

Jews of Goulburn.

By SYDNEY B. GLASS.

CHAPTER TWO.

The barque *Ann*, a craft of 339 tons, frothing her way up the New South Wales coast under the driving of a half-gale, carried for cargo the usual colonial merchandise—English machinery and cloth, Mauritius sugar, Indian tea, etc. From the port of London she had sailed on May 1st, 1833, and from Hobart Town, Van Diemen's Land, on October 28th. The cabin passengers named in her shipping list were forty-three. On arrival at Hobart Town there were fifty-one persons in the steerage. Her master was Captain Free.*

Samuel Benjamin, one of the cabin passengers, was to establish in Australia an important section of his father's house. He was the eldest of the sons of Lyon (Judah) Benjamin, merchant, of Hyde Park, London, and Rachel, his wife, and was soon to be followed in the Australian venture by his brothers, Solomon, David and Moses.† There are now many descendants of Lyon Benjamin in the Australian States. The family has provided a knighted civic head for the City of Melbourne, as well as a Lord Mayor of the City of Sydney. Happy only, however, to escape from the cramped quarters of the *Ann*, Samuel Benjamin disembarked in Port Jackson, at the threshold of Sydney, on November 13th, 1833.

With Elias Moses, one of his shipmates on the *Ann*, Samuel Benjamin entered into partnership in the wholesale and retail business in Sydney in the same year. Their relationship was further cemented by his marriage with his partner's youngest sister, Rachel, at the Bridge Street Synagogue on February 4th, 1835. The officiant was Rev. Solomon Phillips.‡

A business at Sydney House, No. 44 Lower George

**Sydney Herald*, October 21st, 1833, and November 14th, 1833.

†Records of the Benjamin family.

‡From marriage certificate and records of the Synagogue.

Street, "next to Mrs. Tighe's Emu Inn,"§ also another at 321 George Street, "opposite the Burial Ground,"¶ proving insufficient to absorb their joint energies and capital, the firm established a store at George Street, Windsor, "next to Dargan's Brewery," under the name The London



SAMUEL BENJAMIN.

Stores.|| A little later—attracted, no doubt, by reports of itinerant traders—the partners turned their attention to the new township that was beginning to take rude shape near the head of the Goulburn Plains.

The method of carriage of goods and materials into the South Country was by the slow-moving bullock team. In the rainy season the journey sometimes took weeks.

§*Sydney Morning Herald*, May 14th, 1835.

¶*Australian*, July 15th, 1836.

||*Ibid*, January 13th, 1835. The burial ground was the site of the present Sydney Town Hall.

Often it was necessary to unload from waggons that were bogged in the unmade tracks on to others that were all too likely to suffer a similar fate. Says McAlister at pages 9 and 10 in reference to a journey from Sydney to Strathaird, south of Goulburn, during the period :—

Except in little patches here and there the roads were unformed; there were no signs of bridges beyond the Sydney district and the traveller had to pay for his right to the road at the tollbars near the settlements. . . . We found a penal camp, or lock-up, where an officer and a few soldiers guarded a gang of convicts at nearly every second day's stage of the journey.

The premises first used by the firm were "a temporary skillion structure near the Hospital and new Court House."* Having purchased for forty pounds from one Abraham Moses an allotment at the corner of Auburn and Verner Streets, Goulburn,† the firm set about erecting a substantial store and premises. This land had been purchased by Moses from the Crown in 1836 for sixteen pounds.‡ The site is at present occupied by the Imperial Hotel. The establishment was named "The Argyle Store."

According to McAlister (pages 12 and 97), "It was the town's pioneer store."

John Plummer, writing in the *Illustrated Sydney News* of September 30th, 1882, records that in 1842 the store was the only establishment of its kind between Sydney and Melbourne. A representation of one of the billheads of the store in 1842—which, by a happy chance, came to light in 1940—is here reproduced.§

**Ibid*, February 28th, 1837, and November 20th, 1838.

†Records of the Registrar-General.

‡*Ibid*.

§McAlister, and writers after him, have suggested that the firm was first established in the old town of Goulburn. There is no authority for this (see notices quoted). Depending entirely on his memory, he has reversed the names of the partners to Moses and Benjamin. Plummer refers to the store as that which occupied the site of the present Imperial Hotel. McAlister states the store was founded in 1833. Again he is wrong, having been misled, no doubt, by the firm's advertisements in the 'fifties. 1833 was the date of the foundation of the partnership, not of the Argyle Store. The block of the store comes to us by courtesy of Mr. Ransome T. Wyatt, author of *History of Goulburn* (1941). The billhead remained for almost a hundred years, with other accounts, in a deed box in a Goulburn bank.

Mr. Wyatt has interpreted the year of the billhead as 1862. Under a powerful magnifying glass, the date is read by the author as 1842. This view is strengthened by the fact that the store went out of business in 1861. For some years prior to 1861 another store traded as the New Argyle Store, and the business carried on in original premises advertised as the Old Argyle Store.

The stock-in-trade enumerated on the billhead is as follows :—



ARGYLE STORE.

Grindery of every description, Pistols and Fowling pieces, Gunpowder and Shot, Haberdashery, Drapery, Hosiery and Saddlery, Sole and Kipp Leather, Wines, Spirits, Tea, Sugar, Tobacco, Groceries, General assortment of Clothing, Crockery, Ironmongery, Wilkinson's Sheep Shears, Wool Packs, Bags and Bagging, Paints, Oil and Turpentine with an extensive assortment of every description of Goods on the most reasonable terms.

Among the newcomers who were entering the port of Sydney during the period, there was almost a concerted movement towards the southern districts.

From the large Jewish community in the Russian-controlled city of Warsaw, in the Grand Duchy of Poland, where he was born in 1805, Nathan, son to Naphthali and Rachel Leah Mandelson, departed while a young man to

¶Certificate of death and from records of the family supplied by Mr. Norman L. Mandelson.

seek happier conditions in the more enlightened lands. His grandfather, according to family records, was a Colonel in a Polish Lancer Regiment, and had fought with the Russians against the invading French under the Emperor Napoleon in the campaign of 1812. His commander was Count Barclay de Tolly, famous cavalry leader and Marshal of the Russian First Army, whose forces harassed the French in their retreat. In an engagement near the Niemen, the grandfather of Nathan Mandelson had been killed.||

As many of the sons of his native land have done before and since, Nathan Mandelson proceeded to England. There, in 1830, he married Phoebe, a daughter of Jacob Levy Cohen, of Leicester. The family was a distinguished one in Anglo-Jewry. Of the same stock came Hannah, who married Nathan Meyer, the first English Rothschild, also Judith, who married Sir Moses Montefiore.* Dinah, another daughter of Jacob Levy Cohen, was likewise to be a founder of a large Australian Jewish family, which will figure in this record.

Mandelson arrived in Australia in 1833.† After some time in Sydney, he opened in January, 1836, a business venture in the small settlement of Bungonia, a then thriving centre in County Argyle, some miles to the eastward of the Goulburn Plains. It was in a "house formerly occupied by a Mr. Shields."‡

In July of the same year, the Magistrates at Bungonia granted him a publican's licence for the "Hit or Miss Inn." Here, according to his notice, "The travellers up and down the Maneroo will find good stabling and feed for horses; also four hundred acres of Richlands divided into paddocks, well secured for cattle," etc.§ Bungonia—for a time called Inverary—was on the route generally

||*Ibid.*

**Ibid.*

†Certificate of death.

‡*Sydney Morning Herald*, December 29th, 1836.

§*Australian*, July 14th, 1837. Maneroo was an old form of the present Monaro. The spelling was for a long time uncertain. Richlands was a well known estate.

chosen for traffic into the southern areas of the state—an advantage which it was later to lose because of the better access through the Goulburn Plains. Mandelson conducted the inn for three years.



NATHAN MANDELSON.

On the plan of the new township of Goulburn, Allotment 1 of Section 1, at the corner of Sloane and Clinton Streets, at the outlet to the south towards Braidwood and Monaro, had been acquired from the Crown in 1833|| by John Cole, who erected on it a hotel premises. “Mr. Cole’s new Inn” is mentioned in the early files as the meeting place of the Association for the Suppression of Horse, Cattle and Sheep Stealing.|| After the death of its builder, the premises were owned and conducted suc-

¶Records of the Registrar-General.

||*Sydney Morning Herald*, July 13th, 1835.

cessfully for some years by Isaac Moses under the sign of the "Goulburn Inn."*

Mandelson purchased the house from Moses for £1750,† transferring to the new premises from the Hit or Miss Inn in May, 1840.‡ On this site and the two adjoining allotments Mandelson erected in 1846 a building which, under the name of Mandelson's Hotel, was a well known feature of the district for many years. The greater part of the building still stands.§ The large sign erected on it in 1846 was only recently demolished.¶ A photograph of the hotel will be recorded in a later chapter.

In 1838,|| Samuel Davis founded in Auburn Street the Australian Store, a business which, under the name of the later proprietors, Davies, Alexander & Company, has an interesting and remarkable history of its own. It was for many years the best known business establishment in the southern districts.

The commercial ventures of its early Jewish citizens referred to in this chapter, as well as others that followed, were in line with the steady influx of capital and energy which lifted Goulburn from a tiny bark-roofed frontier village—half way between the port of Sydney and the large sheep holdings in the South and South-West—into the chief distributing centre and warehouse for the Riverina and Southern New South Wales.

The march of progress brought with it the first whisperings of Jewish community organisation in County Argyle. These, together with the record of a tragedy illustrative of the unsettled conditions of the country, we defer to our next chapter.

To one of our members, Mr. M. Roy Mandelson, I am indebted for the block of his grandfather, Nathan Mandelson.

(To be continued.)

**Australasian Chronicle*, September 10th, 1839.

†*Australian*, October 31st, 1840.

‡Records of the Registrar-General.

§Statement of the late E. C. Manfred, May 11th, 1936.

¶Statement of the proprietor of the present establishment, the Mulwarrie Private Hotel.

||*The Empire*, September 26th, 1856.