2.

century.<sup>37</sup> The region was eventually characterised by the participation of African and Eurafrican families in the transatlantic slave trade.<sup>38</sup> Thus, a pattern of trade, predicated largely on the slave trade, existed in the Sherbro region for much of the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries and continued into the nineteenth century.

The Gallinas and Krim regions were mainly populated by the Vai, Krim and the Mende ethnic groups and was also characterised by trade with Europeans in the pre-colonial era.<sup>39</sup> In the Gallinas, the Portuguese, Dutch and English traded in the region where camwood, ivory and perhaps gold and malagueta could be found.<sup>40</sup> However, from the early eighteenth century, the slave trade was a dominant driver of economics in the Gallinas and surpassed the erstwhile legitimate commerce engaged in by Africans and Europeans.<sup>41</sup> The Gallinas region was also politically dominated by two African families, the Massaquoi and the Kpaka Rogers dynasties and these families held sway when Jewish and Sierra Leonean merchants traded in the Gallinas in the nineteenth century.<sup>42</sup>

The Northern Rivers of the modern-day Republic of Guinea, populated by the Baga, Landuma, Nalu, and Susu ethnic groups, were characterised by the participation of Europeans in the slave trade.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup>Jones, Adam, 'White Roots: Written and Oral Testimony on the "First" Mr Rogers,' *History in Africa*, Volume, 10 (1983), pp. 151-4.

<sup>38</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 9-10. High ranking officials such as Thomas Corker of Falmouth, England and low-ranking company agents or employees such as John Tucker and Zachary Rogers intermarried with local Sherbro women producing powerful Eurafrican clans. Although studies by Lynda Day Rose and John Davidson have examined aspects of Sherbro history, it is perhaps to the detriment of Sierra Leonean historiography that possibly no comprehensive historical or anthropological study on the early inhabitants of Sierra Leone such as the Bullom ethnic group and the Limba ethnic group has been published to date.

<sup>39</sup>Gorvie, *Our People of the Sierra Leone Protectorate*, (Africa's Own Library, Number 6), (United Kingdom: United society for Christian literature, 1944), pp. 24-5. Jones, *From Slaves to Palm Kernels*, pp. 6-18.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 20-1.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 23-4.

<sup>42</sup>Jones, 'White Roots: Written and Oral Testimony on the "First" Mr Rogers,' *History in Africa*, Volume, 10 (1983), pp. 151-162. In Adam Jones' ground-breaking article, 'White Roots,' he outlines the family history of the Kpaka Rogers clan by comparing the oral history of the family to the documented historical record on Zachary Rogers (d. 1781), an English interloper and agent for the Gambia Adventurers, and the European ancestor of the Kpaka Rogers family.

<sup>43</sup>Mouser, 'Trade and Politics in the Nunez and Pongo Rivers, 1790-1865,' (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1971), pp. 5-28.

European and North American slave traders established trading bases in the Northern Rivers and Eurafrican families such as the Curtises, Lightbournes, Stiles, Ormonds and Fabers were dominant merchant families in the region.<sup>44</sup> The slave trade continued in the Rio Pongas during the nineteenth century, even after the abolition of the slave trade by the British and American governments.<sup>45</sup>

However, some European merchants such as Michael Proctor and Benjamin Campbell made attempts at promoting legitimate commerce and developed the produce trade in the Rio Nunez.<sup>46</sup> Yet, despite efforts that promoted legitimate commerce in the region, the slave trade persisted in the Northern Rivers until the early nineteenth century, even if perhaps less so than in other regions.

Thus, although the earliest European merchants arrived in modern-day Sierra Leone to trade for camwood and other commodities, the Sherbro, Gallinas, and Northern Rivers were economically dependent on the slave trade for much of the late seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries. The interests of local African rulers were further bulwarked by the rise of Afro-European families of American, Portuguese or English descent who emerged between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>47</sup> Thus, the Kpaka Rogers family, of Anglo-African descent were one of the most powerful clans in the Gallinas region and the Caulker, Cleveland, and Tucker families were the most powerful Anglo-Sherbro clans in the Sherbro region. In the Northern Rivers, the Curtis and Lightburn families held sway of the slave trade in the Rio Pongo and the Pearce and Lawrence families dominated trade in the Rio Nunez.<sup>48</sup> These families safeguarded their interests and that of their local kingdoms and dominated trade in the region during the pre-colonial to colonial era. Jewish merchants who arrived in the

---

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., pp. 24-8.

<sup>45</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 254-5.

<sup>46</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 226-7. Proctor, an Englishman from Yorkshire, traded in the Northern Rivers and Isles de Los, and produced coffee with the intention of exporting to Britain.

<sup>47</sup>Jones, 'White Roots: Written and Oral Testimony on the "First" Mr Rogers,' *History in Africa*, Volume, 10 (1983), pp. 151-4. Mouser, 'Trade and Politics in the Nunez and Pongo Rivers, 1790-1865,' pp. 20, 26.

<sup>48</sup>Mouser, 'Trade and Politics in the Nunez and Pongo Rivers, 1790-1865,' pp. ii, 26, 32-4, 132, 194.

nineteenth century to trade at the Northern Rivers, Gallinas, or the Sherbro sought the patronage of these African rulers and Eurafican families.

Furthermore, the patterns of trade that developed in the Sherbro and in the Gallinas resulted in the extension of local customs and traditions to the trading relationships between Africans and Europeans. Tenancy relations between Europeans and Africans in the hinterland of Sierra Leone were governed by a customary tradition of 'landlords' and 'strangers' that regulated the relationship between the Europeans who settled in local chiefdoms and the African rulers.<sup>49</sup> As scholars such as Christopher Fyfe and V.J. Dorjahn noted, the concept of 'landlords' and 'strangers' ensured that African chiefs retained power and benefitted from trade and that European merchants and traders did not directly interfere in African affairs.<sup>50</sup> African landlords, who were generally political leaders, were responsible for the safety and actions of their European tenants and for recovering debts or seeking redress on behalf of their European tenants. In return for the protection of an African landlord, Europeans provided regular rent and customary gifts to the landlord and were expected to trade only in the territory of their landlord and not to travel further inland to seek opportunities for trade.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, some Europeans married the daughters of their African landlords thus solidifying the relationship between the stranger and landlord. The custom of Europeans marrying into the families of their African landlords would remain an important aspect of the landlord and tenant relationship during the period of slave-

---

<sup>49</sup>Dorjahn, V.R., Fyfe, Christopher, 'Landlord and Stranger: Change in Tenancy Relations in Sierra Leone,' *The Journal of African History*, Volume 3, Number 3, (1962), pp. 391, 394-7. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 8. The concept of landlord and stranger applied to any 'stranger' who arrived in the African kingdoms in the hinterland of Sierra Leone, possibly regardless of their racial or ethnic origins. Thus, Creole merchants from the Colony of Sierra Leone and other 'Educated Africans' of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who traded in the hinterland were subjected to the landlord and stranger tenancy system.

<sup>50</sup>Dorjahn, Fyfe, 'Landlord and Stranger: Change in Tenancy Relations in Sierra Leone,' *The Journal of African History*, Volume 3, Number 3, (1962), pp. 394-7. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 8.

<sup>51</sup>Dorjahn, Fyfe, 'Landlord and Stranger: Change in Tenancy Relations in Sierra Leone,' pp. 394-7. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 8.

based economies and the transition to engagement in legitimate commerce by African, Jewish and other European merchants.<sup>52</sup>

### **Patterns of trade and commerce in the Colony of Sierra Leone**

The Colony of Sierra Leone and its hinterland attracted a diverse range of merchants, missionaries and colonial officials during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although free people and the repatriated ex-slaves and their descendants comprised the vast majority of the inhabitants of the Colony of Sierra Leone, the Colony also attracted a wide variety of mainly American, British, French, and German colonial officials, missionaries, and merchants.<sup>53</sup> The merchants were typically shopkeepers, traders, or agents of commercial firms and some were from working-class families in Europe or America.<sup>54</sup> Although the landlord and stranger system did not exist in the Colony, the Colony developed a pattern of trade that was driven by shopkeepers, traders, and import and export merchants in the Colony. African and European merchants in the Colony formed mercantilist associations that lobbied the colonial government on behalf of their trading interests and Jewish

---

<sup>52</sup>Correspondence: Sherbro Affairs: To the Editor of the Weekly News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 25 February, 1893. 'Obituary: The Passing Away of Mr. James Nathaniel Harris Of Sulima,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 April, 1934. Culp, Daniel Wallace, *Twentieth Century Negro Literature: Or, A Cyclopaedia of Thought on the Vital Topics Relating to the American Negro*, (Illinois: J.L. Nichols & Company, 1902), p. 418. Neyland, Leedell W., Riley, John W., *The history of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University*, (Florida: University of Florida Press, 1963), p. 12. Gaymon, N.E., *A Century of Wisdom: Selected Speeches of Presidents of Florida A & M University, 1887-1987*, (Florida: Four-G PUB, 1990), p. 1. Davidson, 'Trade and politics in the Sherbro hinterland, 1849-1890,' pp. 61-2. Smyke, *The First African Diplomat: Momolu Massaquoi (1870-1938)*, pp. 174-5. Tucker, Peter L., *The Tuckers of Sierra Leone 1665-1914*, (United Kingdom: 1997), pp. 13-14, 37. The Tucker family intermarried with several Europeans and mixed-race individuals who settled in Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century. For example, William Nankin, possibly the mixed-race son of a European, married Yantickar, a possible daughter or granddaughter of Peter Tucker I, a son of John Tucker, the original Englishman in the employ of the Gambia Adventurers and later the Royal African Company. Furthermore, Thomas Desaille (DeSalieres) Tucker (1844-1903) was born on 21 July 1844 to Joseph DeSaille or de Salieres, a Frenchman of possible noble descent, who was described in some sources as an explorer, and the youngest daughter of Chief James Tucker, who was possibly the same individual as Chief James Henry Tucker (1780-1828).

<sup>53</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 135-6, 141. Furthermore, there were European officers serving in the British or colonial military units such as the West India Regiment and Royal Colonial Corps in Sierra Leone.

<sup>54</sup>Fraser, Ian, 'Father and son--a tale of two cities,' *Ulster Medical Journal*, 1968 Winter Vol. 37 No. 1), pp. 3-6. For example, Kenneth Macaulay was a member of a notable political family in Britain and John MacCormac was a member of a distinguished medical family in Ireland.

merchants were active participants as independent traders, partners, or agents of mercantilist firms in the commercial associations in the Colony of Sierra Leone.

Trade and commerce in the Colony of Sierra Leone was closely connected to trade in the hinterland of Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers of Guinea.<sup>55</sup> The nature of European trade in Freetown fluctuated throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The early export trade of the Colony was dominated by timber merchants such as Henry Williams and John MacCormac, who exported over twenty thousand logs between 1825 and 1826.<sup>56</sup> Merchant princes such as Charles Heddle, a mixed-race Senegalese Métis pioneered the groundnut and palm kernel trades.<sup>57</sup> Some of these European merchants established their own small firms or formed partnerships such as John MacCormac and the partners of Kidd and Dawson.<sup>58</sup> Nathaniel Isaacs, one of the earliest Jewish merchants to trade in Sierra Leone, formed a partnership in 1834 with G.C. Redman of London.<sup>59</sup> Isaacs and Redman operated two merchant vessels that traded between London and Sierra Leone.<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup>Mouser, 'Trade and Politics in the Nunez and Pongo Rivers, 1790-1865,' pp. 49-50.

<sup>56</sup>Holman, James, *Travels in Madeira, Sierra Leone, Teneriffe, St. Jago, Cape Coast, Fernando Po, Princes Island, etc. etc.* (Britain: G. Routledge, 1840), pp. 98-100.

<sup>57</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 239. Fyfe, Christopher, 'Heddle, Charles William Maxwell (1811/12-1889)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, May 2008. [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/49291>, accessed 7 Nov 2016].

<sup>58</sup>'Notice,' *London Gazette*, Number 20177, 13 December, 1842. 'Death Of J. Eugene Dawson, F.R.G.S.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 3 March, 1917. 'Obituary: John Eugene Dawson, F.R.G.S., F.R.C.S.,' *Sierra Leone Guardian*, 9 March, 1917, hereafter the *S.L.G.* 'Funeral Of Mr. J. Eugene Dawson,' *S.L.W.N.*, 24 March, 1917. 'Death Of James Williams, Esq.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 14 January, 1899. Kidd and Dawson (Kidd & Dawson) was formed by John Dawson, (29 May, 1814-28 July 1845), and George Alexander Kidd. John Dawson was possibly the father of John Eugene Dawson Sr. and the grandfather of John Eugene Dawson Jr. (1859/1860-20 February, 1917), the Assistant Collector of Customs and Harbour Master, who was a nephew of James Williams, (1819/1820-12 January, 1899), a Sierra Leonean merchant of Maroon descent and the father of Nash Hamilton Williams, the Sierra Leonean barrister. John Eugene Dawson Jr. was the father of Maximillian Eugene Dawson, formerly Hamelberg. George Alexander Kidd, who continued to engage in trade as late as 1855, might have also been the ancestor of several individuals with the surname 'Kidd' in Sierra Leone.

<sup>59</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 243.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 225, 243. Nathaniel Isaacs had established a joint-stock company called the South African Company for Commerce, Colonization, & Agriculture at the Bay of Natal. The company had £500,000 in capital with 10,000 shares priced at £50 per share. Jolles provides a copy of the prospectus of the South African Company for Commerce, Colonization, & Agriculture at the Bay of Natal in *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, and Nathaniel Isaacs*.



In the nineteenth century, there were several European mercantilist firms that established bases in Freetown and employed European and African agents. The largest European mercantilist firm in the Colony of Sierra Leone in the early nineteenth century was Macaulay and Babington a firm established by Zachary Macaulay, (1768-1838), the Scottish abolitionist and member of the Clapham Sect. Several merchants settled in Sierra Leone in connection with Macaulay and Babington.<sup>61</sup> Isaac, Campbell and Co, which traded as the Anglo-African Company, was one of the mercantilist firms founded by Saul Isaac and Samuel Isaac, both Anglo-Jews businessmen and cousins of Nathaniel Isaacs. The Anglo-African Company, which had extensive business operations in Sierra Leone, employed several agents, clerks and contractors in Sierra Leone including Lionel Hart, Henry Solomon, and possibly Louis Solomon, who later emerged as important Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone.

European merchants in the Colony of Sierra Leone also formed various mercantilist associations that were aimed at lobbying the colonial government of Sierra Leone on various issues. Jewish merchants who settled in Sierra Leone such as John Myer Harris and John Levi were active members of these mercantilist associations.<sup>62</sup> The Chamber of Commerce was established in the early nineteenth century and several mercantilist associations such as the Commercial Association, Mercantile

---

<sup>61</sup>Verger, Pierre, *Trade Relations Between the Bight of Benin and Bahia from the 17th to 19th Century*, (Nigeria: Ibadan University Press, 1976), p. 528. Smith, Robert Sydney, *The Lagos Consulate, 1851-1861*, (United States: University of California Press, 1979), p. 49. Whyte, Iain, *Zachary Macaulay 1768-1838: The Steadfast Scot in the British Anti-slavery Movement*, (Britain: Liverpool University Press, 2011), pp. 195-6. For example, Benjamin Campbell, a merchant in the Northern Rivers who was later appointed as the Consular Agent for the Lagos Colony, was an employee of Macaulay and Babington and Robert Dougan, an Afro-Caribbean merchant possibly from Guyana or Tortola, was an agent of Macaulay and Babington. Furthermore, Joseph Easton, a European commemorated in Freetown by Easton Street, was possibly an employee of Macaulay and Babington or a close associate of Kenneth Macaulay, the principal of Macaulay and Babington.

<sup>62</sup>'Sierra Leone,' *Anti-slavery Reporter*, 1 May, 1858, Volume 6, No 5 (New Series), (Third Series), (London: The Society, 1858), p. 111. 'Fifty Years Ago: From The Free Press, December 11, 1863: Meeting Of The Merchants,' *S.L.W.N.*, 13 December, 1913. 'Fifty Years Ago: From The Free Press, December 18, 1863: Meeting Of The Merchants (Continued),' *S.L.W.N.*, 20 December, 1913. 'Fifty Years Ago: From The Free Press, December 18, 1868: Meeting Of The Merchants (Continued),' *S.L.W.N.*, 27 December, 1913. 'Fifty Years Ago: From The Free Press, December 18, 1863: Meeting Of The Merchants (Continued from our last),' *S.L.W.N.*, 3 January, 1914. Jewish merchants such as Nathaniel Isaacs, Simeon Cantor, John Etting Taylor, and David Henry Davison were members of the Mercantilist Association of Freetown alongside African and other European merchants. Furthermore, John Myer Harris had a leading role in the proceedings of the 1863 election that featured John Levi as a candidate against John Ezzidio (1810-1872).

Association, and the Sierra Leone Association were established with both Sierra Leonean and European members.<sup>63</sup> Jewish merchants had an active role in some of these mercantilist associations that allowed them to lobby the colonial government on matters of importance to the mercantilist community. Thus, as traders and merchants, Jewish businessmen had an active role in the mercantilist affairs of the Colony and hinterland of Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers that dated from the period when the first Jewish merchants arrived to trade in Sierra Leone.

### **The early Jewish merchants**

Jews, although few in number, were a vibrant segment of the European population in Sierra Leone and its hinterland during the nineteenth century. A testament to the presence and legacy of Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone is reflected in some of the Hebrew inscriptions in gravestones in Freetown and possibly in Bonthe.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, notices such as obituaries in the *Jewish Chronicle* reflect the presence of Jews in Sierra Leone.<sup>65</sup> Although probably most of the Jewish merchants who arrived in Sierra Leone traded in West Africa from around the mid-nineteenth century, there were also some Jews who arrived in Sierra Leone from as early as the early 1830s and possibly the 1820s.

Possibly the earliest Jewish merchants to settle in the Colony of Sierra Leone were Abraham Lemon, (1806-1849), and Edward Lemon, (1820-1856), who were half-brothers from an Anglo-Jewish

---

<sup>63</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 175, 259, 387, 451-2, 463-4. There were other associations such as the Sierra Leone Native Association, which was later constituted as the Sierra Leone Association, and the Kissy Road Traders Association, but these were largely, if not exclusively comprised of Sierra Leonean members.

<sup>64</sup>Fyfe, C.H., 'View of the New Burial Ground, *Sierra Leone Studies*, (New Series), Number 2, (June 1954), p. 86. As Christopher Fyfe noted, the presence of Jewish merchants is reflected in the Hebrew inscriptions on the headstones at Circular Road Cemetery where some Jewish merchants such as Nathaniel Salomon and Leo Levi were buried. The headstones of Nathaniel Salomon and Leo Levi of Liverpool, both presumably Jewish merchants, had inscriptions in Hebrew. Nathaniel Salomon and Leo Levi were victims of the yellow fever epidemic of 1859. It is possible that Leo Levi was a relative, perhaps a brother or cousin, of John Levi and H.B. Levi, the brothers who settled as merchants in Sierra Leone.

<sup>65</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 251. J.C. Spiers was another merchant recorded as dying in Sierra Leone in 1869.

family from London but with roots in Lancashire.<sup>66</sup> The Lemons were possibly born to Lionel Asher Lemon and were possibly the grandchildren of Myer Isaiah Lemon (1750-1820), who was originally from Tulsberg, Bavaria in Germany.<sup>67</sup> Abraham Lemon arrived in Sierra Leone in the 1820s or 1830s and established himself as a trader at Number 30 Kissy Street, Freetown.<sup>68</sup> By the 1840s, Lemon had prospered enough to establish a commercial house and employed several European clerks.<sup>69</sup> Governor Norman William MacDonald appointed Abraham Lemon to the Governor's Council of the Colony of Sierra Leone as possibly the first Jewish Member of Council.<sup>70</sup> Abraham Lemon died in Freetown, Sierra Leone on 14 January, 1849 and a tablet was erected in St George's Cathedral in Freetown in his memory.<sup>71</sup> Edward Lemon, who remained in Sierra Leone following his brother's death, died of injuries

---

<sup>66</sup>Deveneaux, Gustav, 'Buxtonianism and Sierra Leone: The 1841 Timbo Expedition,' *Journal of African Studies*, 1978. Volume 5, Number 1, p. 41. Public and Private Family Trees, *Ancestry*. Gustav Deveneaux identified Edward Lemon as a brother of Abraham Lemon but referred to the brothers as Afro-West Indian merchants. There was also a John Lemon who was Bengali and a member of the Black Poor colonists of the failed 1787-1789 attempt at colonization in Sierra Leone.

<sup>67</sup>Public and Private Family Trees, *Ancestry*. 'Lemon, Henry (1822-3-December 1902), engraver,' in Rubinstein, W., Jolles, Michael A., *The Palgrave Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish History*, (Britain: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 562-3. Henry Lemon, a notable Jewish engraver was possibly a member of the family. The entry for Henry Lemon in *The Palgrave Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish History* states that Lemon was the son of an African merchant who died of fever in Sierra Leone. Edward Lemon died of injuries resulting from a carriage accident and so unless there was another Lemon brother in Sierra Leone, Abraham Lemon was possibly the father of Henry Lemon. If Henry Lemon, (1822-1902), was a son of Abraham Lemon, then the latter would have been fifteen or sixteen years old when Henry Lemon was conceived.

<sup>68</sup>The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, CO 267/111, '1831 Census of Population and Liberated Africans.'

<sup>69</sup>Shreeve, William Whitaker, 'Deaths in Merchant Service,' *Sierra Leone: The Principal British Colony on the Western Coast of Africa*, p. 100. William Whitaker Shreeve described the "house of A. Lemon" in recording the death of two clerks employed by Abraham Lemon.

<sup>70</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 226.

<sup>71</sup>PROB 11/2099/341, 'Will of Abraham Lemon of Freetown, Sierra Leone,' *The National Archives of the United Kingdom*, Kew, 27 September, 1849. 'Deaths For The Week,' *S.L.W.N.*, 4 January, 1908. 'Supplement To The Sierra Leone Weekly News: Post Office Notice,' *S.L.W.N.*, 24 October, 1908. Photographs in 'Lemon Family Tree,' in Public and Private Family Trees, *Ancestry*. The tablet remains extant and can be viewed at St. George's Cathedral, George Street, Freetown, Sierra Leone. Lemon left his estate to his wife Annie Colt Lemon, née Wilson. The 'Lemon' surname remained extant in Sierra Leone, although the surname could have been derived from other individuals such as John Lemon, the Bengali member of the 1787 'Black Poor' Settlers of Granville Town and the first colony at Sierra Leone. There were several individuals with the 'Lemon' surname including Margaret Lemon, who died aged 78 years old at Number 27 East Street, Freetown, Sierra Leone and E.E. Lemon of Pademba Road, Freetown.

resulting from the accidental overthrowing of his carriage on 30 January, 1856 in Freetown, Sierra Leone.<sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>72</sup>Obituary: Deaths: Arranged In Chronological Order,' *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Volume 45, p. 434. Photographs in the 'Lemon Family Tree,' in Public and Private Family Trees, *Ancestry*. A tablet at St. George's Cathedral was also erected in memory of Edward Lemon.

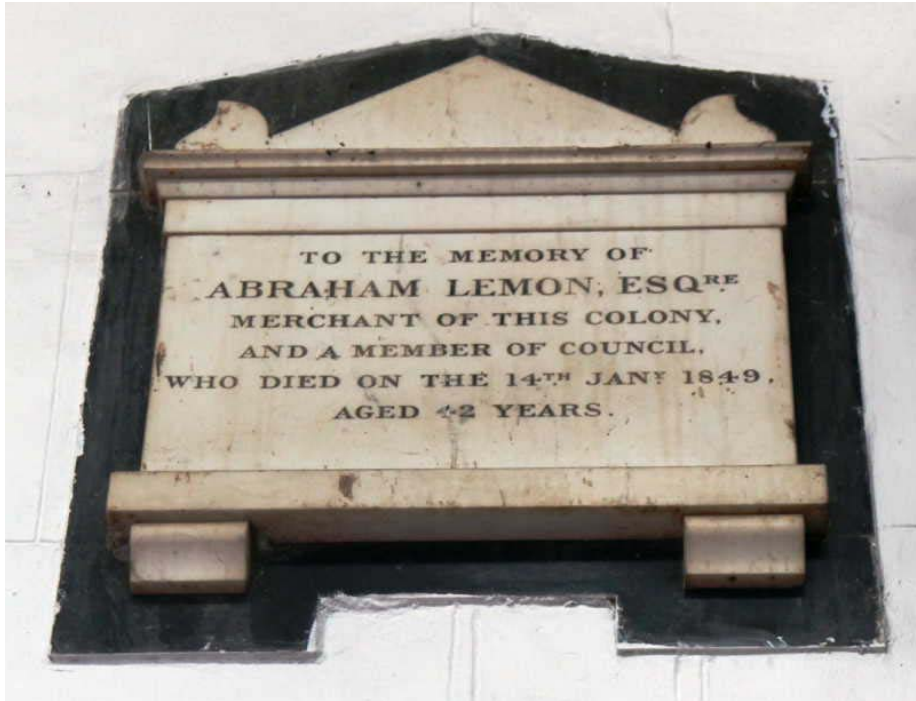


Fig. 1. Tablet in memory of Abraham Lemon, St George's Cathedral, Freetown, Sierra Leone<sup>73</sup>



Fig. 2. Tablet in memory of Edward Lemon, St George's Cathedral, Freetown, Sierra Leone<sup>74</sup>

<sup>73</sup>Photographs in the 'Lemon Family Tree,' Public and Private Family Trees, *Ancestry*.

<sup>74</sup>Photographs in the 'Lemon Family Tree,' Public and Private Family Trees, *Ancestry*.

There were also several Jews who were actively engaged as colonial officials and John Etting Taylor, (1803-1860), the first American Consul to Sierra Leone was from a prominent Jewish family in Baltimore.<sup>75</sup> Etting Taylor, who traded in Sierra Leone and the Gambia served as acting Consul for the United States from 1853 and was appointed substantively in 1858. Taylor, who was possibly a member of the Maryland Colonization Society, died on 27 January, 1860 in Sierra Leone.<sup>76</sup> John Levi and H.B. Levi, Anglo-Jewish businessmen, were both active merchants in the trade in Sierra Leone.<sup>77</sup> John Levi was a candidate for the position as the first Unofficial Member of the reorganised Legislative Council, although he was defeated by John Ezzidio, a Liberated African merchant of Nupe descent.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, in the late nineteenth century, Sir Matthew Nathan served as acting governor of Sierra Leone, perhaps one of the last administrators who empathised with Sierra Leoneans before the significant downturn in Anglo-Sierra Leonean relations.<sup>79</sup>

Thus, Jewish merchants and colonial officials had an active role in colonial society in Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century. However, although there were several Jewish colonial officials and merchants in Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century, there were perhaps five Jewish merchants who distinguished themselves in trade, commerce, and in the economic and political developments in

---

<sup>75</sup>Hall, ESQ., Geo. W.S., 'Sierra Leone,' *The African Repository*, Volume 35, Number 7, (July, 1859), pp. 205-6. John Etting Taylor, (1803/7-1858), was possibly born in Baltimore, Maryland to Robert Taylor, (1767-1803), and Fanny Taylor, née Etting, (1766-1828), a member of a prominent Jewish American family. John Etting Taylor was a grandson of Elijah Etting, (1724-1778), a German Jewish trader originally from Frankfurt, Hesse, Germany, who was a son of Reuben Etting, and Shinah Etting, (1744-1822), née Solomon, a daughter of Joseph Solomon of London, England and Bilah Solomon, née Myers-Cohen.

<sup>76</sup>Friday, January 27 [1860]: American Consul Dead,' *Vincent's Semi-Annual United States Register*, (1 January, 1860 to 1 July, 1860), (Philadelphia: Francis Vincent, 1860), p. 64. *Despatches from United States consuls in Sierra Leone, 1858-1906*, [microform], Volume 1, (Washington: The National Archives and Records Service, 1960), National Archives and Records Service, 1960.

<sup>77</sup>'Reduced From Thousands To Hundreds. Sawyerr's West Africa Almanack, 1914, 43rd Issue: Price 3d.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 21 February, 1914. John Levi, (1839/1840-12 June, 1874), of Liverpool, England died in Sierra Leone on 12 June, 1874 at the age of thirty-four years old.

<sup>78</sup>Berger, Doreen, (Ed.), *The Jewish Victorian: Genealogical Information from the Jewish Newspapers, 1871-1880*, (Oxford: Robert Boyd Publications, 1999), p. 321.

<sup>79</sup>Newbury, Colin, 'Nathan, Sir Matthew (1862–1939)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35189>, accessed 16 Nov 2016]. Matthew Nathan received a knighthood in 1902.

the Colony of Sierra Leone and its hinterland: Nathaniel Isaacs, John Myer Harris, Philip Lemberg, Louis Solomon, and Lionel Hart. Some of these merchants were not only notable for their commercial endeavours, but were also influential because of their participation in colonial and indigenous society and in some instances, their political manoeuvring that impacted both the Colony and the hinterland of Sierra Leone. Furthermore, at least two of these merchants left notable progeny in Sierra Leone who carried on the tradition of commercial pursuits in the Colony and hinterland of Sierra Leone.

### **Jewish Merchants and Legitimate Commerce**

The introduction of legitimate commerce in the hinterland of Sierra Leone and Northern Rivers was one of the significant developments that contributed to the eradication of the transatlantic slave trade in the Northern Rivers, Sherbro and Gallinas regions during the nineteenth century.<sup>80</sup> Although the efforts of the British colonial government to suppress the slave trade was a significant factor in the eradication of the slave trade, it was the export of groundnuts and coffee from the Northern Rivers and palm kernels from the Gallinas and the Sherbro that provided these regions with an economic alternative to slave trading.<sup>81</sup> As one scholar noted, the Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone were largely responsible for advancing trade along the coast of Sierra Leone and for promoting legitimate trade in areas previously dependent on the slave trade.<sup>82</sup> These merchants, who were predominately Anglo-

---

<sup>80</sup>Mouser, 'Trade and Politics in the Nunez and Pongo Rivers, 1790-1865,' pp. 220-2, 229-31. Jones, *From slaves to palm kernels*, pp. 104-8. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 239, 275. As Mouser notes, there were various factors that contributed to the eradication of the slave trade in the Northern Rivers including the surveillance of European warships, chiefly British, to end the slave trade and intervention by colonial governments to protect the property of traders. Furthermore, the introduction of legitimate commerce had different consequences in the Rio Nunez and the Rio Pongas and the slave trade ended at different periods in these parts of the Northern Rivers.

<sup>81</sup>Mouser, 'Trade and Politics in the Nunez and Pongo Rivers, 1790-1865,' pp. 220-2, 229-31. Jones, *From slaves to palm kernels*, pp. 104-8. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 239, 275.

<sup>82</sup>Fyfe, C.H., 'View of the New Burial Ground, *Sierra Leone Studies*, (New Series), Number 2, (June 1954), p. 86.

Jews, pioneered some of the trade in the Northern Rivers of the modern-day Republic of Guinea and in the Gallinas and Sherbro regions in towns such as Gbinti (Binty), Sulima, Bendu, and Bonthe.<sup>83</sup>

The Jewish merchants who settled in Sierra Leone were predominately of British origin, although at least two were from Germany and Silesia.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, the Jewish merchants of British origin who settled in Sierra Leone were strongly connected to London, Kent, Liverpool, and Brighton.<sup>85</sup> There were interlocking regional, familial or business ties among some of these Jewish merchants and their intermarriage with African women, possibly from interrelated families, often resulted in the continuation of strong kinship ties among the descendants of these merchants. Thus, the Lyons brothers, Solomon brothers, and Philip Lemberg were related to Nathaniel Isaacs and the Harris brothers were from Chatham, Kent which was in the area where or nearby where the Lyons brothers and members of the Solomon family were born.<sup>86</sup> Lionel Hart was a boarder and co-worker alongside Henry Solomon, one of the Solomon brothers and both Hart and Solomon married two sisters, Gertrude

---

<sup>83</sup>Ellis Edwards, 'Reminiscence Of Sierra Leone: To the Editor of the Weekly News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 5 September, 1903. The trade at the Northern Rivers in the modern-day Republic of Guinea attracted a wide variety of European merchants and several Jewish merchants also settled for trade in the Northern Rivers.

<sup>84</sup>'The Descendancy Chart For Franz Heinrich Rudolph (Rudolf) Gustav Hamelberg,' 14 April 2001, p. 1. Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, pp. 250-1, 278. Nine of the eleven significant Jewish merchants were British and the remaining two merchants were Philip Lemberg, who was originally from Silesia in modern-day Poland and who naturalised as a British Subject, and Franz H.G.R. Hamelberg, who was originally from Hamburg, Germany.

<sup>85</sup>England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. 1841-1911 Censuses of England and Wales, *Ancestry*. Although European merchants such as John MacCormac and Kenneth Macaulay engaged in mercantilist pursuits with close family members or individuals from the same geographical area, this was perhaps even more apparent among the Jewish merchants who settled in Sierra Leone for commercial trade. For example, Nathaniel Isaacs, the Lyons brothers, Harris brothers, and Solomon brothers had all been born in Canterbury, Gillingham, or Chatham, Kent. Furthermore, John Myer Harris, Lionel Hart, and Louis Solomon all belonged to the same Masonic Lodge in Liverpool; although evidence suggests that John Myer Harris had also been initiated into another lodge at a different and possibly earlier date.

<sup>86</sup>England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. 1841-1911 Censuses of England and Wales, *Ancestry*. Barnet Harris, the father of John Myer Harris, named one of his sons as Saul Solomon Harris (b. 1846) possibly indicating kinship or friendship ties with the family of Saul Solomon, a relative of Nathaniel Isaacs.



Rosa Lichtenstein and Matilda Lichtenstein.<sup>87</sup> Thus, in contrast to perhaps the majority of European merchants who traded in Sierra Leone, a sizeable number of the Jewish merchants who arrived in Sierra Leone were part of a wider network of interrelated or acquainted families.

Some of the Jewish merchants who pioneered legitimate commerce in the Northern Rivers, Sherbro and Gallinas arrived in Sierra Leone as agents for individuals or for firms such as the Anglo-African Company established by Saul Isaac and Samuel Isaac.<sup>88</sup> For example, Nathaniel Nathan, who was an agent of Nathaniel Isaacs, later became an agent of Charles Heddle, a mixed-race Senegalese merchant of partial Scottish descent.<sup>89</sup> In 1850, Nathan was the first European to establish a factory for the purpose of legitimate trade in the Sherbro.<sup>90</sup> Nathaniel Lyons, a nephew of Nathaniel Isaacs, traded at Mellacorée and David Henry Davison, a merchant trading at Gbinti (Binty) near the Mellacorée River

---

<sup>87</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 55. 'Hart, Lionel, 1884, Marylebone, London' in the England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. 'Solomon, Henry, 1881, Marylebone, London,' in the England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*.

<sup>88</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 249, 273, 372. Furthermore, some Jews arrived as independent merchants seeking a fortune such as Nathaniel Isaacs.

<sup>89</sup>'Deaths For The Week, *S.L.W.N.*, 23 April, 1898. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 273, 285. Davidson, *Trade and politics in the Sherbro hinterland, 1849-1890*, p. 96. Nathaniel Nathan contributed to the fund for the building of the Prince Alfred's Triumphal Arch to commemorate the visit of Prince Alfred to Freetown. Nathan was based in Bonthe, Sherbro and Nathan Street in Bonthe might have been named after him. Nathaniel Nathan was possibly the father of Nathaniel Nathan, (c. 1852/3-1898), of Upper Waterloo Street, Freetown. Fyfe stated in his paper, 'View of the New Burial Ground', that Nathaniel Nathan had a daughter buried in Bonthe and Nathan possibly had at least another child with his Sierra Leonean wife.

<sup>90</sup>Davidson, *Trade and politics in the Sherbro hinterland, 1849-1890*, p. 96.

in Guinea, managed the business operations of Charles Heddle at Mellacorée.<sup>91</sup> There was also another Jewish merchant with the surname 'Cohen' who also engaged in mercantilist pursuits in the Sherbro.<sup>92</sup>

Jewish businessmen established relationships with local chiefs based on the old trading relationships between the landlord and 'stranger'.<sup>93</sup> Influential merchants such as John Myer Harris and Nathaniel Isaacs developed a reputation with local African ethnic groups and through alliances with local rulers and some political manoeuvring, held sway in regions that had previously derived profits from engagement in the slave trade. Thus, some Jewish merchants were witnesses to treaties with indigenous rulers. For example, Simeon Moses Cantor, a member of the Mercantilist Association of Freetown who traded in the Sherbro, signed as a witness, alongside Nathaniel Nathan, to the terms for peace between the Quiah Kings and Chiefs who had fought against the colonial government of Sierra Leone.<sup>94</sup> Thus, as

---

<sup>91</sup>Mr. Nathaniel Lyons (a trader of Mellicourie), *The Reports: The Past and Present State of Her Majesty's Colonial Possessions, Transmitted With The Blue Books For the Year 1854, Parliamentary Papers, House of Common*, Volume 42, (Britain: H.M. Stationery Office, 1856), p. 60. 'No. 1. Extract of a Despatch from Acting Governor Dougan to the Right Hon. Sir George Grey, Bart,' Correspondence Relative to The Recent Expeditions Against The Moriah Chiefs In The Neighbourhood Of Sierra Leone, *Accounts and Papers of the House of Commons*, Volume 37, Session 12 December 1854 to 14 August 1855, pp. 3-4. Herslet, Lewis, *Hertslet's Commercial Treaties*, Volume 11, (Britain: Butterworths, 1864), p. 15. Mayo, John J., *The Mercantile Navy List and Maritime Directory For 1867*, (London: William Mitchell, 1867), p. 16. 'Distinguished Anglo-Sierra Leonean: The Late Sir Alfred Molony, K.C.M.G.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 13 September, 1913. Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 251. Davison owned or managed the ship, *Allimamee Mussa*. Davison possibly had an agent at Gbinti (Binty) called Mr. Prigg, who was possibly a son of William Prigg, a European merchant. Davison married a Senegalese woman of at least partial African descent and had at least three children born in Freetown. Davison might have also been the father of Walter Henry Davison J.P., Edward Richard Davison, (c. 1850-1907), and Frederick Davison, (d. 1909), who possibly had business connections or traded in the Sherbro. An article in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* referring to the children of Europeans educated at the Church Missionary Society Grammar School mentioned the Davisons as children of Europeans; the only Davisons to enter the Grammar School were Edward Davison and Frederick Davison (and possibly Walter Davison). It is possible that Edward Davison, Frederick Davison, and Walter Davison were the children of David Henry Davison from an earlier relationship or were perhaps born to his African wife. Jolles states that D.H. Davison (Davidson) was buried in the Protestant plot in a cemetery in Sierra Leone in 1869.

<sup>92</sup>Ellis Edwards, 'Reminiscence Of Sierra Leone: To the Editor of the Weekly News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 5 September, 1903. E.W.C. 'Harbour News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 8 June, 1907. Chalmers, David, *Report by Her Majesty's Commissioner and correspondence on the subject of the insurrection in the Sierra Leone Protectorate, 1898*, (Great Britain: Darling & Son, 1899), Volumes I-II, p. 475, par. 7847, hereafter cited as C.R I-II, (pp.), (par.). From preliminary research, there is little information that the author discovered about the business activities of the Jewish merchant in the Sherbro with the surname 'Cohen'. In the early twentieth century, there was also the Mons. Cohen Brothers which was a business house based at Conakry, Guinea and Brew Stuart was a Freetown agent for the Cohen Brothers. George Maximillian Domingo, author of the *Caulker Manuscript*, referred to a "Beah Hai alias Cohen of Bumpetuk," in his testimony given before Sir David Patrick Chalmers during the inquiry into the Hut Tax War.

<sup>93</sup>The Sherbro District, *S.L.W.N.*, 7 June, 1902.

<sup>94</sup>Sierra Leone, *Anti-slavery Reporter*, 1 May, 1858, Volume VI, (Third Series, (London: The Society, 1858), p. 111. Berger (Ed.), *The Jewish Victorian: Genealogical Information from the Jewish Newspapers, 1871-1880*,

pioneers of legitimate commerce, some Jewish merchants engaged in the old framework of Euro-African relations exemplified in the landlord and stranger system and were able to influence internal affairs in the hinterland of Sierra Leone or the Northern Rivers.

The prominence of Jewish merchants in trade in the hinterland of Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers of Guinea is perhaps exemplified in the reminiscences of Ellis Edwards, a prominent Welsh merchant in the West African trade who was based in the Sherbro. Ellis described a number of Creole and European merchants and his reminiscences of European merchants in the Northern Rivers and Sherbro reflects the dominance of Jewish merchants:

"Then there were...Capt. Taylor the American Consul, and a few others [European merchants]. In the Rivers there were, Mr. Davison at Binty [sic], and Nathaniel Isaacs at Matacong [sic], in which place I first met Mr. Lemberg (in 1862), Messrs. J.M. Harris, Cohen, Nathan, and Geslinger in Sherbro."<sup>95</sup>

Save for Geislinger, the remaining merchants and traders that Edwards recalled who were based in the Sherbro and Northern Rivers of Guinea were all Jews from England, the United States or modern-day Poland.<sup>96</sup> Edwards' reference to these Jewish merchants in the major centres of mercantilist activity in the Northern Rivers and hinterland of Sierra Leone reflects the scope of Jewish activity in these regions in the nineteenth century. The first of these merchants to arrive in Sierra Leone was Nathaniel Isaacs, an author and explorer, whose activities in Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers were perhaps the catalyst for attracting other Jewish businessmen to the region.

---

(Oxford: Robert Boyd Publications, 1999), p. 73. Hertslet, Lewis, Hertslet, Sir Edward Cecil, *Hertslet's Commercial Treaties*, (Britain: H.M. Stationery Office, 1871), p. 92. Simeon Moses Cantor, (1825/6-1875), was a son of Moses Cantor (c. 1798/9-1870) and Caroline Cantor née Solomons, (c. 1801-1875), a daughter of Isaac Solomons. Simeon Moses Cantor was possibly named after his paternal great grandfather, Simeon Cantor. Simeon Moses Cantor married Alice Cantor in 1853 and settled in Australia before returning to Britain in 1855. Cantor was recorded in the 1871 Census of England as an "African Merchant," and was related to Leah Hart.

<sup>95</sup>Ellis Edwards, 'Reminiscence Of Sierra Leone: To the Editor of the Weekly News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 5 September, 1903. Ellis Edwards stated that he was on board the same vessel that brought Dr William Broughton Davies and Dr James Africanus Beale Horton to West Africa following the completion of their medical studies in Britain.

<sup>96</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 324. Emmanuel Geislinger, a French agent for Malfilatre and Co. died in 1864 in Bonthe, Sherbro and was buried in the Mission Cemetery in Claffin Lane.

## Nathaniel Isaacs

Nathaniel Isaacs, (1808-1872), was perhaps the most notable Jewish merchant to settle in Sierra Leone and the modern-day Republic of Guinea, and it is not a coincidence that several Jews from Kent or London who were related or indirectly connected to Isaacs eventually settled as merchants in Sierra Leone.<sup>97</sup> Isaacs, an adventurer and explorer in the Natal Colony of modern-day South Africa, established a prosperous business in the groundnut trade in the Colony and later at Matakong Island near the coast of the Republic of Guinea. He was one of several British traders who were engaged in legitimate trade in the Northern Rivers and had strong commercial ties to the Rio Nunez. Although Isaacs was later marred by accusations of participation in the slave trade, he was perhaps the most influential of the early Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone and at Matakong, and it was through his commercial activities that other Jewish merchants such as Nathaniel Nathan, Edward Emmanuel Lyons, Nathaniel Lyons, and Philip Lemberg also settled in Sierra Leone.<sup>98</sup>

Nathaniel Isaacs was born in Canterbury, Kent to Isaac Isaacs, (c. 1785-c. 1822) and Elizabeth 'Lenie' Isaacs, née Solomon (c. 1779-c. 1849), a daughter of Nathaniel Solomon (1735-1793) and Phoebe Solomon, née De Metz (1745-1834).<sup>99</sup> The ancestry of Nathaniel Isaacs through the Solomon and De Metz lineages connected him with many important pioneers in Britain and in South Africa. Isaacs was a maternal nephew of Saul Solomon (1776-1852), the notable merchant of St. Helena and his maternal uncles also included Sir David Salomons, (1797-1873), the first Jewish Lord Mayor of London and the Sheriff of the City of London and a founder of NatWest Bank. Nathaniel Isaacs was also a first cousin of

---

<sup>97</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, pp. 245-253.

<sup>98</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 273, 275, 285, 324. Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 281.

<sup>99</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, pp. 60-62, 255.

Saul Isaac, the first Jewish Conservative Member of Parliament and Samuel Isaac, founding partner of Isaac, Campbell, and Co.<sup>100</sup>

Isaacs had previously settled at St Helena before travelling to Natal in modern-day South Africa, where he explored the interior for which he later published the two volume, *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa*, a controversial account of his experiences in the Zulu Kingdom.<sup>101</sup> Isaacs began trading in West Africa in 1834 and established a base in the Gambia by the 1840s and between 1843 and 1844 he invested in property in Freetown where he received palm oil from the rivers and groundnuts. He was also an Army Contractor and engaged in the social activities of other Europeans in Freetown. It was the opportunity to establish himself in business, outside the custom duties of the colony, that possibly influenced Isaacs to purchase Matakong Island in 1844 and to sell his remaining properties in Freetown.<sup>102</sup> Thus, Nathaniel Isaacs was perhaps one of the earliest Jews to establish the pattern of engaging in trade outside the jurisdiction of the Colony to benefit from duty free trade.

Although the slave trade had persisted in the Northern Rivers well into the early nineteenth century, the export of coffee and the groundnut trade provided Africans, Europeans, and the old Eurafrican families in the Northern Rivers with a commercially viable alternative to the slave trade.<sup>103</sup> Isaacs was one of several African and European merchants to engage in the groundnut trade in the Northern Rivers.<sup>104</sup> Isaacs invested in building trading establishments at Matakong Island and continued to export groundnuts and other produce duty-free to Europe. He built wharves and stores on the island

---

<sup>100</sup>Ibid. pp. 58-59, 62-64. It was through Isaacs's maternal family connections that he was a relative of Jewish merchants who would settle in Sierra Leone such as the Lyons brothers and the Solomon brothers

<sup>101</sup>Pridmore, Julie, 'Isaacs, Nathaniel (1808–1872)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2013 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/51115>, accessed 16 Nov 2016]. It was Nathaniel Isaacs who sketched the drawing of Shaka Zulu.

<sup>102</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 275. Isaacs bought property at Gloucester Street, Freetown, which was then part of Settler Town or Settlers' Town.

<sup>103</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 275.

<sup>104</sup>Matacong [sic], West Coast Of Africa (From a Correspondent), *Illustrated London News*, 2 December, 1854, p. 552.

which allowed him to ship his produce from his depot on mainland Guinea.<sup>105</sup> Isaacs's position at Matakong attracted several ships who sought to avoid custom duties and in 1853 an estimated eighty American, British, and French vessels anchored at Matakong.<sup>106</sup>

The success that Isaacs enjoyed partly resulted from the strength of his relationships with local rulers and this pattern was similarly adopted by later Jewish merchants such as John Myer Harris. It was chiefs from neighbouring territories who supported Isaacs's right of ownership against William Gabbidon, a merchant of Maroon descent who asserted his right to ownership of the island.<sup>107</sup> The relationship between Isaacs and rulers from the neighbouring territories was reflective of the landlord and stranger relationship, although the perception of Isaacs as a British representative might have strengthened his position in political relations with the chiefs. A correspondent for the *Illustrated London News* who visited Matakong in 1854 and remarked on the rapid transformation of the island into a commercial enterprise stated that:

"All this has been effected...by the experience and foresight; the skill, energy, and enterprising spirit of a single individual-Mr Nathaniel Isaacs, a merchant engaged for many years in the African trade, and who, having gained the confidence and respect of the several chiefs of the neighbouring territories, not only holds the island upon a secure tenure, but has had all the rights and privileges of a chieftain conferred upon him at a meeting of those chiefs, convened for the purpose."<sup>108</sup>

Although it is possible that the article in the *Illustrated London News* exaggerated the extent of the political power conferred upon Isaacs, the article reflects the collaboration between Isaacs and local

---

<sup>105</sup>Ibid. pp. 551-2.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid. pp. 551-2.

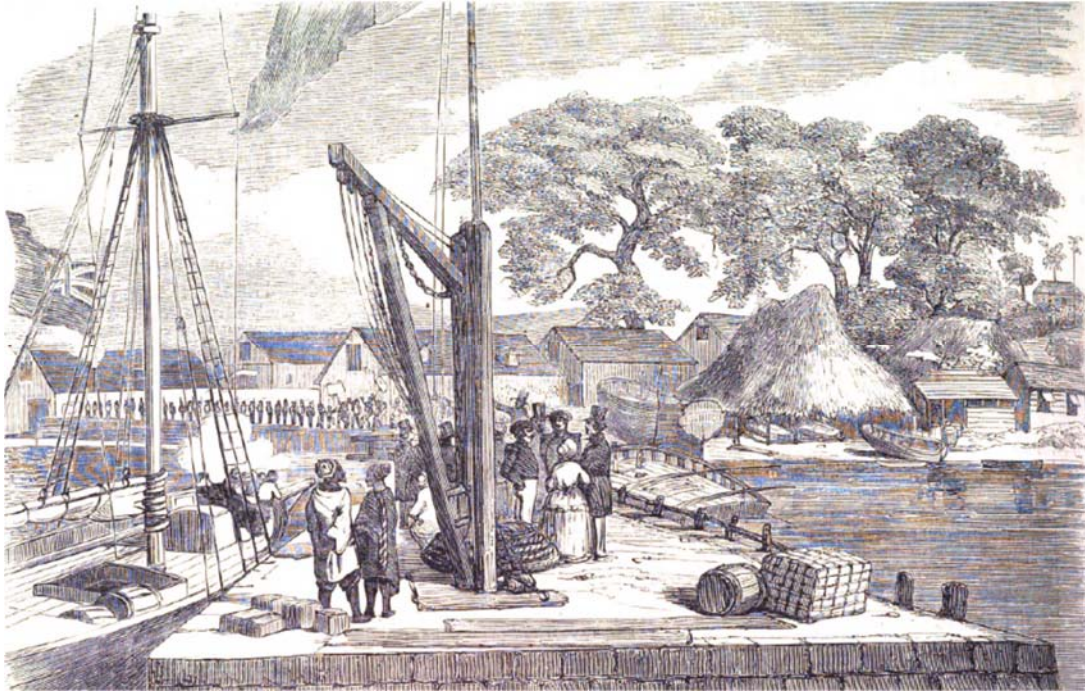
<sup>107</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 275. William Gabbidon, a mixed-race Maroon descendant was a son of Stephen Gabbidon, (1779-1839), the prosperous Maroon merchant and Elizabeth Tolley, the mixed-race Maroon who was a daughter of Major-General Henry Dunbar Tolley. Elizabeth Tolley married Guy Porter and through this marriage was the ancestor of the notable Porter family of Caribbean and Jamaican Maroon descent. The grandson of Elizabeth Tolley was Alexander Libert Porter, who married the daughter of another Jewish merchant.

<sup>108</sup>Matacong [sic], West Coast Of Africa (From a Correspondent), *Illustrated London News*, 2 December, 1854, p. 552.

rulers, in a pattern reminiscent of the landlord and stranger relationship. However, the reference to Isaacs receiving the rights and privileges of a chieftain reflects the independence that he might have achieved outside the standard norms of the usual landlord and stranger relationship.<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>109</sup>Dorjahn, Fyfe, 'Landlord and Stranger: Change in Tenancy Relations in Sierra Leone,' *The Journal of African History*, Volume 3, Number 3, (1962), pp. 391, 394-7. 'Matacong [sic], West Coast Of Africa (From a Correspondent), *Illustrated London News*, 2 December, 1854, p. 552.



**Fig. 3. The Pier and Warehouses at Matakong<sup>110</sup>**

---

<sup>110</sup>Matacong, On The West Coast Of Africa-The Pier, Warehouses, Etc., in 'Matacong, West Coast Of Africa (From a Correspondent), *Illustrated London News*, 2 December, 1854, p. 552.



The status of Isaacs on Matakong was also enhanced by the Africans that he employed in addition to a close network of family members and the children and wider relatives of local rulers.<sup>111</sup> For example, Isaacs employed a brother of Chief Canreba Caulker as the principal shipwright at Matakong and he also employed as clerks the son and nephew of Thomas Stephen Caulker, Chief of the Plantain Islands and a member of a prominent Anglo-Sherbro family.<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, Isaacs also employed Jews including his clerk, Nathaniel Nathan, who later opened a factory in the Sherbro. Edward Emmanuel Lyons, a nephew of Nathaniel Isaacs, settled at Wilberforce Street, Freetown as an agent of Isaacs, alongside his brother, Nathaniel Lyons, in the late 1840s or early 1850s.<sup>113</sup> Philip Lemberg, described as a

---

<sup>111</sup>Matacong, West Coast Of Africa (From a Correspondent), *Illustrated London News*, 2 December, 1854, p. 552. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 275. The strong ties between Nathaniel Isaacs and African rulers is perhaps reflected in some of the positions in which he employed Africans on Matakong Island.

<sup>112</sup>Matacong, West Coast Of Africa (From a Correspondent), *Illustrated London News*, 2 December, 1854, p. 552. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 275. Canreba Caulker was referred to as the “well-known Sherbro chief” and was probably Chief Canreba Caulker of Bumpe. Isaacs was also said to have employed the son of the Chief of Dubrica in the Sumbuya territory as the Clerk and Superintendent of the Store-yard.

<sup>113</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, pp. 275-277, 285. Berger (Ed.), *The Jewish Victorian: Genealogical Information from the Jewish Newspapers, 1871-1880*, p. 364. Berger, Doreen, (Ed.), *The Jewish Victorian: Genealogical Information from the Jewish Newspapers, 1861-1870*, (Oxford: Robert Boyd Publications, 2004), p. 233. 'Lyons, Edward Emanuel, [GSM2 154/74],' Synagogue Scribes, URL: <http://synagoguescribes.com/blog/>. England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. 1841-1911 Censuses of England and Wales, *Ancestry*. England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1996, *Ancestry*. Australia, Marriage Index,, 1788-1950, *Ancestry*. Australia, Death Index, 1787-1985, *Ancestry*. Nathaniel Lyons (b. 8 February 1836), traded in the Northern Rivers of Guinea for several years and served as the American Consul in Sierra Leone in 1874. Edward Emmanuel (Emanuel) Lyons, (4 July, 1831-6 July, 1875), an auctioneer and agent for Nathaniel Isaacs, was born with the Hebrew name of Menachem in Canterbury, Kent to Myer (Mayer) Lyons (Meir Leib) and Bet Elizabeth Lyons, née Isaacs, (1813-27 February, 1868), a sister of Nathaniel Isaacs. Edward Emmanuel Lyons had a sister, Phoebe Levy, née Lyons, (30 April, 1834-1883) who was married to Alfred Levy (1823/4-1876), a son of Hyman (or Hymer) Levy (1776/1781-1862), who was born in Holland, and Julia Levy (1789/1791-1854), had several children including Edward Levy (b. 1857), who married Martha Emanuel and Nathaniel Hyman Lyons (1855-1926), who settled in Australia and married Sarah Harris. Edward Emmanuel Lyons and his brother, Nathaniel Lyons, were at one time both based as merchants in West Africa with Edward Emmanuel Lyons being based at Wilberforce Street, Freetown. Hannah Rose Lyons, a daughter of Edward Emmanuel Lyons, was born in 1846 or 1847 so Edward Emmanuel Lyons would have been based in West Africa in 1845 or 1846. According to a cousin of Nathaniel Isaacs quoted in Jolles' study, Edward Emmanuel Lyons and his brother, Nathan Lyons, both died of a “fever” in West Africa. However, both Edward Emmanuel Lyons and Nathan Lyons returned to England and were mentioned in Myer Lyons will. Edward Emmanuel Lyons married Phoebe Solomon, (1826-1906), a daughter of Edward Solomon (1774/5-1855) and Rachael (Rachel) Solomon (1790/1-1859), on 7 September, 1853. Edward Emmanuel Lyons was returned as a councillor for Northgate, Kent on 11, November, 1870. Edward Emmanuel Lyons died in England on 6 July, 1875 at Margate, Kent and was survived by his wife and three daughters; Hannah Rose Lyons in Sierra Leone and his children born in Britain, Ellen Lyons (b. 1856) and Rachel Lyons (b. 1859), who married a Simmonds.

nephew of Nathaniel Isaacs, settled in Matakong in the employ of his uncle before establishing himself in business in the Sherbro and in Freetown.<sup>114</sup> Thus, Isaacs's influence in the region was further enhanced by his network of agents or employees which included family members and the children or relatives of local rulers.

In the early 1850s, Nathaniel Isaacs's extensive influence might have led to exaggerated notions of his power and there are later references to him as a "king" or "lord" of Matakong.<sup>115</sup> Isaacs's influence was also bolstered by his official appointments by the British and French colonial powers. He was appointed as a treaty commissioner to the Northern Rivers by the colonial government of Sierra Leone and he was among the first of several Jews to be appointed as diplomatic agents when he was appointed as the French Consular Agent.<sup>116</sup> Isaacs built a Wesleyan Chapel and he financially contributed to Christian mission funds which reinforced notions of his respectability and perhaps gained him further favour with British officials in the Colony of Sierra Leone.<sup>117</sup>

However, Isaacs's influence in the region might have also been enhanced by his possible participation in the slave trade.<sup>118</sup> Although Isaacs sought to monopolize legitimate trade, he was known to befriend slave traders and it is certainly possible that he illegally engaged in the slave trade. Governor Arthur Kennedy of Sierra Leone had sent an officer to Matakong who discovered Isaacs's slaves but Kennedy lost the evidence compiled against Isaacs for slave-dealing at sea following a shipwreck. Isaacs returned to England and issued legal proceedings against Governor Kennedy on the basis that Kennedy had persecuted him unjustly and Isaacs declared that he was prepared to stand on trial. However, Isaacs

---

<sup>114</sup>Ellis Edwards, 'Reminiscence Of Sierra Leone: To the Editor of the Weekly News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 5 September, 1903. 'Fifty Years Experience In West Africa,' *S.L.W.N.*, 11 February, 1911.

<sup>115</sup>Jones, Hilary, *The Métis of Senegal: Urban Life and Politics in French West Africa*, (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2013), p. 220. Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 280.

<sup>116</sup>Matacong, On The West Coast Of Africa-The Pier, Warehouses, Etc.,' in 'Matacong, West Coast Of Africa (From a Correspondent), *Illustrated London News*, 2 December, 1854, p. 552. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 275.

<sup>117</sup>Matacong, On The West Coast Of Africa-The Pier, Warehouses, Etc.,' in 'Matacong, West Coast Of Africa (From a Correspondent), *Illustrated London News*, 2 December, 1854, p. 552. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 275.

<sup>118</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 275, 278.

was probably relieved when it was determined that the witnesses in the Northern Rivers and Sierra Leone would not travel to England for the trial.<sup>119</sup>

Isaacs travelled to Matakong Island in 1859 and 1860 but never settled at Matakong or in the Colony on a permanent basis again.<sup>120</sup> However, Isaacs maintained contact with his business partner, Thomas Reader, an English merchant and former Methodist preacher who managed Matakong and presumably with his several children in West Africa.<sup>121</sup> After his partnership with Reader was dissolved in 1860, Isaacs continued to assert his right to ownership of Matakong and bequeathed his title to the island to his son-in-law. He visited Sierra Leone for the final time in 1863 and subsequently retired to Liverpool, England where he lived with his daughter, Phoebe Ann Manning, who had been born in Matakong. Isaacs probably maintained contact with some of his African-born children and at his death left legacies for some of his children born in West Africa.<sup>122</sup>

Isaacs died in a coma at 8 Church Street, Egremont, Cheshire on 26 June 1872, in the presence of his African-born daughter, Phoebe Ann Manning. He is perhaps better remembered in scholarship on South Africa than in West African and British historiography. Although the business activities of Isaacs in

---

<sup>119</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 278. Isaacs's demand for a trial was a form of grandstanding and according to Fyfe, Isaacs declared his readiness to stand trial in England until witnesses in Freetown were gathered to be sent to England for the trial. It was only then that Isaacs demanded to be tried in the Colony but after leaving London for Liverpool, he did not return to the Colony. After the British government decided not to proceed with a trial in England and the witnesses were discharged, Isaacs then appeared again to demand a trial.

<sup>120</sup>Fifty Years Ago: From The Free Press, June 12, 1863, *S.L.L.W.N.*, 14 June, 1913.

<sup>121</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, And Nathaniel Isaacs*, pp. 252, 285-6. 'Household of Cathcart Ogilvie Connor,' Cheshire, England, in the 1871 Census of England, *FamilySearch*. 'Household of Emily H Combes,' Lancashire, England, in the 1881 Census of England, *FamilySearch*. The known children of Nathaniel Isaacs in West Africa were: Elizabeth Isaacs, Hannah Isaacs, Benson Hilton Isaacs, Phoebe Ann Isaacs, Emily Emma Isaacs, and Alfred Isaacs. Benson Hilton Isaacs was possibly named after a possible brother of Nathaniel Isaacs, who might have also settled in Natal. Isaacs was also possibly the father of Elizabeth Cole, who was possibly named for Isaacs's mother, Elizabeth Isaacs, née Solomon, or his sister Bet Elizabeth Lyons and another daughter named 'Phillipa,' who might have been Phoebe Ann Isaacs. Alfred Isaacs might have been the 'Alfred Isaacs' or Issaacs [sic] born in 1864 or 1865 in 'Africa' and who was recorded in the 1871 Census of England as a 'boarder' and a "Scholar" and in the 1881 Census of England as a 'Boarder' and 'Clerk'. If the Alfred Isaacs recorded in the Censuses of England was the son of Nathaniel Isaacs, then the possible birth of Alfred Isaacs in 1864 would indicate that he was conceived during Nathaniel Isaacs return to West Africa in 1863. Nathaniel Isaacs possibly had other children in southern Africa including a daughter, born in modern-day South Africa, who was raised in the indigenous community of her mother and subsequently married an African.

<sup>122</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, And Nathaniel Isaacs*, pp. 252, 285-6.

Sierra Leone and the modern Republic of Guinea did not survive his return to England and were perhaps tarnished by his possible involvement in the slave trade,<sup>123</sup> his legacy was sustained through the business activities of his relatives who settled in Sierra Leone or the Northern Rivers. Perhaps the most favoured of Isaacs's relations to settle in Freetown and the Colony Sierra Leone was Philip Lemberg, who enjoyed a lengthy residence in Sierra Leone matched by only a few European merchants.

### **Philip Lemberg: 'The Good Creole Boy'<sup>124</sup>**

Philip Lemberg, (1843-1914), was perhaps the most popular Jewish merchant to settle and establish a commercial enterprise in Freetown, Sierra Leone. In a pattern almost parallel to some of his contemporaries such as John Myer Harris, Lemberg integrated himself into the emergent Creole society of Freetown.<sup>125</sup> Despite the racial tensions that increasingly characterised some aspects of European and Creole relations in the nineteenth century, Lemberg endeared himself to the Freetown community as one of the most popular European residents and merchants. Lemberg, although successful as a businessman, was perhaps not as prosperous as the merchant princes of the hinterland, yet it was his political influence and concern for the Creole community and the development of Sierra Leone which gained him widespread adulation within the Colony.

---

<sup>123</sup>Communicated, *Independent*, 14 December, 1876.

<sup>124</sup>'The Good Creole Boy,' *Colonial And Provincial Reporter*, 13 July, 1912 hereafter the *C.P.R.* 'General News: Death Of Mr. P. Lemberg,' *C.P.R.*, 14 February, 1914. According to an article printed in the *Sierra Leone Daily Mail* on 25 March, 1933, Philip Lemberg might have also been called the "White Creole Boy."

<sup>125</sup>'The Good Creole Boy,' *C.P.R.*, 13 July, 1912. In contrast to some of the other Jewish merchants such as John Myer Harris, who integrated himself into Vai society, Lemberg was immersed in the Creole society of Freetown, perhaps more than any other Jewish merchant in Sierra Leone.

The precise family ties and background of Philip Lemberg are unclear,<sup>126</sup> although Lemberg, who was originally from Silesia in modern-day Poland, was described as a nephew of Nathaniel Isaacs.<sup>127</sup> It is possible that Philip Lemberg was a son of a sister of Nathaniel Isaacs or according to one scholar was possibly related to the wife of Nathaniel Isaacs.<sup>128</sup> Lemberg travelled to Old Calabar in modern-day Nigeria and arrived in West Africa on 10 February 1861.<sup>129</sup> After engaging in trade in Old Calabar,<sup>130</sup> Lemberg arrived in Matakong in order to join the business of his uncle, Nathaniel Isaacs.<sup>131</sup> After serving in Nathaniel Isaacs's business operations, Lemberg decided to return to England but was approached by William Henry Quin and Sigmund Aaron Stoneweher to operate as their agent in the Sherbro. Lemberg accepted the offer and operated as an agent of Quin and Stoneweher for several years in the Sherbro region.

---

<sup>126</sup>Fifty Years Experience In West Africa,' *S.L.W.N.*, 11 February, 1911. Philip Lemberg was possibly from Lowenberg, Silesia in modern-day Poland which was also known as 'Lemberg.' The surname Lemberg was possibly derived from Lemberg or Lowenberg, Poland. Michael Jolles stated in his study on Nathaniel Isaacs and his cousins that he (Jolles) assumed that Philip Lemberg was Jewish. Beyond the familial ties of Lemberg to Nathaniel Isaacs there is little direct evidence to suggest that Lemberg was Jewish. However, Philip Lemberg was buried in the Willesden United Synagogue Cemetery and there is little indication that he engaged in the clerical activities that characterised Europeans who settled in Sierra Leone for such an extensive period of time and were embraced by the community.

<sup>127</sup>Fifty Years Experience In West Africa,' *S.L.W.N.*, 11 February, 1911. Nathaniel Isaacs or 'Nat Isaacs' was described in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* as an uncle of Philip Lemberg. However, although Lemberg was a described as a nephew of Nathaniel Isaacs, the precise relationship between Lemberg and Isaacs is unclear. Circumstantial evidence would support the statement in an article published in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* that Lemberg was a nephew of Isaacs as Lemberg settled in Matakong Island, which was owned by Nathaniel Isaacs. Lemberg was unlikely to settle in this area for trade unless he had a connection to Nathaniel Isaacs, who owned the island and controlled trade on the island.

<sup>128</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 278. 'Household of Frederick Robert Fardo,' Watford, England, 1911 Census of England, *Ancestry*. Malonie Maria Fardo, the daughter of Philip Lemberg, named one of her children as "Ludwig" which might have been another name of Philip Lemberg or perhaps was a family name within the Lemberg family from Silesia. It is possible that the father or grandfather of Philip Lemberg bore the name "Ludwig".

<sup>129</sup>Fifty Years Experience In West Africa,' *S.L.W.N.*, 11 February, 1911. Philip Lemberg arrived in West Africa on 10 February, 1861 and celebrated his jubilee in West Africa on 10 February, 1911.

<sup>130</sup>Fifty Years Experience In West Africa,' *S.L.W.N.*, 11 February, 1911. It is interesting that Philip Lemberg first travelled to Old Calabar before settling at Matakong Island and Sierra Leone; according to an article by a cousin of Nathaniel Isaacs reproduced in Michael Jolles' study of the Isaacs and Isaac families, Nathaniel Isaacs settled in Old Calabar before settling in Sierra Leone and he may have provided an eighteen-year old Philip Lemberg with the responsibility of managing his business interests in Old Calabar or provided Lemberg with commercial contacts to engage in trade in Old Calabar.

<sup>131</sup>Fifty Years Experience In West Africa,' *S.L.W.N.*, 11 February, 1911.

In the 1870s, Lemberg engaged in business on his own account and after thirteen years of independent trade in the Sherbro, he moved to Wilberforce Street, Freetown, Sierra Leone.<sup>132</sup> Lemberg, a general merchant and shipbroker, had an arrangement with an English mercantile house which sold European goods.<sup>133</sup> In a similar fashion to other merchants, he was also active in the produce trade.<sup>134</sup> However, although he had some success in business, Lemberg did not necessarily achieve the great success or wealth of some of his European counterparts. It was as an active and influential merchant based in Freetown, that Lemberg was well-known and most respected for throughout the Colony.

Lemberg was an active member of the elite Sierra Leone Association that was comprised of Creole and European business and civic leaders. As an active participant in civic discourse, Lemberg displayed a strong interest in the development of Sierra Leone and its hinterland. He presciently predicted that gold would be mined in the hinterland and he was a strong advocate for the construction of a railway system, although his proposals were initially not adopted by the imperial or colonial governments.<sup>135</sup> The emphasis of Lemberg on the development of the hinterland and Colony, a theme expressed widely by leading Sierra Leoneans, perhaps further endeared him to the elite. As a possible devotee or arbiter of some of the puritanical values espoused by Sierra Leoneans, he was probably also similarly popular with the other classes of Freetown society.<sup>136</sup>

---

<sup>132</sup>'Fifty Years Experience In West Africa,' *S.L.W.N.*, 11 February, 1911. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 324. Lemberg might have purchased his premises at an address at Wilberforce Street, Freetown that was formerly occupied by Edward Emmanuel Lyons, who was similarly based at Wilberforce Street. It is also possible that Lemberg might have established his base at one of the properties of his wife. The residence of Lemberg was known as "The Woodlands" the same name given to a property owned by Thomas Josiah Thompson, the prominent lawyer.

<sup>133</sup>'Advertisement,' *Independent*, 23 September, 1875. 'Notice,' *Independent*, 28 October, 1875.

<sup>134</sup>'Shipping Intelligence,' *Independent*, 22 July, 1875. 'Shipping Intelligence,' *Independent*, 22 June, 1876.

<sup>135</sup>Correspondence: Railway For Freetown, The Villages, And The Interior: To the Editor of the Weekly News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 30 June, 1888. 'The Proposed Railway To The Interior,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 July, 1888. 'Progress Of Sierra Leone: Interview With Mr. Philip Lemberg, J.P.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 3 August 1902.

<sup>136</sup>Spitzer, Leo, *Creoles of Sierra Leone: Responses to Colonialism, 1870-1945*, (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), p. 23. For example, a poem written by a Creole advising young women to be virtuous referred to "Go to Lemberg, he go tell you, Good good woke way girl for do." The reference to Lemberg in this poem perhaps reflects his importance in Creole society but also perhaps subtly hints at Lemberg's understanding of the puritanical values emphasised in Creole society and his adherence to these values.

The personal ties of Lemberg to the Colony, perhaps strengthened his influence with the Sierra Leonean populace. On 7 July, 1868 at St. George's Cathedral in Freetown, Lemberg married Lydia Thompson, (1846-1901), a daughter of Henry Prigg Thompson, who was a Sierra Leonean of partial European and Nova Scotian Settler descent.<sup>137</sup> The Lemberg couple had a daughter, Malone Maria Lemberg, (1872-1955), who was born in 1872 in Bendu, British Sherbro.<sup>138</sup> In a fashionable ceremony at St George's Cathedral in Freetown, Sierra Leone, Malonie Maria Lemberg married Frederick Robert Fardo, a Liverpudlian of at least partial Welsh descent, and eventually settled permanently in Britain with her husband.<sup>139</sup>

The marriage ties and duration of Lemberg's residence in Sierra Leone earned him a level of popularity perhaps unparalleled among his European contemporaries. Lemberg had endeared himself to the Freetown community to such an extent that he was practically accepted as a Sierra Leonean and was given the nicknames the 'Good Creole Boy' or the 'White Creole Boy.'<sup>140</sup> The respect for Lemberg endured in the Freetown community despite the increasing racial barriers in the colonial service and the deterioration of Anglo-Creole relations following the Hut Tax War in 1898 that soured race relations in the Colony in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, Lemberg's popularity within the Freetown community did not necessarily gain him the patronage of the colonial government, particularly as Anglo-Creole relations deteriorated. His outspoken manner earned him the ire of the

---

<sup>137</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 290, 438, and Note 12 for page 438 on p. 702. England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*.

<sup>138</sup>EAP443/1/3/26, 'Register of Births, Freetown District, 12 December, 1883 to 29 June, 1884,' *British Library Endangered Archives Programme*, URL: [http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview\\_item.a4d?catId=189242;r=6868](http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_item.a4d?catId=189242;r=6868).

<sup>139</sup>'Marriage-Fardo-Lemberg,' *S.L.T.*, 15 February, 1896. 'Marriage Of Mr. Fardo And Miss Lemberg,' *S.L.W.N.*, 22 February, 1896. 'General News: Mr. And Mrs. Fardo,' *S.L.W.N.*, 29 February, 1896. Miss Solomon, a sister or cousin of Henry Clement Solomon Sr. was one of the guests attending the wedding according to an article published in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* on 22 February, 1896.

<sup>140</sup>'Lest We Forget: The late P. Lemberg alias (the white Creole Boy),' *Sierra Leone Daily Mail*, 25 March, 1933, hereafter the *S.L.D.M.*

colonial authorities, although they perhaps begrudgingly recognised his influence and offered him an appointment as an Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council to which he politely declined.<sup>141</sup>

However, Lemberg's frankness did not preclude him from appointments to other positions and he served as the Consul for Portugal in Sierra Leone for several years and was decorated as a Knight of the Royal Military Order of Our Lord Jesus Christo by King Carlos of Portugal for his services.<sup>142</sup> Lemberg was also selected to serve as the Justice of Peace for the Colony of Sierra Leone.<sup>143</sup> He served as one of the original city councillors for the newly-created Freetown Municipal Council and Lemberg also had the distinction of serving as the only European Mayor of Freetown prior to the 1926 reforms to the municipal council.<sup>144</sup> The tenure of Lemberg as the Mayor of Freetown included the commencement of the building of King Jimmy Market.

After fifty-one years of residence in West Africa, Lemberg decided to retire permanently to Britain in 1912. It is possible that he resided with his daughter, Malonie Maria Fardo and her young family in England. After a relatively short retirement, Lemberg died on 10 January, 1914 at 9 St Alban's Road, Harlesden, Middlesex, London.<sup>145</sup> Lemberg was buried at the Willesden United Synagogue Cemetery, the same burial place as John Myer Harris, the merchant prince of the Sherbro and Gallinas regions.<sup>146</sup> The glowing obituaries in the newspapers in Sierra Leone reflect the extent to which Lemberg was the most popular and well-respected European in the Colony even during the downturn in race relations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

---

<sup>141</sup>'Fifty Years Experience In West Africa,' *S.L.W.N.*, 11 February, 1911. 'The Good Creole Boy,' *C.P.R.*, 13 July, 1912.

<sup>142</sup>P. Lemberg, Esq., KT.' *S.L.W.N.*, 26 December, 1896.

<sup>143</sup>'Marriage Of Mr. Fardo And Miss Lemberg,' *S.L.W.N.*, 22 February, 1896.

<sup>144</sup>'The Mayor Of Freetown In England,' *S.L.W.N.*, 10 August, 1901.

<sup>145</sup>England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1996, *Ancestry*.

<sup>146</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 250. Philip Lemberg was buried in Willesden Cemetery in plot CX/4/23 although there is no gravestone to mark the location.



### John Myer Harris: 'Bain Harris' of Sulima<sup>147</sup>

John Myer Harris, (1832-1909), was perhaps the most influential Anglo-Jewish merchant to operate a commercial enterprise in legitimate trade in the hinterland of Sierra Leone.<sup>148</sup> Although the commercial pursuits of Myer Harris made him perhaps one of the most successful Jewish merchants in the hinterland of Sierra Leone, it was Harris's political manoeuvring in the Gallinas and Sherbro that made him powerful and had a significant impact on both Liberia and Sierra Leone.<sup>149</sup> Harris was probably the leading European merchant in the Gallinas from the 1860s onwards and he would later boast to Sir David Chalmers in 1898 that, he was "almost governing the Sherbro country before it was taken over by the Government, from the Sherbro downwards."<sup>150</sup> Historians such as Christopher Fyfe have portrayed Harris as a self-serving and ruthless colonialist who sought to utilise his extensive network with local chiefs and his influence within colonial circles to further his commercial endeavours. However, Harris's anthropological paper and his early critiques of the influence of some missionaries, reflect a respect for indigenous African society. Thus, the motivations and intentions of Harris are not entirely possible to discern and he remains a complex figure in Sierra Leonean and Liberian historiography.

John Myer Harris was born in 1832 in Chatham, Kent, England<sup>151</sup> to Barnett Harris, (1806-1866), a slop seller and tobacconist, and Rosetta Harris, née Levoi, (1807-1865).<sup>152</sup> Rosetta Harris, née Levoi

---

<sup>147</sup>Death Of J.M. Harris, ESQ.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 8 January, 1910.

<sup>148</sup>Smyke, *The First African Diplomat*, p. 173. The middle name of John Myer Harris has been written in some primary or secondary sources as 'Meyer' or 'Mayer.'

<sup>149</sup>Death Of J.M. Harris, ESQ.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 8 January, 1910. Although the commercial activities of Nathaniel Isaacs were noteworthy, the commercial achievements of John Myer Harris in Sierra Leone perhaps surpassed that of Nathaniel Isaacs.

<sup>150</sup>C.R I-II, p. 488, par. 7915.

<sup>151</sup>'Household of Barnett Harris,' Chatham, Kent, 1841-1861 Censuses of England, *Ancestry*. John Myer Harris was the third eldest child of at least thirteen children born to Barnett and Rosetta Harris. John Myer Harris was recorded as 'Myer Harris' in the household of Barnett Harris in the 1841 Census of England and Wales. The siblings of John Myer Harris included Phoebe (Phebe) Harris, (b. 1828/9), Ester Harris (b. 1833), Michael Harris (b. 1834), Henry Harris (b. 1835/6), Abraham Harris (1841-1859), and Nathaniel Harris (1849-c. 1880).

<sup>152</sup>'Household of Barnett Harris,' Chatham, Kent, 1841-1861 Censuses of England, *Ancestry*. UK, City and County Directories, 1766-1946, *Ancestry*. U.K. City and County Directories, 1600s-1900s, *Ancestry*. 'Marriage: 2 October 1861 St Helen, Sefton, Lancashire, England,' *The Church of St. Helen, Sefton in the County of Lancashire: Marriages at St Helen in the District of Sefton, Liverpool: Marriages recorded in the Register for the years 1837-*

was a daughter of Mikal (Michael) Levy Levoi and Leah Levoi, née Nathan, (1791-1862).<sup>153</sup> Barnett Harris was a son of Meir Halevi Harris, (1768-1832), who was recorded as a son of Mordecai Alfeld or Malfeld, which was possibly a place surname derived from Saxony in modern-day Germany.<sup>154</sup> Meir Halevi Harris, (1768/70-1832), also known as Michael Harris, married Elizabeth Nathan, a daughter of Natsa Mile End, on 22 May, 1791 and Meir Halevi had at least two children, Abraham Harris and Barnett Harris.<sup>155</sup> The naming pattern of the Harris family suggests that the family was perhaps of German-Jewish origin.<sup>156</sup>

There is little information known about the early life of John Myer Harris although he was recorded in the household of his father in the 1841 Census of England.<sup>157</sup> By 1851, John Myer Harris was

---

1864, p. 222, Entry 443, URL: [http://www.lan-opc.org.uk/Liverpool/Sefton/sthelen/marriages\\_1837-1864.html](http://www.lan-opc.org.uk/Liverpool/Sefton/sthelen/marriages_1837-1864.html). Barnett Harris, sometimes spelled as 'Barnet' Harris', was at one-time a slopseller, clothier, and tobaccionist. He married Rosetta (Reizecha) Harris on 6 February, 1826 or 1828. Barnett Harris died at 7 Vincent Terrace, City Road, Islington London on 11 September, 1865. Barnett Harris was recorded as the father of John Myer Harris on the marriage certificate dating from Myer Harris marriage to Mary Westhead in 1861. Furthermore, census records substantiate the theory that John Myer Harris was a son of Barnett Harris as the 1851 and 1861 census records reveal that Barnett Harris was also the father of Abraham Harris (1841-1859) and Nathaniel, 'Nathan' or 'Nat' Harris, both the names of the brothers of John Myer Harris.

<sup>153</sup>[18510], Harris, Barnett,' 1851 Anglo-Jewry Database, *JewishGen*, URL: <http://www.jewishgen.org/jcr-uk/1851/introduction.htm>. Public and Private Family Trees, *Ancestry*.

<sup>154</sup>18510, Harris, Barnett,' 1851 Anglo-Jewry Database, *JewishGen*, URL: <http://www.jewishgen.org/jcr-uk/1851/introduction.htm>. 'Harris, Michael, [GSM 001/4],' *Synagogue Scribes*, URL:

<http://synagoguescribes.com/blog/>. 'Meir Halevi Harris, 9SQ1-LQ1,' Family Tree Search, *FamilySearch*, URL: <https://familysearch.org/>. There were possibly other unrelated individuals named Meir Halevi (Halevy) Harris. A *FamilySearch* family tree records a Meir Halevi Harris, (1768-1832), who died in London, England on 23 October, 1832 as the son of Zvi Hirsch Harris. Thus, although it is uncertain, Mordecai Alfeld or Malfeld (possibly spelled as Ahlfeld) was possibly also known as Zvi (Hirsch) Halevi Harris who is recorded as the father of Meir Halevi Harris. The Hebrew name of Meir Halevi is a surname which is indicative of Meir Halevi being a descendant of the Levite Priests and Levi, the son of Israel and ancestor of Aaron and Moses, the Biblical figures. John Myer Harris, as the eldest son of Barnett Harris, was almost certainly named after his paternal grandfather, Meir Halevi Harris, who died in 1832.

<sup>155</sup>Harris Rebecca [Rebecca b Meir Halevi, 1803-1861 [I1935],' *Cemetery Scribes*, URL:

<http://www.cemeteryscribes.com/>. Berger, Doreen, *The Jewish Victorian: Genealogical Information from the Jewish Newspapers, 1871-1880*, (Oxford: Robert Boyd Publications, 1999), pp. 136-7. Meir Halevi Harris and Elizabeth Harris were the parents of Abraham Harris (1792/6-1865). It is also possible, although perhaps unlikely, that Rebecca Michaels, née Harris, (1803-186), was a daughter of the same Meir Halevi Harris who was the father of Barnett Harris. Rebecca Michaels was an ancestor of a branch of the Michaels family that settled in the United States. Abraham Harris, the son of Barnett and Rosetta Harris, also had a son called Myer Harris, who was born on 6 January, 1832.

<sup>156</sup>18510, Harris, Barnett,' 1851 Anglo-Jewry Database, *JewishGen*, URL: <http://www.jewishgen.org/jcr-uk/1851/introduction.htm>. 'Harris, Michael, [GSM 001/4],' *Synagogue Scribes*, URL:

<http://synagoguescribes.com/blog/>. However, the name 'Meir' is Jewish and it is possible that the ancestor of John Myer Harris had Germanized this Jewish name into the Germanic 'Myer'.

<sup>157</sup>'Household of Barnett Harris,' Chatham, Kent, 1841-1861 Censuses of England, *Ancestry*. Coincidentally, there was another Barnet Harris, (1810-1887), whose household was recorded in the 1841 and 1851 census records that

no longer resident with his family and he might have been the 'John Harris', born in 1832 in Chatham, Kent, who was recorded as a boarder and ladies shoemaker at Golden Lane, London in the 1851 Census of England.<sup>158</sup> It was possibly around this period of time that he subsequently established himself as a tailor at 11 Oriental Place, Brighton.<sup>159</sup> As a young man, Myer Harris might have been an apprentice to his father who was recorded in a directory as a clothier, a common term for a tailor.<sup>160</sup>

It is unclear the precise basis for John Myer Harris forsaking his profession as a tailor and deciding to settle in Sierra Leone, derisively designated by some observers during the nineteenth century as the 'White Man's Grave'. However, the success of Nathaniel Isaacs, who had spent over a quarter of a century in Sierra Leone and was regarded as one of the most prosperous merchants in the region was perhaps an inspiration to John Myer Harris. Furthermore, Harris might have been the representative of a commercial firm in London.<sup>161</sup>

Myer Harris arrived in Sierra Leone alongside his younger brother, Abraham Harris, (1841-1859) and settled at Yelbana Island that adjoined York Island in the Sherbro Estuary.<sup>162</sup> Harris's first few years in Sierra Leone were difficult and his brother died after succumbing to a yellow fever attack in Freetown in May 1859 during the Yellow Fever Epidemic.<sup>163</sup> However, business was a family affair for John Myer

---

also included a young son named Myer(s)? Harris. However, this Myer Harris (born in 1836 or 1837) was aged four according to the 1841 Census of England and Wales. John Myer Harris was born in 1832 and therefore it is evident that the Myer Harris recorded in the 1841 Census at Middlesex, England was not the same individual as John Myer Harris of Sierra Leone.

<sup>158</sup>'The Household of Thomas Southam,' Middlesex, England, 1851 Census of England, *Ancestry*.

<sup>159</sup>'The Household of Thomas Southam,' Middlesex, England, 1851 Census of England, *Ancestry*. Spector, David, 'Brighton Jewry reconsidered,' *Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions Of The Jewish Historical Society of England*, Volume XXX, 1987-1988, p. 110. A John Harris, born in 1832 in Chatham Kent was recorded as a "lodger" at Golden Lane, London in the 1851 Census of England and Wales.

<sup>160</sup>UK, City and County Directories, 1766-1946 [1840, 1847, 1851, 1858], *Ancestry* and possibly in U.K. City and County Directories, 1600s-1900s, *Ancestry*.

<sup>161</sup>Jones, *From Slaves to Palm Kernels*, p. 104.

<sup>162</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 307. Spector, David, 'Brighton Jewry reconsidered,' *Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions Of The Jewish Historical Society of England*, Volume XXX, 1987-1988, p. 110.

<sup>163</sup>Spector, David, 'Brighton Jewry reconsidered,' *Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions Of The Jewish Historical Society of England*, Volume XXX, 1987-1988, pp. 110-1. Abraham Harris was not listed in the household of Barnet and Rosetta Harris in the 1861 Census of England and based upon the author's research, no other Abraham Harris with a similar age or birthplace was recorded in the 1861 Census of England. That Abraham Harris was not recorded

Harris and another one of his younger siblings, Nathaniel Harris, (1849-1880), later joined Harris in the trade in Gallinas and the Sherbro.<sup>164</sup> It was during these early periods of possible difficulty that Harris entered into his first marriage when he was united in matrimony to Mary Westhead, an English Catholic, on 2 October, 1861 at Liverpool, England.<sup>165</sup>

After suffering several setbacks in his commercial endeavours, John Myer Harris decided to establish himself in business in the Gallinas region and obtained a concession in 1860.<sup>166</sup> In 1862, Harris purchased 10,000 gallons of 200 tons of palm kernels, a ton of ivory, and country cloths at Sulima in the Gallinas region.<sup>167</sup> He built several factories on parcels of land between Sulima and Cape Mount on the Moa River and Soweii which he was granted as a concession from local rulers.<sup>168</sup> In a pattern reflective of the landlord and stranger relationship, Harris sought the protection of local rulers where he traded and often intermarried into these families. He sought the protection of Prince Mana, the king of Gallinas and a member of the Massaquoi family and maintained this relationship during his period of trade in the

---

in the 1861 Census of England perhaps further substantiates the theory that Barnett Harris recorded in Chatham, Kent was the father of John Myer Harris.

<sup>164</sup>Household of Barnett Harris, Chatham, Kent, 1841-1861 Censuses of England, *Ancestry*.

<sup>165</sup>Household of Henry Westhead, Lancashire, England, 1841 Census of England, *Ancestry*. Household of Thomas Latham, Lancashire, England, 1851 Census of England, *Ancestry*. 'Marriage: 2 October 1861 St Helen, Sefton, Lancashire, England,' *The Church of St. Helen, Sefton in the County of Lancashire: Marriages at St Helen in the District of Sefton, Liverpool: Marriages recorded in the Register for the years 1837-1864*, p. 222, Entry 443, URL: [http://www.lan-opc.org.uk/Liverpool/Sefton/sthelen/marriages\\_1837-1864.html](http://www.lan-opc.org.uk/Liverpool/Sefton/sthelen/marriages_1837-1864.html). This was John Myer Harris's first marriage. Mary Westhead, who was originally from Pemberton, Lancashire, England and was living at Waterloo at the time of her marriage, was a daughter of George Westhead, a farmer. Mary Westhead might have been the 'Mary Westhead' recorded in the 1841 Census of England in the household of Henry Westhead in Lancashire or the 'Mary Westhead' who was recorded as a niece and house servant in the household of Thomas Latham of Lancashire, England.

<sup>166</sup>C.R I-II, p. 488, par. 7915. Jones, *From slaves to palm kernels*, p. 104. Over the course of seventy-five years, the Harris family was associated with Sulima and the town almost became synonymous with the enterprising exploits of the Harris clan. However, as Jones notes, Harris retained his trading post at Yelbana.

<sup>167</sup>Jones, *From slaves to palm kernels*, p. 104.

<sup>168</sup>'To Be Sold: By Private Treaty,' *S.L.W.N.*, 12 May, 1894. 'Harris's trading posts at Sulima and Mano Salija,' [Greenwich, National Maritime Museum, 2722 and A3427], in Jones, *From slaves to palm kernels: A history of the Galinhas country (West Africa), 1730-1890, (Studien zur Kulturkunde)*, (Germany: F. Steiner, 1983), Plates 8-9. In 1877, Harris obtained leases for land in Sulima and Mano Salija. Adam Jones reproduced several two lithographs (from 2722 and A3427 held at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich) of John Myer Harris's business establishments at Sulima and Mano Salija.

Gallinas. Harris also developed a strong interest and understanding of Bullom and Vai culture and was reputedly one of the first Europeans to join the Poro.<sup>169</sup>

However, Myer Harris was a pragmatist; although he appeared to develop an interest in the culture and history of the Gallinas and maintained close relationships with local rulers in the region, there was unquestionably a commercial benefit to Harris's friendships with local chiefs. As scholars such as Adam Jones have outlined, Myer Harris partly forged alliances with various rulers to further his own economic interests.<sup>170</sup> However, Harris's political manoeuvring did not preclude a genuine affection for the Gallinas region and it is remarkable that for half a century he was able to develop strong relationships with ruling families that provided him with influence in the region unparalleled by any European in the middle to late nineteenth century.

The relationship between Harris and the indigenous Vai ethnic group of the Gallinas, allowed Harris to undermine the sovereignty of the Republic of Liberia in the region.<sup>171</sup> Harris sought to avoid the payment of custom duties to the Republic of Liberia and thus used his friendship with Prince Mana and other African rulers to weaken the claims of the Liberian government. After the Liberian government seized Harris's schooners, the *Phoebe* and *Emily*, Harris appealed to the colonial government for assistance in recovering the vessels. Although Harris wanted no interference from the British colonial government in his commercial endeavours and negotiations with local rulers, he was willing to gain the support of the colonial government to prevent any encroachment on his business interests by the Liberian Republic. The colonial government at Sierra Leone intervened on Harris's behalf and recovered the vessels from the Liberian government. However, the incident was the first of several disputes over

---

<sup>169</sup>Jones, *From slaves to palm kernels*, p. 106. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 411-2. However, Harris was not the first European to integrate into indigenous African society. Jean Meheux, a French trader, had settled on the Banana Islands in the early nineteenth century and lived in "African style" according to Christopher Fyfe's *A History of Sierra Leone*.

<sup>170</sup>Jones, *From slaves to palm kernels*, pp. 105-6, 127.

<sup>171</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 307-8, 412. Jones, *From slaves to palm kernels*, pp. 110-1. The attempts of Harris to undermine the sovereignty of the Liberian Republic reflected his ruthless business acumen.

ownership of the Gallinas territory in which Harris used his influence with African rulers to pit the colonial government at Sierra Leone against the Liberian government.

In addition to fostering relations with indigenous Africans in the hinterland, John Myer Harris also had ties to the business community in Freetown, Sierra Leone. In a similar fashion to other Jewish and European merchants, Harris was active in the mercantilist associations of Freetown. Harris was one of the merchants who re-established the defunct Mercantile Association and voted in the election featuring John Levi as a candidate seeking to serve as the first Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council in 1863. However, the success of Harris as a merchant was partly the result of his involvement in indigenous African society and his operations outside the jurisdiction of the Colony of Sierra Leone. Thus, his involvement in the mercantilist community of Freetown was perhaps less pronounced than other Jewish merchants such as Philip Lemberg and perhaps the Levi brothers.

Harris temporarily left the Gallinas region and was active in England from the late 1860s until possibly the early 1870s. He was recorded as a “Merchant” in the 1871 Census of England who resided with his wife, Mary Harris, née Westhead, and a servant named Emily Thomas in Penge, Surrey.<sup>172</sup> In the 1860s, Harris was an active member of the Anthropological Society and he was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Society and the Royal Geographical Society. Harris published an article presented to the Anthropological Society entitled ‘Remarks on the Origin, Manners, Customs, and Superstitions of the Gallinas People of Sierra Leone.’<sup>173</sup> This article, which is still cited by some scholars of the Vai people, appeared to boost the reputation of J.M. Harris among academic circles. His

---

<sup>172</sup>The Household of John M. Harris,' Penge, England, 1871 Census of England, *Ancestry*.

<sup>173</sup>Harris, J.M., 'Some Remarks on the Origin, Manners, Customs, and Superstitions of the Gallinas People of Sierra Leone,' *Journal of the Anthropological Society of London*, Volume 4, (Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, 1866), pp. lxxxii-lxxxv, URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3025374>. Accessed: 16/05/2014 07:58. *Memoirs Read Before the Anthropological Society of London: 1865-66*, Volume 2, (Britain: Anthropological Society, 1866). *The Anthropological Review*, Volume III, (London: Trubner & Co., 60 Paternoster Row, 1865). John Myer Harris was elected or selected as a Fellow of the Anthropological Society of London perhaps based upon his knowledge of West Africa, and in particular the Gallinas region. He remained an active member of the Anthropological Society in the 1860s and possibly the 1870s.

knowledge of the West African coast was further recognised when Charles Darwin, the naturalist and geologist, in his landmark publication, *Descent of Man*, referred to Harris's statement published in the *Anthropological Review* in 1866 outlining his preference to hire European employees with red hair and Harris's belief that Europeans with dark hair did not withstand a hot climate any better than those with light hair.<sup>174</sup> Furthermore, the involvement of Harris in the Poro might have been the inspiration for the character 'Perera,' the Anglo-Portuguese Jew who was the "only resident white trader at Sulyma [Sulima]" in H.G. Well's *Pollock and the Porroh Man*.

After a few years in England, Harris returned to West Africa to resume trade in the hinterland of Sierra Leone and also proposed the establishment of a bank.<sup>175</sup> He settled in the Sherbro and might have been joined in Sierra Leone at this time by his younger brother, Nathaniel Harris, who had charge of Harris's factory in the Kittam.<sup>176</sup> John Harris took over the former premises of the Anglo-African company in Yelbana and built a factory with a boat-building yard that he later sold to Callendar, Sykes, and Mather.<sup>177</sup> As a principal trader in the Sherbro, Harris was the sole Sierra Leonean representative of a West African deputation to London outlining the grievances of some of the merchants in British West Africa to the Colonial Office in 1873. Harris outlined that there was not a sufficient return on the custom duties that were paid by merchants in the Sherbro to the colonial government of Sierra Leone.<sup>178</sup> It was possibly increasing competition from Creole merchants in the Sherbro and Harris's grievance over the payment of custom duties, that might have precipitated his return to the Gallinas.<sup>179</sup>

---

<sup>174</sup>Darwin, Charles, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex, Volume 1*, (London: John Murray, 1871), p. 245. *The Anthropological Review*, Volume IV, (London: Trubner & Co., 60 Paternoster Row, 1866), p. xxi.

<sup>175</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 383-4. Harris did not necessarily settle permanently in England, but he might have travelled back and forth between England and Sierra Leone. In 1871, Harris, who was in association with Child, Mills and Co., approached the Sierra Leone government with a view to establishing a bank and he aroused the support of the mercantile community of Freetown. However, although Governor Kennedy of Sierra Leone was impressed with the proposal, the Treasury rejected the proposal.

<sup>176</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 417. Jones, *From Slaves to Palm Kernels*, p. 126.

<sup>177</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 372, 411.

<sup>178</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 394-5.

<sup>179</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 411. The avoidance of custom duties altogether was one of the main business strategies of Harris.

After several years in the Sherbro, Harris returned to the Gallinas in 1877 following the imposition of higher customs duties by the British colonial government that depressed the palm kernel trade.<sup>180</sup> The return of Harris to the Gallinas allowed him to display the tendencies of other European colonialists and merchants in Africa by his political manoeuvring which undermined local rulers and possibly contributed to the spread of warfare in the Gallinas.<sup>181</sup> Although Harris had recognised Prince Mana as the rightful ruler of Sulima, he ignored Chief Jaia, a brother and the successor of Prince Mana, and to further his business interests, instead supported the Kiajua Massaquoi family of Gbema.<sup>182</sup> Harris sought to avoid paying custom duties and established himself at Sulima and Mano Solija where he secured 99-year leases for trading posts. He built an extensive post at Sulima with a compound covering two hectares of ground which one scholar later noted was the largest trading establishment between the Sherbro and Monrovia.<sup>183</sup>

Harris established two trading companies that were incorporated in Britain in the early 1880s.<sup>184</sup> He first established the Sulymah Trading Company in 1881 and appointed himself as the managing director of the company.<sup>185</sup> The capital that Harris raised allowed him to establish a new post at Lavana on the southern shore of Lake Mape and by 1881 Harris had built an approximately mile-long railway line from Lavana to the sea which transported land goods and produce.<sup>186</sup> Harris probably traded with indigenous Africans from the Gallinas hinterland and he transported canoes from Sulima to the Kerefe

---

<sup>180</sup>Jones, *From Slaves to Palm Kernels*, p. 126.

<sup>181</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 127. Harris was accused of selling gunpowder and secretly buying war by Chief Jaia.

<sup>182</sup>Jones, *From Slaves to Palm Kernels*, p. 127.

<sup>183</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>184</sup>'Letter From Rev. Dr. Blyden, Sierra Leone, March 13, 1884,' *African Repository*, Volume LX, Number 3, (July 1884), p. 93.

<sup>185</sup>'Company No: 14806; Sulymah Trading Company Ltd. Incorporated in 1881. Dissolved before 1916,' The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies, BT 31/2733/14806. 'British Business Archives and the History of Business in Nineteenth Century West Africa, Business Archives, Volume 7, Number 2, (Number 62), *Business Archives Council*, (1991), p. 31. Harris placed a notice in the London Gazette for the winding up of the Sulymah Trading Company and the company was officially dissolved possibly by 1905.

<sup>186</sup>Jones, *From Slaves to Palm Kernels*, p. 132.



River and from there onwards to Lake Mape and Waanje and Sewa through a small waterway that connected Lake Kerefe and Lake Mape during the rainy season.<sup>187</sup> Harris was also able to compete with Sierra Leonean and European merchants who paid duties at the Sherbro and he might have smuggled goods into the Sherbro.<sup>188</sup> It was during this period that Harris, who was later described as a merchant prince, was at the apogee of his dominance as the main export trader in the Gallinas.

However, despite Harris's monopoly on trade in the Gallinas, the plans of the colonial government to annex the Gallinas territory threatened Harris's duty-free trading posts. The imperial government and colonial administration at Sierra Leone was concerned about safeguarding the economic interests of the Colony and the opportunities to further expand the territory following the encroachment of the French colonial government in modern-day Guinea.<sup>189</sup> In 1882, Governor Arthur Havelock offered terms to the Liberian government and engaged with local rulers in the Gallinas to cede their coastal territory to the colonial government at Sierra Leone.<sup>190</sup> Harris sought to oppose and influence local rulers to disengage from discussions to cede land to the colonial government. However, the efforts of Harris to protect his business interests were futile and on 30 March 1882, Chief Jaia and other chiefs ceded their seaboard in return for annual stipends. The colonial government of Sierra Leone also signed treaties with rulers in the Krim country and Queen Messe, the ruler of the Eastern Kittam, and Chief Zorokong and Chief Fawundu signed treaties that ceded their coastal strips in return for stipends.<sup>191</sup> Thus, the colonial government had jurisdiction over 62 miles of coastal land between the Sherbro and Mano River and colonial custom posts were established at Lavana, Mano

---

<sup>187</sup>Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>188</sup>Ibid., pp. 126-7.

<sup>189</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 430. Jones, *From Slaves to Palm Kernels*, p. 133. Incidentally, Harris was among those who warned Governor Samuel Rowe of Sierra Leone of the possible encroachment of the French in the Gallinas in October 1880.

<sup>190</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 431-2. Jones, *From Slaves to Palm Kernels*, pp. 133-5.

<sup>191</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 432.

Salija, and Sulima in January 1884.<sup>192</sup> Thus, after several years of avoiding custom duties, Harris's commercial empire in the Gallinas was within the complete jurisdiction of the colonial government of Sierra Leone.

Harris eventually formed the Sulymah and Sherboro Trading Company in 1882 with £100,000 in capital and 20,000 shares in order to buy out the Sulymah Trading Company which was wound up in 1883.<sup>193</sup> He published, *Annexations To Sierra Leone, And Their Influence On British Trade With West Africa, (With Map)*, a publication outlining his claim to duty-free trade and his role, even if perhaps slightly exaggerated, in promoting legitimate commerce in the Gallinas.<sup>194</sup> He sought compensation for the loss of his business monopoly although the colonial government at Sierra Leone only provided him with a six-month exemption from duties and an offer to purchase some of his trading posts for use as customs posts.<sup>195</sup> Harris had lost the right to duty-free trade in the Gallinas and eventually sold the assets of the Sulymah and Sherboro Trading Company to the Palma Trading Company and eventually liquidated his company in 1886.<sup>196</sup>

Harris, who had returned to England in the 1880s, began to shift his focus towards his family life. In 1883, he married Hester Levy, (1854-1919), a Jewish woman from London, at Kensington in London,

---

<sup>192</sup>Jones, *From Slaves to Palm Kernels*, p. 135. As Jones notes the colonial government at Sierra Leone was now responsible for 100 kilometres of coastal strip.

<sup>193</sup>Company No: 17329; Sulymah and Sherbord [sic] Trading Company Ltd. Incorporated in 1882. Dissolved before 1916,' The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, Records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies, BT 31/3051/17329. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 432. 'The Sulymah And Sherbro Trading Company Limited,' *Truth*, Volume 12, November 16, 1882, p. 711. Dop, Henk,(Ed.), Robinson, Philip, (Ed.), *Travel Sketches from Liberia: Johann Büttikofer's 19th Century Rainforest Explorations in West Africa*, (Netherlands: Brill, 2012), p. 461.

<sup>194</sup>'Annexations To Sierra Leone, And Their Influence On British Trade With West Africa,' (With Map), (London, George Berridge & Co., 1883), *Tracts Relating To British Colonies, 1859-83*, pp. 1-67.

<sup>195</sup> Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 432.

<sup>196</sup>'Notice: The Sulymah & Sherboro Company, Ltd.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 8 January 1887. 'Notice: The Sulymah & Sherboro Company, Ltd.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 22 January 1887. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 462. Harris began to divest some of his interests and by 1894 had sold land at Bendu and at 'Chatham' in Sherbro Island. However, these interests might have been concessions granted after the annexation of Gallinas not necessarily during the years that Harris was a dominant trader in the Sherbro.

England and the couple had four children born in England.<sup>197</sup> However, even after retiring from trade, John Myer Harris was restless and still sought commercial opportunities in the Gallinas and Sherbro.<sup>198</sup> Although he was far from the young merchant with long brown locks of hair, Harris continued to search for business opportunities in West Africa and was convinced that Sierra Leone was the territory to establish his business enterprises.<sup>199</sup> Thus, Harris returned to Sierra Leone in 1890 after several years of retirement or inactivity, involved in a large scheme to explore the interior of the Sherbro.<sup>200</sup>

Harris initially returned to Sulima with the intention of obtaining a concession from local rulers to cultivate rice.<sup>201</sup> However, he gained an interest in land speculation perhaps as a result of the 'jungle boom' of the 1890s and the opportunities to profit from land speculation. Although he had previously expressed disdain for Sierra Leone Creoles, he partnered with Frederick William Dove, a Creole businessman with concessions in Kuniki, to float the Anglo-African and India-Rubber Trading Company Ltd in association with J.S. Sawrey, a London-based company promoter.<sup>202</sup> Harris frequently visited Sierra Leone for his new business venture and he testified before Sir David Patrick Chalmers during the official inquiry into the Hut Tax War of 1898.

---

<sup>197</sup>England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915. 'Household of John N. Harris [sic],' Brighton, 1901 Census of England. 'Household of Hester Harris,' Willesden, Paddington, London, 1911 Census of England, *Ancestry*. Hester Levy was born to Alexander Levy, (1826-1901) an auctioneer and who became an estate agent, and Amelia Levy, née Harris (1827-1905). John Myer Harris and Hester Harris had two children who died before reaching adulthood. The four children of John Myer Harris and Hester Harris were John Bernard Harris, (b. 1884/5) a motor engineer for the Metropolitan Police, (1885), Millie Gladys Harris (1888), a milliner's assistant, Nelly Rose Harris, (1889), a milliner showroom assistant, and Francois 'Frank' Heddle Harris, (1890-21 May, 1964), a rubber stamps salesman probably named after his father's colleague, Honourable Charles Heddle, the mixed-race Senegalese (Métis) merchant prince. The Harris children, with the exception of Frank Heddle Harris who was born in Brighton, were born in London, England. Frank Harris, who served in the Royal Army Medical Corps in the First World War, was possibly the father of Bernard John Kendall Harris who was born in Islington in 1913.

<sup>198</sup>'Post Office Notice,' *S.L.W.N.*, 19 April, 1902.

<sup>199</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Marke, London, England, 13 October 2016. Harris had a receding hairline and was nearly completely bald before his death in 1909. However, according to Ms. Rosemarie Marke, the Harris family portraits in Freetown revealed that Harris had long locks of hair fashioned in a style apparently typical among Jewish men. Unfortunately for this study, these portraits no longer exist.

<sup>200</sup>J.M. Harris, Esq., *S.L.W.N.*, 4 October, 1890.

<sup>201</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 490.

<sup>202</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 250. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 545-6.

The concessions held by Harris and Dove attracted the attention of Captain Kinet and Percy Baines, who belonged to a powerful syndicate in Antwerp, Belgium.<sup>203</sup> After travelling to Fernando Po and attending a dinner at Dove's house in their honour, Kinet and Baines inspected Harris's and Dove's concessions in Sulima in 1900.<sup>204</sup> Harris eventually sold his concession of land in the Gallinas to a syndicate and possibly received a handsome profit for the sale. His decision to cash in on the land proved timely as the concessions were a disastrous investment that dramatically decreased in value. Harris only salvaged profits from the endeavour by selling his interests before the eventual decrease in the value of the concessions, a decision which reflected the business acumen and strategic nous that he had displayed during his mercantilist pursuits in West Africa.<sup>205</sup>

Harris semi-retired to a comfortable living at 13 Bedford Place, Brighton and by 1904 had settled at 14 Castellain Road, Maida Vale, Paddington, London.<sup>206</sup> He had been elected as a member of the Royal Colonial Institute in 1896 thus joining several notable Europeans and Africans who were members.<sup>207</sup> John Myer Harris, who was erroneously referred to as 'John N. Harris', was recorded as a 'West African Merchant' in the 1901 Census of England.<sup>208</sup> His fortune in West Africa perhaps ensured that he was able to provide for his children and he had a domestic servant to assist around the house.<sup>209</sup> Thus, after a lengthy period in business, John Myer Harris probably enjoyed a relatively comfortable retirement in Maida Vale, London.

---

<sup>203</sup>General News: Mr. J.M. Harris,' *S.L.W.N.*, 2 December, 1899. 'Evening Party At Councillor F.W. Dove's,' *S.L.T.*, 9 December, 1899. 'General News: Inspection Of Concessions,' *S.L.W.N.*, 20 January, 1900.

<sup>204</sup>General News: Mr. J.M. Harris,' *S.L.W.N.*, 2 December, 1899. 'Evening Party At Councillor F.W. Dove's,' *S.L.T.*, 9 December, 1899. 'General News: Inspection Of Concessions,' *S.L.W.N.*, 20 January, 1900.

<sup>205</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 612.

<sup>206</sup>'Household of John N. Harris [sic],' Brighton, England, 1901 Census of England. 'Household of Hester Harris,' Willesden, Paddington, London, 1911 Census of England. 'John Meyer Harris,' London, England, Electoral Registers, 1832-1965, *Ancestry*. Harris possibly later moved to Flat 1, 86 Portsdown Road, Maida Vale, Paddington in 1906 and perhaps moved to 2B Warrington Gardens in 1909.

<sup>207</sup>'Royal Colonial Institute,' *Colonies And India*, 17 October, 1896.

<sup>208</sup>'Household of John N. Harris [sic],' Brighton, England 1901 Census of England, *Ancestry*.

<sup>209</sup>*Ibid.* However, the employment of a domestic servant is not necessarily reflective of Harris's fortune. Sarah Levy, the sister-in-law of John Myer Harris, was also recorded as a 'Visitor' in the household in the 1901 Census.

However, Harris retained his ties with West Africa and his African progeny were not forgotten. His African children and relatives possibly interacted with his English family and the bond between both branches of the family seemingly endured even after Harris death in 1909. Thus, the 1911 Census of England records Harry Clement Solomon, the thirteen-year old Sierra Leonean grandson of Louis Solomon and his mother, Etta Solomon, née Cole visiting the Harris family at 30 Summerfield Avenue, Queens Park, London.<sup>210</sup> The familiarity of Myer Harris's family in England with his enterprises in West Africa is perhaps also reflected in Thomas Alfred Wall, a Mancunian who at one time served as the Civil Commandant at the Sherbro, acting as the executor for the estate of Hester Harris following her death on 4 January, 1919.<sup>211</sup> Thus, the Harris family in Sierra Leone would maintain close ties with their Jewish relatives in England throughout the twentieth century.

After several years of engaging in trade in West Africa, John Myer Harris died at the age of seventy-seven years old of cirrhosis of the kidneys, uraemia, and syncope at Number 2B Warrington Gardens, Maida Vale, Paddington, London on 15 December, 1909. Harris, who was survived by his wife and seven children, was buried at the Willesden United Synagogue Cemetery, Beaconsfield Road, in Willesden, London.<sup>212</sup> The obituary of Harris in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* declared that:

"Mr Harris was an individual that could never say no, and was known to have elevated the condition of both European and African Traders in this place, and his name will ever be cherished by those who remember him."<sup>213</sup>

---

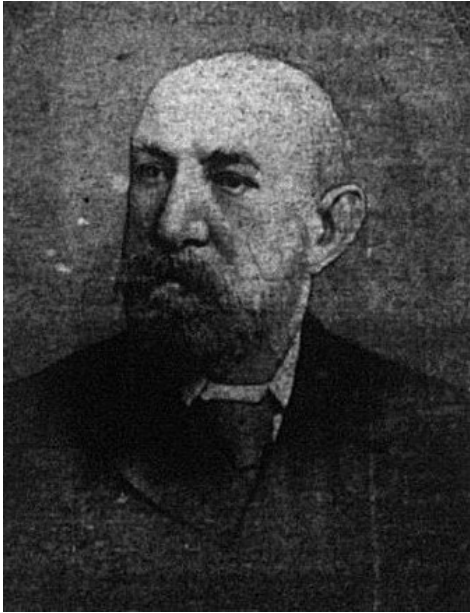
<sup>210</sup>'Household of Hester Harris,' Willesden, Paddington, London, 1911 Census of England and Wales, *Ancestry*. That the Solomon family visited the Harris family in England almost two years after the death of John Myer Harris reflects the closeness of the Harris family to the African relatives and acquaintances of John Myer Harris.

<sup>211</sup>'Harris, Hester, Paddington, London,' in England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916-2007, *Ancestry*.

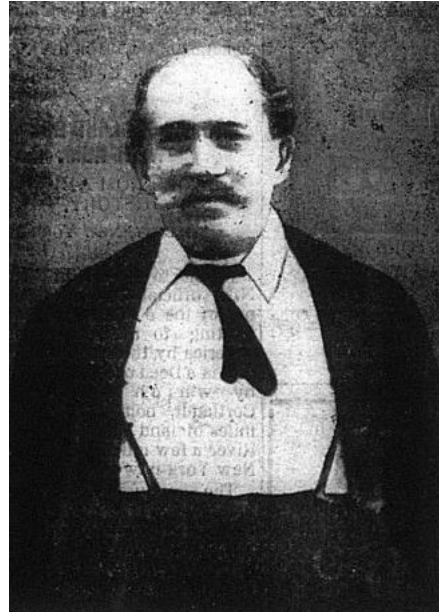
<sup>212</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 250. Jolles states that Harris was buried at Willesden Cemetery in plot AX/2/16. Jolles' reference to "Willesden Cemetery" presumably refers to Willesden United Synagogue Cemetery which is also known as Willesden Jewish Cemetery. The inscription on the tombstone of John Myer Harris reads as "died in his 77<sup>th</sup> year" and "mourned by his wife and children." Willesden United Synagogue Cemetery was the burial place for several distinguished Anglo-Jews including Sir Matthew Nathan, governor of Sierra Leone, Lionel de Rothschild and his son, the 2nd Baron Rothschild, and later Jack Cohen, the founder of Tesco Supermarket.

<sup>213</sup>'Death Of J.M. Harris, ESQ.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 8 January, 1910.

Thus, even the parting tributes accorded to Harris in his obituary in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, reflect the complexities of Harris as a ruthless commercialist and promoter of legitimate commerce in the hinterland of Sierra Leone. Although he is briefly referred to in modern Sierra Leonean history, Harris reputation during his lifetime and legacy after his death make him perhaps the most important Jewish merchant to trade in the hinterland of Sierra Leone.



**Fig. 4. John Myer Harris<sup>214</sup>**



**Fig. 5. Philip Lemberg<sup>215</sup>**

---

<sup>214</sup>'The late J.M. Harris (Father) one of the earliest European Traders of Sierra Leone,' *S.L.D.M.*, 21 June, 1933.

<sup>215</sup>'Lest We Forget: The late P. Lemberg alias (the white Creole Boy),' *S.L.D.M.*, 25 March, 1933. The caption under the photograph of Philip Lemberg that was featured in the *Sierra Leone Daily Mail* stated "Philip Lemberg alias The White Creole Boy.'

## Louis Solomon

The extensive network of Nathaniel Isaacs, perhaps the first impactful Jewish merchant, is reflected in the number of Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone during the middle to late nineteenth century who were related to or familiar to Isaacs and his family. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, some of the immediate relatives of Nathaniel Isaacs settled in Sierra Leone to engage in trade.<sup>216</sup> Perhaps the most successful Jewish merchants in the late nineteenth century with kinship ties to Nathaniel Isaacs were Louis Solomon and Henry Solomon, two nephews of Isaacs, who engaged in commerce in Sierra Leone for several years.<sup>217</sup> The business interests of Louis Solomon in the Sherbro would result in a partnership with Lionel Hart, a former co-employee of Henry Solomon, and the establishment of Lionel Hart & Co., perhaps the last business operated by the Jewish pioneers and participants in legitimate trade in the hinterland and Northern Rivers of Sierra Leone.

Louis Solomon was born in Medway, Kent on 17 February, 1851 as Louis Simon Magnus to Samuel Magnus and Miriam Magnus, née Isaacs.<sup>218</sup> Solomon's paternal ancestors descended from a Jewish family from the Netherlands and regions in modern-day Germany.<sup>219</sup> Miriam Isaacs was a daughter of Lewis Isaac and Catherine Isaac, née Solomon and a sister of Saul Isaac and Samuel Isaac

---

<sup>216</sup>Mr. Nathaniel Lyons (a trader of Mellicourie), *The Reports: The Past and Present State of Her Majesty's Colonial Possessions, Transmitted With The Blue Books For the Year 1854, Parliamentary Papers, House of Common*, Volume 42, (Britain: H.M. Stationery Office, 1856), p. 60. 'Fifty Years Experience In West Africa,' *S.L.W.N.*, 11 February, 1911. Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, and Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 73. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 275, 323, 372. The Anglo-African Company, operated by Samuel Isaac and Saul Isaac, had operations in Sierra Leone and employed at least two Jewish agents who settled in Sierra Leone for trade.

<sup>217</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, pp. 55-6. Although it is possible that John Myer Harris was a relation of Nathaniel Isaacs, save for the reference to Harris's brother, Saul Solomon Harris, there is little evidence that the author has discovered to suggest a kinship relationship between Harris and Isaacs.

<sup>218</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, and Nathaniel Isaacs*, pp. 22, 55-6. Miriam Isaacs was a first cousin of Nathaniel Isaacs, which reflects the importance of Nathaniel Isaacs in possibly attracting some of his relatives to Sierra Leone.

<sup>219</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, and Nathaniel Isaacs*, pp. 13, 31. Lazarus Phillip Magnus, (1776-1821), the paternal grandfather of Louis Solomon, was born in Zwolle, Netherlands and settled in Chatham, Kent alongside his wife, Sarah Magnus, née Moses, (1774-1850), and his parents, Joseph Simon Magnus, (1737-1815) and Bele Eliaser Magnus, (1744-1802), née Cohen, who were both born in the Netherlands. Nathan or Neta Magnus (was the earliest known member of the Magnus family that the author was able to trace.



who operated the Anglo-African Company.<sup>220</sup> Phoebe Solomon, née de Metz, the maternal great grandmother of Louis Solomon, was from a prominent Jewish family from the Netherlands and her immediate relatives married into distinguished families such as the Montefiore dynasty. Following the death of Miriam Magnus, the surnames of Louis Simon Magnus and Henry Magnus were changed to 'Solomon' possibly after the maiden name of their maternal grandmother, Catherine Isaac, née Solomon.<sup>221</sup>

Louis Solomon's connection to Sierra Leone was almost certainly through his maternal uncle, Samuel Isaacs, the proprietor of Isaac & Campbell Co and a first cousin of Nathaniel Isaacs, the Jewish explorer and merchant at Sierra Leone and Matakong Island.<sup>222</sup> Henry Solomon, the elder brother of Louis Solomon, was recorded in the 1861 Census of England as a boarder alongside Lionel Hart at Jermyn Street, London, the premises of the Anglo-African Company. Both Henry Solomon and Lionel Hart were stationed in Sierra Leone as agents or otherwise general employees of the Anglo-African Company, and Louis Solomon possibly arrived in Sierra Leone in the employ of the Anglo-African Company.<sup>223</sup>

There is little known of the commercial activities of Louis Solomon in the hinterland or the Colony of Sierra Leone before his partnership with Lionel Hart. Following the demise of the Anglo-African Company after the American Civil War, Louis Solomon was probably a trader at the Sherbro in

---

<sup>220</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, and Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 55.

<sup>221</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, and Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 55.

<sup>222</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 1-4, 55, 56-62, 71. Miriam Isaacs was a sister of Samuel Isaacs, and a daughter of Lewis Isaacs and Catherine Isaacs, née Solomon. Catherine Isaacs, née Solomon, a daughter of Nathaniel Solomon and Phoebe Solomon, née De Mitz (Metz), was a sister of Saul Solomon of St. Helena and Elizabeth 'Lenie' Solomon who was the wife of Isaac Isaacs and the mother of Nathaniel Isaacs, the explorer and merchant of Sierra Leone and Matakong. However, according to at least one Australian newspaper, Miriam Isaacs was a daughter of Saul Solomon of St. Helena.

<sup>223</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 73. Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 372. It is also possible that Louis Solomon entered the trade as an independent merchant.

partnership with his elder brother, Henry Solomon.<sup>224</sup> It was possibly following the departure of his elder brother to Britain that Louis Solomon entered into a partnership with Lionel Hart. It was the partnership between Louis Solomon and Lionel Hart that resulted in the establishment of Lionel Hart & Co. which maintained business operations until the twentieth century.

### Lionel Hart

The life of Lionel Hart is perhaps illustrative of the kinship or friendship ties between Jewish merchants who traded in Sierra Leone, which was not necessarily reflected to the same degree amongst other European merchants in Sierra Leone. Lionel Hart was born in 1842 in London, England as one of seven children born to John Naphtali Hart, (1805-1858), a watch repairer and Elizabeth Hart (c. 1817-1879).<sup>225</sup> John Naphtali Hart, who had possibly changed his name from Cohen to Hart, was a son of Naphtali Cohen (1767-1838) and Sarah Cohen (d. 1838).<sup>226</sup> Following the death of John Hart in 1859, Elizabeth Hart was subsequently remarried to Lewis Solomon.<sup>227</sup> Lionel Hart was recorded in the 1861 Census of England as a clerk to the army contractors and he was in the employ of the Anglo-African Company working alongside Henry Solomon, the elder brother of Louis Solomon.

---

<sup>224</sup>British Sherbro: Visit of His Excellency Governor Korthright (From our Special Correspondent) Sherbro, April 23, 1875,' *Independent*, 13 May, 1875. 'Correspondence, British Sherbro, April 8, 1875,' *Independent*, 27 May, 1875. 'Copy of a letter addressed to the Colonial Secretary at Freetown, by the Merchants and Traders of Sherbro,' *Independent*, 23 May, 1878. 'For Sale Or A Long Lease,' *Independent*, 24 February, 1876. Louis Solomon was not necessarily the first and certainly not the only Jewish member of the Solomon family to settle in Sierra Leone. There were other Solomons, probably of Jewish origin, who engaged in mercantile pursuits in the Sherbro such as M. Solomon who advertised alongside Philip Lemberg for the sale of the former premises of the Company of African Merchants at Bendu, Sherbro. Fyfe mentions that Nathaniel Salomon was buried at Circular Road Cemetery and a monument with Hebrew inscriptions was erected over the burial site.

<sup>225</sup>'The Household of John Naphtali Hart,' 1841-1851 Censuses of England, *Ancestry*. According to the 1851 census of England, the children of John Naphtali Hart and Elizabeth Hart, (b. 1814/21), were Ernest Hart (b. 1837/8), Louisa Hart (b. 1839 or 1840), Montague Hart, Lionel Hart, John Hart (b. 1844/5), Henry Hart (b. 1846 or 1847), and Herman Hart (b. 1849 or 1850) .

<sup>226</sup>Public and Private Family Trees, *Ancestry*. Naphtali Cohen (c. 1767-4 March, 1838), was a son of Ezekiel HaCohen, and Sarah (d. 15 October, 1838).

<sup>227</sup>'Hart, Elizabeth, 1860, Pancras,' in the England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. It is interesting that before Lewis Solomon married Elizabeth Hart, his first wife was Mary Ann Davison. David Henry Davison was a prominent Anglo-Jewish merchant based in Freetown and the Northern Rivers of Guinea during the nineteenth century.

Hart settled in the Sherbro, as an agent of the Anglo-African Company possibly in the 1860s.<sup>228</sup> Following the demise of the Anglo-African Company, Lionel Hart subsequently entered into trade in the Sherbro on his own account.<sup>229</sup> Hart first traded at Kittam and then moved to Bendu in the Sherbro after competition from Creole traders. After several years in the Sherbro, Lionel Hart and his elder brother, Montague Phineas Hart, (1841-1926), entered into a partnership as the Hart Brothers by December, 1874.<sup>230</sup>

However, Hart continued to maintain a close relationship with the Solomon family and the interlocking ties between some of the Jewish merchants who settled in Sierra Leone is particularly reflected in the relationship between Hart and Solomon families. Lionel Hart, who travelled on occasion to visit relatives in England, married Gertrude Rosa Lichenstein, a sister of Mrs. Henry Solomon and a daughter of Simpson or Sampson Lichenstein, a Polish Jewish emigrant.<sup>231</sup> Thus, Hart, as a relative by marriage of the Solomon family, entered into a partnership with Louis Solomon to form Lionel Hart & Co, perhaps the last significant enterprise of the nineteenth century that was founded by the Jewish pioneers of the hinterland.

---

<sup>228</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 372. Lionel Hart's association with Henry Solomon at Jermyn Street as an employee of the Anglo-African Company was almost certainly the basis for both Hart and Solomon settling in Sierra Leone.

<sup>229</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 372.

<sup>230</sup>'Notice,' *Independent*, 28 December, 1874. 'British Sherbro: Visit of His Excellency Governor Korthright (From our Special Correspondent) Sherbro, April 23, 1875,' *Independent*, 13 May, 1875.

<sup>231</sup>England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. "England and Wales Census, 1871", database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VBDB-WKG>; 24 June 2017), Lionel Hart in entry for Lewis Jacobs, 1871. Hart is possibly the Lionel Hart recorded as a 'merchant' and 'brother-in-law' in the 1871 Census in the household of Lewis Jacobs and Emily Jacobs. Emily Jacobs might have been the 'Emily' or 'Emile' Hart recorded aged four years old in the 1841 Census of England and Wales in the household of John Naphtali Hart.

## Lionel Hart & Co

In the late 1870s or early 1880s, Lionel Hart and Louis Solomon entered into a partnership as Lionel Hart & Co with operations in the hinterland of Sierra Leone such as the Sherbro.<sup>232</sup> Lionel Hart & Co, a general mercantile firm, was one of several firms based in Liverpool or Manchester that operated with agents in Sierra Leone during the late nineteenth century. The firm sold a wide range of goods and employed several African agents including Ezekiel Thomas McCormack and Maximillian Eugene Dawson.<sup>233</sup> However, although the business prospered, both Lionel Hart and Louis Solomon eventually settled in London or Liverpool after several years of residence in Sierra Leone or the hinterland.

---

<sup>232</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 444. UK, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960, TNA UK Series, BT27, Ancestry. 'The Private Reminiscences Of Lionel Hart, Part 1,' (S.A. SIG, *Jewish Genealogy-South African Special Interest Group*, Volume 3, Issue 1, (December 2002), URL: <http://www.jewishgen.org/safrica/newsletter/SA-SIG-NL-2002-12.pdf>. 'Lionel Hart & Co,' *Bulawayo Chronicle*, 31 August, 1917. *Jewish South African SIG Newsletter*, (Jewish Genealogy: Southern African Special Interest Group), Volume 3, Issue 2, (March 2003), URL: <http://www.jewishgen.org/safrica/newsletter/SA-SIG-NL-2003-03.pdf>. Christopher Fyfe notes that English merchants formed partnerships in the 1880s and subsequently referred to Lionel Hart and Louis Solomon entering into a partnership. Interestingly, there was a Lionel Hart & Co established in southern Africa, possibly by Lionel Hart, the merchant whose memoirs were published in the *South African Special Interest Group (Newsletter)*. This Lionel Hart might be the individual recorded in the U.K. Passenger Lists as travelling to South Africa in 1898.

<sup>233</sup>'General News: Passengers By The Burutu,' *S.L.W.N.*, 30 September, 1911. 'Notice,' *S.L.W.N.*, 27 July, 1907.



**Fig. 6. Louis Solomon<sup>234</sup>**

---

<sup>234</sup>Photograph reproduced from Michael Jolles' *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, And Nathaniel Isaacs* (illustration 31) with the kind permission and courtesy of Dr Michael Jolles and Mrs. Maureen Shallcross.

Lionel Hart retired as a co-partner of Lionel Hart & Co from 6 November 1886 and the firm was operated solely by Louis Solomon and was represented by his agents including his African-born son, Henry Clement Solomon.<sup>235</sup> Lionel Hart returned to Britain and in the 1891 Census of England and Wales, Hart and his wife were recorded as visitors to Sillwood Place, Brighton, Sussex, England.<sup>236</sup> Hart settled at 26 Christchurch Avenue, Kilburn, London with his wife Gertrude Rosa Hart and was recorded in the 1901 census of England and Wales as a bill discounter and employer.<sup>237</sup> In the 1911 Census of England and Wales, Hart was recorded as a 'Retired West African Merchant' who lived at Hertford, Hertfordshire, England.<sup>238</sup> He died on 3 July, 1924 at 21 Belsize Avenue, Hampstead, and was one of the longest-surviving Jewish merchants who operated in the Sherbro region.<sup>239</sup>

Louis Solomon possibly returned to Britain on a permanent basis and as the principal of Lionel Hart & Co, perhaps only infrequently travelled to Sierra Leone. In 1885, Louis Solomon married Eveline Leah Cohen, (1867-1948), a daughter of John Aaron Cohen, (1837-1924) and Amelia Cohen, née Joseph, (b. 1843), a daughter of Simon Joseph and Fanny Joseph.<sup>240</sup> He continued to remain in charge of Lionel Hart & Co and was an active member of the Jewish community in Liverpool.<sup>241</sup> Solomon was the Junior Treasurer of the New Hebrew Congregation in Liverpool from 1897 to 1900 and was the Senior Treasurer of the New Hebrew Congregation from 1900 to possibly 1907.<sup>242</sup> However, Solomon died

---

<sup>235</sup>'General News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 6 March, 1886. 'Notice,' *S.L.W.N.*, 27 November, 1886. Lionel Hart travelled to Sierra Leone in 1886 and after a few months, he retired as a partner of the firm. However, Henry Solomon, the elder brother of Louis Solomon, was also a partner of Lionel Hart & Co.

<sup>236</sup>'England and Wales Census, 1891,' database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:4D3T-Z6Z> : 1 April 2016), Lionel Hart in household of Gertrude Hart, Brighton, Sussex, England; from '1891 England, Scotland and Wales census,' database and images, *Findmypast* (<http://www.findmypast.com> : n.d); citing PRO RG 12, Sussex county, sub-district, The National Archives of the UK, Kew, Surrey.

<sup>237</sup>'Household of Lionel Hart,' Christchurch, Middlesex, England, 1901 Census of England, *Ancestry*.

<sup>238</sup>'England and Wales Census, 1911,' database, *FamilySearch*, (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:X7LS-985> :2 August 2017), Lionel Hart, Hertford, Hertfordshire, England; from '1911 England and Wales census,' database and images, *Findmypast* (<http://www.findmypast.com> : n.d); citing PRO RG 14, The National Archives of the UK, Kew, Surrey.

<sup>239</sup>England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1996, *Ancestry*.

<sup>240</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, and Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 22.

<sup>241</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 56.

<sup>242</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 56.

tragically on 6 November 1908 and his death perhaps contributed to the eventual liquidation of Lionel Hart & Co.<sup>243</sup>

Following the death of Louis Solomon, John Solomon, a son of Louis Solomon, continued to engage in business in West Africa and was recorded in the 1911 Census of England as an “African Merchant.”<sup>244</sup> A member of the Solomon family, possibly Henry Solomon, the elder brother of Louis Solomon, formed a new firm named Solomon and Darracott which operated in West Africa following the liquidation of Lionel Hart & Co.<sup>245</sup> However, in the early twentieth century, the mercantilist pursuits of the Solomon family were represented in Sierra Leone by Henry Clement Solomon, a Sierra Leonean merchant who was a son of Louis Solomon and a former agent of Lionel Hart & Co. Thus, although the progeny of the Jewish merchants continued to engage in commerce, the liquidation of Lionel Hart & Co. perhaps marked the end of the participation in trade of Jewish merchants who were pioneers in the promotion of legitimate commerce in the Sherbro and Gallinas.

#### **Social relations: The rise of Sierra Leonean families of Jewish descent**

The Jewish merchants, who settled in the hinterland and Colony of Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers, often participated in the social activities of the mercantilist community and some actively engaged with indigenous African and Creole culture. Jewish businessmen participated in local politics in the Colony and some supported endeavours to Christianise the indigenous ethnic groups in the hinterland. Although the Sierra Leone Creoles were commercial rivals of these Jewish merchants and at least one businessman expressed disdain for the Creoles, there is evidence to suggest that Jewish

---

<sup>243</sup>Ibid. p. 22. 'RE Liquidators Of Messrs. Lionel Hart & Co., And Henry Clement Solomon,' *S.L.W.N.*, 26 August, 1911.

<sup>244</sup>'Household of Eveline Solomon,' Liverpool, England, 1911 Census of England, *Ancestry*. Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 56. John Solomon was associated with Arthur Williams & Co. There was also a Henry L. Hart who was a shipping agent operating from Merseyside.

<sup>245</sup>Solomon & Darracott, Limited: African Merchants, 37, Victoria Street, Liverpool (Opposite General Post Office,' *S.L.W.N.*, 28 December, 1918. Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 56.

merchants, were on cordial terms with the Creole community. Furthermore, several Jewish merchants also subscribed to the pattern of interracial relations that had existed in pre-colonial era and since the existence of the Colony. The liaisons between Jewish businessmen and women of African descent produced a small group of Sierra Leoneans of partial Jewish descent.

As pioneers of legitimate commerce who were active in the affairs of the Colony and the hinterland of Sierra Leone, Jewish businessmen participated in social activities and occasionally expressed support for popular movements or mercantilist interests. A few Jewish businessmen in Sierra Leone were appointed by foreign governments to serve as consuls in Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century.<sup>246</sup> Furthermore, some Jews supported increased political rights in the Colony and Nathaniel Isaacs, Simeon Cantor, Etting Taylor, and David Davison signed a petition in support of the establishment of a popularly elected house of assembly.<sup>247</sup> Following the arrival of Governor Cornelius Hendricksen Kortwright in the Sherbro, it was Lionel Hart who led the "the deputation of the merchants and traders, both Europeans and Natives," and read a welcome address and a memorial outlining the needs of the British Sherbro.<sup>248</sup> Thus, some Jews who settled in Sierra Leone or the Northern Rivers were active in

---

<sup>246</sup> *Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States*, Volume 19, (United States: United States Congress. Senate, 1901), p. 252. *Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States of America*, (United States: Order of the Senate of the United States, Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1969), p. 252. 'Friday, January 27 [1860]: American Consul Dead,' *Vincent's Semi-Annual United States Register*, (1 January, 1860 to 1 July, 1860), (Philadelphia: Francis Vincent, 1860), p. 64. *Despatches from United States consuls in Sierra Leone, 1858-1906*, [microform], Volume 1, (Washington: The National Archives and Records Service, 1960), National Archives and Records Service, 1960. 'General News: Death of P. Lemberg, ESQ.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 14 February, 1914, Lemberg served as a Consul for Portugal; John Etting Taylor was the first official American Consul in West Africa and one of his successors as American Consul was succeeded by Nathaniel Lyons, a trader in the Northern Rivers and a younger brother of Edward Emmanuel Lyons.

<sup>247</sup> 'Sierra Leone,' *Anti-slavery Reporter*, 1 May, 1858, Volume 6, No 5 (New Series), (Third Series), (London: The Society, 1858), p. 111.

<sup>248</sup> 'British Sherbro: Visit of His Excellency Governor Kortwright (From our Special Correspondent) Sherbro, April 23, 1875,' *Independent*, 13 May, 1875. Furthermore, John Myer Harris and the Hart brothers participated in boat races in honour of Governor Kortwright of Sierra Leone. It is possible that some of the merchant based in the Sherbro, including Jewish businessmen, might have initiated, developed or engaged in their own social activities that were possibly exclusive to merchants in the region.



the political affairs of the Colony and hinterland and advocated for the social and economic improvement of these regions.

Some Jewish merchants also actively supported Christian efforts to evangelise to indigenous Africans. Thus, Nathaniel Isaacs was an active supporter of Methodist missionary efforts and donated to mission funds and built a Methodist chapel on Matakong Island.<sup>249</sup> John Myer Harris, whose first wife was an English Catholic, supported the efforts of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit in the Sherbro. Myer Harris offered Father Kayser of the CSSp the opportunity to establish a mission on his site and a subsidy of 1,500 francs per annum. Kayser outlined his perspective on Harris's rationale by stating that:

“Even though he is a Jew, he wants to give us a site, as much as we need, and a subsidy of 1,500 francs yearly. This seemed strange at first, but I can explain it like this. He thinks the priest is the only one able to undertake the task. Besides, this man is married to an English Catholic lady. He told me that his wife's family are very serious Catholic people. Mr. Harris is fond of his wife and regards highly the religion of his wife's family.”<sup>250</sup>

Thus, Isaacs and Harris contributed to the efforts to proselytize indigenous Africans and perhaps laid the foundation for the adherence of some of their African progeny to Christianity. The contributions to Christian efforts by Jewish merchants such as Isaacs and Harris to Christian possibly would have endeared them to the Protestant African community of Freetown.

The nature of relations between Jewish merchants and the settlers of African descent in the Colony of Sierra Leone varied among the Jewish businessmen who settled in Sierra Leone. As legitimate trade in the Sherbro and Gallinas increased in the middle to late nineteenth century, it resulted in the emergence of Creole merchants in Gallinas and the Sherbro who began to challenge the dominance of some of these Jewish merchants. Some merchants such as John Myer Harris, initially demonstrated a

---

<sup>249</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 275.

<sup>250</sup>Smyke, *The First African Diplomat*, p. 174.

strong disdain for the Creoles and Americo-Liberians, although it is possible that he later moderated his perspective on the Creoles.<sup>251</sup> However, Philip Lemberg, a respected and popular merchant who was integrated into Freetown society and was later referred to as the 'Creole Boy', was elected as a Mayor of Freetown in 1912, the only non-African official elected prior to 1929.<sup>252</sup> Louis Solomon was a personal friend of Edward Blyden, the pan-Africanist and an ardent supporter of Zionism, and Lionel Hart & Co published Blyden's publication *The Jewish Question*.<sup>253</sup> Thus, although some Creole merchants emerged as commercial rivals to their Jewish counterparts, there is evidence to suggest that relations between the Sierra Leonean populace and Jewish businessmen had less tension and were cordial.

The nature of Jewish relations with Africans is perhaps also reflected in the relationships between some Jewish merchants and women of African descent in the Colony and hinterland of Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers. The presence of Jewish merchants in the Colony and hinterland of Sierra Leone resulted in the emergence of Sierra Leonean families of Jewish descent. Similar to other Europeans who settled in Sierra Leone and the hinterland, Jewish merchants intermarried with women from the Colony and the adjacent territories,<sup>254</sup> and their offspring were sometimes educated in the Colony schools or in England.<sup>255</sup> The nature of these relationships often reflected the pattern of

---

<sup>251</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 545-6. Harris's opinion of the Creoles of Sierra Leone appears to have tempered with the passing of time; his daughter, Annie Harris Porter, married a Creole and references to Harris in the Freetown newspapers did not display the animosity or disdain expressed at Europeans who condescendingly mistreated or expressed a strong racial prejudice against the inhabitants of the Colony.

<sup>252</sup>'The Good Creole Boy,' *Colonial And Provincial Reporter*, 13 July, 1912.

<sup>253</sup>Bornstein, George, *The Colors of Zion*, (United States: Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 14, 96. Graves-Johnston, Michael, *Eastern Africa*, Catalogue 97, (London: Michael Graves-Johnston, 2007), p. 7. Louis Solomon was the principal of Lionel Hart & Co and so it was effectively Solomon who authorised the publication of Blyden's work. Edward Blyden was also acquainted with Philip Lemberg and inscribed a copy of George Francis Elliot Scott's *A Naturalist in Mid-Africa* to Lemberg on 9 August, 1904.

<sup>254</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 438. The Jewish merchants who settled in Sierra Leone mainly had children by women who were Colony-born or belonged to the indigenous ethnic groups of Sierra Leone and the modern-day Republic of Guinea.

<sup>255</sup>'Distinguished Anglo-Sierra Leonean: The Late Sir Alfred Molony, K.C.M.G.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 13 September, 1913. In the obituary of Sir Cornelius Alfred Molony, a British Colonial Governor who was partly educated in Africa, a correspondent stated that "it was usually the case in those days for European residing in this Colony and along the Coast either in a Governmental, mercantile or private capacity to have their children enrolled as pupils in the Grammar School, such was the case with the Pikes, Lutterodts, Rosenbushes, Evanes [Evanases], Syretts, Davisons, Lloyds, Lejeunes, Broadhursts and others with the object of securing the best education to be had within the Colony.

interracial relationships in the Colony and the dynamics of the landlord and stranger relationship in the hinterland.<sup>256</sup> Thus, Nathaniel Isaacs sought solace with at least two African women<sup>257</sup> during his time in Matakong and Sierra Leone and had at least one daughter in the Gambia as well.<sup>258</sup> John Myer Harris married Boi Sally, a daughter of the Chief of Juring (Jurung) and had at least two daughters, Mary Harris and Annie Harris, (1862-1948), and he subsequently married Jane Tucker, the daughter of Chief Thomas

---

Things have much altered since." Both Henry Clement Solomon and James Nathaniel Harris were possibly educated at the Sierra Leone Grammar School.

<sup>256</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 103, 438. Nathaniel Isaacs and possibly his nephew, Edward Emmanuel Lyons, had children with indigenous or mixed-race women from modern-day Guinea and possibly from the island of Matakong. Henry Solomon possibly had children in Sierra Leone and his younger brother, Louis Solomon had children with an African woman who was possibly related to the African woman whom his business partner Lionel Hart had children with. The Harris brothers both married into the Tucker family and according to Fyfe, John Myer Harris referred to his African household as his 'ménage'.

<sup>257</sup>Jones, Hilary, *The Métis of Senegal: Urban life and Politics in French West Africa*, (United States: Indiana University Press, 2013), pp. 67, 88, 220 (footnote 44). Hannah (Anna) Isaacs, another possible daughter of Nathaniel Isaacs married Jean-Jacques Crespin (8 December, 1837-3 February, 1895), a scion of a prominent Senegalese Creole family. A photograph of Hannah (Anna) Isaacs and her daughter Madeleine Deves was published in Hilary Jones' *The Métis of Senegal: Urban life and Politics in French West Africa*, (United States: Indiana University Press, 2013) on page 67 and another photograph of Hannah (Anna) Isaacs appears in the Généalogie Publique section of the Sénégalmétis website. If Hannah (Anna) Isaacs was the daughter of Nathaniel Isaacs she would not have been the first person from the Gambia or Sierra Leone to marry a Senegalese Creole or individual with French ancestry or citizenship. Adolphe Valantin, a Senegalese Creole who was the nephew of Charles Heddle, the mixed-race merchant prince, had several children born in Sierra Leone including William Valantin and Jestina Henrietta Valantin, who married Simon Cornelius Carew. Furthermore, May Marietta Horton, a daughter of Dr James Africanus Beale Horton, married Francois Turpin with Guinean and possibly Caribbean or Senegalese Métis connections; and Louisa Edith Franz, a cousin of Dr John Randle, married Fernand Pierre Hergaute of Bordeaux. Victor Urbaine Baresté of Senegal married a Sierra Leonean and Frederick Brew Stuart, the son of Melvin Victor Dermont Stuart, the Collector of Customs, married Leonetine Madeleine Baresté, a daughter of Victor Baresté. The ties among the various stratifications of 'Educated Africans' in British West Africa, Francophone West Africa, Spanish and Portuguese West Africa and Liberia reflect the interlocking kinship and other personal and business ties among the 'Educated' West African elite.

<sup>258</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac, and Nathaniel Isaacs*, pp. 252, 286. Jones, *The Métis of Senegal: Urban Life And Politics In French West Africa*, pp. 67, 88, 220 (footnote 44). Peterson, John, *Province of Freedom: A History of Sierra Leone 1787-1870*, (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1969), p. 89. According to the Will of Nathaniel Isaacs transcribed in Jolles' monograph, Nathaniel Isaacs had two other children named Benson Hilton Isaacs and Phoebe Ann Manning, née Isaacs (1844/6-1916), (who might have been the 'Phillipa' recalled by a relative of Nathaniel Isaacs in 1927), the wife of Peter Manning, who were both possibly African-born children of Nathaniel Isaacs. Nathaniel Isaacs also had two other children, Emily Emma Isaacs and Alfred Isaacs who were born to Mrs. Mary Ann Lightburn (Lightbourne), née Skelton of American and African descent. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that Nathaniel Isaacs had a relationship with Madeleine Dion and possibly had at least one daughter, Hanna (Anna) Isaacs who married Jean Jacques Crespin, a Senegalese Métis. If Elizabeth Cole, who was born in at least 1837 or 1838, was a daughter of Nathaniel Isaacs, then she might have been born to Madeleine Dion in the Gambia as there was only a year or two year difference in age between Elizabeth Cole and Hannah Crespin, née Isaacs, who was born in 1838 or 1839. Although some scholars such as James St. George Walker and John Peterson cited the report of Samuel Brown, a Methodist missionary stating that Nathaniel Isaacs had two children with Hannah Hayes, a mixed-race housekeeper, the will of Nathaniel Isaacs does not mention any issue by Hannah Hayes except for Walter William Lewis, who was born to an English father who was his namesake. It is possible that the two sons of Nathaniel Isaacs and Hannah Hayes died before the will of Nathaniel Isaacs was drafted.

Tucker, and had at least one son, James Nathaniel Harris.<sup>259</sup> Nathaniel Harris I, the younger brother of John Harris, also married a member of the Tucker family, who was a sister or cousin of Chief Alfred William Tucker, and had at least two children, Joseph Harris and Julia Cecilia Harris (1880-1956).<sup>260</sup> Louis Solomon had at least one son, Henry Clement Solomon<sup>261</sup> and the Hart brothers or their relatives possibly also had children with indigenous or Colony-born women in Sierra Leone.<sup>262</sup>

Although the relationships between Jews and African women were often customary marriages or informal, some Jewish merchants married women of African descent from the Colony of Sierra Leone in British civil marriage ceremonies. Nathaniel Nathan married Mary Eliza Prigg, a daughter of William

---

<sup>259</sup>Obituary: The Passing Away of Mr. James Nathaniel Harris Of Sulima,' *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, 7 April, 1934. Some sources state that Jane Tucker was known as 'Yana' Tucker and was a daughter of Chief James Tucker. Mary Kirwan was possibly named after John Myer Harris's sister, Mary Harris (b. 1847), who married a Gentle.

<sup>260</sup>Smyke, *The First African Diplomat*, pp. 174-175. If Joseph Harris was the entry recorded in the Entrance Register of the Church Missionary Society Grammar School in the 1870s, he would have been older than Julia Harris, and may have been the half-sibling of Julia Harris. Certainly, Julia Harris had at least one half-sibling, Janie Thomas.

<sup>261</sup>'Passengers Per "Biafra," *Sierra Leone Times*, 4 August, 1900, hereafter the *S.L.T.* 'General News: The Bornu,' *S.L.W.N.*, 8 September, 1900. In Memoriam,' *S.L.W.N.*, 23 August, 1902. 'Thanks For Sympathy,' *S.L.W.N.*, 21 November, 1908. UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960, TNA UK Series BT26, *Ancestry*. UK, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960, TNA UK Series, BT27, *Ancestry*. However, Louis Solomon was possibly also the father of John H. Solomon (possibly named Henry), who attended the Church Missionary Society Grammar School and who might have been the "J.H. Solomon" who travelled to the Canary Islands alongside Henry Clement Solomon and his wife. John H. Solomon might have been the same individual as the individual(s) named John H. Solomon or J.H. Solomon or John Henry Solomon b. 1879 or 1880 who were recorded as passengers or merchants connected to Sierra Leone and also the Cameroons according to the incoming and outward passenger lists for the United Kingdom. However, John H. Solomon could have also been (and more likely was) a son of Henry Solomon, a brother of Louis Simon Solomon who was married to Matilda Lichenstein about a year or two after the possible birth of John H. Solomon. Louis Simon Solomon had a son called John Solomon (1888/9), born to his wife, Eveline Leah Solomon (1867-1948), née Cohen and so John H. Solomon of Sierra Leone was perhaps more likely to be a son of Louis Solomon's elder brother, Henry Solomon. Some Europeans, including some of the Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone, who had legitimate or outside children with African women often observed traditional naming patterns by not naming their wholly European children with names that had already been given to their African progeny. There was also a Martin John Solomon of Howe Street and a John Elijah Stadyl Solomon [check], (born c. 1875/6) who was a cousin of Violet Augusta Edwards and Mabel Susannah Edwards, the daughters of Samuel Benjamin Edwards (1844/4-1903).

<sup>262</sup>'Deaths For The Week,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 September, 1918. Violet Hart, (c. 1897/8-1918) died during the influenza epidemic in Sierra Leone at the age of twenty years old. Violet Hart died at Oxford Street, which was the location of Lionel Hart's business premises, and was connected to the Hart and possibly the Solomon families. It is possible that Violet Hart, who was described as a cousin of Henry Clement Solomon, was a daughter of Lionel Hart or possibly Montague Hart, or that Violet Hart was a Solomon who married a son of Lionel Hart or Montague Hart. According to the oral history provided by Ms. Rosemarie Marke, the Hart family, possibly descended from the Hart brothers, maintained family links with the Sherbro and were connected to Circular Road in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Prigg, a European merchant and David Henry Davison married Aglae Caille, a Senegalese Métis.<sup>263</sup> Philip Lemberg married Lydia Thompson, (1845/6-1901), a daughter of Henry Prigg Thompson, a mixed-race Sierra Leonean of British and Nova Scotian Settler origin.<sup>264</sup> Franz Heinrich Gustav Rudolph Hamelberg, a Jewish merchant possibly from Hamburg, Germany,<sup>265</sup> married Hannah Rose Lyons, of mixed African and Jewish descent and a daughter of Edward Emmanuel Lyons, the nephew of Nathaniel Isaacs.<sup>266</sup> Thus, by

---

<sup>263</sup>EAP443, Registers of Births, Freetown District, 1857-1865, *British Library Endangered Archives Programme*, URL: . ‘Supplement: Service De La Poste,’ *Moniteur du Sénégal et dépendances: Journal Officiel*, Mardi, 4 Juillet 1865 [Tuesday, 4 July, 1865], p. 122. Nathaniel Nathan and Mary Eliza Nathan had a son born on 25 May, 1861 at George Street, Freetown. Following the death of Nathaniel Nathan, Mary Eliza Nathan married George Cooke, (1838/9-11 March, 1873), a merchant and had at least one son named James Cooke (b. 29 November 1869). The *Moniteur du Sénégal et dépendances: Journal Officiel* for July 1864 refers to “Dévisine, née Aglaé Caille, à Sierra-Léone.” Aglaé Caille, was possibly a relation (a sister or cousin) of Emily Caille (d. 1876), the mistress of Charles Heddle, the Senegalese merchant. David Henry Davison had at least three children with Aglaé Davison, née Caille; a daughter born at Charlotte Street, Freetown on 22 August, 1858, Frances Louisa Davison born 8 September, 1864, and a son called Rokeby Jones Davison, (1865-1828), born at Charlotte Street on 14 October, 1865 and named after Captain Rokeby Jones.

<sup>264</sup>‘Marriage-Fardo-Lemberg,’ *S.L.T.*, 15 February, 1896. Philip Lemberg and Lydia Lemberg had at least one daughter, Malonie Maria Lemberg, who was born on 8 June 1872 and died in 1955. Malonie Lemberg married Frederick Robert Harry Fardo at St George’s Cathedral, Freetown, Sierra Leone on 18 February, 1896.

<sup>265</sup>‘News Items,’ *West African Reporter*, 10 March, 1883, hereafter the W.A.R. ‘News Items,’ *Lagos Observer*, 28 January, 1888, hereafter the L.O. ‘Legislative Council Chamber, Thursday, 26th April, 1888, At 3 P.M.,’ *L.O.*, 28 April, 1888 ‘News Items,’ *L.O.*, 9 June, 1888. Blue Books for the Colony of Nigeria, 1862-1945, *British Online Archives*. Blue Books for the Colony of Sierra Leone, 1824-1943, *British Online Archives*. Blue Books for the Colony of Gambia, 1828-1945, *British Online Archives*. ‘The Descendancy Chart For Franz Heinrich Rudolph Gustav Hamelberg,’ 14 April 2001 (The Private Collection of the Author), pp. 1-3. Franz Heinrich Rudolph Gustav Hamelberg, (c. 1851-20 January, 1888) was possibly born in Hamburg, German to a Jewish family although some sources cite Austria as the place of origin of Franz Hamelberg. The surname ‘Hamelberg’ is possibly a place name derived from Hammelburg, Bavaria in Germany. Franz Rudolph Hamelberg arrived in the late 1860s or 1870s as a civil servant or merchant and was eventually appointed as a gaoler in the Gambia. He also served as a gaoler or “Keeper of Prison” in the Lagos Colony from 1 June, 1886 and after suffering from an illness he died on 20 January, 1888 in Lagos, Nigeria. Franz Hamelberg was buried in the afternoon on the same day in which he died at Ikoyi Road Cemetery in Lagos, Nigeria. Rudolph Hamelberg and Hannah Hamelberg had at least five sons including Joseph Hamelberg (17 November 1885-25 November 1885) and possibly daughters. The children who survived into adulthood were Theodore Joseph Hamelberg (26 October 1880-c. 1950), an employee of Cable & Wireless Ltd, Louis Cosmos (Kosmos) Hamelberg (b. circa 19 January 1888-1971), an architect and surveyor who had previously served as an apprentice draughtsman, George Hamelberg (b. circa 24 December, 1883 or later), Edward Andrew Hamelberg, (b. circa 1882 or possibly 24 December 1883), an accountant. Hannah Rose Hamelberg was also possibly the mother of Caroline Hamelberg, (c. 1894-1901) and of a daughter born at Trelawney Street, Freetown on 8 December 1889 (possibly the Hannah Magaretta Hamelberg who married Joseph Marie Valcarcel). Furthermore, a Charles Hamelberg died at the age of forty years old in 1914 and a Thomas Hamelburg [sic] was recorded as residing at Rawdon Street in 1912. Following the death of Franz Hamelberg, Hannah Rose Hamelberg left aboard the *Congo* for Sierra Leone and received pecuniary aid.

<sup>266</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 275. Smyke, *The First African Diplomat*, pp. 174-5. For several years the author of this paper speculated that Edward Emmanuel Lyons referred to in Fyfe’s *A History of Sierra Leone* was the father of Hannah Rose Lyons. However, this theory was not confirmed until the author read Raymond Smyke’s *The First African Diplomat* and ‘Nathaniel Varney Massquoi.’ According to oral family history, Hannah Rose Lyons had familial connections with Guinea and this might be an indication that Hannah Lyons was born on Matakong Island. However, a Hannah King, an occupier of the Gloucester Street residence of Franz Rudolph

the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there were a small number of Sierra Leonean families with Jewish antecedents who were interrelated through their paternal Jewish heritage, through their maternal African heritage, or through both their Jewish and African ancestry.

Furthermore, some of the mixed-race children of these merchants interacted with their relatives in England.<sup>267</sup> Rudolph Hamelberg visited Hamburg, Germany and brought his eldest son, Theodore Hamelberg on the trip possibly to visit his family members.<sup>268</sup> Rokeby Jones Davison, a son of David Henry Davidson settled in England alongside his sisters and he married twice, on both occasions to Englishwomen.<sup>269</sup> Merchants such as Louis Solomon and John Myer Harris who later married Englishwomen, ensured their wives and children were aware of their African progeny and both branches of the Solomon and Harris families remained relatively close. A cousin of Nathaniel Isaacs recounted to a

---

Hamelberg, was present at the birth of Theodore Joseph Hamelberg in 1880 and another member of the King family (possibly Hannah King) was also present at the birth of another son of the Hamelbergs born in 1883. It is possible that the King family were the landlords of the Gloucester Street property, or it is possible, given the naming pattern of 'Hannah' that the King family were the maternal relatives of Hannah Lyons. The mother of Hannah Lyons might have been a Guinean child adopted and raised in Freetown or perhaps Hannah Lyons' mother was of Creole origin. However, according to the oral history among some members of the Hamelberg family and Raymond Smyke's account of the family in his article on Nathaniel Massaquoi, the mother of Hannah Lyons was an indigenous African woman. The name 'Edward' was a family name among the members of the Hamelberg family and Father Edward Hamelberg, the first Sierra Leonean to be ordained as a Catholic priest, was almost certainly named for his great-grandfather or his uncle.

<sup>267</sup>'Household of Hester Harris,' Willesden, Paddington, London, 1911 Census of England, *Ancestry*. 'Marriage-Caulcrick-Renner,' *S.L.W.N.*, 13 March, 1915.

<sup>268</sup>Hamburg Passenger Lists, 1850-1934, *Ancestry*. On 1 May 1886, Rudolph Hamelberg departed from Hamburg, Germany with his five-year old son, Theodore Joseph Hamelberg and returned to Sierra Leone. The Hamburg Passenger Lists also reveal that a Dora Hamelberg (b. 1876/7) and a Minna Hamelberg travelled to West Africa on 23 August, 1901 and 28 February, 1903 respectively.

<sup>269</sup>'Rokeby Jones Davison,' *London, England, Electoral Registers, 1832-1965, Ancestry*. 'Household of Rokeby Davison,' Battersea, London, 1901 Census of England, *Ancestry*. London, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1921, *Ancestry*. England, Select Marriages, 1538-1973, *Ancestry*. Rokeby Jones Davison was first married to Elizabeth Ann Pearse on 10 June 1893 in Westminster, London and was subsequently married to Ada Emily Fielder, a daughter of John Lawrence Fielder, on 12 July 1919 in the parish of Christ Church, Fulham. Rokeby Jones Davison was recorded in the 1901 Census of England and Wales as living with his first wife, Elizabeth Davison, and his two Sierra Leonean sisters, Frances Louisa Davison (b. 8 September 1864), who possibly worked partly as a bookkeeper in connection with a laundrette and Annie Davison (b. 1867/8), who was a housekeeper for Frances Davison, who might have been unwell or handicapped. Annie Davison was born as a British subject in Paris, France and was probably the last child of Aglae Davison and David Henry Davison (who died in 1868).

newspaper in South Africa when the children born to Isaacs in Matakong came to visit the family in England:

"Nathaniel Isaac's son Ben, and his daughter Phillipa were sent Home to be educated at Canterbury. Mr S--- [the cousin of Nathaniel Isaacs] states that they had very violent tempers. They must have found an English school very galling after their care-free and wild life in West Africa. They remained in England until they were grown up, and then returned to their father."<sup>270</sup>

Bernard Harris, a grandson of John Myer Harris, also recalled African family members visiting the Harris household in England during the twentieth century.<sup>271</sup> Thus, some of the children of Jewish merchants retained ties to their fatherland at a time when their fathers had retired or were less active in the West African trade.

---

<sup>270</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac and Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 280. Household of Peter Manning(s), in the 1871-1881 Censuses of England, *FamilySearch*, *Ancestry*, *UKCensusOnline*. 'Household of Phoebe A. Manning,' in the 1891 Census of England, *FamilySearch*. 'Household of Nellie Pittendrigh,' in the 1901 Census of England, *FamilySearch*. The mention of 'Ben' and 'Phillipa' in this anecdote might be a reference to Benson Hilton Isaacs and Phoebe Ann Isaacs, the two children of Nathaniel Isaacs, who were possibly both born in Matakong or Sierra Leone to Hannah Hayes or an indigenous mother from Matakong or perhaps another mistress of Nathaniel Isaacs. Jolles transcribed the household of Peter Manning and Phoebe Ann Manning in the 1871 Census of England and noted that the birthplace of Phoebe Ann Manning was recorded as Sierra Leone. The 1881-1911 Censuses of England variously record the birthplace of Phoebe Ann Manning as 'Sierra Leone' or 'Matacong' indicating that she was another African-born mixed-race child of Nathaniel Isaacs. Phoebe Ann Manning had at least two children, Phoebe Ellen Manning and Nathaniel B. Manning with Peter Manning, an Irish merchant. Phoebe Ellen 'Nellie' Manning, the daughter of Peter Manning and Phoebe Ann Manning, married William Marston Pittendrigh, an agent of Paterson Zochonis in Sierra Leone, who served as first President of the newly constituted Chamber of Commerce in Sierra Leone from 1892. William Pittendrigh, who had spent over twenty years in the Colony in 1898, testified in relation to the Hut Tax War inquiry that resulted in the Chalmers Report following the 1898 Hut Tax War in Sierra Leone. The Pittendrighs were the parents of William Leslie Pittendrigh, a commercial pilot, and Nellie May Pittendrigh.

<sup>271</sup>Spector, David, 'Brighton Jewry reconsidered,' *Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions Of The Jewish Historical Society of England*, Volume XXX, 1987-1988, p. 111.



**Fig. 7. Franz H.R.G. Hamelberg<sup>272</sup>**



**Fig. 8. Hannah Rose Hamelberg, née Lyons<sup>273</sup>**

---

<sup>272</sup>Photograph provided by William ‘Bill’ Leitner and Winona Leitner, née Hamelberg (The Private Collection of the Author).

<sup>273</sup>Photograph provided by William ‘Bill’ Leitner and Winona Leitner, née Hamelberg (The Private Collection of the Author).



The emergence of Sierra Leonean families of Jewish descent coincided with the dawn of the twentieth century which marked the end of the dominance of the Jewish merchants who had pioneered and promoted legitimate trade in the hinterland. John Myer Harris, probably the leading Jewish merchant in the hinterland, died aged seventy-seven years old at 2 Warrington Gardens, Maida Vale, London on 15 December, 1909.<sup>274</sup> Philip Lemberg, who had settled in England with his daughter and son-in-law,<sup>275</sup> died in England in 1914 and was buried in Willesden United Synagogue Cemetery.<sup>276</sup> Louis Solomon committed suicide in 1908 after suffering from a temporary illness.<sup>277</sup> Thus, by 1914, the majority of the prominent Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone of the nineteenth century had passed away and only Henry Solomon Sr. and the Hart brothers lived beyond 1914.<sup>278</sup> However, although nearly all of these pioneer merchants had retired or died by the early twentieth century, some of their progeny in Sierra Leone continued to represent their families and engaged in mercantilist pursuits.<sup>279</sup>

---

<sup>274</sup>Death Of J.M. Harris, ESQ.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 8 January, 1910. Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 250.

<sup>275</sup>Household of Frederick Robert Fardo,' Watford, England, 1911 Census of England, *Ancestry*. Public and Private Family Trees, *Ancestry*. The descendants of Philip Lemberg and Lydia Lemberg remain in Britain. William Henry Quin and Aaron Sigmund Stonewehr (Steinwehr), the business associates of Lemberg, also married African women and had progeny.

<sup>276</sup>Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, p. 250.

<sup>277</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>278</sup>Footnote 35, Smyke, *The First African Diplomat*, p. 232. England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, *Ancestry*. England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916-2007, *Ancestry*. By 1914, only two of the prominent merchants remained; Lionel Hart died in 1924 and Henry Solomon appeared to live beyond 1914. Although the Hart brothers lived until the 1920s, their connection to Sierra Leone was seemingly severed after the retirement of Lionel Hart.

<sup>279</sup>Obituary: The Passing Away of Mr. James Nathaniel Harris Of Sulima,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 April, 1934. However, the daughter of Philip Lemberg did not return to Sierra Leone and the descendants of Lemberg remain in Britain.

## The Second Generation: Sierra Leoneans of Jewish descent

Although some members of the English branches of these Jewish families continued to engage in the West African trade, it was some of the mixed-race African children of these Jewish merchants who remained active in the economic and political sphere of Sierra Leone.<sup>280</sup> The African-born children of Jewish merchants were often educated at schools in the Colony or abroad, and through their association with Freetown or Bonthe formed close friendships and intermarried with other Sierra Leoneans. However, although the children of Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone did not necessarily retain a distinctly Jewish identity or any aspects of the religion or culture of their fathers, there is evidence to suggest that some of these individuals or families of Jewish descent developed idiosyncratic tendencies by practicing endogamy, devoutly adhering to Catholicism, and by engaging in mercantilist pursuits.<sup>281</sup> The Harris and Solomon families were distinctly representative of these idiosyncratic tendencies through the engagement of male members of these families in trade, a devotion to Catholicism, and through intermarriage with other Sierra Leonean families of Jewish descent such as the Cole and Hamelberg families.

---

<sup>280</sup>'Shipping Intelligence,' *S.L.W.N.*, 9 February 1889. 'Post Office Notice: Unclaimed Paid Letters,' *S.L.W.N.*, 17 May, 1890. 'Post Office Notice: Unclaimed Paid Letters,' *S.L.W.N.*, 31 May, 1890. 'Death Of Bailiff Isaacs,' *S.L.W.N.*, 8 December 1894. 'Deaths For the Week,' *S.L.W.N.*, 31 July, 1897. 'Something Of The Gambia By A Gambia Abroad,' *S.L.G.*, 10 July, 1914. For example, it is possible that the Alfred Isaacs recorded in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* as receiving unclaimed paid letters could be the Alfred Isaacs who was a son of Nathaniel Isaacs. Although there were individuals with the Isaac or Isaacs surname in Sierra Leone such as W.G. Isaacs, a bailiff, (d. 7 December, 1894), Lucy Isaacs, Helina (Holina or Halina) Isaac of East Street, Freetown (d. April or May 1916 aged 30 years old), John Isaacs of Charles Street, Freetown, (d. 11 November, 1897), and Philip Isaacs of Westmoreland Street (d. 3 September, 1918), it is unclear whether these individuals were related to Nathaniel Isaacs.

<sup>281</sup>'Marriage H. Solomon-E. Cole,' *S.L.T.*, 21 September, 1895. 'Conversazione-Roman Catholic Pro-Cathedral,' *Sierra Leone Times*, 10 February 1894. This was not necessarily the norm among all the descendants of Jews in Sierra Leone as some individuals of Jewish descent did not necessarily establish mercantilist dynasties, practice Catholicism or intermarry with other individuals of Jewish descent. However, save for the descendants of Philip Lemberg, David Henry Davison, and perhaps Nathaniel Nathan, at least some of the descendants of Nathaniel Isaacs, John Myer Harris, Nathaniel Harris, Edward Emmanuel Lyons, Louis Solomon, and Franz Hamelberg in Sierra Leone reflected these idiosyncratic tendencies. Although members of the Cole, Harris, Lyons, Solomon, and Hamelberg families intermarried with other Sierra Leoneans, the marriages of Henry Clement Solomon and Henrietta Cole and Theodore Hamelberg and Julia Harris are instances of these families of Jewish descent intermarrying.

## Education and Integration

The children of the Jewish merchants who settled in Sierra Leone, were largely educated in Sierra Leone and were integrated into the emergent Creole societies in Freetown and Bonthe.<sup>282</sup> The process of integration into Freetown began at the educational level for many of the children of Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone. Although the children of Jewish merchants born to indigenous African women were perhaps integrated, to an extent, into the communities of their mothers, these children were sometimes educated in Europe or at colonial institutions in the Colony of Sierra Leone. The Harris brothers possibly educated their two male children, Joseph Harris and James Nathaniel Harris at the Church Missionary Society Grammar School.<sup>283</sup> James Nathaniel Harris, the son of John Myer Harris, developed lifelong friendships with other children in the emergent Creole community such as H.A. Maurice and E.A.C. Davies.<sup>284</sup> These educational opportunities enhanced and reemphasised the links between regions of the hinterland and the Colony proper.

However, although the Sierra Leoneans descended from Jewish antecedents, who represented the second generation of these Jewish families, settled abroad or integrated into the emerging Sierra Leonean community in Bonthe or Freetown, the part-Jewish offspring of indigenous African descent sometimes maintained ties to the indigenous communities of their mothers in the hinterland.<sup>285</sup> Thus,

---

<sup>282</sup>Smyke, *The First African Diplomat*, p. 175. 'Police Court: The Celebrated Arson Case. Regina vs. Alfred S. Cole. Before His Worship W. Clark Esq., Police Magistrate. Monday Feb. 10th.,' *S.L.T.*, 15 February, 1896. 'Supreme Court-March Sessions: The Celebrated Arson Case. Regina Versus Alfred S. Cole. Before His Honor Chief Justice Bruce Hindle. Thursday 12th,' *S.L.T.*, 28 March 1896. For example, Julia Harris was educated at the St. Joseph's Convent School in Freetown, Sierra Leone. However, it was stated in the obituary of Annie Harris Porter that she was mainly educated in Europe.

<sup>283</sup>Solomon, Henry, Student Number 933, 1878, 'Entrance Register of the Sierra Leone Grammar School, 1845-2014,' *Sierra Leone Grammar School Alumni Association North America*, URL: <http://www.regentonians-na.org/data/slgsstudents.php>. Smyke, *The First African Diplomat*, pp. 174-5. Joseph Harris, the son of Nathan Harris I, was perhaps a contemporary of Henry Clement Solomon, the son of Louis Solomon, who may have entered the Grammar School as student number 933 in 1878.

<sup>284</sup>Obituary: James Nathaniel Harris (Communicated), *S.L.D.M.*, 4 April, 1934.

<sup>285</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Marke, London, England, 13 October 2016. For example, Ms. Rosemarie Marke informed the author that her mother, Jeanne Rosemarie Marke, née Harris, (1919-1981), a granddaughter of John Myer Harris, spoke fluently in the Vai language.

the Harris family maintained kinship or business ties to the Gallinas and the Solomon family, possibly of indigenous African descent, maintained commercial or familial ties to the Sherbro.

Although their fathers were Jewish, the second-generation of the Harris, Hamelberg and Solomon families in Sierra Leone were often affiliated with the Catholic faith.<sup>286</sup> The mixed-race children of the Harris and Solomon families were active members of the Roman Catholic Church and were among the small number of prominent Catholic families in the Colony of Sierra Leone.<sup>287</sup> Thus, Hannah Hamelberg, née Lyons, Mary Harris Kirwan, Annie Harris Porter, and Julia Cecilia Harris were all practicing Catholics.<sup>288</sup> Henry Clement Solomon married Henrietta Elizabeth Augusta Cole, (1871/2-1944) at the Sacred Heart, Roman Catholic Pro-Cathedral in Freetown in 1895.<sup>289</sup> James Nathaniel Harris

---

<sup>286</sup>'Conversazione-Roman Catholic Pro-Cathedral,' *S.L.T.*, 10 February 1894.

<sup>287</sup>Tucker, Peter, *The Mission Boy From Shebar: An Autobiography*, (Authorhouse, 2011), pp. 11, 54-55. The basis for this adherence to Catholicism might have to do with the rigidity of Catholicism which the fathers of these children might have believed to be the best form of Christianity. This perspective is perhaps reflected in the statement on Catholicism expressed by John Myer Harris to Father Kayser. Furthermore, the outreach of Catholic missionaries and the Holy Ghost Fathers to the indigenous Sherbro communities resulted in a number of Catholic converts including members of prominent Sherbro families such as the Tuckers, Caulkers, and Cleveland families.

<sup>288</sup>'Conversazione-Roman Catholic Pro-Cathedral,' *S.L.T.*, 10 February 1894. Hannah Rose Hamelberg, née Lyons, Annie Porter, née Harris, and Mary Kirwan, née Harris, were prominent members of the Roman Catholic Church in Freetown, Sierra Leone. James Nathaniel Harris, who was also a Catholic, donated funds for a stained-glass window in St. Anthony Catholic Church in Freetown.

<sup>289</sup>'Household of Sylvia Lucas, Charwoman, 21 Regent Street' in The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, CO 267/111, '1831 Census of Population and Liberated Africans.' 'Notice: A French Lady,' *S.L.W.N.*, 22 May, 1886. 'Marriage H. Solomon-E. Cole,' *S.L.T.*, 21 September, 1895. 'The Mayor's Relief Fund,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 April 1900. 'Deaths For The Week,' *S.L.W.N.*, 6 August, 1904. 'Thanks For Sympathy,' *S.L.W.N.*, 20 August, 1904. 'City General Repairing Work-Shop,' *S.L.W.N.*, 11 March, 1905. 'In Memoriam,' *S.L.W.N.*, 3 August, 1907. 'Harbour News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 28 September, 1907. 'Deaths For The Week,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 September, 1912. 'Obituary: Mrs. Harriet [sic] Solomon,' *S.L.W.N.*, 23 December, 1944. 'The Passing of Mrs. H.A. Solomon,' *S.L.D.M.*, 23 December, 1944. 'Thanks For Sympathy,' *S.L.W.N.*, 20 January, 1945. Goerg, Odile, 'Etre Sierra Leonais: A Conakry Dans Les Annees 1920 Etude D'Un Groupe Et Aspects De La Demographie Urbaine,' in Marfaing (Ed.), Laurence, Reinwald (Ed.), Brigitte, *African Networks, Exchange and Spatial Dynamics*, (Germany: LIT Verlag Münster, 2001), p. 77. Goerg, Odile, 'Metiers de femme, metiers d'homme? Sierra Leonais et Sierra Leonaises a Conakry dans l'entre-deux-guerres,' in Nativel (Ed.), Didier, *Madagascar revisitée: en voyage avec Françoise Raison-Jourde*, (France: Karthala Editions, 2009), p. 558. Henrietta Cole, who was possibly born in Guinea, was a daughter of William Henry Cole and Elizabeth Cole (1837/8-5 August, 1904), of Rawdon Street, Freetown who was possibly the same 'Mrs. Elizabeth Cole' of Percival Street who provided an open house for a French teacher in 1886. Elizabeth Cole was probably the daughter of Nathaniel Isaacs, possibly from a relationship with Madeleine Dion of the Gambia or Hannah Hayes of Freetown or another liaison (possibly Mary Ann Lightbourne (Lightburn), née Skelton. Henrietta Cole had two siblings, Phillis Cole and N.J. Cole, who was possibly named Nathaniel Joseph Cole (incidentally a son of Hannah Crespin was named Joseph Nathaniel Crespin which suggests a kinship tie). N.J. Cole was the father of Adelaide Elizabeth Cole and Joseph Bonnie Cole (b. 1884 in Conakry, Guinea), an employee for a commercial firm, who in 1909 was married to Therese Josephine Cole (b. 1889), a Sierra Leonean seamstress, and had five children. The Cole family were staunchly Catholic, which was a characteristic of some Sierra Leonean families of

was also a practicing Catholic and he donated funds for the beautification of a stain glass window in St. Anthony's Church, Freetown, Sierra Leone.<sup>290</sup>

Furthermore, there were also interlocking familial relationships between some of the children of these Jewish merchants that reflected the interlocking ties between the families of the Jewish patriarchs and the families of the African matriarchs. In 1908, Julia Cecilia Harris, the daughter of Nathaniel Harris I, married Theodore Joseph Hamelberg, a telegraphist for Cable & Wireless and the eldest son of Rudolph Hamelberg and Hannah Hamelberg née Lyons.<sup>291</sup> Following the Influenza Epidemic of 1918, Henry Solomon lamented the death of his cousin, Violet Hart, a possible daughter of one of the Hart brothers.<sup>292</sup> Reflecting on the interlocking ties of these families, several years later, a descendant of a prominent Jewish merchant in Sierra Leone would remark that the "Harris, Hart, Hamelberg, and Solomon families were all related."<sup>293</sup>

However, despite the kinship ties or intermarriage between these families, some of the children of these Jewish merchants also married other Europeans or into prominent Sierra Leonean families who were unrelated or unconnected to their paternal or maternal families.<sup>294</sup> This process of intermarriage

---

Jewish descent, and had multi-generational ties with Guinea and in particular, Conakry, Guinea. Thus, Henrietta Cole was probably a daughter of William Henry Cole and his wife, who was a daughter of Nathaniel Isaacs according to testimony given by a Sierra Leonean. This William Henry Cole was probably a child of Thomas Cole or William Williams Cole (or possibly their brothers, George Cole and Charles Cole), two brothers who were both English merchants and colonial officials in Sierra Leone. William Henry Cole was a brother or cousin of Susannah 'Susan' Cole (1823-1875) who was recorded in the 1831 Census of Sierra Leone as a daughter of Sylvia Lucas, a charwoman of Nova Scotian descent living at 21 Regent Street, Freetown, Sierra Leone and William Williams Cole (1796-1864). Susan Cole married John Bucknor Elliott (1822-1890), a son of Reverend Anthony Elliott and Mary Elliott, and a grandson of Anthony Elliott a Nova Scotian Settler. Sylvia Lucas was possibly the daughter of Scipio Lucas Senior or Scipio Lucas Junior, who were Nova Scotian Settlers.

<sup>290</sup>Interview with Rosemarie Marke, London, England, 13 October, 2016.

<sup>291</sup>'The Descendancy Chart For Franz Heinrich Rudolph Gustav Hamelberg,' 14 April 2001, (The Private Collection of the Author), p. 1.

<sup>292</sup>'Some Sierra Leoneans [sic] Victims Of Influenza Epidemic,' *Colonial And Provincial Reporter*, 14 September, 1918. 'Death Roll Of Victims Of The Influenza Epidemic From September 4 1918,' *Colonial And Provincial Reporter*, 21 September, 1918. According to the Sierra Leone newspapers, Violet Hart was born in 1897 or 1898, the years in which the Hart brothers were based in England.

<sup>293</sup>Interview with Rosemarie Marke, London, England, 13 October, 2016. Mrs. Jeanne Marke would often state that the Harris, Hart, Hamelberg, and Solomon families were all related.

<sup>294</sup>Spector, David, 'Brighton Jewry reconsidered,' *Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions Of The Jewish Historical Society of England*, Volume XXX, 1987-1988, pp. 110-111. Mary Harris married Frank Kirwan, (d. 9 February,

further integrated some members of these families of Jewish descent, and, in particular the Harris and Solomon families, into Freetown society. As early as the mid-nineteenth century, Elizabeth Cole, a daughter of Nathaniel Isaacs had married William Henry Cole, a merchant from Water Street, Freetown.<sup>295</sup> On 13 April, 1890, at the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Freetown, Mary Harris, possibly the eldest child of John Myer Harris, married Frank Kirwan, a European employee of the Sierra Leone Coaling Station.<sup>296</sup> Annie Harris, a younger daughter of John Myer Harris, married Alexander Libert Porter,<sup>297</sup> a businessman and a scion of a distinguished Sierra Leonean family of Caribbean and Jamaican

---

1891), a European employee of the Sierra Leone Coaling Company and the couple had at least one son who died on 17 September, 1894. Frank Kirwan was an employee of Messrs Millington & Co. before his dismissal after which he brought a claim against his employers for £600. Kirwan retained the services of James Abram M'Carthy and Messrs Millington & Co. retained the services of Abram Spencer Hebron.

<sup>295</sup>The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, CO 267/263, 'Governor Stephen John Hill to Edward George Earle Lytton, 19 February, 1859, enclosing the Memorial of the Nova Scotians and their descendants, 1 January, 1859'. The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, CO 267/268, William Hazeley Statement, 22 December 1860. Jolles, *Samuel Isaac, Saul Isaac And Nathaniel Isaacs*, (London, Jolles Publications, 1998), pp. 252, 286. Nathaniel Isaacs also had another daughter, probably Elizabeth Isaacs, who was possibly born in the Gambia, Old Calabar, Sierra Leone or Matakong who married William Henry Cole, who was possibly the same individual as William H. Cole who signed the petition of Nova Scotian descendants in 1859 and was the individual recorded as William Henry Cole, a merchant residing at Water Street, who indentured Choo, a fourteen-year old 'Alien Child' of Sherbro descent in 1859. As outlined in Footnote 284 above, William Henry Cole was most probably a mixed-race merchant born to one of the Cole brothers, English merchants and colonial officials in Freetown, Sierra Leone and a Nova Scotian or Maroon mother, was a son-in-law of Nathaniel Isaacs according to the written statement of William Hazeley in 1860. Elizabeth Cole, who was recorded in the will of Nathaniel Isaacs, might have been the daughter of Nathaniel Isaacs who was married to William Henry Cole. This Elizabeth Cole who was probably married to William Henry Cole, was almost certainly the same individual who was the mother of Henrietta Augusta Elizabeth Cole who married H.C. Solomon Jr. in 1895. The author's theory is further substantiated by the Cole, Crespin, and Isaacs family trees featured on the G n alogie Publique section of the S n galm tis website which includes Hannah Isaacs, the Gambian-born daughter of Nathaniel Isaacs and an 'Elizabeth Isaacs' who married a 'Thomas Cole' who was the 'Secr taire g n ral de Sierra L one vers 1840' or the Colonial Secretary of Sierra Leone around 1840. Although the family tree erroneously refers to Thomas Cole (1799-1870), the British Colonial Secretary as the spouse of Elizabeth Isaacs, William Henry Cole was possibly a son or nephew of Thomas Cole and was almost certainly named for Honourable William Williams Cole, (1796-1864) a brother of Thomas Cole. Emily Emma Isaacs, the daughter of Mrs. Mary Ann Lightburn, n e Skelton was recorded as unmarried in the will of Nathaniel Harris dating from 1868 and therefore is unlikely to have been the daughter stated to have been married to William Henry Cole in 1860. It is also possible that the wife of William Henry Cole was born to an earlier relationship of Nathaniel Isaacs in Freetown (possibly born to Hannah Hayes although this is unlikely from as early as 1834) or possibly born to Madeleine Dion of the Gambia or perhaps another woman in the Gambia.

<sup>296</sup>Marriage,' *S.L.W.N.*, 19 April, 1890. The marriage ceremony was conducted by Father Stoll.

<sup>297</sup>'Mr. Alexander Porter,' *S.L.T.*, 30 September, 1893. 'General News: Mr Porter,' *S.L.W.N.*, 19 December, 1896. 'Notice to Creditors: In The Supreme Court of The Colony Of Sierra Leone (Probate Division) In the Estate of Alexander Libert Porter (deceased),' *S.L.W.N.*, 11 May, 1912. Annie Harris married Alexander Libert Porter, (d. 15 May, 1905), a son of Arthur Thomas Porter I, (1834-1908), a businessman, Consular Agent to the Belgian Congo, and the patriarch of a distinguished Sierra Leonean family. Arthur Thomas Porter I was a maternal grandson of Major-General Henry Dunbar Tolly (Tolley), (b. 1783/4-25 December, 1837), a son of Anna Maria Tolly, who later

Maroon descent, on 22 July, 1894.<sup>298</sup> Thus, beyond the interlocking ties among the Jewish merchants and their descendants in Sierra Leone, the second generation also married into notable Sierra Leonean and Liberian families which further integrated them into Sierra Leonean or Liberian societies.

---

married William Johnson, and Colonel or Major William Tolly, (1715-1784), a distinguished soldier and engineer in the British East India Company who oversaw and commissioned the building of Tolly's Nullah in Calcutta and for whom Tollygunge is also named. Arthur Porter was also the half-brother of William Gabbidon, the Maroon merchant who disputed Nathaniel Isaacs's ownership of Matakong.

<sup>298</sup>'Wedding On The Tapis,' *S.L.T.*, 21 July, 1894. 'Holy Week In The Catholic Church,' *S.L.W.N.*, 23 April, 1898. 'Entertainment Given By The Members Of The Roman Catholic Auxilliary Association On The Vigil Of The Feast Of St. James The Apostle,' *S.L.T.*, 29 July, 1899. There were two wedding ceremonies for the marriage of Annie Harris and Alexander Libert Porter; one wedding ceremony was held at the Roman Catholic Pro-Cathedral at Westmoreland Street and another wedding ceremony was held at St. George's Cathedral in George Street. It is unclear whether Alexander Porter was a Catholic as he performed on the harmonium at the Catholic Church during the Holy Week in 1898. The possible participation of Porter in other Catholic events suggests that he might have been raised as a Catholic or converted to Catholicism. The Porter family had at least three daughters including Millicent Porter, (1900-1979), who was the second wife of Sir Ernest Samuel Beoku-Betts and Ina Porter who married Franz Edouard Risch, (born c. 1892/3) of Keta, Gold Coast (now Ghana).



**Fig. 9. Theodore Joseph Hamelberg (seated) and Julia Cecilia Hamelberg, née Harris (seated)<sup>299</sup>**

---

<sup>299</sup>Photograph provided by William 'Bill' Leitner and Winona Leitner, née Hamelberg, (The Private Collection of the Author). Theodora Hamelberg, (b. 1900), the eldest child of Theodore Joseph Hamelberg, who married a Jones (possibly a Bernard-Jones) is possibly the young lady standing on the left next to Julia Hamelberg. Hannah Elizabeth Hamelberg, (1909-1998), a daughter of Theodore Joseph Hamelberg, who married a Kilpatrick (possibly Albert John Kilpatrick) who might have originated from Northern Ireland, could be the young girl standing on the right next to Theodore Joseph Hamelberg.



In contrast to the second generation of prominent Creole mercantilist families who often qualified into the legal or medical professions, at least two families of Jewish descent in Sierra Leone formed multi-generational mercantilist families: the Harris and Solomon families.<sup>300</sup> Although the continued commercial success of the Harris and Solomon families was not necessarily representative of all the descendants of Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone, these families intermarried or had kinship ties with other families of Jewish descent such as the Cole and Hamelberg families. Furthermore, the commercial activities of the Harris and Solomon families and their possible business or kinship ties to the Sherbro and Gallinas ensured that they developed or maintained ties to the hinterland of Sierra Leone. The second generation of the Harris and Solomon families of Jewish descent produced at least two outstanding Sierra Leonean merchants during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Harris family was represented in Sierra Leone by James Nathaniel Harris, (1879-1934), the African son of John Myer Harris and the Solomon family was represented by Henry Clement Solomon, the African son of Louis Solomon.<sup>301</sup>

The Harris and Solomon families produced two slightly contrasting figures in James Nathaniel Harris and Henry Clement Solomon. James Nathaniel Harris, fondly known as 'Nathaniel' or 'Nat', was a well-known figure in Freetown society, although he remained in Sulima for most of his life and did not delve as deeply into the social and political affairs of the Colony. Harris's orientation towards his commercial enterprises in hinterland was slightly in contrast to H.C. Solomon, who engaged in mercantilist pursuits in the hinterland and maintained ties to his possible maternal family, but became fully immersed in the cultural, economic and political aspects of Freetown society. Thus, the lives of H.C.

---

<sup>300</sup>Lewis, Roy, *Sierra Leone: A Modern Portrait*, (United Kingdom: H.M. Stationery Office, 1954), pp. 34-36. Wyse, Akintola, *H.C. Bankole-Bright and Politics in Colonial Sierra Leone, 1919-1958*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 5. Although there were prominent Creole mercantilist families who produced second or even third generation merchants, some of these mercantilist families often produced second-generation lawyers and doctors as opposed to merchants.

<sup>301</sup>'In Memoriam,' *S.L.W.N.*, 22 August, 1908.

Solomon and James Nathaniel Harris reflect the unique cultural and socio-economic position of some Sierra Leoneans of Jewish descent and their ties to Freetown, the hinterland of Sierra Leone, and Europe.

### **Henry Clement Solomon**

The gradual displacement of the Sierra Leone Creole merchants and traders as the principal middlemen in the hinterland of Sierra Leone began in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Hut Tax War resulted in the massacre of hundreds of Sierra Leoneans, many of whom were merchants and traders, and the construction of the railway line allowed for a wider range of merchants to access the hinterland and challenge the adventurous Creole traders who had penetrated the hinterland.<sup>302</sup> Furthermore, economic challenges by the Syrian or Lebanese community, and the establishment of large-scale European trading enterprises signalled the end of commercial dominance by Sierra Leonean middlemen.<sup>303</sup> However, although Sierra Leoneans were increasingly displaced from trade by Lebanese or European commercial rivals, some middle or upper-class Creoles continued to trade in the hinterland or locally in the Colony. Henry Clement Solomon, a merchant of African and Jewish descent, was among the Sierra Leoneans who earned a livelihood by engaging in trade. The participation of Solomon in trade was representative of the second generation of merchants of Jewish descent in Sierra Leone.

Henry Clement Solomon was possibly born in the Sherbro region or Freetown, Sierra Leone in 1870 or 1871 to Louis Solomon and a mother of African origin, possibly of Bullom or Creole descent.<sup>304</sup> Henry Solomon might have been educated initially in the Sherbro and although he would have been

---

<sup>302</sup>Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, pp. 613-4.

<sup>303</sup>Ibid. pp. 613-4. For example, in the twentieth century, the United Africa Company Paterson Zochonis, G.B. Ollivant, Société Commerciale de l'Ouest Africain, and Compagnie Française de l'Afrique Occidentale all had operations in Sierra Leone or in the Republic of Guinea.

<sup>304</sup>'General News: Death of Louis Solomon, Esq.,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 November, 1908. This estimated date of birth is gleaned from some records pertaining to Solomon's social activities in the colony.

relatively young, Solomon was possibly the 'Henry Solomon' recorded as entering the Church Missionary Society Grammar School in 1878. The Church Missionary Society Grammar School, based in Freetown, Sierra Leone, had been founded in 1845 by the Church Missionary Society to educate the Colony-born children of Liberated Africans and transatlantic immigrants. Furthermore, children from the hinterland of Sierra Leone, other areas of British West Africa, Equatorial Guinea, and Liberia were also educated at the Grammar School and, alongside the Wesleyan Boys' High School, the institution provided an atmosphere for the social interactions of the 'British West African Elite' and wider 'Educated African' social group in West Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>305</sup> If Henry Solomon attended the Grammar School, it was at this institution that he became familiarised with students from the Colony and possibly formed long-lasting friendships that would serve his commercial and political interests.

Following the completion of his secondary education, Henry Clement Solomon engaged in commerce as an agent of Lionel Hart & Co, the partnership formed by his father, Louis Solomon and Lionel Hart.<sup>306</sup> He worked alongside other employees of Lionel Hart & Co such as Maximilian 'Max'

---

<sup>305</sup>For example, see Browne-Davies, Nigel, 'The Brothers Easmon: The emergence of a Nova Scotian medical dynasty in Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast,' *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, (2014), Volume 16, pp. 45-109. The term 'Educated African' has been hyphenated in this article to refer to a specific social group that developed British or European mores and were largely European oriented and educated. However, it is important to note that Africans had been educated for generations pre-dating European trade and settlement on the continent. 'British West African Elite' is a term which has been used generically but has been coined for wider scholarship by this author to specifically refer to the various fluid 'Educated African' communities comprised of the Creole and Aku communities in Sierra Leone and the Gambia, the Saro and Amaro communities in Nigeria, and the Ghanaian or Gold Coast elite of Cape Coast, Elmina, and Accra comprised of Africans, mixed-race families, and transatlantic immigrants (including the Tabon or Tabom people from Brazil) and other members of the British West African elite, in addition to other Africans who were acknowledged as members of this elite group across the four British West African territories. The interconnectedness and kinship ties of this social group was enhanced through marriage and educational links reflected in the attendance of members of this group at institutions such as the Church Missionary Society Grammar School and the Annie Walsh Memorial School. Furthermore, some members of the wider 'Educated African' social group from outside British West Africa, attended institutions such as the Grammar School and the Wesleyan Boys' High School. The ties between the British West African Elite and the wider 'Educated African' were reinforced by fraternal activities, trade, and intermarriage that linked the British West African Elite and the wider 'Educated African' communities including, but not necessarily limited to, the Americo-Liberian community, Fernandino community of Fernando Po in Equatorial Guinea, and the Creoles or M tis of Senegal.

<sup>306</sup>Lionel Hart & Co,' *S.L.W.N.*, 10 April, 1897. 'Annuals For 1898,' *S.L.W.N.*, 18 December, 1897. 'Calendars For 1915,' *S.L.W.N.*, 16 January, 1915. As an agent in Sierra Leone, Solomon distributed the annual calendars produced

Eugene Dawson, formerly Hamelberg,<sup>307</sup> and H.C. Solomon continued to travel to the Sherbro, Northern Rivers, and Liverpool for business and possibly to visit relations.<sup>308</sup> In his capacity as agent of Lionel Hart & Co. and possibly on a personal basis, Henry Solomon also travelled to Britain on several occasions.<sup>309</sup>

Following the death of Louis Solomon and the liquidation of Lionel Hart & Co, Henry Solomon went into business on his own account and moved his business premises from Oxford Street to Westmoreland Street.<sup>310</sup> Solomon was also the proprietor of the Royal Hotel at Wilberforce Street, formerly owned and built by Arthur Thomas Porter I, the father-in-law of Mrs. Annie Harris Porter.<sup>311</sup> Thus, by the early twentieth century, Solomon was a propertied businessman and perhaps one of the leading merchants in Sierra Leone.<sup>312</sup>

Although H.C. Solomon maintained business or personal ties with the Sherbro, he was a leading citizen in Freetown society.<sup>313</sup> Solomon and his family frequently travelled, whether for business or for

---

by Lionel Hart & Co. Solomon was also based at the farm residence of Lionel Hart & Co at Kennedy Street, Freetown.

<sup>307</sup>'Public Notice: Change of Name,' *S.L.W.N.*, 28 April, 1906. The precise relationship of Maximillian Eugene Dawson to the Hamelberg family is unclear. His father was John Eugene Dawson (1859/1860-20 February, 1917), a probable Maroon descendant and a son of John Eugene Dawson, who was probably a son of John Dawson, (1814-1845), the English timber merchant. John Eugene Dawson was a highly respected Assistant Collector of Customs and harbour master who was selected as a Justice of Peace of Freetown and was an elected Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and the Royal Colonial Institute. Since Maximillian Hamelberg was born when John Eugene Dawson was about eighteen years old, he was probably raised as a Hamelberg due to possibly being born outside marriage.

<sup>308</sup>'Mr. H. Solomon,' *S.L.W.N.*, 14 December, 1895. 'Queen Victoria Memorial Fund: Concert To Augment Fund,' *S.L.W.N.*, 8 February, 1902. L.W.C., 'Harbour News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 5 October, 1907. 'Harbour News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 8 May, 1909. 'Shipping Intelligence,' *S.L.G.*, 30 January, 1914. 'Shipping Intelligence: Sailings: Departures,' *C.P.R.*, 24 January, 1914. UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960, TNA UK Series BT26, *Ancestry*. UK, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960, TNA UK Series, BT27, *Ancestry*.

<sup>309</sup>'Harbour News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 14 January, 1905. 'General News: Passengers By The Falaba,' *S.L.W.N.*, 28 March, 1908.

<sup>310</sup>'Estate Of Louis Solomon, (deceased),' *S.L.W.N.*, 25 December, 1909. 'Estate Of Louis Solomon, (deceased),' *S.L.W.N.*, 1 January, 1910. 'Notice of Removal: H.C. Solomon,' *S.L.W.N.*, 26 February, 1910. 'RE Liquidators Of Messrs. Lionel Hart & Co., And Henry Clement Solomon,' *S.L.W.N.*, 26 August, 1911.

<sup>311</sup>'General News: Women's Progressive Union, Freetown,' *S.L.W.N.*, 1 July, 1916. 'Colonel H. Graham's Return To The Colony,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 September, 1918. The Royal Hotel was informally called "Porter's Hotel" and was referred to as "Solomon's Hotel" after H.C. Solomon became the proprietor of the hotel.

<sup>312</sup>'Sale Of Valuable Lands At Cline Town,' *C.P.R.*, 26 October, 1918.

<sup>313</sup>'A Picnic In Honour Of The Hon. J.H. Thomas, J.P., Mayor of Freetown,' *S.L.W.N.*, 23 May, 1913. 'The Wesleyan High School,' *S.L.T.*, 6 February, 1897. 'Marriage of Dr. Horace Dove,' *S.L.W.N.*, 1 November, 1919. H.C. Solomon and his wife were attendants at the wedding of their niece, Esterre Isabella 'Bijou' Mann, who married Dr Horace Dove. Isabella Mann was a daughter of Mrs Mann, née Solomon, a sister or cousin of H.C. Solomon, who served as

pleasure, to England and other parts of West Africa.<sup>314</sup> Solomon was a frequent attendee at the various picnics, soirees, and high class weddings of the Freetown elite and he hosted several events at the Royal Hotel, or at his estate, which was styled "Clementville."<sup>315</sup> Solomon was also active in sporting activities such as the local cricket games<sup>316</sup> and was politically active as a member of the local committee of the National Congress of British West Africa.<sup>317</sup> He attended several social events such as garden parties, weddings and hosted Governor Leslie Probyn at Sparta House in Wilberforce Street.<sup>318</sup> Solomon served in positions of honour and was the Honorary Secretary for the Sierra Leone Chamber of Commerce.<sup>319</sup> However, Solomon was not unafraid to engage in litigation against other leading Creoles, a frequent occurrence in the litigious society of Freetown.<sup>320</sup>

The status of Henry Solomon as a member of the Creole elite was not only reflected in his social activities but also in his appointments to service in the Colony. He was appointed as a Justice of Peace of the Colony of Sierra Leone in 1901 at the relatively early age of thirty years old.<sup>321</sup> H.C. Solomon was also

---

the Governess of the Wesleyan Girls High School in Freetown until her marriage to Mr. Mann of the Coaling Company. Thus, Mrs. Mann, the mother of Isabella Mann, was a daughter of Louis Solomon or his elder brother, Henry Solomon. Isabella Mann was possibly a paternal descendant of the Mann family of Wilberforce (or another Mann family from the colony who possibly settled in Bonthe) or possibly was a granddaughter of Gustav Mann, a German botanist who travelled with Dr. William Baike to the Niger and who inspected timber for the Admiralty in the Sherbro. H.C. Solomon led his niece to the altar and the newspapers reported that "popularity of the two families attracted a great crowd."

<sup>314</sup>'Harbour News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 26 February, 1910. Mrs. H.C. Solomon possibly travelled to Dakar, Senegal and returned to Freetown from Senegal on 24 February, 1910. Solomon was possibly visiting a branch of the prominent Crespin family, her maternal relatives in Senegal who were partly descended from Nathaniel Isaacs through his daughter, Hannah Isaacs.

<sup>315</sup>'Musical Evening At "Egga House",' *S.L.W.N.*, 9 June, 1906. 'The Maze On Whit Monday,' *S.L.W.N.*, 1 June, 1918.

<sup>316</sup>'Legal vs. Police,' *S.L.W.N.*, 9 March, 1918. 'East End Games Club versus Hill Station Team,' *S.L.W.N.*, 9 March, 1918.

<sup>317</sup>'British West African Conference: Statement of Local Committee,' *S.L.W.N.*, 15 February, 1919.

<sup>318</sup>'Banquet In Honour Of His Excellency Leslie Probyn, C.M.G., Governor Of Sierra Leone,' *S.L.W.N.*, 5 January, 1907

<sup>319</sup>'Sierra Leone Chamber Of Commerce,' *S.L.W.N.*, 21 August, 1915

<sup>320</sup>'In The Supreme Court Of The Colony Of Sierra Leone,' *C.P.R.*, 16 August, 1913. 'Law Intelligence,' *C.P.R.*, 11 October, 1913. 'Law Report,' *C.P.R.*, 27 December, 1913. For example, H.C. Solomon was involved in an action against Canon Wilson and an unsuccessful action against Solomon was brought by Daniel William Carrol, a son of Daniel Carrol, the Master of the Supreme Court.

<sup>321</sup>'General News: New J.Ps,' *S.L.W.N.*, 13 July, 1901.

appointed to the Local Municipal Board as a Government Nominee<sup>322</sup> and he replaced Philip Lemberg who resigned from the Municipal Council.<sup>323</sup> In November 1900, Solomon was also elected to serve as a member of the Freetown City Council representing the Central Ward of Freetown and he was re-elected for several terms as a 'City Father'.<sup>324</sup> The political appointments of Henry Solomon firmly established him as a member of the Freetown elite and his social and personal affairs reflected his status in the Colony.

In his personal affairs, Solomon found solace in his marriage to Henrietta 'Etta' Elizabeth Augusta Cole, who was possibly of Nova Scotian descent and a maternal granddaughter of Nathaniel Isaacs. Solomon married Henrietta Cole on 18 September, 1895 at the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Pro-Cathedral at Westmoreland Street, Freetown.<sup>325</sup> The marriage between two individuals of a Catholic background and mixed African and Jewish descent perhaps reflects the importance of class and family

---

<sup>322</sup>Mr. H.C. Solomon, 'S.L.W.N.', 20 July, 1912.

<sup>323</sup>Mr. H.C. Solomon, 'S.L.G.', 19 July, 1912.

<sup>324</sup>'City Council Elections,' S.L.W.N., 3 November, 1900.

<sup>325</sup>'Marriage Of Mr. O.J. Marie Robinson To Miss May Rosa Metzger (Communicated),' S.L.W.N., 14 June, 1890. 'Marriage Of Mons. George Joseph Wetterwald And Miss Ida Rosa Linna Steinwehr,' S.L.W.N., 19 March 1892. 'Conversazione-Roman Catholic Pro-Cathedral,' S.L.T., 10 February, 1894. 'Marriage H. Solomon-E. Cole,' S.L.T., 21 September, 1895. E.W.C., 'The Harbour News,' S.L.W.N., 22 December, 1906. 'In Memoriam, S.L.W.N., 3 August, 1907. Henrietta Cole was a bridesmaid at the wedding of O.J. Marie Robinson and May Rosa Metzger at the Roman Catholic Pro Cathedral in Freetown, Sierra Leone on 4 June, 1890. Mesdames Elizabeth Cole, possibly the mother of Henrietta Cole, and Mesdames Hannah Hamelberg were also in attendance at the wedding. Henrietta Cole also attended the wedding of George Joseph Wetterwald and Ida Rosa Steinwehr, a sister of Fanny Steinwehr, Anna Henrietta Steinwehr, who married Carl Wulff, a descendant of Wulff Joseph Wulff, a Danish Jewish colonial official in Accra, Gold Coast, and Hermann Steinwehr, who was an employee of Messrs. Broadhurst Sons & Co near the Dubrica River. Ida Rosa Steinwehr (Stonewehr) and her siblings were the children of Seigmund Aaron Steinwehr, a Hanoverian merchant of Sherbro and Lagos, who was in business with Philip Lemberg. Catholic families in the Colony, and particularly those families of Jewish descent, were seemingly close-knit and Mesdames Elizabeth Cole, Hannah Hamelberg, Mary Kirwan, and Misses Annie Harris, and Henrietta Cole participated in the Conversazione at the Roman Catholic Pro-Cathedral at the Wilberforce Memorial Hall on 6 February, 1894. If Elizabeth Cole was the daughter of Nathaniel Isaacs then she was a first cousin once removed of Hannah Hamelberg, née Lyons. Furthermore, if Elizabeth Cole was a daughter of Nathaniel Isaacs then Henry Clement Solomon and Henrietta Cole were distantly related since Miriam Isaac, the grandmother of H.C. Solomon, was a first cousin of Nathaniel Isaacs, the possible grandfather of Henrietta Cole. However, the marriage of Solomon and Cole united two families, both possibly of Jewish descent and tied H.C. Solomon even further within the Freetown elite as William Henry Cole, the possible father of Henrietta Cole was of Nova Scotian descent and was related to some of the most distinguished of Freetown's old elite such as the Bucknor Elliott family. The name 'Elizabeth' was a family name given to female children within the Cole family and Elizabeth Cole, Henrietta Solomon, and Adelaide Elizabeth Cole were all named Elizabeth, possibly after the mother or sister of Nathaniel Isaacs.

background in Freetown marriage arrangements in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Solomon family had several children although it is possible that only Henry 'Harry' Clement Solomon Jr. survived to adulthood.<sup>326</sup> Furthermore, in the tradition of a number of Sierra Leonean families and perhaps reflective of the kinship ties of the Solomon family to the hinterland, Henry Clement Solomon cared for wards from the British Sherbro or Protectorate including Lucretia Caulker who married Alfred Charles Williams on 20 June, 1907.<sup>327</sup>

After a lengthy career in commerce and politics, Henry Clement Solomon retired from his commercial activities and largely from public life by the 1940s. However, although Solomon was less active from the 1920s onwards, he remained attached to Freetown, and it was as a concerned citizen that he wrote to the editor of the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* on the Assessors Ordinance in 1926.<sup>328</sup> Henry Solomon resided at Baker Farm, Freetown Road, Wilberforce Village during his retirement.<sup>329</sup> He suffered a great personal loss following the death of his wife, Etta Solomon, on 22 December, 1944.<sup>330</sup> The relative longevity of Solomon allowed him to witness the participation of the third generation of the Solomon family in business. Therefore, after Henry Solomon died in the middle to late twentieth century, his son, Harry Solomon, was among the third generation of Sierra Leonean businessmen of Jewish descent who continued the family tradition of participation in commerce.

---

<sup>326</sup>General News: Deaths For The Week,' *S.L.W.N.*, 23 June, 1900. Henry Clement Solomon was also probably the father of Louis Solomon of Wilberforce Street, Freetown who died as an infant aged fifteen months old. According to the 1911 Census of England, Etta Cole had at least another child who died before reaching adulthood.

<sup>327</sup>Marriage: Williams-Caulker,' *S.L.W.N.*, 22 June, 1907. Alfred Charles William and Lucretia Caulker might be the ancestors of the Williams family that Akintola Wyse stated was of partial "Sherbro blood."

<sup>328</sup>Solomon, H.C., 'The Assessors Ordinance: To the Editor of the Weekly News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 26 June, 1926.

<sup>329</sup>Thanks For Sympathy,' *S.L.W.N.*, 20 January, 1945.

<sup>330</sup>Thanks For Sympathy,' *S.L.W.N.*, 20 January, 1945. UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960, TNA UK Series BT26, *Ancestry*. UK, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960, TNA UK Series, BT27, *Ancestry*. Although the obituary of Henrietta Solomon in the *Sierra Leone Daily Mail* stated that Solomon was survived only by a son in the Lower Guinea Coast (presumably Harry Solomon Jr.), Henrietta Solomon was recorded as traveling with an infant to Conakry, Guinea on 12 March 1914. Henrietta Solomon was a grandmother at the time of her death, suggesting that Harry Solomon had children at the time of her death (possibly the Solomon family who continued to live at Wilberforce Village and members of the Solomon family who presently reside in California. including a retired accountant, are the descendants of Harry Solomon).

The life of Henry Clement Solomon, was reflective of the social and political sphere to which some elite Creoles belonged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, Solomon, whose mother might have been an indigenous woman, also reflected some of the unique tendencies that Sierra Leonean families of Jewish descent displayed: an adherence to Catholicism, intermarriage or strong kinship ties with other Sierra Leonean families of Jewish descent, and a penchant for engaging in mercantilist pursuits. Thus, as a prominent merchant active in Freetown society, Solomon did not merely exhibit the tendencies of his fellow Creoles but also reflected the cultural values that some of the Sierra Leonean descendants of Jewish merchants exhibited in their navigation between cultures in the Northern Rivers, the hinterland and Colony of Sierra Leone and in Europe.

#### **James Nathaniel Harris: The 'Monarch'**

The life of James Nathaniel Harris is also reflective of a Sierra Leonean merchant who established or managed a successful African company despite the changing dynamics of trade in Sierra Leone and its hinterland.<sup>331</sup> Although James Nathaniel Harris was possibly the last male member of the Harris family to engage in large-scale commercial pursuits, his life exemplifies the success of a few members of the second generation of Sierra Leoneans of Jewish descent in replicating or emulating the commercial successes of their fathers in trade.

James Nathaniel Harris was born on 15 July, 1879 at Sulima, to John Myer Harris and Jane Tucker, a daughter of Chief Thomas Tucker of Gbap and a member of the Anglo-Sherbro Tucker family.<sup>332</sup> Harris, fondly known as 'Nat', was brought up by his elder sister, Mary Kirwan, at Sulima before attending the Roman Catholic Mission School in Freetown, Sierra Leone. In 1891, Harris was

---

<sup>331</sup>Obituary: The Passing Away of Mr. James Nathaniel Harris Of Sulima,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 April, 1934. In particular, the changing dynamics reflected in the importance of large-scale European firms and Lebanese merchants to trade in these regions.

<sup>332</sup>Obituary: The Passing Away of Mr. James Nathaniel Harris Of Sulima,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 April, 1934.



subsequently enrolled at the Church Missionary Society Grammar School in Freetown, Sierra Leone which was then under the tutelage of Principal Canon Obadiah Moore.

After completing his education at the Grammar School, Harris was employed by the Sierra Leone Coaling Company before being engaged as an Agent-in-Charge by the firm of H.A. Davies & Co. at Mopalma.<sup>333</sup> Following the Hut Tax War in 1898, Harris resigned from H.A. Davies & Co. and joined Ryff Roth & Co. which was later known as S.C.O.A. at Bonthe.<sup>334</sup> Harris demonstrated the commercial acumen that would characterise his business enterprises and he impressed the agent for Ryff Roth & Co. at Bonthe who placed Harris in charge at Titibue and later at Mopalma and Yoni. James Nathaniel Harris also found solace in his personal affairs and in May 1905, he married Rose Marie Roberts, a member of the Roberts family of Liberia and a daughter of Madam Marigba.<sup>335</sup> Thus, Harris and his wife maintained

---

<sup>333</sup>Ibid. H.A. Davies might have been the European who was the father of Mary Davies, the wife of Louis Cosmos Hamelberg, a son of Franz H.G.R. Hamelberg and Hannah Rose Hamelberg, née Lyons.

<sup>334</sup>'Marriage,' *S.L.W.N.*, 9 March, 1907. 'Marriage Of Miss A Smythe,' *S.L.W.N.*, 24 March, 1928. 'Smythe-Baxter,' *S.L.W.N.*, 12 October, 1929. 'The Late Mrs. Mary Smyth,' *S.L.D.G.*, 14 January, 1948. 'Deaths For The Week,' *S.L.W.N.*, 24 January, 1948. Blue Books for the Colony of Sierra Leone, 1824-1943, *British Online Archives*. UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960, TNA UK Series BT26, *Ancestry*. UK, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960, TNA UK Series, BT27, *Ancestry*. 'Smythe-Macaulay, Donald Charles Oguntola, Oil Company Executive,' *Prabook*, URL: <http://prabook.com/web/person-view.html?profileId=314871>. Hans Ryff and Wilhelm Roth established Ryff Roth & Co which was later absorbed into the S.C.O.A. Hans Ryff and his brother, Fritz Ryff, were Swiss merchants (possibly of Swiss-German descent) who engaged in commerce in West Africa. Herr Ryth, possibly Hans Ryff, was the father of Mrs Sarah Leigh, who was married to Evelyn Leslie Foy Leigh, a son of Thomas Hamilton Leigh, (1848-1906), and was the uncle of Franklin A. Peyton Ryff and Mary Caroline Smythe, née Ryff (1882/3-1948), who were possibly the children of Fritz Ryff, a brother of Hans Ryff. On 9 February, 1907 at the Roman Catholic Church in Bonthe, Mary Caroline Ryff married John Henry Maitland Smythe, an employee of the Post Office and a son of Selina Power (possibly née Parkes or Maitland) and a nephew of James Christopher Ernest Parkes of Native Affairs Department. J.C.E. Parkes was a maternal grandson of Iris Maitland, née Jones, a Nova Scotian descendant and Thomas Maitland, a disbanded sergeant in the West India Regiment. This John Henry Maitland Smythe, who might have been a son of John Henry Smyth, (1844-1908), the African American Consul to Liberia, was the father of Selina (Celina) Baxter Doramodu, née Smythe, (b. 1907/8) Agnes Jeanne Eloise Smythe-Macaulay, (b. 11 November 1912), who Reverend Canon Christian Athanasius Everette Macaulay and is the matriarch of the Smythe-Macaulay family, and possibly also John Henry Clavell Smythe, (1915-1996), the Royal Air Force Navigator and Queen's Counsel.

<sup>335</sup>'Thanks For Sympathy,' *S.L.W.N.*, 9 September, 1911. 'Deaths,' *C.P.R.*, 13 May, 1916. James Nathaniel Harris had three children with Rose Marie Roberts, a member of the distinguished Roberts family of Americo-Liberian descent; a son named John who died in August 1911 and possibly another son named Nathaniel who died aged seven years old at Regent Road in 1916. J.N. Harris's second wife, Rosetta 'Etta' Harris, née Massally, (d. 1963) was also from the distinguished Massally family. Etta Harris was instrumental in the independence movement and was a founder of the Women's Movement. It is perhaps ironic that a son of John Myer Harris, perhaps one of the greatest individual nemeses of the Liberian Republic in the middle nineteenth century, married Rosemarie Roberts, a member of the same family as Joseph Jenkins Roberts, a founding father of the Republic of the Liberia. The family albums with photographs of the wedding of James Nathaniel Harris to Rosemarie Roberts no longer survive.

family ties and possible business relationships in Sulima, Bonthe, Sherbro and Yoni in the Northern Sherbro District.<sup>336</sup>

After working for Ryth Roth & Co, Nat Harris decided to establish himself in business and he was appointed as the manager of the Sulima Trading Company, a business with a similar name and perhaps similar business model to that of his father.<sup>337</sup> The Sulima Trading Company was founded by L.A. Massaquoi, a member of the distinguished Vai royal family, and Harris eventually managed the business alongside or with the assistance of a Mr Lamin.<sup>338</sup> As a manager of the company, Nat Harris had business interests in Sulima and the surrounding region of the Gallinas where his father had traded over a half a century before.

Similar to aspects of his father's business, Nat Harris specialised in the produce trade and gained substantial wealth from his business interests.<sup>339</sup> Frederick William Migeod, a British civil servant, travelled to Sulima and was introduced to James Nathaniel Harris whom he described in his publication, *A View of Sierra Leone*:

"The trading store here belonged to Mr. James Nathaniel Harris. He was born in 1879, his father, J.M. Harris, being an English man and a trader here...Mr Harris did not immediately follow on in his father's business.

---

<sup>336</sup>'Thanks For Sympathy,' *S.L.W.N.*, 9 September, 1911.

<sup>337</sup>Footnote 40, Laan, H.L. van der, *The Lebanese traders in Sierra Leone*, (Mouton, 1975), p. 330. Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Marke, London, England 13 October 2016. Correspondence and Interview with Jean-Pierre Eleady-Cole, 2 October, 2015 to 13 October 2016. According to the oral family history provided by Ms. Rosemarie Marke and Mr. Jean-Pierre Eleady-Cole, James Nathaniel Harris inherited the Sulymah Trading Company from his father, John Myer Harris. However, according to the business records and scholars such as Christopher Fyfe and Adam Jones, Harris liquidated the Sulymah Trading Company in 1883 and sold the Sulymah and Sherboro Trading Company in 1887. James Nathaniel Harris took over the Sulima Trading Company and bought a launching pad for taking piassava to ships.

<sup>338</sup>Footnote 40, Laan, H.L. van der, *The Lebanese traders in Sierra Leone*, (Mouton, 1975), p. 330.

<sup>339</sup>'Mr. "Nat" Harris (Son) (A chip of the old Block). The "Wizard of the Produce Trade at Sulima, Sierra Leone Protectorate,' *S.L.D.M.*, 21 June, 1933.

He came along much later. I wrote and invited him to come along in the evening for a talk. He was very well informed, and had been several times to England."<sup>340</sup>

According to Migeod, piassava was the main trade of the Sulima Trading Company and it was brought down river and stacked on sand near the sea to await the irregular ships that passed through Sulima.<sup>341</sup>

Thus, from a commercial perspective, James Nathaniel Harris was perhaps the leading Sierra Leonean merchant of Jewish descent in the early twentieth century. As a successful businessman and the only African son of 'Bain' Harris, James Nathaniel Harris was the patriarch of the Harris family and he provided for the education of his nieces, Ina Harris Porter and Millicent Harris Porter in England.<sup>342</sup> The Porter sisters would send regular letters to Nat Harris updating him on their studies and dance lessons.<sup>343</sup> Harris might have also entrusted aspects of his business to his nephews, Nathaniel Varney Massaquoi and Rudolph Joseph Hamelberg, the sons of his paternal cousin, Julia Harris Hamelberg.

James Nathaniel Harris also maintained ties with his sisters in Freetown and with his Grammar School friends or "boys of the old brigade" such as E.A.C. Davies and H.A. Maurice, but he remained in Sulima, and was dedicated to his business. After marrying Rose Marie Roberts, Harris invested in property in Freetown and built a house at Howe Street for his wife.<sup>344</sup> However, in contrast to Henry Clement Solomon, Harris remained at 'home' in Sulima and although he was part of Freetown society

---

<sup>340</sup>Migeod, Frederick William Hugh, *A View of Sierra Leone*, (Britain: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd, 1926), p. 145.

<sup>341</sup>Ibid. p. 145.

<sup>342</sup>Obituary, 'S.L.D.G.', 5 July, 1948. Marie Michel, née Harris-Porter, married a Michel and predeceased her mother, Annie Harris Porter.

<sup>343</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Marke, London, England, 13 October 2016.

<sup>344</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Harris, London, England, 13 October, 2016. 'Obituary: The Passing Away of Mr. James Nathaniel Harris Of Sulima,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 April, 1934.

and frequently visited relatives and friends in the town, Harris also maintained some distance from the emergent culture of Freetown through his trading activities.<sup>345</sup>

Harris's family connections and business operations in Sulima gained him a similar level of respect accorded to his father and he was also referred to as 'Monarch' by the local population. Although he suffered personal tragedy through the loss of his two sons and the death of his wife in the early twentieth century, Harris was resilient and continued with his business interests and found happiness with a new partner.<sup>346</sup> On 3 May 1927, he married Etta Massally, a half-sister of his first wife and a daughter of Madam Marigba, and the couple had at least two children. Harris remained at his base in Sulima and his hospitality and geniality was on full display when he entertained guests at his home. As a devout Catholic, he hosted the Bishop of Acmonia and Pro-Vicar Apostolic of the Roman Catholic Church in December 1933, the last guest that Harris would entertain before his untimely passing the following year.

After managing the Sulima Trading Company for several years, James Nathaniel Harris died at Connaught Hospital in Freetown on 31 March 1934 at the relatively early age of fifty-four years old following an accident at his residence in Sulima.<sup>347</sup> After an elaborate funeral ceremony held at the Roman Catholic Pro-Cathedral in Freetown, Harris was buried at the Racecourse Cemetery in Freetown next to the resting place of his first wife. A lengthy obituary published in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* described Harris as a man of:

---

<sup>345</sup>'Harbour News,' *S.L.W.N.*, 22 April, 1905. Harris mainly resided in Sulima and continued to conduct business in the Gallinas or in the Sherbro regions, although he would frequently travel to Freetown to visit his friends and family members.

<sup>346</sup>'Thanks For Sympathy,' *S.L.W.N.*, 9 September, 1911. 'Deaths,' *C.P.R.*, 13 May, 1916. Nathaniel Harris probably had a son called John Harris who died in August 1910 and was possibly named after John Myer Harris.

<sup>347</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Harris, London, England, 13 October, 2016. Jokongoi, 'Notes From Sulima,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 April, 1934. According to the oral family history provided by Ms. Rosemarie Marke, James Nathaniel Harris, who lived a "good life" full of the finer aspects of life resulting from wealth, was sitting at his desk in Sulima when his fountain pen fell and pricked his foot. Harris, who was suffering from gout, was poisoned by the pen prick and according to oral history this contributed to the condition that resulted in his death.

"wonderful business acumen...always ready to give advices and assist anyone who stands in need of same and to encourage them in the hope of a great future."<sup>348</sup>

The death of James Nathaniel Harris signalled the end of the Harris family connection to large-scale commerce in the Gallinas. Thus, although Rudolph Joseph Hamelberg (1912-1983), a nephew of Harris, would continue to engage in trade in Sulima, the business operations of the Sulima Trading Company eventually ceased.<sup>349</sup>

### **The legacy of the Second Generation**

As merchants in the hinterland and the Colony of Sierra Leone, the second generation of Jewish merchants were perhaps less influential than their Jewish fathers and yet merchants such as Henry Clement Solomon and James Nathaniel Harris continued to engage in commerce and in some instances in regions or aspects of trade that had been pioneered by their fathers. Nor were Sierra Leoneans oblivious to the fact that the descendants of these Jewish merchants in Sierra Leone may have inherited their commercial astuteness from their fathers. In eulogizing James Nathaniel Harris, a correspondent in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* stated:

"By the passing of Mr. Nat Harris the Protectorate mourns the loss of a great man. How business like he was? How devoted and faithful to duty; with an eagle's eye for business: a wary opportunist who swooped upon the slightest chance with the greatest precision till it is won! Mr. Harris was of Jewish antecedent [sic] in consequence [sic] had the distinguishing Jewish quality."<sup>350</sup>

---

<sup>348</sup>Obituary: The Passing Away of Mr. James Nathaniel Harris Of Sulima,' *S.L. WN.*, 7 April, 1934.

<sup>349</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Harris, London, England, 13 October, 2016. The death of James Nathaniel Harris in 1934 largely signalled the end of the engagement of the Harris family in trade in the Gallinas or the Sherbro. Although James Nathaniel Harris intended for his business empire to pass on to his nephews, Nat Massaquoi and Rudolph Hamelberg, this request was unfulfilled following the death of Nat Harris perhaps as a result of family dynamics.

<sup>350</sup>Macala, 'Echoes From The Protectorate,' *S.L. W.N.*, 7 April, 1934.

Although the language employed by the writer in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* might reflect some stereotypical qualities about Jewry, it was a recognition of the Jewish heritage of these descendants being an integral aspect of their identity in colonial Sierra Leone. However, as the third generation of Sierra Leonean families emerged, their integration into Sierra Leonean society signalled the end of some of the close ties that these families had to their Jewish antecedents and their legacy in trade.



**Fig. 10. James Nathaniel Harris<sup>351</sup>**



**Fig. 11. Henry Clement Solomon<sup>352</sup>**

---

<sup>351</sup>'Mr. "Nat" Harris (Son) (A chip of the old Block),' *Sierra Leone Daily Mail*, 21 June, 1933. 'Death of Mr. J.N. Harris: The Late Mr. J. Nat. Harris [Photograph],' *Sierra Leone Daily Mail*, 3 April, 1934. 'Lest We Forget: In Memoriam,' *Sierra Leone Daily Mail*, 31 March, 1937 The photograph of James Nathaniel Harris was published in the *Sierra Leone Daily Mail* on 21 June, 1933 and the photograph was also published in the same newspaper on 3 April, 1934 and 31 March, 1937.

<sup>352</sup>'Caption: Sierra Leone: Freetown: Councillor H.C. Solomon, J.P., reading the Farewell Address of the people of Sierra Leone to His Excellency, Governor Sir Chas King-Harman on the eve of his final departure from the Colony,' Publisher: W.S. Johnston, circa 1901 to October 1904, *Sierra Leone Web*, URL: <http://www.sierra-leone.org/Gspostcards-9.html>

### The Third Generation: Sierra Leoneans descended from Jewish antecedents

The third generation of Sierra Leoneans descended from Jewish antecedents were perhaps even less active in business than their predecessors but were still active in Sierra Leonean society.<sup>353</sup> The male patriarchs such as James Nathaniel Harris had died and although Henry Clement Solomon remained active, he was perhaps less visible in Freetown society than he had been during the earlier part of the century.<sup>354</sup> Furthermore, some families such as the Harts, although possibly represented by African descendants,<sup>355</sup> were no longer engaged in mercantilist pursuits or were particularly influential in Freetown society.<sup>356</sup> However, some members of the third generation of Sierra Leoneans descended from Jewish antecedents were educated in England and strengthened ties to their relatives in England during their education.<sup>357</sup>

---

<sup>353</sup>The Descendancy Chart For Franz Heinrich Rudolph Gustav Hamelberg,' 14 April 2001, pp. 1-3. Save for Harry Clement Solomon and possibly John Clement Dominic Solomon.

<sup>354</sup>Shipping Intelligence: Sailings: Outward: The Elder Dempster Line: Departures: Per s.s. Elele, March 16,' *Colonial And Provincial Reporter*, 21 March, 1914. *Who's Who in California*, Volume 16, (California: Who's Who Historical Society, 1986). California, Federal Naturalization Records, 1843-1999, *Ancestry*. The middle name 'Clement' was a family name among the Sierra Leonean branch of the Solomon family. Mrs. Marquis Gertrude Fergusson, née Solomon, (b. 1916/7), the wife of Eugene Clarence Fergusson and another Solomon descendant (who was perhaps named after the Marquis of Salisbury), was one of the oldest members of the Solomon family. Marquis Solomon Fergusson was a sister of John Clement Dominic Solomon and a daughter of John H. Solomon or Henry Clement Solomon Sr. Eugene Fergusson and Marquis Solomon had several children including a son who is a chiropractor and reverend. The Solomon-Fergusson connection may be the reference to the Fergusson family having 'Sherbro blood' that Akintola J.G. Wyse referred to in his biography of H.C. Bankole-Bright.

<sup>355</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Marke, London, England, 13 October, 2016. According to Rosemarie Marke, the Hart family had a close association with Circular Road and descendants of the family remained in Freetown throughout much of the twentieth century.

<sup>356</sup>'The Celebration Of The Fourth Anniversary Of The Delta Pastorate,' *S.L.T.*, 27 June, 1896. 'Deaths For The Week,' *S.L.W.N.*, 19 April, 1913. 'Deaths,' *C.P.R.*, 13 October, 1917. 'Cricket Match: Native Sports Club vs All Port Harcourt,' *S.L.W.N.*, 9 August, 1919. There was an Emily Hart, who had possibly travelled to and from the Sherbro, who might have been a descendant of the Hart brothers or their relatives. Furthermore, there was a distinct Creole family that was probably unrelated to the Hart family of mixed Sierra Leonean and Anglo-Jewish descent.

<sup>357</sup>'Household of Hester Harris,' Willesden, Paddington, London, 1911 Census of England, *Ancestry*. UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960, TNA UK Series BT26, *Ancestry*. UK, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960, TNA UK Series, BT27, *Ancestry*. Henry 'Harry' Clement Solomon Jr., (b. 15 July, 1897), Millicent Porter, and Ina Porter were all educated in England similar to some members of the second generation such as Annie Harris Porter who was educated in Europe (and presumably England). Harry Solomon arrived with his mother in England on 15 July, 1907 aboard the *Karina* and settled in the Congo from England aboard the *Anversville*. Harry Solomon departed from England on 10 November, 1919 and settled in the Congo via Sierra Leone where he visited his parents and other family members. Millicent Porter and Ina Porter arrived in Britain aboard the *Abinsi* and were erroneously recorded in the passenger lists with the ages twenty-three and twenty years old respectively. The Harris Porter sisters



The third generation of the Solomon family remained active in Freetown and Britain and possibly the Sherbro region.<sup>358</sup> Henry Clement Solomon Jr., a son of Henry Clement Solomon, was a representative of the third generation of Sierra Leoneans descended from Jewish merchants to engage in trade. Henry Solomon, fondly known as 'Harry Solomon', possibly entered the Grammar School in 1904. Harry Solomon, who lived in England for several years, was educated at Colet Court School and later at St Paul's School and was an active member of the cricket team.<sup>359</sup> Solomon's prowess as a cricket player was vividly described in *The Illustrated Sporting And Dramatic News* in June 1916:

Quite the best all-rounder, on present form at all events, in this team, is H.C. Solomon, who came here from Sierra Leone. I am not expecting to see many better fieldsmen in schoolboy cricket this season than Solomon. His "eye" reminds one of that of a much more famous cricketer from India, and the way he gets his hands to the ball for a catch proves him a born fieldsmen. As a bowler he reaps consistent success at a medium pace through the air succeeded by a much greater speed from the pitch than either his run, his action, or the pace of the ball in the air appear to warrant.<sup>360</sup>

---

returned to Sierra Leone aboard the *Wahehe* with Millicent Harris-Porter recorded on the Outward Passenger Lists with the age of twenty-three and Ina Harris-Porter recorded with the age of twenty-one. The Harris-Porter sisters travelled from and to Sierra Leone in First Class and were recorded as intending to live at 200 Marylebone Road, London upon entering Britain and were recorded as living at 221 Golders Green Road, London, NW11 upon their return to Sierra Leone. The Harris-Porter sisters might have interacted with their Jewish relatives in England and might have been the "coloured cousins" that Bernard Harris recollected visiting the family.

<sup>358</sup>'Marriage-Caulcrick-Renner,' *S.L.W.N.*, 13 March, 1915. The Solomon family appears to have maintained connections with their Jewish relatives in Liverpool, England. This relationship was further strengthened by the English-born Solomons maintaining the family tradition of mercantilist pursuits in West Africa. In 1915, John Solomon, the son of Louis Solomon, and Henry Solomon, the brother of Louis Solomon sent gifts for the wedding of Dr William Awunor-Renner's daughter to John Caulcrick. There was also a Mrs. Louis Solomon and her daughter who sent gifts for the wedding of Dr. Awunor-Renner's daughter. This Mrs. Louis Solomon was almost certainly Eveline Leah Solomon, the widow of Louis Solomon. Awunor-Renner studied medicine at the University of Liverpool and may have been acquainted with the Solomon family during his studies.

<sup>359</sup>'Public School Cricket: Bedford And St. Paul's,' *The Illustrated Sporting And Dramatic News*, Number 2,231, Volume LXXXV, June 17, 1916, p. 435. Harry Solomon was a boarder at St. Paul's School from Spring 1911 to July 1916. Danner, I.P. Carlton, 'Dakar Vs. S.L.F.A. Football Match: Report and Observations,' *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, 1 May, 1948. Harry Solomon was actively involved in sports; he boxed for his House and played rugby for the 1st XV, cricket for the 1st XI, and fives for the 2nd IV. Harry Solomon remained active in sports even during his business activities in Guinea.

<sup>360</sup>'Public School Cricket: Bedford And St. Paul's,' *The Illustrated Sporting And Dramatic News*, Number 2,231, Volume LXXXV, June 17, 1916, p. 435.

Following the completion of his studies in July 1916, Solomon enlisted in the British military in 1918 and served during the First World War.<sup>361</sup> Solomon served as a Rifleman in the Rifle Brigade and as a Private in the Labour Corps during the War.<sup>362</sup> Following the completion of his service, Solomon was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal for his service.<sup>363</sup> After several years in England, Harry Solomon eventually returned to Sierra Leone in 1919 and travelled to Boma in the Congo to engage in commerce and later worked for a commercial firm or entered business in Conakry, Guinea.<sup>364</sup>

In addition to Harry Solomon, there were other members of the third generation of the Solomon family who continued to engage in commerce. John Clement Dominic Solomon, a possible brother or cousin of Harry Solomon, who served as a managing director of the National Trading Company and as a director of the United Africa Company, was another member of the Solomon family who continued the family tradition of business.<sup>365</sup> J.C.D. Solomon, described as "a well-known business man" with a "wide

---

<sup>361</sup>Bourne, Stephen, *Black Poppies: Britain's Black Community and the Great War*, p. 42. Costello, Ray, *Black Tommies: British Soldiers of African Descent in the First World War*, p. 53.

<sup>362</sup>'Henry C. Solomon,' in the 'British Army World War One Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920,' *Ancestry*. 'Henry Clement Solomon,' in the 'United Kingdom World War One Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914-1920,' The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, World War One Service Medal and Award Rolls, WO 329, Piece Number 1864], *Ancestry*. Henry Clement Solomon served with the regimental number 31059 as a Rifleman in the Rifle Brigade and with the regimental number 613632 as a Private in the Labour Corps.

<sup>363</sup>'Henry C. Solomon,' in the 'British Army World War One Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920,' *Ancestry*. 'Henry Clement Solomon,' in the 'United Kingdom World War One Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914-1920,' The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, World War One Service Medal and Award Rolls, WO 329, Piece Number 1864], *Ancestry*.

<sup>364</sup>'Mr. Harry Solomon,' *S.L.W.N.*, 6 December, 1919. UK, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960, TNA UK Series, BT27, *Ancestry*. Harry Solomon worked as a clerk and possibly engaged in trade in Boma, Congo, Abijan, Ivory Coast, and possibly in the modern-day Republic of Guinea. In the obituary of Henrietta Solomon, Harry Solomon was described as engaging in commerce in the Lower Guinea Coast.

<sup>365</sup>UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960, TNA UK Series BT26, *Ancestry*. UK, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960, TNA UK Series, BT27, *Ancestry*. Blue Books for the Colony of Sierra Leone, 1824-1943, *British Online Archives*. 'Sherry Party By Dr. M.C.F. Easmon,' *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, 10 December, 1949. Anthony, Farid Raymond, *Sawpit Boy*, (England: F.R. Anthony, 1980), pp. 10, 124. Raj, K.B. Chandra, *Mining My Own Life: This Much I Remember And This Is How I Remember It*, (United States: Trafford, 2014), p. 130. Wellesley-Cole, Robert, *An Innocent In Britain, or The missing link: documented autobiography*, (Britain: Campbell Matthews, 1988), p. 346. John Clement Dominic Solomon (b. 13 July, 1914) was a member of the Solomon family of Jewish descent and possibly a son of Henry Clement Solomon. John Clement Dominic Solomon was a brother of Marquis Gertrude Solomon. The name "Clement" was a family name within the Solomon family of Anglo-Jewish and Sierra Leonean descent. However, it is possible that John C.D. Solomon was a son of John H. Solomon, who was possibly a brother or cousin of Henry Clement Solomon. John Clement Dominic Solomon was appointed as a Third Grade Clerk at the Post Office on 25 January, 1937 alongside Louis Frederick Cornelius Solomon, a possible brother or cousin of J.C.D. Solomon. John Clement Dominic Solomon was married to Jestina 'Tina' Druscilla Solomon, (b. 30

experience in commerce," was a highly successful manager of the National Trading Company. Solomon remained active as a businessman throughout his life, thus continuing the legacy of the Solomon family in business into the middle to late twentieth century.<sup>366</sup>

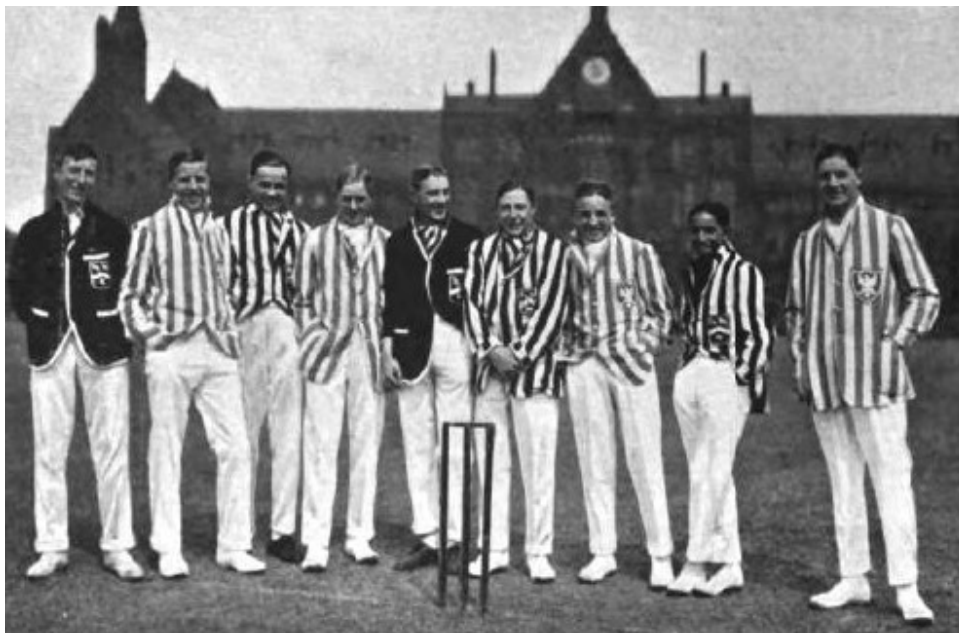
---

September 1919), a family friend of Thomas Leighton Decker, a Sierra Leonean journalist and playwright. J.C.D. Solomon and Jestina Solomon had at least two children: Edward Solomon and Glynis Solomon. John Clement Dominic Solomon was mentioned in the memoirs of K.B. Chandra Raj and was also acknowledged by Farid Anthony, whose memoirs (which referred to Solomon as a Sierra Leonean businessman) were printed by Solomon. He served as a director of the United Africa Company and Taylor Woodrow in addition to serving as the managing director of the National Trading Company. The descendants of John Solomon reside in the United States (presently Maryland) and in Britain.

<sup>366</sup>Anthony, Farid Raymond, *Sawpit Boy*, (England: F.R. Anthony, 1980), p. 124. *New African*, [Issues 196-207], (Europe: IC Magazines Limited, 1984), p. 38.



**Fig. 12. Henry Clement Solomon Jr. (Right)<sup>367</sup>**



**Fig. 13. Henry Clement Solomon Jr. (Second from Right)<sup>368</sup>**

---

<sup>367</sup>Public School Cricket: Bedford And St. Paul's: 'H.C. Solomon, St Paul's,' *The Illustrated Sporting And Dramatic News*, Number 2,231, Volume LXXXV, June 17, 1916, p. 435.

<sup>368</sup>Public School Cricket: Bedford And St. Paul's: A Mixed Group,' *The Illustrated Sporting And Dramatic News*, Number 2,231, Volume LXXXV, June 17, 1916, p. 435.

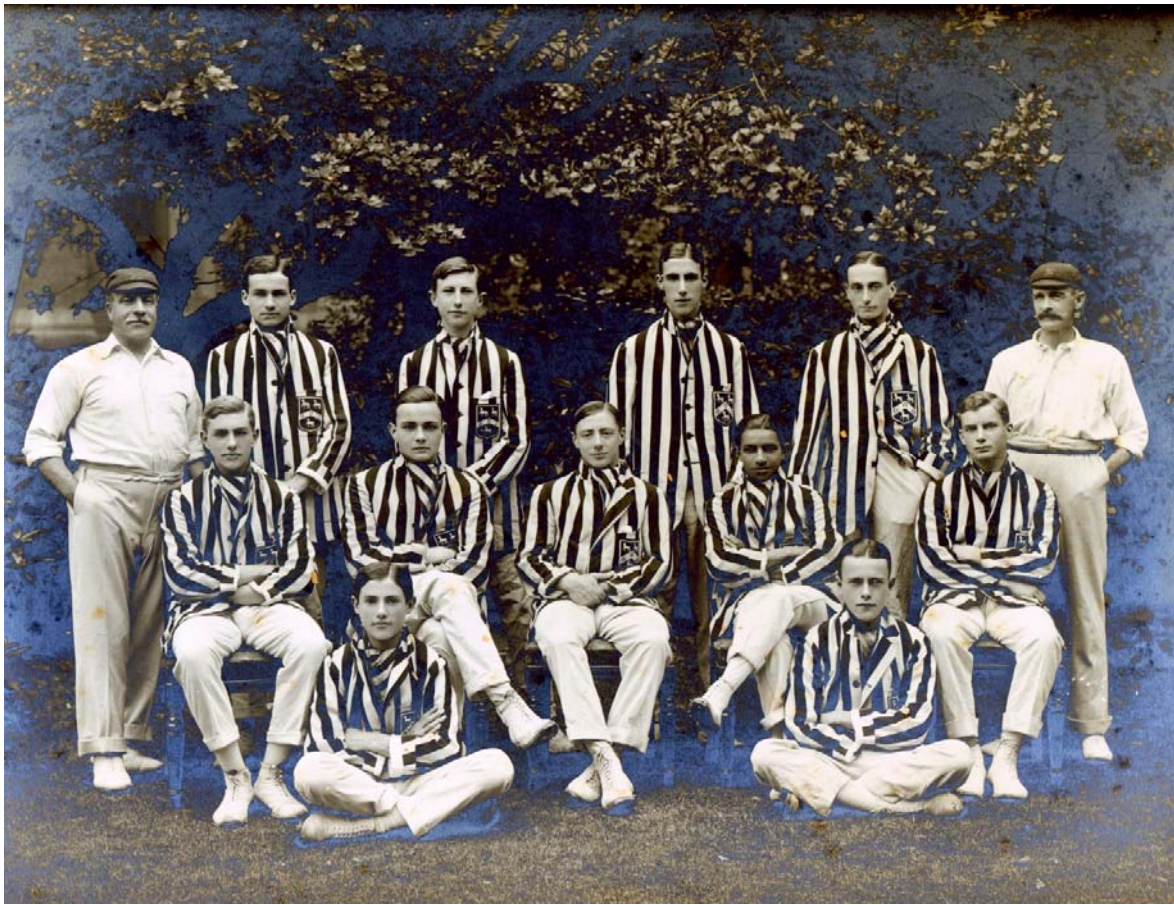


Fig. 14. Henry Clement Solomon (seated, second row, second from right)<sup>369</sup>

---

<sup>369</sup>Photograph provided by Alexandra Aslett, Archivist of St Paul's School, London.

Although Henry Clement Solomon Sr. remained the head of the Solomon family, the death of James Nathaniel Harris signalled the end of patriarchy within the Harris family clan. Thus, perhaps for the third generation of Sierra Leoneans of Jewish descent, and in particular the Harris family, the matriarchal influence was perhaps even more pronounced than in previous generations.<sup>370</sup> Mary Kirwan, the proprietor of Sir Alfred Jones Lodge, had an important role in raising several generations of the Harris clan.<sup>371</sup> Following the death of James Nathaniel Harris, Kirwan was a matriarch of the family and was responsible for caring for Jeanne Marke, one of the surviving children of James Nathaniel Harris.<sup>372</sup> Thus, the death or inactivity of patriarchs such as Nat Harris and Henry Solomon did not diminish the strong familial bonds amongst these families.

The Harris family remained close-knit and members of the third generation such as Rudolph Joseph Hamelberg and Harry Solomon continued to meet with their close relatives from other Sierra Leonean families of Jewish descent. The Harris family even extended to Liberia which was where Nathaniel Varney Massaquoi, the first son of Julia Harris Hamelberg, resided as a civil servant.<sup>373</sup> The fostering of these families ties across geographical boundaries perhaps reflected an understanding amongst these interrelated families that their ancestors, of the first and second generation, belonged to a distinct collective group.

---

<sup>370</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Marke, London, England, 13 October 2016. However, although there was perhaps a lack of dominant male figures within the third generation of the Harris family, the role of matriarchal figures within these families was evident even when patriarchal figures such as John Myer Harris and James Nathaniel Harris were heads of the family. For example, Mary Kirwan was responsible for the upbringing of James Nathaniel Harris and Julia Harris Hamelberg and all these descendants had some interaction with their maternal relatives which is perhaps reflected in their attachment to Catholicism. Smyke notes how it was Mary Kirwan and Annie Harris Porter, not necessarily James Nathaniel Harris, who overruled Julia Harris's intentions to marry Nathaniel Massaquoi, thus revealing that perhaps matriarchy was even more influential on family matters among these families than the patriarchs such as Myer Harris and Nat Harris.

<sup>371</sup>'Deaths,' *S.L.W.N.*, 14 February 1891. 'General News: Mr Frank Kirwan,' *S.L.W.N.*, 14 February, 1891. 'Death Of Mrs Kirwan's Child,' *S.L.T.*, 22 September 1894.

<sup>372</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Marke, London, England, 13 October 2016.

<sup>373</sup>Smyke, Raymond J., 'Nathaniel Varney Massquoi (1905-1962): A Biographical Essay,' *Liberian Studies Journal*, Volume XVII, Number 1, (1992), pp. 47-8. The Harris family also extended to Guinea which was where Joseph Harris, the son of Nathaniel Harris I and a member of the second generation, settled as a commercial agent. However, it is unclear whether Joseph Harris returned to Sierra Leone or whether he had any children.

Furthermore, these families maintained their status in colonial society and did not fade into obscurity even after the death of notable family members and the withdrawal of the third generation from trade. The continued importance of the Solomon and Harris families is perhaps reflected in the obituaries that appeared in the Sierra Leone newspapers following the deaths of Henrietta Augusta Elizabeth Solomon aged seventy-two years old and Annie Harris Porter aged eighty-six years old at her residence at Regent Road, Freetown.<sup>374</sup> Thus, the removal from trade of most members of the Harris and Solomon families did not diminish their importance in Sierra Leone during the twentieth century.

Some members of the third generation of Sierra Leonean families of Jewish descent, still maintained close links with Sulima and their ancestral homelands in the hinterland of Sierra Leone.<sup>375</sup> However, perhaps the majority of the members of these families were born into or integrated into the emergent Creole society of Freetown, Sierra Leone. Hannah Magaretta 'Marie' Hamelberg, a daughter of Hannah Hamelberg and a great-granddaughter of Edward Emmanuel Lyons, married Joseph Marie Valcarcel, a licensed auctioneer, in 1912.<sup>376</sup> Ina Porter married Franz Edouard Risch, a Gold Coaster of at least partial European descent who was an accountant.<sup>377</sup> Ina Porter's sister, Lady Millicent Porter, was married to Sir Ernest Samuel Beoku-Betts, the second Sierra Leonean to be knighted after Sir Samuel Lewis.<sup>378</sup> Jeanne Harris, a daughter of Nat Harris and a first cousin of Ina Risch and Millicent Beoku-Betts, married Sonny Marke, a Creole businessman related to the Leigh and Macauley families.<sup>379</sup> Alice

---

<sup>374</sup>Mrs. A.H. Porter Passes,' *S.L.D.M.*, 3 July, 1948. 'Obituary,' *S.L.D.M.*, 5 July, 1948. 'Death,' *S.L.W.N.*, 10 July, 1948. 'Deaths,' *S.L.W.N.*, 17th July, 1948.

<sup>375</sup>T.T.F., 'News From Bonthe,' *S.L.W.N.*, 6 May, 1933.

<sup>376</sup>'Deaths,' *S.L.G.*, 9 November 1917. 'In Memoriam,' *S.L.W.N.*, 17 November, 1917. 'In Memoriam,' *S.L.W.N.*, 14 June, 1947. The Valcarcel family had at least one daughter, Marie Valcarcel.

<sup>377</sup>Cupid, 'A Fashionable Marriage At Kwitta,' *Gold Coast Leader*, 4 April, 1903. 'Quittah,' *Gold Coast Independent*, 1 July, 1922, hereafter *G.C.I.* 'General News: Marriage of Miss Porter,' *S.L.W.N.*, 28 August, 1926. Franz Edouard or Francis Edward Risch, a former employee of the Bush Company Limited in Accra who was originally from Keta, was most likely a son of F.E. Risch, a businessman possibly of German origin who was a partner at the firm of Funk and Risch in Keta, Gold Coast. Franz Risch had previously been married to Miss Taiwo Zumanu in 1922.

<sup>378</sup>Spector, David, 'Brighton Jewry reconsidered,' *Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions Of The Jewish Historical Society of England*, Volume XXX, 1987-1988, p. 111.

<sup>379</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Marke, London, England, 13 October 2016.

Hamelberg, a daughter of Theodore Joseph Hamelberg, married Roland Williams, a Sierra Leonean businessman based in Freetown.<sup>380</sup> Thus, although some members of the Harris and Hamelberg families maintained ties to their ancestral communities in the hinterland and Sherbro region, the third generation of these families were born into or fully integrated into Freetown society.<sup>381</sup>

---

<sup>380</sup>The Descendancy Chart For Franz Heinrich Rudolph (Rudolf) Gustav Hamelberg,' 14 April 2001, p. 1. Alice Williams, a devout Catholic, and Roland Williams had seven children. At the time that this essay was published, Alice Williams, a great grandmother to several great grandchildren, remains one of the oldest Sierra Leoneans currently residing in Sierra Leone.

<sup>381</sup>Sei Lebi, 'Random Shots, From Bonthe Sherbro,' *S.L.W.N.*, 7 April, 1934. Tucker, Peter, *The Mission Boy From Shebar: An Autobiography*, (Authorhouse, 2011), pp. 49-50. Tucker, *The Tuckers of Sierra Leone 1665-1914*, (United Kingdom: 1997), pp. 38-9, 100, 123-4. Julia Harris Hamelberg visited her relatives, the Tuckers, in Bonthe on at least one occasion according to newspaper sources. However, Julia Harris Hamelberg was almost certainly a regular visitor to her relatives in Bonthe. Julia Harris Hamelberg was a half-sister of Miss Janie Thomas of Bonthe and stayed with her on at least one occasion in April 1934. Julia Hamelberg also visited her uncle, Honourable Paramount Chief Alfred William Tucker, a son of Ba William Emmanuel Tucker (1810-1892) a son of Beayemi Tucker, who was a son of William Nankin and Yah Tikkah Tucker. Yah Tikkah was a possible daughter of Peter Tucker I, a mixed-race merchant and son of John Tucker of the Gambia Adventurers. This implies that the mother of Julia Hamelberg might have been a sister of Alfred William Tucker and one of the several daughter of Ba William Tucker. Dr Peter Tucker refers to Father Edward Ignatius Hamelberg visiting relatives in Bonthe and the Hamelbergs and Harris family maintained their familial links with their family members in the hinterland of Sierra Leone.

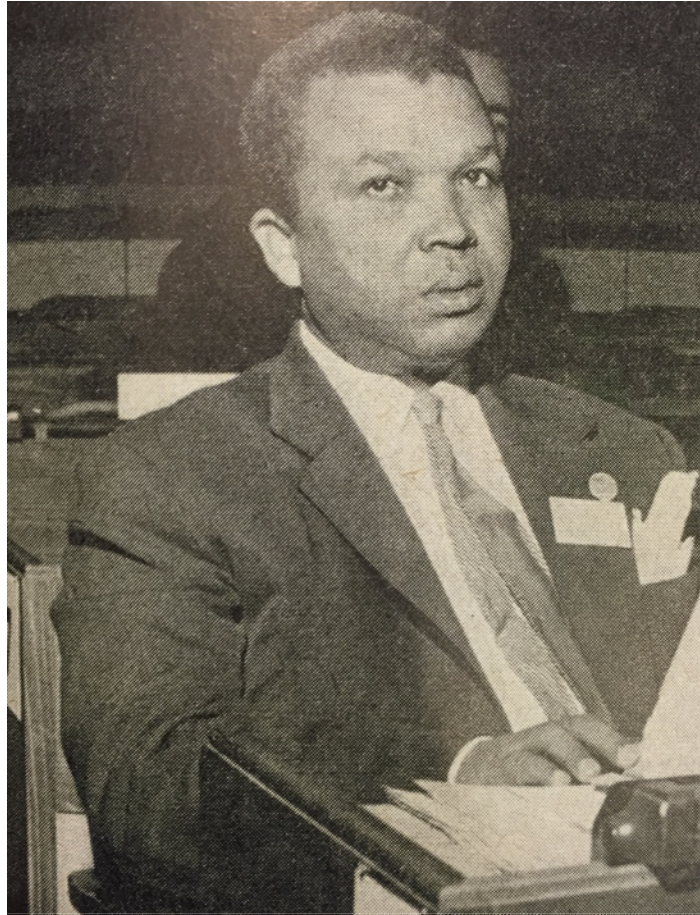




**Fig. 15. Sir Ernest Samuel Beoku-Betts and Lady Millicent Beoku-Betts, née Harris<sup>382</sup>**

---

<sup>382</sup>[Photograph of Sir Ernest Beoku-Betts and Lady Millicent Beoku-Betts], *Daily Mail*, 29 July, 1957.



**Fig. 16. Nathaniel Varney Massaquoi<sup>383</sup>**

---

<sup>383</sup>Richardson, Nathaniel R., *Liberia's Past and Present*, (London: Diplomatic Press, 1959), p. 289.

The third generation of Sierra Leoneans of Jewish descent were distinctly Sierra Leonean and save for their adherence to Catholicism and the participation of some in commerce, the idiosyncratic tendencies of the third generation were perhaps less pronounced if at all evident in comparison to the second generation.<sup>384</sup> However, the third generation of these families had not entirely forgotten their partial Jewish roots and some retained fond, if not colourful, memories of their Jewish ancestors.<sup>385</sup> Some members of the Harris and Solomon continued to interact with their Jewish relations in England even in the late twentieth century. In 1975, Bernard John Kendall Harris, a grandson of John Myer Harris visited members of the Harris family in Sierra Leone and maintained ties with the family until his death in 1996.<sup>386</sup> Observers remarked on the strong resemblance between Bernard Harris and Jeanne Marke, née Harris, a granddaughter of John Myer Harris.<sup>387</sup> Therefore, although the third generation of Sierra Leoneans descended from Jewish merchants were absorbed into the cultural milieu of Freetown, Bonthe, or Sulima, some of the connections to their Jewish relatives or heritage were retained even into the late twentieth century. Thus, the legacy of the original pioneering Jewish merchants was preserved through the memory and family ties of their African progeny.<sup>388</sup>

---

<sup>384</sup>‘The Descendancy Chart For Franz Heinrich Rudolph Gustav Hamelberg,’ 14 April 2001, pp. 1-3. It is unclear if there were any Jewish cultural retentions among the descendants of the Jewish merchants who settled in Sierra Leone. However, if there were cultural retentions, these retentions were perhaps less evident in the third generation than in the previous generation. The third generation of Sierra Leoneans of Jewish descent were born into or fully immersed into Sierra Leonean society. For example, Mrs. Hannah Hamelberg provided testimony that was published in the *Sierra Leone Times* on 28 March, 1896, and provided an interesting account of her son, Theodore Hamelberg speaking Krio.

<sup>385</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Marke, London, England, 13 October 2016. A family myth among the descendants of some of these Jewish families was that the Lyons family of Sierra Leone was related to the Bowes-Lyon family of the late Queen Mother Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon. This myth was propagated among various branches of the Harris and Hamelberg families.

<sup>386</sup>Correspondence and Interview with Jean-Pierre Eleady-Cole, 2 October, 2015 to 13 October 2016.

<sup>387</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Marke, London, England, 13 October 2016. Correspondence and Interview with Jean-Pierre Eleady-Cole, 2 October, 2015 to 13 October 2016. According to Rosemarie Marke, the Harris families were reacquainted when a great-grandson of John Myer Harris and his companion noticed a European gentleman walking along one of the beaches in Sierra Leone. The companion noticed that the European looked distinctly similar to Jeanne Marke, the granddaughter of John Myer Harris, and the couple proceeded to introduce themselves to the European who happened to be Bernard Harris.

<sup>388</sup>Correspondence and Interview with Jean-Pierre Eleady-Cole, 2 October, 2015 to 13 October 2016. Bernard Harris became very close to his Sierra Leonean relatives and even a member of the fifth generation of Sierra Leoneans descended from John Myer Harris had fond memories of Bernard Harris.

## Conclusion

The establishment of the Colony of Sierra Leone and the transition from the slave trade to legitimate commerce provided African and European merchants with opportunities to serve as drivers of economic change in the Northern Rivers of Guinea and the hinterland of Sierra Leone. Although the activities of Jewish merchants have largely been overlooked, Jews were among the first Europeans to expand legitimate trade into the hinterland of Sierra Leone and the Northern Rivers. As exporters of groundnut such as Nathaniel Isaacs or palm kernels such as John Myer Harris, Jewish merchants were pioneers of trade and some became wealthy merchant princes through their business acumen and relations with local rulers. Although the commercial enterprises of these merchants did not necessarily survive the emergence of large-scale European commercial firms in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the legacy of these merchants in advancing legitimate commerce was a testament to their commercial acumen.

The presence of Jewish merchants in the hinterland and Colony of Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century is also reflective of the cosmopolitan society that existed in the Colony of Sierra Leone and through trade extended to the neighbouring territories.<sup>389</sup> The Colony of Sierra Leone not only attracted various African ethnic groups, Lebanese merchants, and Europeans of various nationalities, it also attracted European and American Jewry. Although the Jewish merchants who settled in Sierra Leone were primarily Anglo-Jews from related or otherwise interconnected families, Jews from Germany and modern-day Poland were also represented among these merchants. Therefore, the presence of Jewish businessmen in the Northern Rivers and the hinterland of Sierra Leone reflects the diversity of merchants who settled in the Colony and traded in other neighbouring regions.

---

<sup>389</sup> 'A Day At Sierra Leone,' *Chambers' home book: or pocket miscellany containing a choice selection of interesting and instructive reading for the old and the young*, Volume 6, (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1853), pp. 9-10. The cosmopolitanism of Freetown society in the nineteenth century is reflected in the observations of European and American visitors to Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century.

Perhaps the most visible aspect of the legacy of these Jewish merchants in modern-day Sierra Leone are the descendants of these merchants. These men had notable progeny in Sierra Leone who continued to engage in business and some of whom were among the leading merchants of their time. The surnames of Hamelberg and Solomon remain recognisable and are well-known in modern Sierra Leone.<sup>390</sup> Some of the descendants of these Jewish families maintain an attachment to Catholicism and the oral tradition regarding their ancestors even in the post-Civil War era.<sup>391</sup> Notable descendants of these Jewish merchants include the first Sierra Leonean ordained as a Catholic priest, a well-known Liberian public official, an acclaimed and notable Sierra Leonean artist, an assistant professor in biochemistry, a distinguished Sierra Leonean anthropologist, and a notable author and television personality.<sup>392</sup> The remarkable achievements of the descendants of these Jewish merchants in the modern era are perhaps partly a reflection of the prominence of their ancestors in the nineteenth century exemplified in the role these merchants had in promoting legitimate trade in the hinterland that presently forms the modern-day Republic of Guinea and the Provinces of Sierra Leone.

---

<sup>390</sup>‘The Descendancy Chart For Franz Heinrich Rudolph Gustav Hamelberg,’ 14 April 2001, pp. 1-3. James Nathaniel Harris also had a son called Jack Michael Harris and possibly another daughter called Goodie Harris.

<sup>391</sup>Interview with Ms. Rosemarie Harris, London, England, 13 October, 2016.

<sup>392</sup>General News, *S.L.W.N.*, 14 September, 1940. ‘General News,’ *S.L.W.N.*, 28 September, 1940. Edward Hamelberg, the first Sierra Leonean ordained as a priest was the grandson and great grandson of Rudolph Hamelberg and Edward Emmanuel Lyons. Nathaniel ‘Nat’ Massaquoi was the son of Julia Harris Hamelberg and Chief Momolu Massaquoi, the first African Liberian diplomat. Rosemarie Marke, a highly accomplished artist, is the great-granddaughter of John Myer Harris. Donald Hamelberg, an assistant professor in biochemistry, is a great-grandson of Rudolph Hamelberg and Nathaniel Harris I and the second great grandson of Edward Emmanuel Lyons. Dr Nathalie Ina Koto Eledy-Cole, née Harris, a well-known academic, is the youngest daughter of James Nathaniel Harris. Nadia Maddy, an author and television personality, is a great-great granddaughter of Franz Heinrich Gustav Rudolph Hamelberg and a third great granddaughter of Edward Emmanuel Lyons.

## **Acknowledgement**

This paper is dedicated to Janette Davies, my mother, who originally informed my knowledge of the Hamelberg family and their partial German origins and provided pertinent information on the Solomon family. Special acknowledgement is also given to Ms. Rosemarie Marke and Mr Jean-Pierre Eleadly-Cole, and Ms. Nadia Maddy and Mr Naseem Hudroge, who eagerly encouraged the publication of this article and enriched my knowledge with information that can often only be derived from oral history.

Acknowledgement is also given to William 'Bill' and Winona Leitner, née Hamelberg, who originally provided me with the photographs, descendancy chart and pertinent information on the Hamelberg family.

## **Bibliography available on request**

THE 1793 SIERRA LEONE JOURNAL OF ISAAC DUBOIS

Jonathan Howard

### THE 1793 SIERRA LEONE JOURNAL OF ISAAC DUBOIS

#### ABSTRACT

In 1793 John Clarkson was Superintendent for the project of the Sierra Leone Company, to build Freetown as a new home for refugees from Nova Scotia. When the Company recalled him, he asked Isaac DuBois to keep this journal, which is mainly about conflicts within the settlement. The Company staff often fell ill or died; it was difficult to recruit competent replacements. They had fewer conflicts with their African neighbours, but did not respect their culture.

#### ISAAC AND HIS JOURNAL

In 1793 Isaac DuBois was building Freetown, a settlement for refugees from the 1775-1783 War of American Independence. They had sailed across the Atlantic with Lieutenant John Clarkson, whom the Sierra Leone Company appointed as Superintendent for the new settlement. When the Company replaced him with William Dawes and Zachary Macaulay,<sup>393</sup> he asked Isaac to keep the journal which I read in the British Library 223 years later. Research on building history involves visiting the site, reading relevant publications and reading contemporary documents. This last was a new experience for me, but building the eighteenth-century refugee settlement was not unlike what I had done two centuries later as an architect in Africa. Isaac's journal is neatly written in his own handwriting, but sometimes he seems so angry that he can hardly hold the pen. Most of the other documents were dictated to a secretary; the handwriting of the signature shows if it is a holograph. (The Abolitionist William

---

<sup>393</sup> The famous son Thomas Babington Macaulay was born just after Zachary's return to England.

Wilberforce often wrote himself, with a characteristic vigorous handwriting). Some were written in ink on both sides of the paper; now the writing has soaked through and they are illegible. In my school days in the early 1940s, we still used dip-pens and ink-wells. Mistakes could not be erased; the pupil must cross them over and continue with a new version. Pupils in those days were also expected to carry a knife, for sharpening pencils; I do not remember any instance of a pen-knife being misused against another pupil.

Christopher Hamilton Fyfe, 1920-2008, annexed Isaac's journal to his edition of Anna Maria Falconbridge's *Narrative of Two Voyages to the River Sierra Leone* and added notes on the rest of Isaac's life.<sup>394</sup> Fyfe had also edited *Our Children Free and Happy: Letters from Black Settlers in Africa in the 1790s*.<sup>395</sup> Since few of the settlers could read or write, Isaac may have helped them write.

Freetown lies on the south shore of the estuary of the Sierra Leone River. The narrow strip at the foot of the mountain is still as laid out in 1793, but is to-day the central business district of the capital of the Republic of Sierra Leone. The prevailing wind blows from the north-east which had prevented Europeans from visiting West Africa until 1434, when Gil Eanes succeeded in sailing back to Portugal, thanks to his lateen sails and magnetic compass. In 1460 Pedro da Sinta saw the lion-like mountain of Sierra Leone in 1460, Vasco da Gama sailed around the world 1497-1499 and Pedro Alvares Cabral sailed to Brazil in 1500. Christopher Columbus' 1492 transatlantic voyage is not considered so important in Portugal.

Isaac was born in 1764 in Wilmington, North Carolina. His well-to-do family did not sympathise with the movement for Independence; when war broke out in 1775, he and his already-widowed mother fled to Britain. In 1792 he was employed by the Sierra Leone Company to help build a new home for other refugees.<sup>396</sup> When the American war ended in 1783, there were at least five thousand refugees in Canada and in England, many of them former black slaves. Slavery continued to be legal in the United States for another century. It was considered illegal in Britain and British colonies, but black refugees found it difficult to settle there and were attracted by a project to build a new settlement in Sierra Leone.<sup>397</sup> Few had any family connection there, but some had known Isaac in North Carolina. Isaac could not agree with the Company officials in Freetown and on 6 June 1793 went back to England with his new wife Anna Maria, the widow of another Company official.<sup>398</sup> In 1794 he applied for a job with the second attempt to settle Bolama Island.<sup>399</sup> In England in 1801, Isaac and Anna Maria had a son. According to Wikipedia, the family ended their lives on the Virgin Islands.

---

<sup>394</sup> Fyfe, Christopher, editor. *Anna Maria Falconbridge: Narrative of Two Voyages to the River Sierra Leone: Alexander Falconbridge: An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa: The Journal of Isaac DuBois*. Liverpool University Press, 2000.

<sup>395</sup> Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991.

<sup>396</sup> I do not know what he did in the previous decade. When he married Anna Maria, he wrote that he was "now once more properly joined in the bands of wedlock".

<sup>397</sup> The 1772 Mansfield Decision did not declare slavery to be illegal, but was thought to have done so.

<sup>398</sup> A letter, in a private collection, from Melville Horne to Thomas Haweis, 27 January 1794, said DuBois had helped send the petition complaining about the management of the settlement. Fyfe, Christopher, editor. *Anna Maria Falconbridge: Narrative of Two Voyages to the River Sierra Leone. Alexander Falconbridge: An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa: The Journal of Isaac DuBois*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000, page 168.

<sup>399</sup> Fyfe, 2000, page 168.

## THE SIERRA LEONE COMPANY

The Sierra Leone Company was originally formed to rescue Granvilletown, a philanthropic settlement about two kilometres up-river from Freetown and called after its sponsor Granville Sharp, 1735-1792. The Company was part of the campaign to abolish the slave trade and at the same time business, philanthropy and scientific exploration. The Chairman, Henry Thornton, 1760-1815, was a banker; among the Directors were William Wilberforce, 1759-1833, and Thomas Clarkson, 1760-1846, two leading Abolitionists. None of the Directors had ever been to Africa; none had any experience of community planning or building.

## OTHER CONTEMPORARY JOURNALS AND PUBLICATIONS

The reports of the Sierra Leone Company and the correspondence of their superintendent John Clarkson, 1764-1824, are in the British Library.<sup>400</sup> The journal of the Swedish botanist Adam Afzelius, 1750-1837, for 1792-1794 was destroyed in the French raid on Freetown; the journal for 1794 -1796 was published in Uppsala in 1969 by Peter Kup. The Scottish physician Thomas Winterbottom, 1766-1859, published his account,<sup>401</sup> but when the Swedish geologist August Nordenskiöld, 1754-1792, died in Freetown, he entrusted his papers to Jakob Strand, the Swedish secretary to the Superintendent. Strand also kept a journal, but died in Freetown 1793 and Nordenskiöld's papers disappeared. Anna Maria Horwood, 1769-1816,<sup>402</sup> married first Alexander Falconbridge, 1760-1792,<sup>403</sup> and secondly Isaac DuBois. Her account of her time in Sierra Leone has come out in numerous editions and is quoted below, as is as the account of the Swedish quartermaster Daniel Wilhelm Padenheim, 1750-1821.<sup>404</sup>

## EXTRACTS FROM ISAAC'S JOURNAL<sup>405</sup>

31 December 1792

This morning I resolved to begin the journal you desired me to keep in your absence.

03 January 1793

*Made my wedding ring this day. Everything quiet, but the people are rather dissatisfied that neither their town lots nor their country lots are run out, the Engineer<sup>406</sup> being busy with his new fort.*

*Amused myself till ½ past 10 o'clock at my neighbour's<sup>407</sup> and am just going to bed, but I recollect one or two more occurrences of the day ... Yesterday I began to cut down the side of the hill and to level the foundation for the grand store house, but I have a hint that the masons are to be taken from me to build*

---

<sup>400</sup> Add MS 41,262 A.

<sup>401</sup> Winterbottom, Thomas. *An Account of the Native Africans in the Neighbourhood of Sierra Leone: to which is Added an Account of the Present State of Medicine among them.* London: C Wittingham, 1803.

<sup>402</sup> Fyfe, 2000.

<sup>403</sup> He had in London in 1788 published *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa.*

<sup>404</sup> Padenheim, Daniel Wilhelm. *Bref till en Vän i Sverige*, (Stockholm: Kumlinska Tryckeriet, 1801). My English translation is being published in Ontario.

<sup>405</sup> The original manuscript, 17 pages in Isaac's own handwriting, is in the British Library, MS Add 41,263. Christopher Fyfe in 2000 published the journal *in extenso*, 20 printed pages. These extracts follow Fyfe's use of italics instead of Isaac's underlining, but use a modern date format, spelling and punctuation.

<sup>406</sup> The Surveyor of Works, Richard Pepys.

<sup>407</sup> The neighbour was Anna Maria, whose husband Alexander Falconbridge had died 19 December 1792.



*the fort. Surely this cannot be true? Will not one room in that store house be of more consequence than twenty forts? Have we anything to dread, or have we soldiers to occupy a fort?*

06 January 1793

I hear such shameful accounts of my workmen's idleness during my absence yesterday that it put me out of humour, which my neighbour takes for indifference towards her and gets in quite a *pet*. However, a reconciliation is quickly brought about, and we agree to be married to-morrow, *all well*.

07 January 1793

At nine o'clock this morning the Reverend Mr Horne performed the marriage ceremony and I am now once more, I think, properly joined in the bands of wedlock. We intended our marriage should be kept a secret till the 21<sup>st</sup> of this month. This Mr Horne had promised to do, but the poor parson was not born to keep secrets. He carried it, piping hot, to the ears of everyone he met, but desired every one he told it to not to mention it to anyone. However, in less than two hours it was known over the whole colony. It made very little difference to me, whether it was known today or a fortnight hence; I am happy the parson is pleased at telling the news.

08 January 1793

*Mr [William] Dawes hinted to me this morning that he did not wish I should go on with the grand store house under the hill.<sup>408</sup> This no doubt was the advice of Pepys yesterday. I pointed out to Mr Dawes that there was already sufficient stone<sup>409</sup> cut to complete the building, which was the worst of the labour, also that it was Mr Clarkson's particular wish for me to go on with that work. To this he made no reply, and I mean to go on with it till I have his positive written order to stop. I am rather of the opinion there is no other objective than the masons being wanted for the fort. Which of the two buildings does the colony stand most in need of?* Mr Dawes took a walk with me this afternoon, to see where my grumettas<sup>410</sup> were clearing the field, and took a look at where I am digging the foundation of my Store. In the course of all the afternoon, he neither *approved* nor disapproved of anything I shewed him, which was rather unpleasant.

09 January 1793

I cannot help thinking Mr Dawes has behaved in a very strange and illiberal manner with respect to Mr Afzelius. It was Mr Clarkson's desire that Mr Afzelius should mess with me. Mr Afzelius also wishes; Mr Dawes says he must mess with him. Mr Afzelius says he promised Mr Clarkson to mess with me and that he prefers it to any other mess. Mr Dawes insists that he messes with him and poor Afzelius is left in an awkward situation, he tells me, and begs to know what he can do. I immediately said it would be a pleasure for me to have his company. Yet in case it should cause any shyness (*sic*) from Mr Dawes, I would wish him to dine there. He could otherwise be with me as often as was agreeable to himself. This he agrees to.

11 January 1793

---

<sup>408</sup> Dawes became Superintendent after Clarkson.

<sup>409</sup> It seems odd to quarry stone for the very first public-use buildings. No one considered using African building methods. The Company sent out some building material and prefabricated houses.

<sup>410</sup> Locally-employed Africans.

Had occasion to send this morning for some paint of different kinds to the store. But Mr King refused to let me have such as I wanted, without having any reasonable excuse whatever.<sup>411</sup> Immediately after, he went to Mr Dawes and told him he had offered me such as I wanted, but that I was displeased and would not take it. By telling the *wilful mistake*, he did not mend the matter much.

12 January 1793

I called on Mr Dawes respecting some of the works this morning. He again repeated his intention or wish to stop the new store house in Susan's Bay, but gave no positive order, so I shall go on. *However, he has desired me to call on him during the course of the ensuing week, as he wishes to speak to me relative to the several works I am conducting. [He] means to stop some of them. The reason he assigns is the poverty of the Company. If that is the case, why in God's name build such an expensive fort as Mr Pepys is now about?*

14 January 1793

Mr Dawes sent Mr Strand to acquaint me that he had authorised *Mr Pepys to supply his place in his absence, and in case I wanted anything, I was to apply to him. This to be sure did not go down well with me. And is it not scandalous to see so villainous a character as an atheist govern a Christian colony? Is there is a doubt but Pepys is an atheist? Nor is there the smallest doubt that he rules everything here just now. But leave him to himself. I warrant that in time he works his own ruin. All idea of laying out the lots of land seem to be vanished. Nothing but fortification is thought of ... I am surprised at Mr Dawes, but really, both he and the Engineer are fort mad.*

Memorandum: Mr Dawes has never called on me since I was *married*. Would Mr Clarkson have done so?  
NON OPPOSITE!

15 January 1793

I am disappointed, as I have not received the scrape of a pen from a single friend in England or elsewhere.

16 January 1793

This day, having sent to the store for some nails, wanted for the Hummums,<sup>412</sup> Mr King refused to let me have them, and gave for reason that Mr Dawes had desired him to deliver no more goods *to me*, unless I had an order from him, specifying such articles as I wanted, which being sure was a *falsehood*, I wrote the following letter to Mr Dawes ... As soon as Mr Dawes received this letter, he went in person to Mr King and desired I might have whatever I wanted, as usual. The nails consequently were sent immediately.

17 January 1793

This day I sent cards of invitation to all the gentlemen in the colony, for dinner on Monday next.

18 January 1793

---

<sup>411</sup> King was storeman and no goods were issued without his personal approval; when he was ill, the store was closed.

<sup>412</sup> The strange name for the main building for the administration of the settlement.

Received a note from Mr King, refusing my invitation to dinner, with a very frivolous apology. Had polite cards from Mr Dawes and Mr Macaulay, accepting the same.

20 January 1793

Mr Horne [preached] for the first time to the natives, but I fear it did not make much impression on them. *Is it not truly ridiculous, to preach to any set of people in a language they do not understand?* Captain Morley arrived from Îles de Los.<sup>413</sup> He seems to be a good honest fellow and I am rather gratified by his being highly pleased at his sister's marriage.<sup>414</sup>

21 January 1793

Gave my wedding dinner this day to such gentlemen in the colony as chose to attend. Mr Horne was absent, sent word that he was unwell. Such a dinner in all probability was never seen on the Grain Coast of Africa.<sup>415</sup>

23 January 1793

Last Sunday, Divine Service was ordered to be performed twice a day throughout the week. The inconvenience of this is already felt, and the Company in the end will pay dear for it, for the workmen are an hour later in coming to their work than they used to be ... Is it not a pity that religion should be a cloak to vice and idleness?

25 January 1793

*An unpleasant circumstance happened yesterday. Mr Dawes wished me to take in about twenty feet from William Grant's lot, into the fence I am making round the Hummums. Grant refused the ground, and while Mr Dawes was speaking, the whole neighbourhood assembled. Unanimously they said, if we offered to fence in another inch of ground than what we had, they would pull the fence down. At the same time, they cried out loudly for their town and country lots. Till they get them, they would not resign an inch of what they had in possession. Mr Dawes said, if they would not show him more respect than they did, he would leave the country. With one voice: "You may do as soon as you please; God Almighty will take care of us".*

06 February 1793

*I have understood, though I could not credit it, that the lots of land are not to be laid out till next year. However, this day I am persuaded it is the case, as Mr Dawes told me that Mr Pepys, having little or nothing to do just now, wished to resume his place as Surveyor of Works ... He wished him to take the direction of the old wharf. I observed that it was unpleasant not to finish what I had begun, and that it was Mr Clarkson's last promise to me. To this I had no reply, but he told me Mr Pepys would take the direction of that wharf on Monday next.*

Mr Dawes at this time asked me what commutation I would take, in lieu of the Company finding my table etc. To this I replied, that I did not wish to say anything on that subject, as I had spoken to Mr Clarkson before he sailed, that it was a desirable thing, to have a table of one's own, and that I was sure

---

<sup>413</sup> The trading station outside to-day's Conakry.

<sup>414</sup> Morley was Anna Maria's brother-in-law.

<sup>415</sup> The parts of the West Coast of Africa were named the Grain, Ivory, Gold and Slave Coasts.

Mr Clarkson would do everything necessary concerning salary. This subject being ended, we parted. After recollecting myself a few minutes, I wrote the following letter to Mr Dawes:

Sir, you are no doubt acquainted, that I have written orders from Mr Clarkson for all the works I am carrying on in the colony. Therefore, as you intimated to me this day, that it was your intention to put a part of them immediately under the directions of Mr Pepys, I shall feel myself much obliged, if yourself and Mr Macaulay will signify your wishes on that subject, in writing, before any event of the kind takes place ...

I shortly after received the following note:

Messrs Dawes and Macaulay are total strangers to any orders which Mr Clarkson may have thought proper to give Mr DuBois before his departure for England, but Mr DuBois may depend on having written directions from them for every measure they may deem it expedient for the good of the colony.<sup>416</sup>

*Memorandum: If I am not to have the credit of finishing the works I have begun, I shall quit the colony. Mr Pepys talks of going home in a month or two. Is it not evident that taking the works from me is merely to fill up his reports and to enhance his value and depreciate mine with the Directors? I grant that Mr Pepys came out as Surveyor of Works, but who can tell me of any work which he has done in the department, except his own kitchen and that noble monument of his memory, the store house, which would long ago have tumbled down, and which would at this moment fall to the ground, was it not for the repairs I gave it very recently after it was erected? Why does he not finish laying out the lots of land ... besides the injustice done to the Nova Scotians in keeping them out of their lots, should the completing of them be postponed to next year?*

07 February 1793

I understand there was a great palaver with the settlers last night. The town lots were the subject. The people were called together to be informed that the town lots were ready; those they at present occupied, they were to quit directly. They asked how far the front lots were from the water, to which they were answered, 500 feet. They then said they would not move back so far, *but had the promise originally made them been attended to, then in that case they could have no objection to moving ...* Now as this promise was broken by the number of buildings on the river side, they looked upon it, [that] any obligation they were under on that score was also cancelled. They were determined not to give up these habitations *they now possessed, unless the lots were near the water.* They said none of the promises made them by Mr Clarkson in Nova Scotia were performed. They did not blame him for it; he could not lay out the lots himself. Mr Clarkson told them they would be treated as free men, and as well as white men. They believed Mr Clarkson, they said, to be an honourable man, and they were sure he would never have left them without performing his promises to them. Had he not been assured by the gentlemen he left behind, they should all be complied with?

Mr Pepys had told them that whatever promises Mr Clarkson made them in Nova Scotia were all from himself; he had no authority whatever for what he [had] said. He believed Mr Clarkson was drunk

---

<sup>416</sup> The African neighbours must have thought it strange, that officials in the tiny European settlement communicated in writing. The secretary Jakob Strand complained of a shortage of paper.

at the time he made them. This he repeated several times, and added that Mr Clarkson seldom knew or thought of what he said, so it was not to be wondered, he should make extraordinary promises, or words to that effect, besides many disrespectful things. With respect to the sea side being filled with houses, he said Mr DuBois had assumed an authority he had no right to – of building houses -- and that it was my fault all the houses were built; everything I am doing in the colony was without any authority whatever. He was to have the works directly, and he meant to pull them all down. But to this the people replied he had better let that alone, or he would bring himself into bad head (*sic*), for they would not see what had cost so much money destroyed, unless there was a good reason for it, and at present they saw none. I do not mind what he had said against me, so much as his ingratitude in endeavouring to poison the people against my friend.

Memorandum: He, *Richard Pepys*, is as black-hearted, insinuating a *villain* as this day exists. If he offers to take any more liberties with my character, I shall perhaps put him in mind of all at once, but for the sake of peace, I will be quiet now. However, I think I will tell him of it, the first time I meet him and Mr Dawes together.

09 February 1793

*I dislike the proceedings here more and more. In my life, I never lived among such an illiberal set.*

12 February 1793

My grumettas have almost all left me ... They do not like cutting down the woods, where they are just now working, as they say the Devil lives there and they do not wish to offend Him.<sup>417</sup>

16 February 1793

I am afraid, my dear Sir, you will neither take time to read or pleasure in receiving this strange kind of journal. Pray look over my faults with your usual goodness. I am sorry to tell you your presence is much wanted; unless you or someone of your disposition comes out, *this colony is lost*. I shall stay quietly, till I know whether you do really come or not. But should you not come, I cannot possibly remain here a week after I know it. Pray let me hear from you. Mrs DuBois begs her best wishes. Adieu, my dear Sir; do not forget that you have left one man behind you, who would cheerfully sacrifice his life to do you and this colony a *real service*. He is your sincere friend and humble servant, Isaac DuBois.

09 June 1793: I sail in about an hour, with Captain Morley ... You will not be pleased to hear of my leaving the colony, but I hope it is for the best. Believe me, unless the Directors will listen to truth, their colony is lost. Such conduct! Such everything you little dream of! Two of the black settlers, deputed by the whole, go home in the *Amy*, to represent their grievances. They have been shamefully trampled on since you went away. Mr Afzelius goes home in the *Amy*; he will deliver you this, with a large bird. Mrs DB begs her best respects to yourself and Mrs Clarkson. Adieu and believe me, most sincerely and affectionately yours, Isaac DuBois.

#### SUPPORTING INFORMATION FROM PADENHEIM

Daniel Wilhelm Padenheim published his account of the years 1792 and 1793 in the form of

---

<sup>417</sup> Perhaps the Africans were aware that when the forest is cut down, the heavy rain washes away the top-soil?

letters to a friend in Sweden.<sup>418</sup>

From Letter 3, 10 August 1792: In my previous letter, I mentioned the misunderstanding between the Superintendent and his Councillors. It is unfortunate that it arose and now, instead of subsiding and disappearing, it has swelled seriously and put the whole settlement into confusion, at least as far as our administration and social life are concerned. Naturally this has put us into a miserable situation. The orders given by one person are countermanded by another. The unfortunate consequences of this strike the settlers with full force. The management of the settlement had been entrusted to a Council of eight of the Company's foremost officials, but their unskilful, ambitious and eccentric character has made some of them want to take command and be obeyed under all circumstances. As they lacked the necessary experience and knowledge, this only increased the settlement's problems. In an attempt to save the settlement from approaching disaster, the Directors in London provisionally gave unlimited power to Lieutenant Clarkson as Superintendent, but unfortunately it was too late. Opposed by the Council, he went back to England, where he was dismissed ...

From Letter 4, 04 October 1792: Now they have decided to appoint, in addition to the Superintendent Clarkson, two Councillors and other assistants. The first of these Councillors is Marine-Lieutenant Dawes. He has spent a long time at Botany Bay<sup>419</sup> and is a man of understanding and experience. The other is a Scot called Macaulay, who has spent several years in the West Indies. These two are thus going to be the Superintendent's official advisers. A former West Indian plantation manager, called Watt, has also arrived; he will improve the settlement's agriculture. I am quite sure these three are knowledgeable men, each in his profession. But these terrible disagreements! Misunderstanding has already arisen between the Superintendent and his Councillors, about what I neither know nor care. It may be that they have been instructed to restrain the Superintendent, because his generosity towards the black settlers may have disquieted the Directors. It may also be the newcomers' own ambitions. Anyway, it is very unfortunate.

From Letter 5, probably March 1793, but incorrectly dated: The truly skilful DuBois has been dismissed by the Company and gone away in dudgeon.

#### SUPPORTING INFORMATION FROM ANNA MARIA

In 1792 the Company sent Alexander Falconbridge, with his brother, his wife Anna Maria and her brother, to rescue Granvilletown. Having done so, they returned to England, but Alexander and his wife were persuaded to go back to build Freetown. His salary was increased and the Company promised to look after Anna Maria, should anything happen to him. The Company probably understood that Alexander was drinking himself to death, but could do useful work, if his wife were with him. When John Clarkson arrived from Nova Scotia, he could replace Alexander.

---

<sup>418</sup> Daniel Wilhelm Padenheim, *Bref till en Vän i Sverige*. Stockholm: Kumblinska Tryckeriet, 1801, my translation.

<sup>419</sup> The earliest Australian penal settlement, near Sydney, New South Wales.

Anna Maria writes in Letter 7: "In a short time, he [Captain Wilson] confirmed our surmise, with regard to the disagreements subsisting between the parties, was well grounded, for they were constantly snarling at one another. But it required very little penetration to arrive at the true source of their animosities ... The Directors have appointed eight persons to represent them and conduct the management of their colony, under the dignified appellation of Superintendent and Council. It is a pity, when making these appointments, they had not probed for characters of worth and respectability, as success in any enterprise greatly hinges on skilful, prudent conduct – qualities more especially requisite in an undertaking like this, labouring under a load of enemies, who will, no doubt, take advantage to blow the smallest spark of mal-conduct into a flame of error. Perhaps the Directors imagine they were particularly circumspect in their choice of representatives. If so, they are grossly deceived. For never were characters worse adapted to manage any purpose of magnitude, than some whom they have nominated. Are men of little worth and much insignificance fit to be guardians and stewards of the immense property required for erecting the fabric of a new colony? Are men, whose heads are too shallow to support a little vicissitude and unexpected imaginary aggrandizement, whose weak minds delude them with wrong notions of the nominal rank, and whose whole time is occupied with contemplating their fancied consequence, in place of attending to the real and interesting designs of their mission, calculated for the executors of a theory which can only be put into practice by wise and judicious methods? Certainly not! Yet of this description are the greater part who guide and direct our colony. A majority came as passengers in the *Harpy*. Intoxicated with false ideas of their authority, they wished to assume the prerogatives of controlling Captain Wilson<sup>420</sup> in managing and governing his ship. But the latter treated their arrogance with contempt, and consequently grew the dissensions alluded to, which have since been the cause of many disagreeable, unpleasant consequences."

#### FREETOWN DIFFICULTIES

The Nova Scotians expected to be assigned land lots; most of 1792 and 1793 passed without this being done, partly due to the incompetence of the officials, and partly because some of the Directors of the Sierra Leone Company saw Freetown, not as a community of freeholders, but as a plantation with employed labourers instead of slaves. Much of Isaac's journal is about conflicts in the little settlement. It was difficult to recruit competent officials in England; the Company seems to have turned to Scots and Swedes. The Swedish historian Göran Rydén has shown how well-educated Swedes had limited opportunities at home.<sup>421</sup> Winterbottom, Macaulay and Watt were Scots. Adam Afzelius, August Nordenskiöld, Daniel Wilhelm Padenheim and Jakob Strand were Swedes.<sup>422</sup> Three publicists for colonisation were Swedes. Ulrik Nordenskiöld had published a treatise<sup>423</sup> and Anders Johansen had published on colonisation of the island of Bolama, near Bissau.<sup>424</sup> Neither of these two had ever been in Africa and both had brothers who were Swedenborgian journalists. The third was Carl Bernhard

---

<sup>420</sup> Captain of the *Harpy*; his wife was with him.

<sup>421</sup> Rydén, Göran, editor. *Sweden in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century World: Provincial Cosmopolitans*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013.

<sup>422</sup> The botanist Andreas Berlin had already died there 1773, as assistant to Henry Smeathman, 1742-1786.

<sup>423</sup> Nordenskiöld, Ulrik. *Afhandling om Nyttan för Sverige af Handel och Nybyggen i Indierna och på Africa*. Stockholm: Peter Hesselberg, 1776.

<sup>424</sup> Johansen, Anders. *A Geographical and Historical Account of the Island of Bulama, with Observations on its Climate, Productions &c, and an Account of the Formation and Progress of the Bulam Association and of the Colony itself, to which are Added a Variety of Authentic Documents and a Description Map of the Island and Adjoining Continent*. London: Martin & Bain, 1794.

Wadström, 1746-1799, who had at least spent a few months in Senegal in 1787 and published his two-volume *Essay on Colonization* in 1794/1795. I have not found any contracts for Company officials.<sup>425</sup> The Swedish botanist Adam Afzelius had with him a long letter from Joseph Banks, promising food and lodging, clothes, tools, servants and assistants.<sup>426</sup>

## HEALTH

The Company Chairman, Henry Thornton, wrote to John Clarkson 30 December 1791 that “none but eccentric or disloyal persons were likely to go out so soon”. One reason was the legend of the White Man’s Grave. White men and women often died soon after arriving in West Africa. James Philips’ 1795 *Account of the Colony ...* reports on page 47:

26 upper servants went out; no more than 4 died ... only 2 can properly be charged to the climate. 59 lower servants went out, 29 died. 18 settlers went out from England; 13 died, some of these much addicted to liquor. 16 soldiers went out, 11 died, almost universally intemperate.

At the same time, Anna Maria observed that “deaths are not frequent among the natives; indeed, I have not heard of one since we arrived.”<sup>427</sup> In Letter 8 she says: “I cannot imagine what kind of stuff I am made of, for though daily in the midst of so much sickness and so many deaths, I feel myself much better than when in England.” The excessive consumption of alcohol must have been both a cause and an effect of the legend. Rum was a remedy for stress and often a method of payment.<sup>428</sup> On her first visit, in the trading post on Bunce Island, Anna Maria was “astonished to see not only the men, but [also] the women, drink rum in half-pints, as deliberately as I would water”.<sup>429</sup>

Philip Curtin in the 1961 *Journal of British Studies* presented an epidemiological analysis. The Europeans did not understand that different diseases, for example, malaria, yellow fever or the less dangerous salmonella, require different preventions and different cures. Common treatments, such as blood-letting, were, in Curtin’s phrase, “enough to kill even a healthy person”. Adam Afzelius and Thomas Winterbottom understood that traditional African medicine could be effective. All the eye-witnesses comment on how the Africans washed themselves several times a day, but none of them seem to have followed this example.<sup>430</sup> There is no mention of sexually transmitted diseases, nor of latrines or refuse disposal. A convincing story from an unpublished historical novel by the American scholar Mary Louise Clifford:<sup>431</sup>

The doctors sent out by the Company are of very little use to the settlers, for they know almost nothing about treating malaria (which they called "ague"), sunstroke, scurvy, dysentery, or

---

<sup>425</sup> In the National Archives in Freetown is an undated manuscript, *Orders from the Directors of the Sierra Leone Company*, probably from 1791, which mentions annexed town plans house plans and contracts, but all these are missing.

<sup>426</sup> Joseph Banks, 1743-1820, was Director of the Royal Botanical Gardens. JBK/1/5/ Volume 2, 28 December 1791 and 2 January 1792.

<sup>427</sup> Fyfe, *Anna Maria Falconbridge*, Letter 4, page 49.

<sup>428</sup> A century later, workers on the canal across Sweden were partially paid in rum. The British Navy was still dispensing rum in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

<sup>429</sup> Falconbridge, *Narrative*, Letter 3.

<sup>430</sup> “The women are remarkable for the attention they bestow on the cleanliness of their persons; they wash several times a day.” Winterbottom, *An Account of the Native Africans*, pages 102, 103.

<sup>431</sup> She lived for some years in Sierra Leone and has published: *From Slavery to Freetown: Black Loyalists after the American Revolution*. Jefferson NC: McFarland, 1999.



rheumatism. They have only chinchona bark (from which quinine would later be derived), opium, and laudanum to work with. Dr. Bell is already dead. Dr. Charles Thomas ministered to the sick during the winter passage from Nova Scotia, but the chills and fevers raging in the soggy equatorial heat are not part of his experience. Knowing how little he can do to aid the stricken, the hapless doctor wanders away almost daily to King Jemmy's town nearby, where (according to his journal)<sup>432</sup> he admires the flora, fauna, and nubile young women, who wear nothing but wrap-arounds called *lapas*<sup>433</sup> and strings of beads. The spectacle of these half-naked women is a shocking contrast to the pious atmosphere ordained by the Company ... Those who fall sick have very little effective medical attention, save for the healing skills of a young African woman who seeks refuge in the settlement. She has fled Signor Domingo's<sup>434</sup> village upriver, because he intends to sell her, or so she claims. When she sees how many of the settlers are stricken with fever, she immediately brews infusions of local barks and herbs, which ease the symptoms for many of the sick. They are so delighted that they ask John Clarkson to buy her; the men pledge their labour to pay for her. He is very reluctant to get involved in the slave trade, but how can he refuse to redeem slaves who claim refuge in Freetown, particularly at the urging of leading settlers? In any case, this African woman is allowed to stay, after promising that she wear a blouse with her *lapa*.

#### SURVEYING

As well as the difficulty of finding a competent Superintendent, the Company never had a competent Surveyor. When Padenheim arrived 18 February 1792, he was for a month not allowed to go ashore;<sup>435</sup> was the British surveyor afraid that the Swede would take over? On 31 July 1792 John Clarkson asked the Surveyor of Works Richard Pepys to take over from the Land Surveyor Cocks:

As Mr Cocks has left this place and has done no one thing but create confusion and expense to the Company, and has neglected the grand object of laying out the lots of land, which is of the most serious consequence to the Sierra Leone Company, I must therefore request that you will take upon you the charge of so important an employ, to lay out the different lots in the manner I have mentioned in the enclosed paper. I should wish you to give up every other pursuit, should it in the least interfere with the business I am speaking of, and whatever assistance you may want to enable you to complete this serious work, you must inform me and I will order you every help in my power."<sup>436</sup>

Before John Clarkson arrived with his thousand Nova Scotians, Alexander Falconbridge had had time to agree with King Naimbana on a new town site, but not to lay it out in building lots. It would not have been a difficult task. Was the slowness due to incompetence, or did the surveyor hope for "kick-backs"? Even the destitute Nova Scotians could offer sexual or other services. Their concept of Freedom

---

<sup>432</sup> I have not seen this journal, unless it is the anonymous notebook in A5 format, British Library MS-41,264, Clarkson Papers Volume IV.

<sup>433</sup> A *lapa* is an African wrap-around skirt.

<sup>434</sup> A local African chief, of Cape Verdean origin.

<sup>435</sup> Padenheim, *Brev till en Vän i Sverige*, Letter 2.

<sup>436</sup> British Library EAP 284/3/1, images 22, 23 & 24.

had three levels: A slave did not even have the freedom of his own body. A tenant did not have the freedom of his own home. A free citizen had some say in how he or she was governed.<sup>437</sup>

Was the Sierra Leone Company a philanthropic project, to build a New Jerusalem for the Nova Scotians? Or was it a business venture, in the long run competitive with the slave-plantations? And was this business primarily trade with Africans in so-called non-slave commodities, or was it agriculture for export? On 30 December 1791 Henry Thornton wrote to John Clarkson:

... whether settlers in our district shall have the right to trade or not ... it seems reasonable that we who are at the expense of governing them, setting up a factory and giving even a free passage ... should have the profits of trade to ourselves ... it is not our principle, however, to maintain a strict monopoly.

#### EUROPEANS AND AFRICANS

The Europeans arrived with a general contempt for African medicine, building methods and entrepreneurship. Anna Maria observed that on the Bunce Island trading station "every gentleman has his lady"<sup>438</sup> but the Company policy about sexual relations between Europeans and Africans was different from the trading company policies:

Bad morals of our servants ... if they are flagrant, suspend ... if they are not quite flagrant, exercise your counsel ... the taking of black or indeed of white women into keeping ... habitual neglect of public worship ... open profanation of the Sabbath ... must, in a colony like this, founded on Christian principles, be kept quite down.<sup>439</sup>

Freetown was an island with puritan Abolitionist rules, surrounded by Africans and European traders with quite different rules. British colonial management continued to be so. In Graham Greene's novel,<sup>440</sup> the colonial officials have some contact with Lebanese traders, but almost none with Africans, except as servants. There is no record of any eighteenth century European trying to learn an African language, although few Africans were fluent in English, French or Portuguese. In 1773 the botanist Henry Smeathman in Sierra Leone advised his young Swedish assistant Andreas Berlin to arrange an African mistress and drink less; Berlin did neither and died the first year. Some European traders and officials formed African families and stayed in Africa, but none of them took an African wife back to Europe. Wadström relates from his 1787 visit to Senegal, my translation:

Miss Sophi, one of the most beautiful mulatto-girls, confidentially proposed marrying me, for as long as I stayed here ... I did not accept the lovely Sophi's proposal, but I was assured that these African girls were always faithful during their so-called marriages. Their warmth and sincere friendship, together with their clean and supple bodies, made them truly attractive and beautiful

---

<sup>437</sup> Representative democracy was still an untried form of government in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Nova Scotians belonged to at least seven Christian sects, including the Countess of Huntingdon's Connection, with republican traditions.

<sup>438</sup> It was also so on Swedish Saint Barthélemy; see Thomasson, Fredrik. *Ports of Globalization and Places of Creolization: Nordic Possessions in the Atlantic World during the Era of the Slave Trade*, Leiden and Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2015.

<sup>439</sup> Thornton does not explain the difference between flagrant and not quite flagrant in his letter to John Clarkson, 30 December 1791, British Library MS Add 41,262 A, page 4.

<sup>440</sup> Greene, Graham. *The Heart of the Matter*. London: Heinemann, 1948.

and more so than the European girls. The African girls were so faithful to their European lovers that when they found themselves abandoned, they often went out of their minds and took their own lives. Nevertheless, they usually are abandoned, because prejudice does not allow a white European to marry formally a black or mulatto girl; those who do so are treated with contempt."<sup>441</sup>

---

<sup>441</sup> Carl Bernhard Wadström. *C. B. Wadströms Resa ifrån Stockholm genom Danmark, Tyskland och Frankrike till Senegal-länderna i Afrika åren 1787 & 1788*. Stockholm: J. P. Marquard, 1811, letter 11.

## SUGGESTED ILLUSTRATIONS

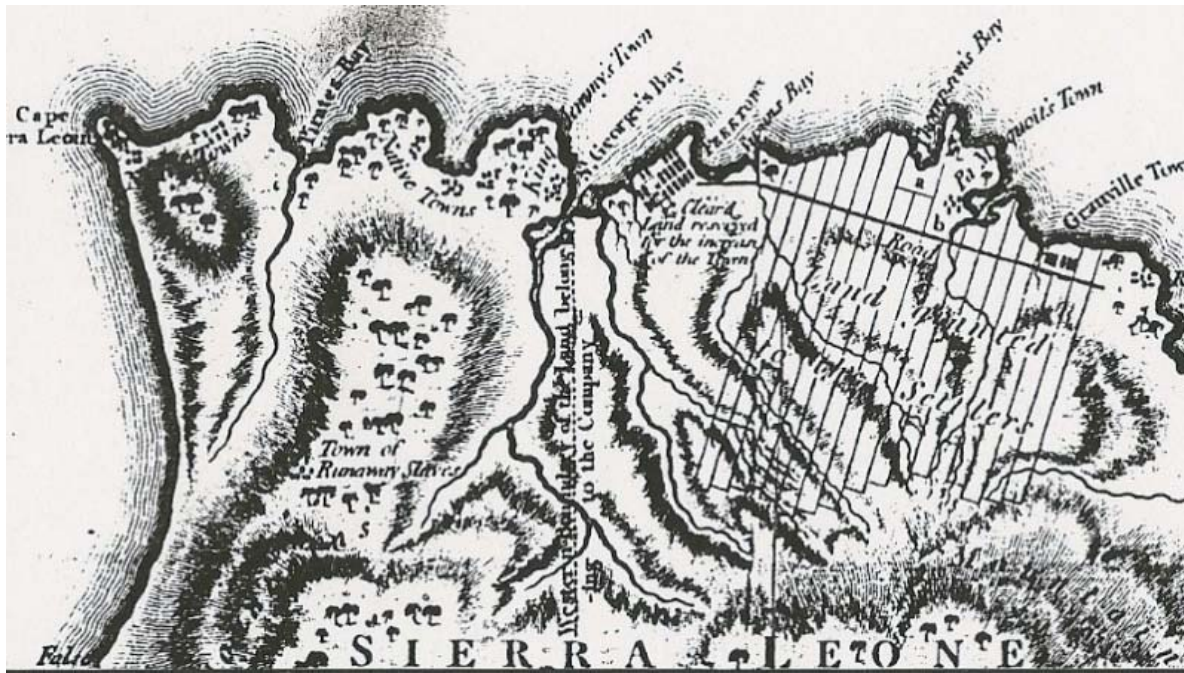
From the Atlas of Sierra Leone, Survey & Lands Department, 1953.

The western coast of to-day's Republic of Sierra Leone. The lion-like mountain marks the mouth of the Sierra Leone River. To the south are the Banana Islands and Sherbro Island.



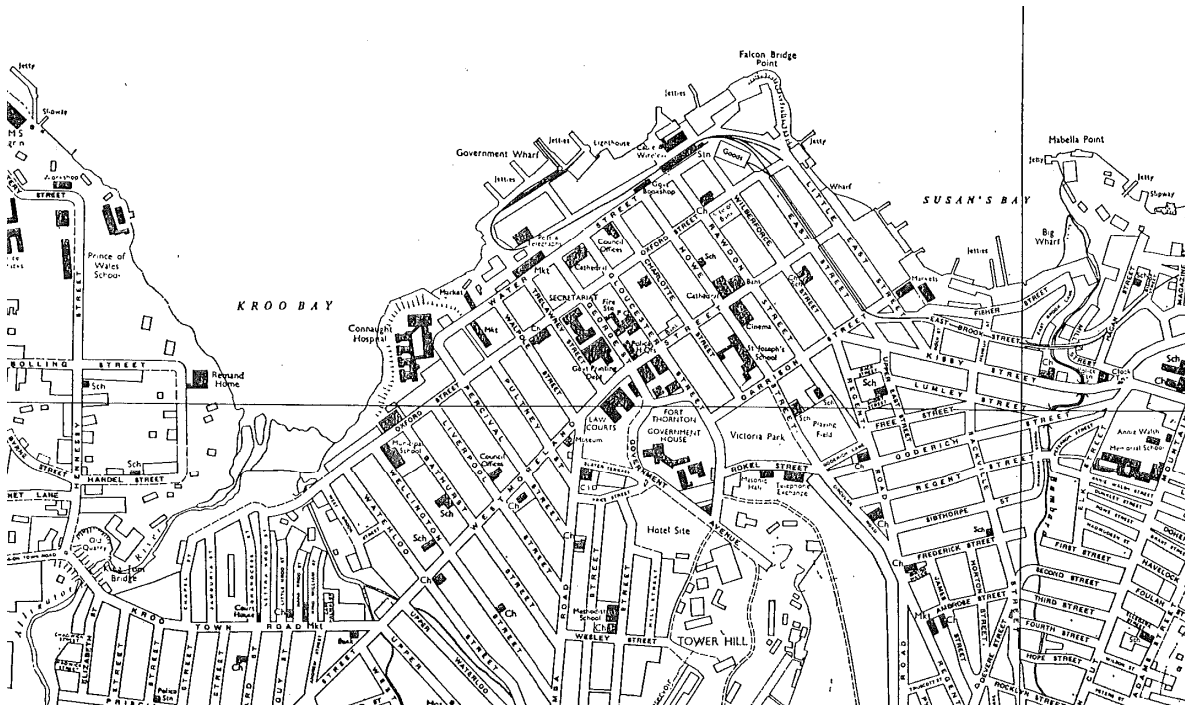
From The Sierra Leone Company. *An Account of the Colony of Sierra Leone ...* London: James Philips, 1795. *Plan of Sierra Leone and the Parts Adjacent.*

(Note: "Land Reserved for the Increase of the Town, Land Granted to the Settlers, Granville Town, Town of Runaway Slaves").



From R. J. Olu-Wright. *The Physical Growth of Freetown*. Freetown: Sierra Leone University Press, 1968.

The Central Business District of Freetown was still in 1968 as laid out in 1792. The railway has now been abandoned and the names of many of the streets have been changed, but the overall plan is unchanged.



---

### Jonathan Howard's Bibliography of articles and other publications relating to Sierra Leone

BL = British Library, SL = Sierra Leone, NS = Nova Scotia, WI = West Indies,

RBG = Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, UP = university press

Abasiattai, M. B. *The Search for Independence: New World Blacks in Sierra Leone and Liberia 1787-1847*. In *Journal of Black Studies*, SAGE Periodicals Press, 1992.

Ackroyd, Peter. *William Blake*. London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1995.

Afzelius, Adam. *An Account of the State of the Public Gardens in Sierra Leone, 1794*. British Library Add MS – 1794-11.

Ahlskog, Jonas. *The Political Economy of Colonisation: C. B. Wadström ... Sjuttonhundratalet ... 2010*.

- Ajadán-Lester, Luis. *De Andra: Afrikaner i Svensk Pedagogiska Texter 1768-1965*. Lund: Institution för Nordiska Språk, 1997.
- Alie, J. A. D. *A New History of Sierra Leone*. London: Macmillan Overseas, 1990.<sup>442</sup>
- Ambjörnsson, Ronny. *Guds Republique: en Utopi från 1789*. In *Lychnos* 0076-1648, 1975.
- Ambjörnsson, Ronny. *Det Okända Landet: Tre Studier om Svenska Utopister*. Stockholm: Gidlund, 1981.
- Ambjörnsson, Ronny. *Fantasin till Makten: Utopiska Idéer i Västerlandet under 500 År*. Stockholm: Ordfront, 2004.
- Ambjörnsson, Ronny and John Hanning Speke. *Flodsökarna*. Staffanstorps: Cavefors, 1969.
- Anderson, David, and Richard Rathbone. *Urban Africa: Histories in the Making*. Oxford: James Currey, 2000.
- Anonymous. *Reasons against Giving a Territorial Grant to a Company of Merchants to Colonize and Cultivate the Peninsular of Sierra Leone on the Coast of Africa*. London: 1791.
- Anstey, R. and P. E. H. Hair, editors. *Liverpool, the African Slave Trade and Abolition*. Widnes: Cheshire, 0305-9375, 1976.
- Anthony, George Samuel Oluwole. *A History of the Freetown City Council*. London: Tamare House, 2012.
- Arppe, A. E. *Anteckningar om Finska Alkemister*. Helsingfors: 1867.
- Atkinson, Alan. *The Europeans in Australia: a History*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Banbury, G. A. L. *Sierra Leone or the White Man's Grave*. London: 1888.
- Barbot, Jean. *Description of Voyages to Guinea 1678 & 1681*. London: Henry Lintet & John Osborne, 1746.<sup>443</sup>
- Barclay, Oliver. *Thomas Fowell Buxton and the Liberation of Slaves*. 2010.
- Beaver, Philip. *African Memoranda: Relative to an Attempt to Establish a British Settlement on the Island of Bulama, on the Western Coast of Africa, in the Year 1792, with a Brief Notice of the Neighbouring Tribes, Soil, Productions and some Observations on the Facility of Colonizing that Part of Africa, with a View to Cultivation and the Introduction of Letters and Religions to its Inhabitants, but More Particularly as the Means of Gradually Abolishing African Slavery*. London: C. and R. Baldwin, 1805.
- Behrendt, S. D. *Crew Mortality in the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*. 1997.
- Benezet, Anthony. *A Short Account of that Part of Africa Inhabited by the Negroes, with Respect to the Fertility of the Country, the Good Disposition of Many of the Natives and the Manner by which the Slave Trade is Carried On*. Philadelphia: W. Dunlap, 1762.
- Berg, Lasse. *När Sverige Upptäckte Afrika*. Stockholm: Rabén Prisma, 1997.
- Berg, Lasse. *Ut ur Kalahari*. Stockholm: Ordfront, 2014.
- Berglund-Lake, Håkan. *Om att Bo i Arbetar-kasernernas Spiselrum*. In *Bebyggelsehistorisk tidskrift* #68, 2014.
- Beskow, Bernhard von. *Minne af Övfver-Direktören C. B. Wadström*. Stockholm: 1861.
- Björkas, Mattias. *Bref från Colonien*. Åbo Akademi: Avhandling pro gradu, 2008.

---

<sup>442</sup> For high-school students.

<sup>443</sup> Also edited by Paul Hair for the Hakluyt Society, 1992.

- Bluett, Thomas. *Some Memories of the Life of Job*. London: Richard Ford, 1734.<sup>444</sup>
- Bodman, Gösta. *August Nordenskjöld: en Gustav III Alkemist*. Pages 189-229 in *Lychnos*, 1943.
- Bohls, Elizabeth A. *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics 1716-1818*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995.<sup>445</sup>
- Bosman, Willem. *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea*. London: James Knapton & Dan Midwinter, 1705.
- Brachan, C. and M. Ellis and S. Salih, editors. *Discourses of Slavery and Abolition: Britain and its Colonies 1760-1838*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
- Braidwood, Stephen J. *Black Poor and White Philanthropists: London's Blacks and the Foundation of the Sierra Leone Settlement 1786-1791*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1994.<sup>446</sup>
- Broadie, Alexander, editor. *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Brooks, George E. *Bolama as a Prospective Site for American Colonization in the 1820s and 1840s*. Bissau: Boletim Cultural da Guiné Portuguesa #109, ano 28. 1973.
- Brooks, George E. *The Providence Africa Society's Sierra Leone Emigration Scheme*. 1974.
- Brown, Peter Douglas. *The Chathamites*. London: Macmillan, 1967.
- Byrd, Alexander X. *Captives and Voyagers: Black Emigrants across the 18th Century British Atlantic*. Louisiana State UP: 2008.
- Bååth-Holmberg, C. *Om C. B. Wadström*. 1961.
- Campbell, Mavis C. *Back to Africa: George Ross and the Maroons from Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone*. Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 1993.
- Carreira, António. *Os Portugueses nos Rios de Guiné 1500-1900*. Lisboa: Lithografia Tejo, 1984.
- Chambers, Neil. *Joseph Banks and the British Museum*. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2007.
- Christensson, Jakob. *Lyckoriket: Studier i Svensk Uppllysning*. Stockholm: Atlantis, 1996.
- Christopher, Emma. *Slave Ship Sailors and their Captive Cargoes 1730-1807*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006.
- Clark, Peter. *Migration in England during the Late 17th and Early 18th Centuries*. In "Past and Present" #83, May 1979.
- Clarke, J. J. and others, editors. *Sierra Leone in Maps*. London: London UP, 1966/1969.<sup>447</sup>
- Clarkson, John. *Journal 1791-1792*. British Library: Add MS 41,262.
- Clarkson, John. *Correspondence*. British Library: Add MS 41263.
- Clarkson, John. *Diary of Lieutenant J. Clarkson, RN*. Freetown: SL Studies 8:1-114.
- Clarkson, Thomas. *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species*. London: Joseph Cruikshank, 1786.
- Clarkson, Thomas. *Report to the Company on the Economic Potential of Sierra Leone, 1791*. British Library Add MS 12131.

---

<sup>444</sup> On Job ben Solomon / Ayuba Suleiman Diallo, sold as a slave to Maryland, 1731.

<sup>445</sup> Cambridge Studies in Romanticism #13.

<sup>446</sup> Also in Liverpool Historical Studies 99-0821075-0:10.

<sup>447</sup> Situation in 1961 only.



- Clifford, Mary Louise. *The Land and People of Sierra Leone*. New York: Lippincott, 1974.
- Clifford, Mary Louise. *Saleh of Sierra Leone: A Novel*. 1975.
- Clifford, Mary Louise. *From Slavery to Freetown: Black Loyalists after the American Revolution*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 1999.
- Coleman, Deirdre. *Sierra Leone, Slavery and Sexual Politics: Anna Maria Falconbridge and the "Swarthy Daughter" of Late 18<sup>th</sup> Century Abolitionism*. In *Women's Writing*, Volume 2:1, 1995.
- Coleman, Deirdre. *Maiden Voyages and Infant Colonies*. London: Leicester University Press, 1999.
- Coleman, Deirdre. *Bulama and Sierra Leone: Utopian Islands and Visionary Activities*. In Rod Edmund and Vanessa Smith, editors, *Islands in History and Representation*. Routledge, 2003.
- Coleman, Deirdre. *Romantic Colonization and British Anti-Slavery*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Coleman, Deirdre. *Henry Smeathman and the Natural Economy of Slavery*. In Carey, Brycchan and Peter Kitson, editors. *Slavery and the Cultures of Abolition: Essays Marking the Bicentennial of the British Abolition Act of 1807*. Boydell & Brewer, 2007.
- Corry, Joseph. *Observations on the Windward Coast of Africa*. London: G. and W. Nicol, 1807.
- Cumberland, George. *The Captive of the Castle of Senaar: An African Tale*. 1789.
- Curtin, Philip D. *The White Man's Grave 1789-1850*. In *Journal of British Studies* 1:1961.
- Curtin, Philip D. *The Image of Africa 1780-1850*. London: Macmillan, 1965.
- Curtin, Philip D. *Africa Remembered: Narratives of West Africans from the Era of the Slave Trade*. Madison: Wisconsin University Press, 1967.
- Dahlgren, Erik W. *Carl Bernhard Wadström i England och Afrika*. Uppsala: Nordisk Tidskrift, 1915.
- Darwin, Erasmus. *The Botanic Garden*. Dublin: J. Moore, 1791.<sup>448</sup>
- Davidson, Basil. *A History of West Africa*. Garden City NJ: Doubleday, 1966.
- Davidsson, Sten. *Det Gudomliga Samhället: Swedenborgskt Afrika-Projekt och Religiös Utopi*. Uppsala University thesis, 1975.
- Davies, D. B. *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution 1770-1823*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1975.
- Davies, E. *The Architecture of Freetown*. In *Freetown: A Symposium*, q.v.
- Day, Lynda R. *Afro-British Integration on the Sherbro Coast 1665-1795*. 1983.
- De Corse, Christopher. *The Europeans in West Africa: Contact, Continuity and Change*. London: Leicester UP, 1998.
- De Soto, Hernando. *The Mystery of Capital : Why Capital Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*. London: Bantam, 2000.
- Demanet, Abbé. *Nouvelle Histoire de l'Afrique Française, Enrichie de Cartes et d'Observations Astronomiques et Géographiques*. Paris: 1767.
- Des Marchais, Reynaud. *Voyages du Chevalier des Marchais en Guinée, Îles Voisines et à Cayenne en 1725–1727*. Amsterdam: Ordre des Frères Prêcheurs, 1730.

---

<sup>448</sup> Poem.

- Desmond, Ray. *Kew: The History of the Royal Botanical Gardens*. London: Harvill, 1995.
- Dickinson, Thorold, and J. C. Shees, directors. *Power among Men*. United Nations Film Service, 1959.
- Dickson, W. *Strictures on Miss Williams' Memoires of Wadström, showing that the Essay on Colonization was Compiled by W. Dickson LLD*. London: Monthly Magazine, #52, 1799.
- Donelha, André. *Descrição da Serra Leoa e dos Rios de Guiné do Cabo Verde 1625*. Lisboa: Junta de Investigações Científicas do Ultramar, 1977.
- Dorigny, Marcel. *La Société des Amis des Noirs et les Projets de Colonisation en Afrique*. Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française, Volume 293 :1, 1993.
- Drescher, Seymour. *Capitalism and Anti-Slavery*. London: Macmillan, 1986.
- Drescher, Seymour. *The Mighty Experiment: Free Labour vs. Slavery in British Emancipation*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002.
- Driver, F. and L. Martins, editors. *Tropical Visions in an Age of Empire*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2005.
- Dubois, Isaac. *Journal, from my Departure from the Colony 16<sup>th</sup> July 1793*. British Library, Add MS 41,263, Volume 3.
- Duyker, Edward. *Nature's Argonaut: Daniel Solander*. Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 1998.
- Eamon, M. C. F. *Paul Cuffee*. Freetown: SL Studies # 12, 1956.
- Edmond, Rod and Vanessa Smith, editors. *Islands in History and Representation*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Ek, Sverker. *Kellgren och Gustav III*. Stockholm: 1933.
- Eklund, Peter. *Carl Bernhard Wadström och det Goda Samhället*. Uppsala thesis, 1998.
- Eschesseriaux. *On C. B. Wadström's Colonization Proposal*. 1798.
- Fagerstedt, Otto and Sverker Sörlin. *Linné och hans Apostlar*. Stockholm: Natur & Kultur, 2004.
- Falconbridge, Alexander. *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa: by Alexander Falconbridge, Late Surgeon in the African Trade*. 1788.
- Falconbridge, Anna Maria. *Two Voyages to Sierra Leone during the Years 1791, 1792, 1793, in a Series of Letters*. London: printed for the author, 1794.
- Fara, Patrícia. *Sex, Botany and Empire: the Story of Carl Linnaeus and Joseph Banks*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Ferguson, Moira. *Subject to Others: British Women Writers and Colonial Slavery 1670-1834*. Metuchen NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1992.
- Foray, Cyril P. *Historical Dictionary of Sierra Leone*. Metuchen & London: Scarecrow Press, 1977.
- Forna, Aminatta. *The Devil that Danced on the Water*. London: Harper Collins, 2002.
- Forna, Aminatta. *Ancestor Stones*. London: Bloomsbury, 2006.
- Forna, Aminatta. *Memory of Love*. London: Bloomsbury, 2010.
- Fox, Richard Hingston. *Dr John Fothergill and his Friends: Chapters in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Life*. Cornell University Press, 2009.
- Fyfe, Christopher. *A History of Sierra Leone*. London: Oxford University Press, 1962.
- Fyfe, Christopher, editor. *Our Children Free and Happy: Letters from Black Settlers in Africa in the 1790s*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991.
- Fyfe, Christopher and Eldred Jones, editors. *Freetown: a Symposium*. Freetown: 1968.
- Fyfe, Christopher. *Race, Empire and De-colonisation*. Edinburgh : Centre for African Studies, 1997.
- Fyfe, Christopher, editor. *Anna Maria & Alexander Falconbridge & Issac DuBois*. 2000.
- Gainot, Bernard. *L'Établissement Libre de Sierra Leone et les Projets de Colonisation Nouvelles en Afrique 1783-1802*. Paris: Cahiers Charles V, 2009.
- Gerzma, G. H. *Black Loyalists in London after the American Revolution*. ??

- Golbery, Sylvain Meinrad Xavier de. *Fragmens d'un Voyage en Afrique Fait pendant les Années 1785, 1786 et 1787 dans les Contrées Occidentales de ce Continent, comprises entre le Cap Blanc de Barbarie et le Cap de Palmes*. Paris: Treuttal et Würtz, 1802.
- Granlund, Victor. *En Svensk Afrikakoloni*. 1879.
- Greene, Graham. *The Heart of the Matter*. London: Heinemann, 1948.
- Hagen, Ellen. *En Frihets Son: Carl Bernhard Wadström*. Stockholm: Gothia, 1946.
- Hair, P. E. H. *A Bibliographic Guide to Sierra Leone 1650-1800*. 1960.
- Hair, P. E. H. *Elephants for Want of Towns: The Inter-ethnic and International History of Bulama Island 1456–1870*. New Jersey: Rutgers University, African Studies Association, History in Africa, volume 24, 1997.
- Hair, P. E. H. *Franciscan Missionaries and the 1752 'Donation of Sierra Leone'*. Journal of Religion in Africa, 30:4, 2000.
- Hallet, Robin. *Western Africa up to 1830*. 1965.
- Hallet, Robin. *Africa to 1875*. London: Heinemann, 1974.
- Halifax, Lord. *Proposals for the Establishment of a Civil Government and the Settlement of a Number of Protestant Subjects in the Province of Nova Scotia*. House of Lords Records Office, Nova Scotia Papers, bundle A#1f, 3740.
- Hamberg, Erik. *Anders Berlin: En Linnéan I Västafrika*. Uppsala: Svenska Linnésällskapets Årsskrift, 1994.
- Hansen, Lars, editor. *The Linnaeus Apostles*. IK Foundation, 2007/2010.
- Harvey, M. and J. C. Dewdney. *Planning Problems in Freetown*. In Freetown: A Symposium.
- Hegardt, Stig B. *Drottningholm under 400 År*. 1983.
- Hoare, Prince. *Memoires of Granville Sharp, Composed from his own Manuscripts and other Authentic Documents in the Possession of his Family and of the African Institution*. London: 1828.
- Hochschild, Adam. *Bury the Chains*. London: Macmillan, 2005.
- Hughes, H. G. A. *Philip Beaver and the Settlement at Bulama 1792-1793*. 1991.
- Hunt, Tristram. *Building Jerusalem: the Rise and Fall of the Victorian City*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1974.
- Häll, Jan. *In Swedenborg's Labyrinth*. 1995.
- Höjer, Signe. *I ett Vaknande Afrika*. Stockholm: LT, 1983.
- Jacobson, Carl Olof. *Den Mångsidige Linné*. Stockholm: Parnass 2007:1.
- Johansen, Anders. *A Geographical and Historical Account of the Island of Bulama, with Observations on its Climate, Productions &c, and an Account of the Formation and Progress of the Bulam Association and of the Colony Itself, to which are Added a Variety of Authentic Documents and a Description Map of the Island and Adjoining Continent*. London: 1794.
- Kandé, Sylvie. *Terres, Urbanisme et Architecture Créoles en Sierra Leone XVII-XIX Siècles*. Paris & Montréal: L'Harmattan, 1998.
- Kapuscinski, Ryszard. *Heban*, Warsaw, 1998, translated from Polish as *The Shadow of the Sun* by Klara Glowczewska, Penguin, 2001.

- Kasula, Samuel. *Historical Atlas of Africa*. 1998.
- Kellgren, Johan Henric. *Förslag till Nybyggen Anläggande i Indien och på Africanska Kusten: Nya Handelsbiblioteket Utgifvit af J. H. Kellgren, Kongl. Bibliotekarie*. Stockholm: A. S. J. Nordström, 1784.
- Kindmark, Kristina and György Nováky. *Imperiets Budbärare: Henry Smeathman på Resa i Sierra Leone 1771–1774*. Lund: Historiska Media, 2000.
- Kup, Peter Alexander. *Freetown in 1794*. Freetown: Sierra Leone Studies #11, 1958.
- Kup, Peter Alexander. *History of Sierra Leone 1400-1787*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1961.
- Kup, Peter Alexander. *Adam Afzelius' Sierra Leone Journal 1792-1795*. Uppsala: Studie Ethnographica Upsaliensis, 27-1969.
- Land, I. and A. Schocket. *New Approaches to the Founding of the Sierra Leone Colony 1786–1808*. Baltimore: Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History, Volume 9:3, John Hopkins University Press, 2008.
- Landell, Nils Erik. *Linné och Swedenborg som Trädgårdsmästare*. Stockholm: Swedenborg Forum, 2015.
- Lamm, Martin. *Emanuel Swedenborg*. Stockholm: Geber, 1915.
- Lesch, Bruno. *Jan Anders Jägerhorn: Patriot, och Världsmedborgare, Separatist och Emigrant*. Helsingfors: Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland, 0039-1941.
- Le Maire. *Voyages aux Îles Canar, Cap Verde, Sénégal et Gambie*. Paris: 1696.
- Levison, George Gumpertz. *Utkast til Physiska Anmärkningar öfwer Lefnadssättet i Stockholm upsatt wid Genomresan af en Engelsk Läkare*. Stockholm: 1780.
- Lind, James. *Essay on Diseases Incidental to Europeans in Hot Climates*. London: T. Becket & P. A. de Hondt, 1768.
- Lindroth, Sten. *Adam Afzelius: en Linnean i England och Sierra Leone*. Uppsala: 1945.
- Littlejohn, James. *The Temne House*. Freetown: Sierra Leone Studies #14, 1960.
- Lovejoy, Paul E. and Suzanne Schwarz, editors. *Slavery, Abolition and the Transition to Colonialism in Sierra Leone*. Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 2015.
- Lowe, John. *Liberty or Death: a Tract by which is Vindicated the Obvious Practicability of Trading the Coast of Guinea for its Natural Products in Lieu of the Slave Trade, Much More to the Interest of the Merchants in General and the Kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland in General*. Manchester: 1789.
- Lukach, Henry Charles. *A Bibliography of Sierra Leone*. 1910.
- Macaulay, Zachary. *Journal 1793-1797*. British Library, Add MS 25126, 35133, 36461, 38270.
- Maddy, Nadia. *The Palm Oil Stain*. London: New Generation Publishing, 2011.
- Magbaily-Fyle, C. *A Nationalist History of Sierra Leone*. Freetown: 2011.
- Makdisi, Saree. *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity*. New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Malmberg, Carl Johan. *Stjärnan I Foten: Dikt och Bild, Bok och Tanke hos William Blake*. Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 2013.
- Manning, Patrick. *Slavery and African Life*. 1990.
- Mansén, Elisabeth. *Sveriges Historia 1721-1830*. Stockholm: Norstedts, 2011.
- Mark, Peter. *Portuguese Style and Luso-African Identity*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2002.

- Matthews, John. *A Voyage to the River Sierra Leone on the Coast of Africa, Containing an Account of the Trade and Productions of the Country and of the Civil and Religious Customs and Manners of the People*. London: B. White and Son, 1788.
- Matthews, Susan. *Blake, Sexuality and Bourgeois Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011.
- Martin, E. C. *The British West African Settlements 1751-1821*. London; University thesis.
- Mitchell, P. K. *18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Printed Maps of Sierra Leone*. Freetown: SL Studies #22, 1968.
- Mouser, Bruce L. *Who and Where Were the Baga? European Perceptions from 1793 to 1821*. In *History in Africa*, Volume 29, African Studies Association, 2002.
- Mouser, Bruce L. *American Colony on the Rio Pongo: the War of 1812, the Slave Trade and the Proposed Settlement of African Americans*. Trenton N J: Africa World Press, 2013.
- Mitchell, P. K. *18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Printed Maps of Sierra Leone: a Preliminary Listing*. Freetown: Sierra Leone Studies #22, 1968.
- Montefiore, Joshua. *An Authentic Account of the Late Expedition to Bulam on the Coast of Africa, with a Description of the Present Settlement of Sierra Leone and the Adjacent Country*. London: J. Johnson, 1794.
- Naum, Magdalena and Jonas Nordin. *Scandinavian Colonialism and the Rise of Modernity*. New York: Springer, 2013.
- Nelson, P. K. *Carl Bernhard Wadström: Mannen bakom Myten*. Norrköping: Föreningen Gamla Norrköping, 1998.
- Njoh, Ambe J. *Planning Power: Town Planning and Social Control in Colonial Africa*. New York: Routledge-Cavendish, 2007.
- Nordenskiöld, August. *A Plain System of Alchemy*. 1779?<sup>449</sup>
- Nordenskiöld, August. *An Address to the True Members of the New Jerusalem Church*. London: 1789.
- Nordenskiöld, August. *Det Borgerliga Samhällets System*. Stockholm, 1789.
- Nordenskiöld, August. *Församlingsformen uti det Nya Jerusalem*. København: Johann Rudolph Thiele, 1790.
- Nordenskiöld, August, and Carl Bernhard Wadström, and Colborn Barrell, and Johan Gottfrid Simpson. *Plan for a Free Community upon the Coast of Africa, under the Protection of Great Britain, but Intirely Independent of All European Laws and Governments, with an Invitation, under Certain Conditions, to all Persons Desirous of Partaking the Benefits thereof*. London: R. Hindmarsh, 1789.
- Nordenskiöld, Ulrik. *Afhandling om Nyttan för Sverige af Handel och Nybyggen i Indierna och på Africa*. Stockholm: Peter Hesselberg, 1776.
- Nordenskiöld, Carl Fredrik. *Considerations Générales sur le Christianisme Actual et la Lumière que M Emanuel Swedenborg Répand sur les Religions*. Rostock: 1819.
- Northrop, David. *Africa's Discovery of Europe*. 2002.
- Northup, Solomon. *Twelve Years a Slave*. Auburn New Jersey, Derby & Miller, 1853.
- Nynäs, Carina. *Läkaren Linné: Kvinnorna och Barnen*. Helsingfors: Historisk Tidskrift för Finland, 2014:1.
- Ogot, B. A., editor. *General History of Africa, Volume 5: Africa from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*. Paris: UNESCO, 1999.
- O'Loughlin, Katrina. *Our Floating Prison: Anna Maria Falconbridge and Travel to the River Sierra Leone*. *Journal of African Travel Writing*, 1998.
- Olu-Wright, R. J. *The Physical Growth of Freetown*. In *Freetown – a Symposium*, Christopher Fyfe and Eldred Jones, editors. Freetown: Sierra Leone University Press, 1968.
- Oglethorpe, James Edward. *A New and Accurate Account of the Provinces of South Carolina and Georgia*. London: 1733

---

<sup>449</sup> Not yet read, very rare.

- Padenheim, Daniel Wilhelm. *Bref till en Vän i Sverige, Innehållande Historisk och Geografisk Beskrifning öfver Colonien Sierra Leona i Afrika, jemte S L Compagniets och Coloniens Formerande, med Anmärkningar öfver Climatet, Producter &c, Colonisternas och de Inföddas Character, Population, Religion, Seder, Gjöromål &c, Coloniens Tiltagande och dess Förstörande af en Fransk Esquadre i October 1794, samt Handlingar och Bref Rörande Följderna deraf*. Stockholm, Kumblińska tryckeriet, 1801.
- Parker, Mary Ann. *Voyage to Bantry Bay 1794*. Sydney: Horden House, 1991.
- Pearson, J. D. *Guide to Manuscripts and Documents in the British Isles Relating to Africa*. 1993.
- Pessoa, Fernando. *Mensagem*. Lisbon: 1934.
- Peterson, J. *Province of Freedom: History of Sierra Leone 1787-1870*. London: Faber, 1969.
- Polasky, Janet. *Revolutions without Borders: the Call to Liberty in the Atlantic World*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015.
- Pulis, John W. *Moving on: Black Loyalists in the Afro-Atlantic World*. New York: Garland, 1999.
- Rau, Virgínia. *Uma Tentativa de Colonizaçãõ da Siera Leoa no Século XVII*. Madrid: Revista Las Ciencias, Año XI, 1946.
- Rix, Robert W. *William Blake and Radical Swedenborgianism*. In *Esoterica* 5, Michigan UP, 2003.
- Robsahm, Carl. *Memoirs of Swedenborg and other Documents*. Sollentuna: Föreningen Swedenborgs Minne, 2011.
- Rodney, Walter. *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast 1545–1800*. London: Clarendon Press, 1970.
- Rydén, Göran, editor. *Sweden in the Eighteenth Century World: Provincial Cosmopolitans*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013.
- Sanneh, Lamin. *Abolitionists Abroad: American Blacks and the Making of Modern West Africa*. Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Schama, Simon. *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves and the American Revolution*. London: BBC, 2006.
- Schoeps, Hans Joachim. *Läkaren och Alkemisten Gumpertz Levison*. Uppsala: Lychnos, 1943.
- Schwarz, Suzanne, editor. *Zachary Macaulay and the Development of the Sierra Leone Company 1793-1794*. Leipzig: University of Leipzig, Papers on Africa, History and Culture Series #4, 2000, and #4, 2002.
- Schwarz, Suzanne. *Commerce, Civilisation and Christianity: the Development of the Sierra Leone Company*. In David Richardson, Suzanne Schwarz and Anthony Tibbles, editors, *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007.
- Scotland, D.W. *Notes on the Banana Islands*. Freetown: SL Studies #11, 1958.
- Sharp, Granville. *An Account of the Constitutional English Polity of Congregational Courts and More Particularly of the Great Annual Court of the People called the View of Frankpledge*. London: 1784/1786.
- Sharp, Granville. *A Short Sketch of Temporary Regulations, until Better shall be Proposed, for the Intended Settlement on the Grain Coast of Africa, near Sierra Leona*. London: H. Baldwin, 1786.
- Sierra Leone Company. *Annual Reports, 1792–1808*. British Library Add MS.
- Sierra Leone Company. *An Account of the Colony of Sierra Leone from its First Establishment in 1793, being the Substance of a Report Delivered to the Proprietors*. London: James Philips, 1795.
- Sierra Leone Company. *Orders from the Directors of the Sierra Leone Company*. Incomplete manuscript in the Sierra Leone Public Archives, 1791.
- Sloan, Kim, and Andrew Burnett, editors. *Enlightenment: Discovering the World in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*. London: British Museum Press, 2003.

- Smeathman, Henry. *Sierra Leone Journal 1771-1779*. Uppsala university library MS D:26.<sup>450</sup>
- Smeathman, Henry. *Substance of a Plan of a Settlement to be Made near Sierra Leone on the Grain Coast of Africa, Intended More Particularly for the Service and Happy Establishment of Blacks and People of Colour to be Shipped as Freeman under the Direction of the Committee for Relieving the Black Poor and under the Protection of the British Government*. London: 1786.<sup>451</sup>
- Smeathman, Henry. *Proposals for Printing by Subscription: Voyages and Travels in Africa and the West Indies, from the Year 1771 to the Year 1779, Inclusive*. British Library MS, 1780.
- Smith, William. *A New Voyage to Guinea: Describing the Customs, Manners, Soil, Climate, Habits, Buildings, Education, Manual Arts, Agriculture, Trade, Employments, Languages, Ranks of Distinction, Habitations, Diversions, Marriages and whatever else is Memorable among the Inhabitants*. London: John Nourse, 1726.
- Smyth, W. H. *The Life and Services of Captain Philip Beaver*. London: John Murray, 1829.
- Snelgrave, William. *An Account of Some Parts of Guinea and the Slave Trade*. London: 1734.
- Spillsbury, Francis B. *Account of a Voyage to the Western Coast of Africa ... in the Year 1805*. London: Richard Philips, 1807.
- Sprinchen, C. *1700-talets Planer och Förslag till Kolonisation*. Svensk Historisk Tidskrift, 1923.
- Strand, Jakob. *Sierra Leone Journal April-September 1792*. BL Add MS 12,131.
- Starr, Douglas. *Henry Smeathman*. In Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Strand, Jakob. *Journal, 1792*. British Library MS.
- Swedenborg, Emanuel. *Experientiae Spirituales*.<sup>452</sup> MS at Swedenborg House, London?
- Sörlin, Sverker. *Apostlarnas Gärning: Vetenskap och Offervilja i Linnétidevarvet*. Uppsala: Svenska Linnésällskapets Årsbok, 1991.
- Talbot, Brian. *Schuchard's Swedenborg*.
- Talleyrand-Perigord, C. M. de. *Essai sur les Avantages à Retirer des Colonies Nouvelles dans les Circonstances Präsentes*. 1797.
- Thilmans, G. and N. I. Morais. *La Description de la Côte de Guinée du Père Baltasar Barreira 1606*. Dakar: Bulletin de l'Institut Fundamental d'Afrique Noire, 1972.
- Tigerstedt, E. N. *Johan Henric Kellgren*. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1954.
- Thomas, Helen. *Romanticism and Slave Narratives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Thorild, Thomas. *Uppllysning om Handelns Sanna Frihet*. Stockholm: Anders Zetterberg, 1792.
- Thorild, Thomas. *Om Qvinnökönets Naturliga Höghet*. Köpenhamn: Johan Rudolf Thiele, 1793.
- Thornton, Henry. *Correspondence, 1792-1799*. British Library MS 41,262 A.
- Turner, Michael. *The Limits of Abolition: Government, Saints and the African Question 1780-1820*. English Historical Review, 1997.
- Wadström, Carl Bernhard. *Resa ifrån Stockholm genom Danmark, Tyskland och Frankrike till Senegal-länderna i Afrika, åren 1787 och 1788*. Stockholm: J. P. Marquard, Archiv för Nyare Resor, 1811.
- Wadström, Carl Bernhard. *Observations on the Slave Trade ...* London: James Philips, 1789.

<sup>450</sup> Also British Library Add MS 36494 & Add MS 33977.

<sup>451</sup> Re-printed in Wadström, *Essay on Colonization*, Appendix, page 207.

<sup>452</sup> §5946 contains the famous sketch-map of Africa.

- Wadström, Carl Bernhard. *Plan for a Free Community at SL upon the Coast of Africa ...* London: T. and J. Egerton, 1792.
- Wadström, Carl Bernhard. *Propositions ... Bulam Association.* 1794.
- Wadström, Carl Bernhard. *Essay on Colonization, Particularly Applied to the Western Coast of Africa, Part 1.* London: Darton and Harvey, 1794.
- Wadström, Carl Bernhard. *Essay on Colonization, Particularly Applied to the Western Coast of Africa, Part 2.* London: Darton and Harvey, 1795.
- Wadström, Carl Bernhard. *Précis sur l'Établissement des Colonies de Sierra Leone et de Boulama.* Paris: Pougens, 1798.
- Walker, J. W. St G. *The Black Loyalists: the Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone 1783-1870.* London: Longman, 1976.<sup>453</sup>
- Walker, J. W. St G. *The Establishment of a Free Black Community in Nova Scotia 1783-1840.* 1976.
- Warburg, Carl Simon. *Gustaf de Tredjes Guldmakare.* Svensk Månadsskrift för Fri Forskning och Allmänbildning, Vol. 2, Juli-December 1864.
- West, R. *Back to Africa: a History of Sierra Leone and Liberia.* London: Jonathan Cape, 1970.
- White, E. F. *Sierra Leone Settler Women Traders: Women on the Afro-European Frontier.* Ann Arbor: Michigan UP, 1987.
- Widstrand, Carl Gösta. *Afrikaresenärer: En Antologi.* Stockholm: Bonnier, 1965.
- Williamson, Helene Maria. *Om C.B. Wadström.* 1799.
- Wilson, Ellen Gibson. *The Loyal Blacks.* New York: Putnam, 1976.
- Wilson, Ellen Gibson. *John Clarkson and the African Adventure.* London: Macmillan, 1980.
- Winterbottom, Thomas. *An Account of the Native Africans in the Neighbourhood of Sierra Leone, to which is Added an Account of the Present State of Medicine among them.* London: C. Wittingham, 1803.
- Wright, E. J. *Granville Town.* Freetown: Sierra Leone Studies #12: 1959
- Wästberg, Per. *Anders Sparrmans Resa.* Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1981.

---

<sup>453</sup> Also in Dalhousie African Studies 99-0183128-8, Dalhousie University Press, 1976.  
453 Probably what is now called the Port Loko river.



## **A fascinating glimpse of what one hopes that there is more to come**

### **BOOKS IN FREETOWN 1792**

I am a retired Swedish architect, with some experience of working in Africa. For some years, I have researched the planning and building of Freetown, before 1809. One of the interesting figures was August Nordenskiöld, who died in Freetown in 1792, thirty-eight years old. He was employed by The Sierra Leone Company as geologist, but had published on Emanuel Swedenborg and been employed by the Swedish king as an alchemist. In the Uppsala university library, I transcribed some of a manuscript on the sale by auction in Freetown of his personal effects. It is interesting to see what books he took with him to Africa. The Company sent out books for a little Public Library. I do not have a list of them, but I have translated the description of the library from the Swedish official Daniel Wilhelm Padenheim, who helped build it. I don't know how the auction list came to Sweden, but it could have been brought home by the Swedish botanist Adam Afzelius, who was a colleague of Nordenskiöld and Padenheim. I haven't transcribed the selling price for each item, but his chamber pot was sold for seven pence and the total was £55 – 3s – 3d.

### **BOOKS AND MAPS**

Anonymous French authors. *Chemical nomenclature*

Anonymous. *French pamphlets*

Anonymous. *Small pocket dictionary*

Anonymous. *Lettre sur l'astronomie pratique*

Anonymous. *History of quadrupeds*

Anonymous. *Abregé de l'histoire ecclesiastique*, 3 vols

Anonymous. *Dictionnaire de poche, allemande/française, française/allemande*

Adams. *Flowers of ancient history*, 2 vols

Adams. *Thoughts on the history of man*

Ad. & Hafsenfratz. *New system of chemical characters*

Beufowsky. *Travels in Kamtskatka*, 2 vols

Cavallo. *Mineralogical table*

Chaptal. *Elements of chymistry* (sic), 3 vols

Crackett. *Latin & English dictionary*

D'Auville. *Map of Africa*

D'Auville. *Map of Northern Europe*

De Gebelin. *Histoire naturelle de la parole*

Delafaille. *Dictionnaire de physique*, 2 vols

De Born. *Methode d'extraire les metaux*

Du Clos. *Grammaire générale & raisonnée*

Elliot. *Observations on the method of preserving seeds from foreign parts*

Ferber. *Travels thro' Italy, Hungary*, 2 vols

Frusten. *Chronology, or the historian's vade mecum*

Gelleri. *Metallurgy, chemistry*

Goldsmith. *Grecian history*. 2 vols

Goldsmith. *Roman history*. 2 vols

Has. *Mappe de Guinée*

Lavoisier. *Traité de chemie*, 2 vols

Lassale. *Cours de navigation*, 2 vols

Lenstenii. *Novum Testamentum Graecum*

Macquer. *Dictionnaire de chimie*, 2 vols

Newman. *Chemistry*, 2 vols

Nicholson. *First principles of chemistry*

Noldu & Le Denis. *Map of Africa*

Priestley. *Church history*

Priestley. *On history*

Robertson. *Thesaurus Linguae Sancto* (sancto?)

Roman-Joly. *Histoire de la predication*

Tomard. *Harmonia Evangelistorum*

Valerii. *Elementa metallurgica*

Volney. *Travels in Syria, Egypt*, 2 vols

Woodville. *Chart of Africa*

## PADENHEIM

My translation of pages 76, 77 & 78, Daniel Wilhelm Padenheim. *Bref till en Vän i Sverige, Innehållande Historisk och Geografisk Beskrifning öfver Colonien Sierra Leona i Afrika, jemte S. L. Compagniets och Coloniens Formerande, med Anmärkningar öfver Climatet, Producter &c, Colonisternas och de Inföddas Character, Population, Religion, Seder, Gjöromål &c, Coloniens Tiltagande och dess Förstörande af en Fransk Esquadre i October 1794, samt Handlingar och Bref Rörande Följderna deraf.* Stockholm: Kumblinska tryckeriet, 1801.

Professor Afzelius has now a wide field for his botanical expeditions. I am convinced that his collection will soon be both numerous and valuable. Anything unusual or rare is brought to him by the native Africans, although they have noticed that we already know something about flora and fauna and so do not pay generously. Meanwhile he himself is ceaselessly engaged in collecting natural treasures of all sorts. He has cultivated and enclosed a large garden near the river. Here he is growing all sorts of plants, both from European seeds and from local sources. Particularly the latter are going to develop well under his care.

The mining engineer Nordenskiöld is still not recovered from a rather severe illness. He has for a long time been unhappy in the settlement, because he himself has been forced into inactivity, which does not at all suit his temperament and increases his discontent and his ill-health. All sorts of circumstances have arisen, notably the season's weather, which have impeded his project, which is, to become acquainted with the native Africans further away from us and then, as the Company's representative, make a trade agreement with them. As a geologist, he would also investigate their natural resources. He is now preparing a journey into the interior, up the Gambia<sup>454</sup> river, to become acquainted with another part of Africa. His friends do not approve of his insistence and impatience to carry out his programme, but nothing will restrain him. He has surmounted every difficulty and will soon be setting out. We can only wish him good health and a successful mission.

Jakob Strand, the third of our countrymen here, is secretary to the governor. He is considered hard-working and kind. He has quite a good academic background and is good at languages and music. A little house has been built for him; local timber has been sawn to appropriate dimensions and the walls and roof covered with European planks. Now it has been painted, it looks very nice. It has two rooms. One is his bedroom, the other his office, which is also our library. The company did not want our settlement to lack anything in the way of basic comfort or education and so they sent out an excellent little library, containing travelogues, encyclopaedias, most English authors, books on economics and so on. This was to begin with called the Public Library; here every settler had the right to satisfy his or her curiosity and educational needs, without restriction. But as the library thus became public property, there was a risk that everything might disappear. So Strand was appointed librarian and it was put in his care. It is still open for all and books can be borrowed one or two at a time, but the borrower is obliged to bring them back after a certain time.

---

From the Archives of the *Journal of Sierra Leone Studies*

*Sierra Leone Studies*, Number 11, December 1958

**Madam Yoko**

**Ruler of the Mendi Confederacy**

**By M.C.F. Easmon**

**Editor's Note:** *'Madam Yoko: Ruler of the Mendi Confederacy' by Dr M.C.F. Easmon was a groundbreaking article providing fascinating insights into the inner workings of a traditional female society in Sierra Leone and a notable female ruler. An article on Madam Yoko is particularly important to revisit in the modern-day era following the declaration of the grave of Madam Yoko as a National Monument in Sierra Leone by the re-established Monuments and Relics Commission led by Isatu Smith. Furthermore, recent news bringing to light issues affecting women including efforts to raise awareness regarding equality and the rights of women in Africa and across the globe highlight the relevance of the re-publication of this article that reflects the 'African' emancipation and independence of women. The article has been reprinted in this edition in the original text including references to geographical place names that have since been standardized into different spellings.*

ONE of the highlights at the opening of Sierra Leone's first Museum on the 10th December, 1957, during Sierra Leone's first Festival of the Arts Week, was a 25 in. silver statuette (on loan) of the late Madam Yoko of the Gpa Mendis. This was presented to her for services rendered by a grateful Government in 1906, and bears the following inscription :-

"MADAM YOKO PARAMOUNT RULER OF THE  
GPA MENDI  
CHIEFDOM SIERRA LEONE PROTECTORATE  
June 1885 to August 1906"

Her life spanned the very difficult and eventful period of transition here, when the old order was giving place to the new and the old system of intertribal and internecine wars, led by warrior chiefs, well

illustrated in the "Caulker Manuscript" (*Sierra Leone Studies*, old series, vols. ix-x), and culminating in the Bai Bureh War or Hut Tax Rebellion of 1898, was giving way to the new and more ordered system which started with the inauguration of the Protectorate in 1896. The former treaties, with subsidies between powerful chiefs and the British Government intended to suppress the slave trade and to keep open the main trade routes to the Colony, had by the time of her death in 1906 been replaced by a settled government with the opening up of the country.

Her rise to power had been greatly influenced by two factors common to the everyday life in Mendi land, political and sociological.

In the first place there is no "Salic Law" among the Mendis, and there have been many lady chiefs, styled locally as "Madam". In the recent past and at the present one call to mind the following "Madams": Fangowa of Wando, Caulker of Shengeh, Humonya of Kenema, Gpanda Gbello of Leppiama, Nancy Tucker of Bagru (Sembehun), a succession of Messis of Messi Krim, Woki of Blama (Gallinas), Ella Koblo Gulama of Kaiyamba (Moyamba), and the greatest of them all, Yoko of the Kpa Mendi Confederacy.

The second factor is the existence of the widespread Women's Institution or Society, the Bondu or Sande, and this is especially strong in Mendi Land. Like all primitive societies this society has its Medicine and rituals carefully hidden from the menfolk and through which the women in their own sphere wield almost as much power as the men; all men from the lowest to the highest chief fear and respect the Bondo Medicine and obey its ruling. If there is any infringement they come under the sway of the Bondo medicine and can only be "washed" or freed by making propitiatory ceremonies as directed by the Soweh or head of the Society.

Every female is a member of the Sande and soon after Christmas the girls at about the age of puberty enter the "bush" and usually remain until after Easter and the beginning of the rains. Here after

initiation they learn the Bondo law, the ritual dancing and all that will enable them to take their place as wives and mothers in the local society at the cultural level at the time. In fact this is the equivalent of a boarding school and is the only training and discipline they receive before becoming adults.

Dancing plays an important part in the curriculum and the Bondo girls are much in demand at all local ceremonies (deaths, marriages, gathering of chiefs, entertaining of important strangers, etc.). Some girls are more proficient than others and these stay on in the "dancing" for many years and the best become as famous in their land as the Pavlovas in Europe.

The exact date of Madam Yoko's birth is not known but it must have been in the mid-Victorian era ; she died at Moyamba in 1906. She was born in a small village not far from Tiama then, as it is was a very important Kpa Mendi town. In due course the family went over to Tiama and she was initiated into the Sande Society and soon became a very good dancer and in a few years the most famous. She then married the chief of Tiama. This chief was very friendly with Gbanya the chief of Senahun to the south-west of Tiama. When her husband died his great friend came over from Senahun to Tiama for the funeral ceremonies. At their conclusion Gbanya asked the deceased's family for something to take away in memory of his friend. The family asked him to make his choice and he chose Yoko ; so Yoko went with him, taking with her some of her people, including her brother Lamboi, who on her death succeeded her as Chief at Moyamba. About this time as the wife of a senior chief and for her prowess as a dancer she started her own Sandi Bush and it became famous in Mendiland, so much so that mothers strove to get their daughters into Yoko's Bush, and at the height of her fame when she ruled all



MADAM YOKO

the Kpa Mendi, to enter her Bush was locally the equivalent to being "Presented at Court". She selected all the best young girls for her Bush and then disposed of them in marriage to the leading men who would help in her own advancement.

At that time chiefs were sometimes shy of going in person to meet high officials from the Government and Chief Gbanya would send his very efficient and favourite wife Yoko to represent him and so in time she became well known over a wide area, and also in Freetown. Chief Gbanya was a firm ally of Governor Rowe as shown by the help he gave in the capture of Caulker and others in the Kingboro War. When Gbanya was dying, Parkes told Sir David Chalmers he had asked Rowe to make her chief after his death and Rowe did so.

After Gbanya's death, about 1885, Yoko (exercising to the full her diplomatic gifts and political acumen and continuing a firm ally and supporter of the Government in Freetown, especially at the time of the creation of the Protectorate in 1896, and the subsequent Hut Tax Rebellion of 1898 and its aftermath) steadily enlarged the extent of the territory she ruled, so that soon after her death the unwieldy Kpa Mendi Confederacy had to be broken up into its original fifteen separate chiefdoms. She had other consorts after Gbanya's death; one of the most powerful being the late chief Thomas B. Caulker of the Bumpe section of the Caulkers.

She never had any children and was very highly thought of and at times mentioned in dispatches by the Governors she came in contact with, namely : Rowe, Havelock, Hay, Flemming, Cardew, King Harman and Probyn. She also had a great deal to do with J.T. Lawson whose official title was Government Interpreter, and his successor, J.E.C. Parkes, who became Secretary of Native Affairs, dealing directly with the Governor and carrying out all duties now exercised by His Honour the Chief Commissioner from Bo.



In conclusion here are two appreciations of Madam Yoko. The first is that of J.E.C. Parkes, a Sierra Leonean and Secretary of Native Affairs, who, in his evidence before the Chalmer's Commission in 1898, said : "She is a remarkable woman ; it is due to her force of character."

The second is Sir Harry Luke, an Englishman who arrived in Sierra Leone as A.D.C. to the Governor, Sir Leslie Probyn in 1908, two years after her death and while memory of her was still fresh. In the first volume of his Cities and Men, he writes : "There was the Mendi chief Fangowa of Wando and most important of all Madam Yoko of Gpa Mendi. By sheer ability and force of character this resolute little woman had built up in the formative years of the country the biggest chiefdom in the whole Protectorate. Madam Yoko was not only a sagacious chief but a woman of a mentality unusual in members of a primitive race. At the height of her authority she deliberately committed suicide as she told her attendants just after drinking poison she had enjoyed to the full all that life had to give, power and love and now that old age had approached found that it had nothing more to offer her.

(Note : the Gpa Mendi Chiefdom under Madam Yoko extended from Bauya in the West to Tabe in the East, and from the Timne chiefdoms in the North to the Banta and Shebro chiefdoms in the South.)