Jewish Confederates

by Gary Ayres

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The Jewish people want their history told as accurately as possible. It amazes me why they want to distance themselves from a past that was honorable. A past that was good to them and one in which they were accepted as equals. Most Jewish Confederate descendants now join with the politically correct in denouncing their forefathers of the Southland of America, the Confederate States of America.

I believe that one of the largest ethnic groups to serve the confederate States of America were, 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation Jews.

Jews had lived in Charleston, SC, since 1695 and by 1800 the largest Jewish community in America lived in Charleston, SC. In fact the oldest synagogue in America, K. K. Beth Elohim, was founded in Charleston. By 1861 a third of all Jews in America lived in Louisiana.

Some say that more than 10,000 Jews fought for the Confederacy, with 2,000 of them being officers or in the Confederate Government. Others say that only 6,000 Jews served in the Union Army and as few as 2,000 Jews in the Confederacy. I believe the number of Jews in the Confederacy was more likely to have been between 6,000 and 10,000. I believe that to be more likely because the Jewish population prospered more in the South, and the South was more tolerant to their religion than in the North.

Take today—no one knows how many of the South's Jews have Confederate ancestors, probably 10,000 of just Atlanta's 100,000 Jews.

Here is an account we should look to from Joseph Goldsmith in reference to numbers in the Confederate Army. He was connected to the war from start to finish. He was close to the War and Navy Departments and the Confederate Government as a contractor for side arms and accoutrements.

Joseph Goldsmith was known as the Jewish Confederate "Chaplain." Before the Fall Festivals of their Jewish observances in 1864, he went to Richmond and met with an old friend, Mr. M. J. Michelbacher.

Joseph Goldsmith writes in a letter, 1864:

> There are right around here and in our other armies many Jewish soldiers who would like to keep Rosh Hashanah, but especially Yom Kippur according to our law and ritual. I am trying to get a furlough for these soldiers over these Holy Days, but do not know how to go about it. Here is a petition to the Secretary of War; you know him well; will you present it, or will you go with me to introduce me, or will you get Mr. Benjamin to recommend it?
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> I informed Mr. Michelbacher that as far as Mr. Benjamin was concerned it did not come within the scope of his special office; that if his recommendation was needed I could pledge it, and that the whole matter was for Mr. Seddon to decide.

The next morning Mr. Michelbacher and Mr. Goldsmith met with Mr. Seddon. His reply to the petition of Mr. Goldsmith:

> Well, gentlemen, as far as I am concerned I will give my consent, but must refer the matter to the Adjutant and Inspector-General. Whatever he does, I will sanction. He thereupon wrote his endorsement on the petition, and Mr. Michelbacher and I took it up to General Cooper, who, like Mr. Seddon, received us kindly, and with great interest discussed the proposition with us. He would gladly, he said, grant the furloughs, but, "gentlemen," he added, "look, we have here a roster of all our soldiers, and we know, as far as possible from their names, how many of them belong to your religious denomination, and astonishing as it is that we count about 10,000 to 12,000 Jews who are serving in our Army. Now, should I grant the furloughs you request, you will readily see, that for the time being it would perhaps disintegrate entire commands in the field and might work to a bad effect; besides, the commanders of the different army corps should certainly be consulted. On the whole it would be impractible, as you, Goldsmith will readily acknowledge. In fact, he pleasantly added, you will admit that if your forefathers had fought Titus on the Sabbath Day during the siege of Jerusalem, they most certainly would have beaten him. You see, therefore, I cannot conscientiously grant your request.

Later in 1895, Goldsmith wrote:

> I am still a living witness and can, from my own memory, give you many names of gallant Jewish soldiers of the confederate Army. I had ample opportunity to see and to know. Many a wounded Jew have I met in the hospitals of Richmond and administered to his wants, and many a Jewish soldier have I seen walking on his crutch or having his arm in a sling, traveling to and from his command during the war. And I know further that it was simply a sense of loyalty to their homes and their neighbors that prompted them to fight for the South. If not, they could readily have left this country at any time as I myself could have done, had I so chosen. But love for our adopted country kept us here and we offered all we had in its behalf.

In November 1862, General Grant was convinced that the black market of cotton was organized by "Jews." Grant ordered that "no Jews are to be permitted to travel on the railroad southward from any point." Nor were they to be granted trade licenses.

Now all wars have "contraband," black market," "illegal traders." This will include all people and there were just a handful of Jews that were "illegal traders." The majority of Jews were not. The terms "Jew," "profiteer," "speculator," "trader," were employed interchangeably.

Union General Henry W. Hallack linked "traitors and Jew peddlers" as one. General Grant shared Hallack's mentality, describing "the Israelites" as "an intolerable nuisance."

This order of Gen. Grant's in November 1862 was immediately and with enthusiasm carried out by the Northern Army. In Holly Springs, Mississippi, Jewish traders had to walk 40 miles to evacuate the area. In Paducah, Kentucky, the Union military gave 30 Jewish families, all long term residents, with two of the Jewish inhabitants being Union Army Veterans, 24 hours to leave.

The exodus of the Jews was not happening fast enough for Gen. Grant. He wanted more and he did show exactly the type of man Lincoln wanted for his Commander of the Armies of the United States.

In December of 1862, General Grant initiated an official order of anti-Semitism. It was one of the worst in 19th century America and possibly of world magnitude One could argue this was a test to be used on the Indians in the future. We know that tactics used in the burning of Missouri and of Atlanta were later employed on the Indians. This will never be taught in the schools to your children. It is another part of US history to be swept under the rug. This is no better than a lie to dupe people into believing that Lincoln and the US was correct in its invasion of the Southern States and its lies about a war it raged upon the Southern people, Jewish people included.

Of course it is hard to believe this, but if you just study a little about the advisors of Lincoln and the connection he had with the German Marxists, it will become clear and the truth will come out.

General Grant issued his "General Order Number 11." This order expelled all Jews from Kentucky, Tennessee and Mississippi.

The order read:

> The Jews, as a class violating every regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department and also department orders, are hereby expelled from the department ('Department of the Tennessee,' an administrative district of the Union Army of occupation composed of Kentucky, Tennessee and Mississippi) within twenty-four hours from the receipt of this order.
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> Post commanders will see to it that all of this class of people be furnished passes and required to leave, and any on returning after such notification will be arrested and held in confinement until an opportunity occurs of sending them out as prisoners, unless furnished with permit from headquarters. No passes will be given these people to visit headquarters for the purpose of making personal application of trade permits."

There was enough backlash from residents for Lincoln to make a decision to have General Grant to revoke the "Order.

Here are just a few notable Confederates of the Jewish faith:

- Abraham Myers was a West Point graduate and classmate of Robert E. Lee. Myers served as Quartermaster General and before the war, fought Indians in Florida. The city of Fort Myers was named after him.
- Major Adolph Proskauer of Mobile, Alabama was wounded several times. A subordinate officer wrote "I can see him now as he nobly carried himself at Gettysburg, standing coolly and calmly with a cigar in his mouth at the head of the 12th Alabama amid a perfect rain of bullets, shot and shell. He was the personification of intrepid gallantry and imperturbable courage."
- In North Carolina, 6 Cohen brothers fought in the 40th Infantry.
- The 1st Confederate of Jewish faith was killed in the war was Albert Lurie Moses of Charlotte, NC.
- All-Jewish companies reported to the fray from Macon and Savannah, Georgia.
- In Louisiana, 3 Jews reached the rank of Colonel. They were S. M. Hymans, Edwin Kunchesdt and Ira Moses.
- Simon Baruch, a Prussian immigrant, settled in Camden, SC. He received his degree from Medical College of Virginia and entered the war as a physician in the 3rd SC Battalion. He was at the Battle of Second Manassas. He became the Surgeon General of the Confederacy.
- The most famous Southern Jew of that era was Judah Benjamin. He was educated in law at Yale. He was the first Jewish US Senator and declined a seat on the Supreme Court. He also declined an offer to be Ambassador to Spain. Judah Benjamin served President Davis and the Confederacy in 3 positions, Attorney General, Secretary of War and Secretary of State. After the war, he was unable to resettle in America. He settled in England, where he became a notable lawyer. He also wrote legal text while a lawyer in England.

Moses Jacob Ezekiel of Richmond, fought in New Market with his fellow cadets from VMI. He became a noted sculpture. His mother, Catherine Ezekiel was to have said, "she would not tolerate a son who declined to fight for the Confederacy". Ezekiel wrote in his memoirs "we were not fighting for the perpetuation of slavery, but for the principles of States Rights and Free Trade, and in defense of our homes which were being ruthlessly invaded."

In tribute to Ezekiel it was written, "The eye that saw is closed, the hand that executed is still, the soldier lad who fought so well was knighted and landed in foreign land, but dying, his last request was that he might rest amoung his old Comrades in Arlington Cemetery."

Why do the politically correct (PC) want to destroy the history of a people just because they wanted to save their homeland from an invading army and a government gone wrong?

Not only the Scottish people have been fighting many lifetimes for freedom, but people of the Jewish faith have done the same, and on American soil too.

Notes:

1. Jewish Virtual Library
2. Jews in The Civil War
3. www.jewish-history.com
4. Grant's General Orders
5. Abraham Lincoln, Complete Works

About the Author

Gary Ayres is a member of the Col. John T. Coffee Camp, #1934, of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Gary is a thirteenth-generation American of Scotch, French, Swedish, and Indian decent. With his Indian descent he goes much further back than 13 generations on this land. He has been married 30 years, with two daughters and five grandchildren.