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A HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN ENGLAND

BY

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

A COMPLETE Bibliography of Anglo-Jewish history, containing upwards of 2,000 entries, has been published under the editorship of the present author (*Magna Bibliotheca Anglo-Judaica*, London, 1937; to be referred to in the following pages as *Bibl.*, with the section and number of the entry in question). It is therefore superfluous to give here any detailed bibliographical indications, which by comparison must be inadequate and incomplete. The list that follows contains only the titles of some subsequent works and those cited most frequently in the succeeding pages.

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—— *Essays and Portraits in Anglo-Jewish History* (Philadelphia, 1962) = *Essays and Portraits.*

OTHER ABBREVIATIONS

C.R. Close Rolls.*
P.R. Patent Rolls.
Pp.R. Pipe Rolls.
F.R. Fine Rolls.
Obl.R. Oblate Rolls.
Ch.R. Charter Rolls.
C.R.R. Curia Regis Rolls.
Lib.R. Liberate Rolls.
S.P.D. State Papers, Domestic.
S.P.V. State Papers, Venetian.

* These and the similar series, whether Calendared or otherwise, are referred to for the sake of convenience and clarity by year and page, not by volume.

H.O. Home Office.
H.M.C. *Historical Manuscripts Commission.*
J.Q.R. *Jewish Quarterly Review* (N.S. = New Series).
R.E.J. *Revue des Études Juives.*
J.C. *Jewish Chronicle.*
A.J.H.E. *Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition* [of 1887: *Papers* and *Catalogue*].

I

SETTLEMENT AND CONSOLIDATION

To 1189

§ 1

THERE can be no doubt that the Jews began to be associated with England and the British Isles later than with any other country of western Europe that received them in the Middle Ages. Fantasy has indeed attempted to carry the story back to a remote antiquity, to the period of the fall of the kingdom of Judaea and the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar; while some sober students do not consider it improbable that, with the Phoenician traders who reached Cornwall in the seventh or eighth century before the Christian era, there may have come a few adventurous Hebrews from the maritime territories of the Holy Land.[1] But it is more likely that the connexion began centuries later, in Roman times, when merchants or captives from Palestine reached every province of the Empire.

The legendary missionary journey of St. Paul, which led to the foundation of the British church, presupposes the existence of a Jewish community—always the initial object of his propaganda—even before the capture of Jerusalem by Titus in the year 70.[2] After that catastrophe, the entire Roman world was flooded with Palestinian slaves, and there is no reason to imagine that Britain was excepted. Tangible proof of intercourse between the two lands at this period has been provided by the discovery, during the course of excavations in England, of coins minted in Judaea in the first and second centuries.[3] Whoever

[1] The discovery during excavations at Gaza of ornaments made of Irish (?) gold proves that there was indirect intercourse between the British Isles and Palestine even before the Israelite conquest, and renders this hypothesis somewhat less improbable.

[2] The first Bishop of Britain was legendarily Aristobulus, brother of Barnabas.

[3] For details see now S. Applebaum, *Were there Jews in Roman Britain?* in *Trs. J.H.S.E.* xvii. 189–205, where all the archaeological evidence is carefully examined,

brought them—Roman legionaries or Jewish captives—it is probable that trade and traders went between the two provinces by the same route that was followed by these insignificant relics. There is accordingly good reason to believe that the greater urban centres in Britain harboured, if not organized Jewish communities, at least some nucleus of Jewish population. St. Jerome, in the fourth century, certainly thought so; and, in more than one passage of his writings, he specifically referred to the extension of the Diaspora as far as this remote island province, and to the conviction of the Jews of his day that their co-religionists would be gathered even thence at the time of the great final Deliverance.[1]

If such a community existed it must have been wiped out in the anarchical interlude of the Teutonic invasions, when the Romanized Celts yielded to the Anglo-Saxons, and Britannia became England. In the Saxon period the Jewish traders, then so important in the Mediterranean world and on the Continent of Europe, may have extended their activities as far as the British Isles, but all the evidence formerly adduced in support of this hypothesis is apocryphal.[2] Whether or no individuals visited the country, it may be stated with confidence that no permanent settlement was formed, no community established, and no synagogue built.

§ II

This is not the place to describe in detail how the normally constituted Syrian people known as the Jews were dispossessed of their ancestral home, scattered to every corner of the known world, and driven overwhelmingly into an urban existence. Though before the fall of the Roman Empire even those of the Diaspora in Europe continued to be interested in agriculture, as their brethren in Palestine and Mesopotamia had been, they

without wholly conclusive results. An iron wall-sconce reminiscent of a Jewish seven-branched candelabrum has recently been found at Silchester.

[1] Commentary to Isaiah lxvi. 20, Amos viii. 12, and Zephaniah ii. 8 (9) (Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, xxiv. 672, xxv. 1083, 1364). The phrasing makes it clear that Jerome believed Jews to be living in Britain and even to have attained positions of dignity there: he mentions the province together with Spain, Italy, Gaul, &c., where they were indubitably settled in his day.

[2] See Note I (*a*), p. 270.

were gradually excluded from this. The rise of Christianity undermined their economic and social life. The Church (and its over-ready disciples, the Christian emperors) frowned on their intercourse with true believers on equal terms, hampered their ownership of land, and flatly forbade them not only to have Christians in their employment, but even to acquire moral authority over them in a professional capacity. Slowly, they were driven out of ordinary activities, and restricted to those for which their international connexions, their adaptability, and their acumen gave them perhaps special qualification.[1]

In the Dark Ages, the terms 'merchant' and 'Jew' were sometimes used, in western Europe, virtually as synonyms: and certain branches of trade and manufacture were almost exclusively in Jewish hands. But, as time went on, Gentile competition in these spheres became increasingly strong. The Italian maritime republics embarked upon commercial activities with a degree of cohesion, reinforced by political backing, which the Jews could not emulate. Trade was everywhere organized on a co-operative basis, and impregnated with a feeling of religious solidarity which left few loopholes for the unbeliever. Accordingly, the Jew was driven to employ his capital in the only manner that remained open. Unable to engage in personal enterprise, he had to finance that of others—to lend out his capital, that is, at interest. This tendency became all the more marked since an impossible idealism backed by faulty exegesis was causing the Church—oblivious of the fact that credit is a necessity in any society which has progressed beyond its most rudimentary stage—to oppose the lending of money at interest in any circumstances whatsoever. Not until the Middle Ages were drawing to their close did the change become anything like general. Nevertheless, in some parts of Europe, the process had made great progress as early as the eleventh century, when the Jewish financier or money-lender (the terms are interchangeable)

[1] The process described here in a few lines was of course a long and gradual one, extending over some centuries. For a fuller account see the present writer's *Short History of the Jewish People* (London, 1959) or, in greater detail, H. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden* (preferably in the German original: latest edition, Leipzig, 1890–1911); S. Dubnow, *Weltgeschichte des jüdischen Volkes* (Berlin, 1925–9); and two basic works by James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue* (London, 1934) and *The Jew in the Medieval Community* (London, 1938), with the authorities listed in them, and especially S. W. Baron's *Social and Religious History of the Jews* (2nd ed., 1952, &c.).

was already a familiar figure. Particularly was this the case in north-eastern France, with which (as we shall see) medieval Anglo-Jewry, as England generally, was to be most intimately associated.

With the Norman Conquest of 1066 England became an integral part of the European system for the first time since the Roman evacuation. Thus it entered at last into the cognizance of the Jewish communities of the Continent, hitherto barely aware of its existence.[1] The virtual absence of a middle class and the scarcity of money (now rendered more necessary by new social and economic developments) gave enterprising capitalists a unique opportunity. In the continental possessions of William the Conqueror, considerable Jewish communities were already to be found (at Rouen, for example, they had been settled from about the year 1,000 at the latest).[2] It was natural for some of the more adventurous spirits to follow their duke to the new field of enterprise that offered itself, even if (as is sometimes reported) he did not specifically invite them.[3] Within a short period, congregations—probably consisting in no case of more than a handful of persons—were to be found in a few of the greater cities, that of London of course predominating. The earliest settlers originated almost exclusively from northern France, on which the English communities remained to a very large degree dependent culturally, linguistically, and economically. From the beginning there were also a few individuals from the Rhineland, which at that time formed a single *bloc* with Champagne in the geography of the Jewish world. Subsequently, isolated individuals or families arrived from further afield.

The influx was slow, but its effects were important. While the face of England was being Normanized, while the administration was being reformed on the continental pattern, and while feudalism in its widest sense was being established, England gave its tardy welcome to a band of Jewish wanderers,

[1] The earliest explicit mention of England in Hebrew literature appears to be in the pseudo-Josephus ('Josippon'), probably composed in south Italy in the ninth century.

[2] There is a semi-legendary record of a persecution at this place in 1007, when the Pope is said to have intervened to prevent the massacre of those Jews who refused to accept baptism. However questionable the details, the account presupposes the existence of a fairly numerous Jewish community.

[3] See Note I (*b*), p. 270.

and the most narrowly feudal of all the Jewish communities of the Middle Ages came into existence.

§ III

Of the history of the English Jews under the first two Norman monarchs, hardly anything is known. From the scanty glimpses that we are afforded, it would seem that they were treated with favour—contemptuous, perhaps, but solid. Except for the incidental statement that Jews had been brought over from Rouen to England by William the Conqueror, there is no authentic reference to them during his reign. William Rufus encouraged the exotic strangers somewhat too exuberantly, in words at least, if we are to believe contemporary accounts. On a certain solemnity when the Jews of London brought him a gift, he persuaded them to enter into a religious discussion with bishops and churchmen present at court. Not content with the scandal caused by this, he jestingly swore, by the Holy Face of Lucca, that if they were victorious he would himself embrace Judaism—an impiety which can hardly have enhanced their popularity in ecclesiastical circles.[1] Not, indeed, that there was any objection on the part of the Church to religious discussion as such. About the same time, a certain Jew who had studied at the famous Talmudic academy of Mainz entered into a friendly argument on matters of faith with Gilbert Crispin, abbot of Westminster, with whom he had business dealings. The tenor of the conversation, far more amicable in tone than most mediæval encounters of the sort, was afterwards committed to writing by the abbot and communicated to St. Anselm, the learned archbishop of Canterbury.[2] In consequence of these arguments (so at least the ecclesiastical champion claimed) a Jew was

[1] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta*, iv. 317.

[2] *Gisleberti Crispini abbatis Westmonasteriensis Disputatio Judaei cum Christiano* in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, clix. 1034 ff.: cf. J. Armitage Robinson, *Gilbert Crispin, Abbot of Westminster* (Cambridge, 1911), pp. 60–67, I. Lévi, *R.E.J.* v. 238–45, and, most recently, A. Lukyn Williams, *Adversus Judaeos* (Cambridge, 1935), pp. 375–80. The probable historicity of the account appears from the meticulousness of some of the details: e.g. the statement that Crispin's interlocutor had studied in Mainz, which was in fact one of the great centres of Rabbinic learning at the time, and the reference to business relations (for which we have documentary evidence) between the Abbot of Westminster and London Jews. The latest edition is by B. Blumenkranz, *Gisleberti Crispini Disputatio Judei et Christiani* (Utrecht–Antwerp, 1956).

converted to Christianity and became a monk; and he was followed to the font not long afterwards by another, who was earnestly commended by Anselm to the charity of zealous Christians.[1] This is absolutely all that is known with any degree of assurance of the Jews in England until 1100.

It was at this period that there took place the great massacre of the Jews of Rouen by the crusading knights in 1096—a prelude to the atrocities on the Rhineland—when all who refused to accept baptism were butchered forthwith. Those who managed to escapewould naturally have sought refuge in their duke's domains across the Channel, as yet untouched by the crusading frenzy. It is likely that a settled and relatively numerous Anglo-Jewish community owes its origin to this event, though there is no documentary evidence to support the assumption.

With the reign of Henry I (1100–35) we begin to be on surer ground. It is likely that he issued a charter of protection to the Jews, or at least to certain individuals. The text of this is now lost, but it was so important that it continued to be referred to and imitated for nearly two centuries as a model document, and it may be regarded as the fundamental charter of liberties of medieval English Jewry. It guaranteed, above all, liberty of movement throughout the country, relief from ordinary tolls, protection from misusage, free recourse to royal justice and responsibility to no other, permission to retain land taken in pledge as security, and special provision to ensure fair trial. It confirmed the community, in short, in a position of privilege as a separate entity—existing for the king's advantage, protected by him in all legitimate transactions and answerable to him alone. This charter was confirmed by succeeding rulers after their accession, though not gratuitously.[2]

Protected by these privileges, English Jewry slowly gathered strength.[3] For some years an illustrious ex-Jew was prominent

[1] *S. Anselmi Epistolae*, iii. cxvii.

[2] The original grant of this charter by Henry I is suggested in the preamble to John's confirmation of 1201 (*Rot. Cart.* i. 93): 'to hold all that from us which they held from King Henry our father's grandfather'. For its various confirmations see below, pp. 10, 19, 31–32, 66. On the other hand, the new Borough Charters of the twelfth century refer similarly to 'Henry our Grandfather', suggesting that it was a conventional phrase: see also Richardson, *J.A.A.*, p. 111.

[3] There is, however, no justification for the former statement that in this reign preachers were dispatched to the principal cities of the realm to serve as a corrective to the growing Jewish influence.

as royal physician—the Spaniard Petrus Alfonsi (*c.* 1062–1110), an important figure in the history of the transmission of the Hellenic legacy of the Arabs to medieval Europe, author of the homiletic collection known as the *Training School for Clergy*, and a welcome visitor at Malvern Abbey.[1] The first mention of the 'Street of the Jews' in London is found about 1128, in the 'Terrier' of St. Paul's;[2] while references to Jewish activities in finance are recorded three years later in the earliest extant record of the Exchequer, the Pipe Roll of the 31st year of Henry I (1130).

This invaluable document shows us a community centred in London. At its head is a certain Rabbi Joseph, popularly known as Rubi Gotsce[3]—obviously a person of considerable reputation in the intellectual world and presumably the outstanding scholar in Anglo-Jewry in the first half of the twelfth century.[4] He appears to have originated in Rouen, with which city his children retained their associations. His descendants continued to play an important part in Anglo-Jewish life for more than a century. Besides being a notable scholar, Rubi Gotsce was also a capable financier. Three or four other prominent London business men are also mentioned, especially Manasser (Menasseh) and Jacob, who was assisted in his business affairs by his wife. Their transactions were on a large scale, and mainly, it seems, with the nobility (Jacob has dealings also with the Abbot of Westminster). As always in later history, the Crown was acquisitive rather than benevolent, and would impartially accept a promise of money from a noble to exert pressure on the Jews to remit his debts, or a gift from the Jews to exert pressure on the other side to pay them. Rubi Gotsce and his associates were on the other hand making advances to the Crown also, though of relatively small amounts. A ruthless method of evading payment was found, as will be seen later; so ruthless indeed as to qualify

[1] *Legacy of Israel*, pp. 108–9, &c.

[2] See Note I (*c*), pp. 270–1.

[3] Pronounced *Yotsce* or *Jose*, the *G* being equivalent to *Y*.

[4] Jacobs's identification (*J.H.E.*, pp. 15, 23) with the Talmudist and exegete R. Joseph Bechor-Shor of Orleans is untenable, the latter having been a disciple of R. Jacob Tam of Ramerupt and belonging therefore to the second half of the century. He is probably to be identified with the scholarly Joseph of Morel (below, p. 126).

the accepted view, that this was in every respect a halcyon period for English Jewry.[1]

Indeed, from the few glimpses that we are afforded it does not appear that the condition of the community, though generally tranquil, was enviable. During the civil war between Stephen and the 'Empress' Matilda, they clearly suffered more than the rest of the population. The case of Oxford was no doubt typical. In 1141, during her occupation of that city, Matilda imposed a levy on the Jews. When the place was recaptured by her rival, he demanded from them, by way of punishment for their complaisance, three and a half times as much. Since the victims were unwilling, he sent incendiaries bearing lighted torches with instructions to set fire to all the Jewish houses. Only when one of the finest had been consumed by the flames (it was that of the communal magnate, Aaron fil' Isaac, the earliest known Oxford Jew) did his co-religionists provide what was asked.[2]

Though the Crusading movement had as yet gained only a slight footing in England, the fanatical spirit which it engendered was not altogether absent. About 1130 the London Jews were accused of killing a sick man, who perhaps had gone to one of them for medical treatment—an anticipation of the cruder accusations which were to make their appearance not long after. This charge seems to have given rise to a persecution of some sort—how virulent cannot be determined. But, like most vicissitudes of Jewish life, it was turned to the advantage of the Exchequer. The London community, with Rubi Gotsce at its head, was fined the enormous sum of £2,000. Out of this the claims of Jewish financiers on the Crown were satisfied, or rather cancelled, the credit balance being thus turned into a debit balance of a far greater magnitude and a considerable cash payment being made besides. The timeliness of the accusation, from the point of view of the Exchequer, was such as to

[1] Another entry of the earliest Pipe Roll for Norfolk and Suffolk (Pp.R. 1130–1 p. 91: reference should in every case be made to the original, as Jacobs's excerpts are both defective and inaccurate) refers to a certain Benjamin who accounts for £4. 5*s*. 'ut custodiat placita quae coronae regis pertinent'—apparently an early anticipation of the office of Coroner. Maitland suggests that 'a Benjamin who has no surname looks uncommonly like a Jew, and perhaps the pleas that he wishes to "keep" are pleas concerning the Jews'. But it now appears that he was King's Serjeant: Richardson and Sayles, *Governance of Medieval England*, 1963, pp. 186-7.

[2] There are elements of doubt in the story : cf. Roth, *Oxford*, pp. 2–3.

make one suspect that the coincidence was not altogether accidental.[1]

In 1144 the conception implicit in this charge received a terrible extension. On Easter Eve of that year, the dead body of a young skinner's apprentice, named William, was found in a wood near Norwich. Modern inquirers, after careful examination of the facts, have concluded that the child probably lost consciousness in consequence of a cataleptic fit, and was buried prematurely by his relatives. It was bruited about, however, that he was a victim of the Jews, who had enticed him away from his family and crucified him after synagogue service on the second day of Passover, in mockery of the Passion of Jesus. This was the first recorded instance in the medieval world of the infamous Ritual Murder accusation, which subsequently caused the Jews throughout Europe untold misery. A wave of religious exaltation swept through the city; and the child's body was buried with all solemnity in the Cathedral, where miracles were said to be wrought at the grave-side. The civil authorities did not indeed give any encouragement to this outbreak. The Jews were protected to his utmost ability by the sheriff, who permitted them to seek refuge in the Castle, and would not allow them to be taken to the bishop's court for a biased trial. Nevertheless, after they ventured into the open, one of the leaders of the community was murdered by the followers of a lawless knight who was in his debt; and this was not conceivably the only case. Down to the time of the Reformation, the relics of William of Norwich were venerated as those of a saint and martyr, and he remained a popular figure in the hagiology of the eastern counties.[2]

It is not recorded that these allegations had any wider repercussions. That there were none is hardly to be credited: in 1146, indeed, during the Second Crusade, Bernard of Clairvaux thought it necessary to address his famous appeal against the

[1] Pp.R. 1130–1, p. 149. The amount of the fine, £2,000, must be multiplied by perhaps 100 times to get an idea of its significance in modern currency. It represented something like one-tenth of the total royal income, estimated for this period at £20,000.

[2] A. Jessopp and M. R. James, *St. William of Norwich* (Cambridge, 1896). It may be added that on this occasion (as in subsequent cases, in England) the essential element of the continental *blood* accusation was lacking, as no suggestion was apparently made that the blood was required for ritual purposes.

molestation of the Jews to England, as well as to Germany and France. A few individuals resident in England found it advisable at this period to return to Cologne, near which place one of them, Simeon the Pious of Treves, was murdered by the Crusaders on refusing to be baptized. Nevertheless, a contemporary Hebrew chronicler gratefully records how Stephen, king of England, was inspired to protect the Jews of his realm, not allowing them to be molested in their persons or property. Thus safeguarded, the Anglo-Jewish communities were able to consolidate themselves, attaining in the next generation the zenith of their prosperity.

§ IV

During the long reign of Henry II (1154–89) they and the country enjoyed peace. The crusading spirit had as yet gained little hold. There was no pretext therefore for Englishmen to imitate the massacres which intermittently continued on the Continent. The king mulcted the Jews, indeed, to the utmost; but at the same time he protected and to a certain extent even encouraged them. He not only confirmed, but even extended, his grandfather's charter of protection, formally granting the Jews of England the privilege of internal jurisdiction in accordance with Talmudic law, except in the case of offence against public order.[1] Contemporary chroniclers speak bitterly (if with palpable exaggeration) of the favour with which the sovereign treated his Jewry. 'By an absurd arrangement', writes one of them, 'they were happy and renowned far more than the Christians, and, swelling very impudently against Christ through their good fortune, did much injury to the Christians.'[2] Jews

[1] This concession was renewed by John in 1201 (below, p. 32) apart from his confirmation of Henry I's charter, with specific reference to the grant by Henry II. The original issue may be dated *c.* 1164, when the position of the Jews was put forward as an argument in favour of the autonomy of the clergy (J. C. Robertson, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket*, iv. 148).

[2] William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum anglicarum*, ed. Howlett, i. 280. For the position of the Jews, cf. *St. William of Norwich*, ed. Jessopp and James, p. 100: 'We are thy Jews. We are thy tributaries year by year, we are necessary to thee continually . . . since we are always faithful to thee and highly useful to thy realm. Thou rulest us leniently and gently. . . .'

The story once used to illustrate the favourable position of the Jews in the twelfth century, that the Norwich capitalist Jurnet (= Eliab) of Norwich married almost with impunity a Christian heiress who became converted to Judaism, has been shown by Richardson (*J.A.K.*, pp. 33–39) to have arisen from a confusion of names on the part of the eighteenth-century Norfolk historian Blomefield.

held property as tenants-in-chief of the Crown, though the world would have been scandalized had they attempted to discharge their obligations by performing military service.[1] Even churchmen treated them with marked tolerance. Notwithstanding the laws which forbade it, Jewish financiers lent money to abbeys and minsters on the security of plate, vessels used in divine worship, and—worst scandal of all—relics of the saints.[2] They were allowed to place their womenfolk and children in the monasteries for safety at times of disturbance. They kept their business-deeds in the cathedral treasuries, then generally used for safeguarding valuables in emergency. In Canterbury and Bury St. Edmunds, they even took sides in monastic politics when a fresh abbot was elected, and prayed in their synagogue for the success of the candidate whom they favoured. They were familiar figures in St. Paul's Cathedral in London, to which they resorted to seek their debtors. Jews and clerics rode together on journeys, and jested together in bad French.[3] In London, Lincoln, and York, the Jewish financiers aroused comment by the stone houses—almost fortress-like in their strength—which they built for their security at a time when the majority of the population had to content themselves with flimsy constructions of wood.[4]

At the beginning of the reign of Henry II, according to the official Treasury records, there were Jewish nuclei not only in London but also in Norwich, Lincoln, Winchester, Cambridge, Thetford, Northampton, Bungay, Oxford, and Gloucester (the order given is that of financial, and presumably in most cases numerical, importance).[5] In addition, isolated families were

[1] Below, p. 15. Jacobs (*J.A.E.*, p. 204, &c.) grossly exaggerates the implications.

[2] Benedict Abbot, ed. Stubbs, i. 106: a general statement interestingly confirmed in Pp.R. 1169–70, p. 8, and 1182–3, p. 14, which show Jews paying a fine for having taken church vessels in pledge, and in the story (Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, i. 645–6) that Bishop Nigel of Ely (1133–69) pledged relics with the Jews of Cambridge.

[3] Giraldus Cambrensis, *Itin. Camb.* II. xiii. (Many of these points are reverted to below, in Chap. V.)

[4] In the accounts of the London and York massacres, the strength of the houses in the Jewish quarter is accentuated, while in Lincoln actual specimens dating from this period are extant. For a stone house built at Canterbury in 1190, see Adler, *J.M.E.*, p. 69. (Cf. also p. 123, below.)

[5] For these Jewish centres, cf. Pp.R. 1158–9, pp. 1, 3, 12, 17, 24, 28, 35, 46, 53, 65. The amounts specified would suggest that the London community was at this time three times as large as that of Norwich. But too much stress should not be laid

living in Worcester and Leicester, and from other sources we know communities to have existed in Bristol and York. In consequence of favourable conditions, there seems to have been during the course of the reign a veritable influx from the Continent—stimulated without doubt by the expulsion of the Jews from the Île de France in 1182, and facilitated by the immense extension of the Angevin possessions overseas. The area of settlement expanded, the records showing further groups before the end of the reign at Exeter, Stamford, Lynn, Bury, Bedford, Devizes, Ipswich, Canterbury, Hereford, Dunstable, Chichester, Newport, and some smaller places. New arrivals may sometimes be traced in literary sources. Abraham ibn Ezra, the wandering Spanish scholar, was in London in 1158; and there are indications that he returned to England to die.[1] Rabbi Yomtob of Joigny, an eminent pupil of the famous Jacob of Ramerupt ('Rabbenu Tam'), settled at York. His contemporary and fellow disciple, Jacob of Orleans, migrated to London. The influx from Germany was so great that an embassy sent to England in 1168 by Frederick Barbarossa protested (as it seems) at the loss of these profitable subjects, over whom the emperor claimed special rights. As a result, some of them were forced to return overseas, while a fine of 5,000 marks was exacted from those who remained.[2] In a roll of the community of London in 1186, we find Jews deriving from Spain and France (Étampes, Joigny, and Pontoise). This was paralleled in other cities of the kingdom. Jews from Paris and elsewhere in France were settled at York; Jews from Italy (known as 'Lombard') in Lincoln, Nottingham, and Winchester; and there is recorded even an individual from Russia, where the Rabbis of Kiev and Novgorod were already famous. The official records at the close of the reign show scattered about the country some 300 Jewish business men and householders, whose contributions to the Exchequer were worth recording.[3]

on this; Oxford, for example, is shown as paying only 20 marks as against London's 200, but it had been mulcted 100 marks only a short while previous (Pp.R. 1155, p. 36). The importance of Thetford may be due to the fact that, like Norwich, it had a mint: the name of David the moneyer is suggestive.

[1] *Bibl.* A. 11. 41; below, p. 126.

[2] This seems to be the most rational interpretation of a highly obscure passage (Gervase of Canterbury, ed. Stubbs, i. 205).

[3] See the lists in *J.A.E.*, pp. 345–69. But the Moroccan Jew, p. 89, is fictitious.

Hitherto, the burial-ground in London had to serve for the whole kingdom. When a death occurred, the body was transported thither by wagon, even from places as far away as Exeter or York. The toll-lists specified the charge to be made for a dead Jew; and we read gruesome accounts of how the dogs would bay after the corpse on the road.[1] With the increase of population, such an arrangement was out of the question; and, in 1177, each community was permitted to purchase a place for interring its dead outside the city walls.[2]

Few known episodes disturbed the tenor of Anglo-Jewish life during the reign, but it was not invariably smooth. Before the terrible precedent set at Norwich in 1144 was imitated abroad (the first Ritual Murder accusation on the Continent was that of Blois, in 1171) a similar case took place in the city of Gloucester, where a number of Jews assembled in March 1168, at Passover-time, in honour of a circumcision in the family of a prominent member of the community. It was alleged that they took advantage of this to seize upon a Christian child named Harold, whom they martyred with unspeakable tortures, afterwards throwing the body into the River Severn. In 1181 a similar incident was reported at Bury St. Edmunds, where a certain Robert was the alleged victim; and there was yet another in Bristol by 1183.[3] The relics of these youths, like those of 'St.' William of Norwich, were subsequently venerated as those of martyrs. None of these cases apparently entailed any serious consequences upon the Jewish community at large, safe in the royal protection. It is true that the Assize of Arms of 1181 (which ensured the possession by every Englishman of adequate weapons) forbade Jews to retain 'mail or hauberk', which were to be sold or given away; but this clause was clearly prompted

[1] *Acta sanctorum* (Brussels, 1853), viii. 576; cf. Neubauer in *Collectanea* of the Oxford Historical Society, ii (1890), pp. 282 ff.

[2] It does not follow that all availed themselves of the permission, or that those which did acted immediately: the York cemetery (at what is still called 'Jewbury') was originally shared with the communities of Lincoln and Northampton, which, however, acquired their own burial-grounds in due course. As on the Continent, the Jewish cemetery was generally called the Jews' Garden (e.g. in London, Norwich, and Oxford). Jewin Street, &c., mark the area of the former London burial-ground, for which see now M. B. Honeybourne in *Trs. J.H.S.E.* xx.

[3] *Historia monasterii S. Petri Gloucestriae* (Rolls Series), p. 21; Jocelin de Brakelond (ed. Camden Society), p. 13; *Chronicle of Melrose*, ed. Anderson, p. 43; Adler, *J.M.E.*, pp. 185–6.

by the desire to have all weapons deposited where they would be most usefully employed, rather than by any wish to leave the Jews unprotected.[1]

§ v

The favour and protection enjoyed by the Jews under the first Plantagenet ruler were not due (as was the case, with certain reservations, later on) simply to their importance as tax-payers. This was of course considerable; and when the king went abroad, he often raised large sums by fine or loan from leading members of the community. But they were at the same time what might be termed Treasury agents, advancing large sums to the Crown to defray day-to-day expenditure or unexpected calls, and being repaid by drafts on the sheriffs, secured on the 'ferm of the Shire' or county revenue. Already in the time of Henry I, as we have seen, Rubi Gotsce of London and certain of his associates had dealings with the Crown. These were greatly extended under Henry II when, for convenience as well as security, certain capitalists found it convenient to pool their resources and to work together. Hence, after the middle of the reign, we find a few prominent *consortia* of Jews dealing with the Treasury, the heavy advances that they made being reflected in orders for repayment in due course out of the county revenues. Brun of London, Josce Quatrebuches, and the brothers Jurnet and Benedict of Norwich form one group, providing the Crown on a single occasion, in 1177, with as much as 5,750 marks (£3,833. 6*s*. 8*d*.) in one payment. This was displaced in due course by another group made up of Deodatus Episcopus,[2] Vives of Cambridge, and the brothers Moses and Benedict fil' Sara whose names are noted in at least thirty Treasury transactions in the course of a single year.[3] In the west of England, Moses of Bristol and Belaset his wife acted as Crown agents. Isaac fil' Rabbi, son of Rubi Gotsce and the principal member of the London community, worked in loose

[1] That this clause of the Assize of Arms was enforced is shown by Pp.R. 1185–6, p. 78—a Jew fined 40 marks on account of the hauberk that his wife had taken in pledge 'against the prohibition'.

[2] Probably = Nathaniel haCohen: see below, p. 94.

[3] Pp.R. 1176–7, introduction, p. xxiii. Another outstanding Anglo-Jewish financier of the period was Josce of Gloucester, who advanced money to the adventurers who raided Ireland in 1169. (Jacobs's conclusion, *J.A.E.*, p. 51, that he 'financed' Strongbow's expedition, is not justified by the evidence.)

association with the first group, having been officially authorized to enter into partnership with Jurnet of Norwich. Such was his status that he and his family were granted the manor of Ham by the Crown for services rendered.[1] For some years his financial supremacy was unquestioned. After 1166, however, he began to be outdone in financial importance by his occasional associate, Aaron of Lincoln, who for some years occupied the leading place among the Jews of England, and was among the outstanding European financiers of the twelfth century. Between the two of them, English Jewry was organized to a certain extent into a great co-operative banking association, spread throughout the country.

Like the other Jewish financiers, Aaron of Lincoln periodically made advances to the Crown on the security of the local taxation; in 1166 (when his transactions are first mentioned) these amounted to over £600. He advanced money to private individuals on corn, armour, estates, and houses, acquiring thus important interests in twenty-five counties (especially in the east and south-east of England), in at least seventeen of which he maintained his agents. Loans were contracted with him to assist in the building of no less than nine Cistercian abbeys, as well as the cathedrals of Lincoln and Peterborough. So considerable was his assistance in the construction of the famous conventual church at St. Albans, that he used to boast, with more outspokenness than tact, that it was he who had made the great window in the church, and had prepared a home for the saint when he had been without one.[2]

When he died, about 1186, Aaron of Lincoln was probably the wealthiest person in England, in liquid assets. The king therefore did not scruple to vindicate his legal rights (seldom exercised to the full) and to declare all the property of the

[1] Rymer, *Foedera*, i. 51: the family also owned the manor of Thurrocks, acquired by purchase from the Earl Ferrers (ibid.) and sold in 1199 to Henry de Gray (Pp.R. 1199, p. 6*b*). Abraham of Felmingham, who received a grant of land for bringing Henry II a report that the King of Scotland had been captured (*Book of Fees*, i. 130) was contrary to appearances (his son's name was Isaac!) not a Jew, as is clear from other references. For some reason, Isaac fil' Rabbi never paid the fee for his partnership-licence.

[2] The 'traditional' association with Aaron of the house in Lincoln bearing his name dates only from the nineteenth century. Richardson (*J.A.K.*, pp. 90–91) suggests that the indebtedness of the Cistercian abbeys resulted from loans for acquiring encumbered estates: cf. also J. C. Holt, *The Northerners* (Oxford, 1961), p. 166.

deceased usurer escheated to the Crown. The bullion and treasure was sent over to France to assist in the war then in progress against Philip Augustus. The vessel in which it was conveyed was lost with all it contained while crossing the Channel from Shoreham to Dieppe, in February 1187. The outstanding credits amounted to £15,000, being equivalent to three-quarters of the royal income in a normal year, owed by some 430 persons distributed over a great part of England. To deal with the collection of these amounts, it was found necessary to establish a special branch of the Exchequer, the *Scaccarium Aaronis*, with two treasurers and two clerks, whose labour of sorting out the debts and ascertaining what was due to the Crown took nearly five years. This bureau continued in existence until 1205, when (notwithstanding the chancellor's annual exhortation to debtors to compound with him for their dues) one-half of the total was still outstanding. Among those with whom the dead financier was found to have had dealings were the King of Scotland, the Count of Brittany, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the earls of Northampton, Arundel, Aumale, and Leicester, the bishops of Bangor and Lincoln, the Abbot of Westminster, the Prior of the Knights Hospitallers, and the towns of Winchester and Southampton.[1] Such transactions never failed to be turned to the advantage of the Exchequer. It has been estimated that an average of £3,000—that is, something like one-seventh of the total revenue—was derived at this period from the Jews every year in the normal course of taxation, without taking into account occasional windfalls when individual or community were amerced for some real or imaginary trespass. In 1159, moreover, there had been a fresh departure in the financial administration. On the occasion of the king's expedition against rebellious Toulouse, the cost of the

[1] A detailed study of the activities of Aaron of Lincoln, by Joseph Jacobs, is in *Trs. J.H.S.E.*, vol. iii; see also Mrs. Stenton's informative introduction to Pp.R. 1191–3. For Aaron's very important transactions with the King of Scotland see A. C. Laurie, *Annals of Malcolm and William*, p. ccxix. Jacobs's date for Aaron's death, 1187, is too late: cf. J. H. Round, Pp.R. 1185–6, p. xxx. The amount of his debts in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire was so great that a special membrane dealing with them had to be added to the Pipe Roll. But it should be noted that William Cade, the Flemish Christian usurer, who died about 1166, had worked on similar lines: see Jenkinson in *Studies Presented to R. Lane-Poole*, pp. 190–210: Richardson, *J.A.K.*, pp. 51–61: and for Aaron, ibid. 61–76, 247–53, &c., and J. C. Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 164–5.

expeditionary force was defrayed in part by an arbitrary levy, or 'tallage', on the towns of the country, and on the Jews.[1] The amounts involved on this occasion were not excessively heavy. But, especially as far as the infidel financiers were concerned, it was a particularly dangerous innovation. Instead of having their ability utilized, as hitherto, they could henceforth be exploited, by a facile method which was to end in their ruin.

It was not indeed until the close of the reign that the full potentialities of the new instrument were realized. In 1188, in order to finance the king's proposed Crusade, the Saladin Tithe —the first English tax on personal property—was ruthlessly levied throughout the kingdom. The Jews had been assessed separately at Christmastide 1186 at Guildford, their contribution being fixed not at one-tenth of their property, as was the case with the other inhabitants of the country, but at one-fourth. It is significant that this was expected to bring in no less than £60,000, as against £70,000 from the general levy. Thus, the Jewish capital was estimated to constitute more than one-third of the mobile wealth of the nation—certainly an exaggeration, yet at the same time indicative of their relative importance to the Exchequer.[2] The collection of this vast sum—the equivalent of perhaps £6,000,000 in modern values—had not been completed when, in 1189, Henry Plantagenet ended his long life of struggle, leaving the throne to his worst-hated son.

Fresh light is thrown upon the succession to the claims of Aaron of Lincoln by the sections devoted to his credits in Pp.R. 1208, pp. 80–81 (Lincoln), 143–4 (York). For a payment of 200 marks, his son Elias secured £400 'of the worst of the charters of Aaron his father which are not paid off and are worth little to the Lord King': later, he gave 3 marks of gold to have further charters 'such as may bear fruit to him'. He was now at liberty to exact what he could, and is unlikely to have been light-handed.

[1] Pp.R. 1158–9, pp. 46, 53, &c. This was anterior to the tallage of 5,000 marks in 1168, said by Rigg (*P.E.J.*, p. xvi) to be the earliest.

[2] For the levy, see Pp.R. 1186–7, p. 44. It was expected to be so profitable that the Crown suspended the collection of debts from leading Jews, to the amount of some £6,500. Richardson (*J.A.K.*, p. 162) states that £60,000 was a symbolic figure used to denote an enormous sum. Even so, this was immediately followed by a levy of 10,000 marks on the Jews at the time of the Saladin Tithe. These impositions marked the beginning of a new Exchequer policy which had a profound influence on English Jewry. Hitherto the king had financed himself largely by raising loans from the Jews. This system inevitably broke down because of the difficulty of repaying money lent for unproductive purposes. At the end of his reign, therefore, he began to impose heavy taxation in place of this: but this system similarly broke down in the end owing to the unpopularity which accrued to the royal instruments and their ultimate exhaustion.

II

THE BEGINNING OF PERSECUTION AND THE ORGANIZATION OF JEWRY

1189–1216

§ 1

DURING the course of the past few years the tide of religious feeling had been rising. The recent exactions had been occasioned by the fact that Henry II himself had 'taken the Cross', pledging himself thus to go on Crusade to deliver the Holy Land from the infidel. He had died without being able to fulfil his vow; but his son and successor, Richard Lion-Heart, ascended the throne pledged to the great enterprise, and determined to carry it into effect.

For the first time Crusading enthusiasm—hitherto at a low ebb—spread throughout England among all classes, from highest to lowest. It was inevitable that the feeling against the Jews was accentuated. The heavy exactions of the previous reign, of which they had been to some extent the instruments, were not forgotten, and there was little prospect that the policy of the government would change. Increasing numbers and prosperity were a prolific cause of jealousy. In 1179 Pope Alexander III had felt obliged to exhort the king to protect the monks of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, in their business dealings with the Jews, which must have been of considerable volume.[1] The anti-Jewish legislation of the Third Lateran Council of that same year had applied to England as to other countries. The recent succession of Blood Accusations marked the direction and intensity of the current. The ground was thus fully prepared for an outbreak in the continental style, which England had hitherto escaped. It was an unfortunate coincidence, if nothing more,

[1] Thomas Elmham, *Hist. Monast. Sancti Augustini*, p. 431. It is suggestive that, less than ten years later, in 1187, the Jews of Canterbury were zealously supporting the monks of Christchurch in their struggle against their rivals of St. Augustine's, praying for them in Synagogue and smuggling in supplies of food and wine for their use (Adler, *J.M.E.*, p. 52). The complaint of 1179 probably had an inner history.

that the Assize of Arms had left the Jews helpless, without the prospect of defending themselves as other men could when the storm broke.

A trivial episode at the coronation of the new king proved to be the spark which set the tinder ablaze. The proceedings at Westminster were long and stately, and the solemnity of the occasion was emphasized by a proclamation ordering that no woman, and no Jew, should be admitted.[1] Nevertheless, on the afternoon of the coronation day (Sunday, 3 September 1189), while the festivities were at their height, a deputation from the Jewish communities of the kingdom presented itself at the gateway of Westminster Hall, bearing rich gifts—probably in the hope of obtaining a renewal of the charter of privileges granted originally by Henry I. Some of them, eager to see the magnificence, took advantage of a momentary disorder to slip in, and were driven out by a zealous doorkeeper with unnecessary brutality. This was enough to arouse the crowd at the palace gates. Several members of the deputation were beaten or trampled to death before they could escape. The wealthy Benedict, who had come as one of the representatives of the community of York, saved his life by consenting to embrace Christianity, and was immediately baptized in the adjacent Church of the Innocents by a priest from his own city.

Exaggerated rumours of what was happening at Westminster soon spread to London, where it was reported that the king had given orders for the Jews to be exterminated. In their well-built stone houses, the inhabitants were able to resist for some hours until, towards nightfall, one of the mob threw up a lighted torch which set fire to a thatched roof. The flames rapidly spread, and before long the whole of the Jewry was in a blaze. Though some of the inhabitants found refuge in the Tower of London or under the protection of friendly neighbours, several perished in their houses, and others were done to death when they ventured into the street. Thirty persons lost their lives, amongst them being the eminent Rabbi Jacob of Orleans, not long since arrived from the Continent.

[1] 'Because of the magic arts which Jews and some women notoriously exercise at royal coronations', according to Matthew Paris (*Hist. Angl.* ii. 9). It may be observed that Jewish custom prescribes a special benediction on seeing a monarch, the recital of which might conceivably give rise to a suspicion of this sort.

The news was reported to the king as he sat banqueting. He immediately dispatched the justiciar, Ranulph de Glanville, to check the disorders, but he was unable to make any impression. The outbreak had indeed been of so universal a character, and enjoyed such general sympathy, that it was not considered advisable to take serious measures against those who had participated. Nevertheless, some of the ringleaders were arrested and three were hanged—one for robbing a Christian and two because the fire they had kindled burned down a Christian house. Little else was done except to dispatch letters to all parts of the kingdom ordering the Jews to be left in peace. The day after the riot Richard sent for Benedict of York, who admitted that he had adopted Christianity only in order to escape death. Turning to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the king inquired how he should be dealt with. 'If he will not serve God, let him serve the devil', replied the prelate: and his contemptuous advice was followed.[1]

§ 11

The royal proclamation was sufficient to secure the maintenance of peace only so long as the king was in the country. In December he crossed to the Continent, and for six months remained in France gathering his forces. Meanwhile, in every town in England, Crusading detachments were assembled in readiness for departure overseas. Their reasoning was similar to that of Crusaders everywhere: that it was not right to allow Jewish infidels to enjoy their ill-gotten riches undisturbed at home, while the soldiers of the Cross were facing untold dangers to combat Moslem infidels overseas: the redemption of the Holy Sepulchre, and the avenging of the Crucifixion, should begin in England itself. There was a widespread impression that the slaughter of a single paynim would gain Paradise even for the most hardened sinner. Unhappily, the assembly of the Crusaders coincided with the season of Lent, when the deepest-rooted

[1] William of Newburgh, ed. Howlett, i. 294; Matthew Paris, *Hist. Angl.*, ii. 9 (Rog. Wend. iii. 7); R. Howden, ed. Stubbs, iii. 14; Ephraim of Bonn in Neubauer-Stern, *Hebräische Berichte über die Judenvervolgungen während der Kreuzzüge* (Berlin, 1892), pp. 69–70 (translation in *Trs. J.H.S.E.* v. 78; that in Jacobs, *J.A.E.*, pp. 107–8, is grotesquely inaccurate). The fact that the charter of John (not of Henry I or II), was confirmed by Henry III suggests that the original may have been destroyed during the coronation riots.

religious passions were aroused and the most inflammatory recollections revived.

Early in February the first outbreak took place at the port of Lynn, in Norfolk (subsequently King's Lynn). Here, a recent apostate from Judaism took refuge from the insults of his former co-religionists in a church, where the latter had the imprudence to follow him.[1] The consequent uproar developed into a riot, in which foreign sailors in port took a leading part. The community was all but exterminated, the houses being stormed and pillaged, and the inhabitants butchered or burned in the flames which destroyed a good part of the city.[2] A few days after, the news reached Norwich, the principal town in the eastern counties, where the example was followed (6 February), though most of the Jews took refuge previously in the royal castle. Large numbers of Crusaders and others meanwhile assembled at Stamford for the Lent Fair. 'Indignant that the enemies of the cross of Christ who dwelt there should possess so much when they had not enough for the expenses of so great a journey',[3] they made a similar attack, putting to the sword all who did not get to the castle in time. The houses in the Jewry were pillaged, and a large amount of property was seized (7 March). At the populous city of Lincoln, most of the Jews were able to put themselves and their valuables under the protection of the royal officers in good time, but much havoc was effected nevertheless. Further attacks appear to have taken place in Colchester, Thetford, and Ospringe.[4] At other places, not mentioned in the records, there may also have been outbreaks, for a contemporary tells us that it was only at Winchester, thanks to the phlegmatic nature of the citizens, that the Jews were unscathed; but, as if to compensate, this city was the scene of a ritual murder accusation

[1] This contemporary story does not carry conviction: the medieval Jew may not always have been tolerant, but experience had taught him to be circumspect.

[2] But the great *incendium de Lenna* took place before this: cf. Pp.R. 1186–7, p. 55.

[3] William of Newburgh, i. 310.

[4] These attacks are not mentioned by the chroniclers, but may be inferred from the entries relating to recent murders of Jews at these places in Pp.R. 1191–2, pp. 147, 203, 313; Pp.R. 1193, p. 145, and in C.R.R. 1194, pp. 15, 16. It has been suggested (Pp.R. 1190–1, p. xxii) that some converts from Judaism shared the fate of their former co-religionists, since two of them, Nicholas and John, who had formerly enjoyed a pittance of one penny daily from the counties of Essex and Surrey, henceforth disappear from the records and are replaced by born Gentiles. In the Pipe Rolls for 1191–2 about 200 Jewish names only occur, as against 300 in Jacobs's lists for the close of the reign of Henry II.

two years later.[1] At Dunstable it is reported that the entire diminutive community saved itself from massacre by submitting to baptism. Jewish tradition preserved the memory of one place containing a small congregation of twenty-two souls, who were exterminated without exception.[2]

The worst outbreak of all, which has survived in the recollection of both the English and the Jewish peoples as a classical example of stark tragedy, took place at York. Here, the existence of a community is first recorded in the year 1130, but in such terms as to make it evident that it had already been established for some years and was of considerable importance. Under Henry II it had grown in wealth and numbers. It was one of the principal seats of Aaron of Lincoln's activity, and had apparently attracted some distinguished settlers from the Continent. The local baronage was heavily indebted to the Jews—particularly Richard Malebysse (Malbis), whose fierce temper led him to be nicknamed by his creditors 'the Evil Beast'. On hearing the news of the southern outbreaks, he and various members of the Percy, Faulconbridge, and Darrel families determined to seize the opportunity to wipe out their indebtedness. One stormy March night, when an outbreak of fire caused confusion in the city, a number of the conspirators broke into the house of Benedict of York (who had died of his wounds on his way back from London), murdered his widow and all the other persons whom they found there, seized all the movable property and set the building in flames. The next morning, the other Jews (headed by Benedict's colleague Josce, who had been

[1] Richard of Devizes, ed. Howlett, pp. 383, 435. The chronicler's sarcastic account, which has led to the suspicion that the whole story is fictitious, is grimly confirmed by a record of the expenses for escorting the Jews of Winchester to Westminster (Pp.R. 1193–4, p. 134). There was an alarm of the same nature at Lincoln in 1202, when the discovery of a child's body outside the walls brought the Jews under suspicion (*Earliest Lincoln Assize Roll* (Lincoln Record Society), § 996), and in the same year a Jew of Bedford was accused of causing the death of a Christian child by 'ementulating' him (Tovey, *Anglia Judaica*, p. 66; *Select Pleas of Crown*, Selden Society, i. 26; Fowler, *Roll of Justices in Eyre at Bedford*, i. 133, 247).

[2] This place is possibly to be identified with Lynn, where according to the English sources the slaughter seems to have been comprehensive. Ephraim of Bonn and the chroniclers who derive from him, followed by all modern authorities, speak of this as a 'community of proselytes'. This is highly unlikely, and the reading is plainly due to a faulty passage in the chronicle of Ephraim of Bonn, where *Gerim* ('proselytes') was read for *Garim* ('inhabitants'): a subsequent copyist fixed the confusion by adding the Talmudic gloss 'a community of proselytes is considered a community'.

one of the principal agents of Aaron of Lincoln) sought refuge with their more precious belongings in the castle, leaving only a few subordinates behind as caretakers. Following the example set at Norwich and Lincoln, the Warden did what he could to protect them, allowing them to take up quarters in the keep subsequently called Clifford's Tower, which stood isolated on an artificial mound. A few nights later, an assault was delivered on Josce's residence, those left in it being butchered. Popular feeling and greed were now thoroughly aroused, and the few Jews who remained in the city were given the alternative of baptism or death.

The refugees in the castle became more and more apprehensive, and in the end, anticipating treachery, refused admittance even to the Warden. The latter applied for help to the sheriff, John Marshall, who rashly summoned the armed forces of the county to assist in recovering the stronghold. That evening (it was Friday, 16 March 1190—the eve of the 'Great Sabbath' before Passover, and two days before Palm Sunday according to the calendar of the Church) a terrible scene occurred. The venerable Rabbi Yomtob of Joigny (a poet and legalist, one of whose hymns is still chanted in most Synagogues on the Eve of Atonement) urged his co-religionists to anticipate their inevitable fate in heroic fashion. Fire was set to their valuables, and by the light of the flames, which soon set the whole building in a blaze, the proposal was carried into effect. The number of victims was reported to exceed one hundred and fifty, besides those who met their death in the town: among them being the learned R. Elijah of York, whose opinions were cited with respect by the Rabbinical authorities on the Continent. The last to die were Josce and Rabbi Yomtob, who killed the former before making away with himself.

Next morning at daybreak, when the besiegers gathered to deliver the final assault, the few who had not succumbed were persuaded to throw open the gates, with a promise of clemency if they embraced Christianity. As they ventured out, they were set upon and massacred to a man. Immediately the butchery was over, the ringleaders went to the Cathedral and forced the sacristan to give up the bonds which the Jews had deposited there. These they burned on the floor of the Minster, kindling the flames from the light on the High Altar. All the attendant

circumstances go to indicate that the outbreak was at least as much economic as religious in origin.[1]

Not long afterwards, the majority of those responsible left for the Crusade. The handful of survivors were removed to London as soon as order was re-established (their transport cost only eight shillings).[2] It was many years before any community was re-established at York, and it never again attained the importance which it had enjoyed before that fiery night.[3]

The communities of Lynn and York were not the only ones which came to an end at this time. Under the walls of the great monastery of Bury St. Edmunds a relatively considerable Jewish community had grown up in the twelfth century. During the loose rule of the Abbot Hugh (1173-80) the house fell deeply into their debt. This was largely owing to the improvidence of the sacristan and cellarer, who borrowed on their own responsibility sums which increased at interest with startling rapidity: though the greatest individual creditor was, as it appears, a Christian. The sacristan, William, was on friendly terms with the local Jews, allowing them to deposit their deeds and money in his charge, and to lodge their wives and children in the refectory in time of disorder. In return, they strenuously favoured his claims to be elected abbot on the death of Hugh in 1180. One of the first actions of Abbot Samson, the successful candidate, was to depose the sacristan from office. Immediately afterwards, he set about freeing the monastery from the burden of debt in which it had become involved.[4]

The rapid growth of anti-Jewish feeling in the little monastic town is indicated by the ritual murder accusation which took place there, with the connivance of the monks, in the interregnum before Abbot Samson's election, when the child Robert was alleged to have been murdered (10 June 1181). The ground was thus amply prepared for more violent manifestations. The day after the tragic occurrences at York, on Palm Sunday, 1190,

[1] See Note II (*a*), p. 272.

[2] Pp.R. 1189–90, p. 75.

[3] In the Northampton Donum of 1194, York does not figure. By 1221 it was sufficiently recovered to contribute more than any other city to the Aid to marry the king's sister (below, p. 44 n.); but this unprecedented tribute was probably raised in York itself. Not all the community perished in the massacre: Aaron of York, the great thirteenth-century capitalist, was one of Josce's sons.

[4] The details of the episode are familiar to English readers from Carlyle's account (based on Jocelin of Brakelonde) in his *Past and Present*.

a massacre took place, fifty-seven Jews being killed. Shortly afterwards, Abbot Samson procured a writ from the Sovereign, authorizing the survivors (there cannot have been many) to be expelled from the town, on the ground that all its inhabitants ought to be vassals of St. Edmund. An armed escort was provided to conduct the exiles to their new places of residence. Henceforth, they were allowed to stay in the town for no longer than two days at a time for the purpose of collecting their debts, a sentence of excommunication being pronounced against any person who should give them further hospitality.[1]

The news of these tragic happenings was not long in reaching the Continent; and it was soon substantiated by the splendid manuscripts pillaged at York, which were brought to Cologne for sale. For the first time Jewish historians incorporated the sufferings of the communities of England in their martyrologies, and synagogal poets, such as Joseph of Chartres and Menahem of Worms, bewailed what had taken place in heart-broken elegies.[2]

§ III

The news of the outbreak at York reached the ears of the king (who was still in France completing his preparations) through a special messenger dispatched on Easter Monday.[3] The impression made on him and his advisers was profound. Any breach of the peace was manifestly against public policy, even if

[1] Richardson, *J.A.K.*, pp. 43–44, 80–81, has some pertinent information on the Jewish transactions with the Monastery. He points out that a prominent London citizen held a bond for the sum of £1,040, which would be unlikely to include any overt usury, whereas the amount owed to the principal Jewish creditor, including interest, was no more than £1,200. This strikingly demonstrates the fact that Christian financiers lent money as well as the Jews, and sometimes on a larger scale.

[2] In the earlier editions of this work there was incorporated here a translation of part of the Hebrew elegy by Menahem ben Jacob of Worms, of some literary but little historical significance, first published by S. Schechter in *Trs. J.H.S.E* i. 8–14. I subsequently traced and published in *Trs. J.H.S.E.* xvi. 213–20 a more important and more poignant commemorative poem by the French synagogal poet Joseph of Chartres, embodying some hitherto unknown details. Several of the martyrs are mentioned by name, including the scholars of Yomtob of Joigny, Elijah (already known in Rabbinical literature) and Joseph—obviously Josce of York, whose liberality towards students of the Law is spoken of with warm commendation. The author calls down imprecations on 'The King of the Islands', unaware that Richard did what he could to suppress the disorders. The English massacres are referred to also in another elegy by Menahem of Worms published by A. M. Habermann, *Gezeroth Ashkenaz veZarphath* (Jerusalem, 1936), pp. 147–151.

[3] Pp.R. 1190–1, p. 3.

infidels only were concerned: and the Jews had been specifically taken into the royal protection not many months before. Moreover—and this was more important—the Exchequer stood to lose heavily, both by the impoverishment of the Jews who survived and by the despoiling of those who had perished, part at least of whose property would normally have escheated to the Crown on their demise. Accordingly, when William Longchamp (bishop of Ely, and chancellor and co-justiciar of the kingdom, who happened to be with the king at the time) returned to England after the holyday, he was instructed to take vigorous proceedings against the culprits. Early in May he sent his brother Osbert north with an armed force to stamp out any embers of disorder, following him a little later to administer justice. The panic-stricken citizens of York denied complicity in the outrages, while the baronial ringleaders fled to Scotland before they could be touched. However, the estates of seven fugitives were confiscated (though subsequently restored), fines were inflicted upon some fifty prominent burghers, and hostages for future good conduct were sent in custody to Northampton. The sheriff was punished by removal from office, being replaced by Longchamp's brother. Not a single capital penalty was indeed inflicted, but few outbreaks against the Jews in medieval times gave rise to proceedings so drastic. On the other hand, it was observed that punishment fell most heavily on the adherents of the Percies, the relatives and allies of Longchamp's rival and co-justiciar, the Bishop of Durham.[1] For the restoration of the destroyed keep, in which the tragedy had occurred, an expenditure of over £200 was necessary in the course of the year.[2] From York the chancellor proceeded to Lincoln, taking with him sixty pairs of fetters to secure the prisoners whom he anticipated. But he under-estimated, for in the event no fewer than eighty persons belonging to all classes in the city were arraigned, though punished only by fine.[3]

[1] Stubbs, Introduction to Roger Howden in *Historical Introductions to the Rolls Series*, p. 218; Pp.R. 1190–1, *passim*. It is interesting to note the callings of some of those punished—e.g. Daniel *le bouvier* (drover) and Galfridus *carnifex* (butcher). In some cases the culprits appear not to have been inhabitants of York. Some Lincoln citizens were also fined—one as much as £100: J. W. F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln* (Cambridge, 1948), pp. 390, 392.

[2] Pp.R. 1191–2, p. 61; *Archaeological Journal*, 1934, p. 296.

[3] See the list in Pp.R. 1191–2, pp. 242–3.

By now Richard was immersed in the final preparations for his Crusade, which officially opened at the beginning of July. The enterprise was brilliant as a military achievement, though not peculiarly successful in its object. It was brought to a conclusion in 1192 by a three-year truce with Saladin, which protracted the life of the attenuated Frankish kingdom in Palestine for a little longer, and secured Christian pilgrims access to Jerusalem.[1]

On his return journey (it is a familiar story) Richard was captured by his old enemy, the Duke of Austria, who in turn handed him over to the Emperor Henry VI. A humiliating treaty and a ransom of £100,000 were the price of his release. In England every fibre was strained in order to raise the amount. The Jews, as always, contributed disproportionately, being assessed at 5,000 marks, or three times as much as the burghers of London (incomparably the wealthiest city of the realm). Their representatives were summoned to meet at Northampton on 30 March 1194 to decide what amount each community should pay towards this sum.[2] The *Northampton Donum*, as it is called, which records the outcome of their deliberations, is a particularly valuable record of medieval English Jewry. It reveals the presence of Jews in about twenty major communities, as well as in a number of minor places scattered throughout the country. The most important centres were London, Lincoln, Canterbury, Northampton, and Gloucester, each with from twenty to forty contributors, these being the most affluent men of affairs in each place. The concentration of the greater capitalists in London is indicated by the fact that its contribution easily exceeded that of Lincoln and Northampton combined, whereas the number of direct contributors mentioned is less than half of their total. York, Stamford, Dunstable, Lynn, and Bury, where the worst of the outbreaks of four years previous had occurred, are conspicuous by their absence.[3] The amount

[1] The story that Richard invited Moses Maimonides to enter his service as his body-physician has now been disproved.

[2] The assessment was apparently made on the occasion of the King's Council at Northampton that Easter (Richardson, *J.A.K.*, p. 164). Subsequently, the representatives of the communities were summoned to him at Laigle in Normandy, where they agreed to contribute 3,000 marks towards his ransom (May 1194): cf. *Memoranda Roll, 1 John* (Pipe Roll Society), p. 71: 'Quidam Judei dicunt quod Judei Anglie finaverunt apud Aquilam cum R. Riccardo de quodam tallagio de 3,000 m.'

[3] The lists, which are among the most important sources for the condition of

actually raised was only about one-half of what was demanded—a fact in which it does not seem unreasonable to see a reflection of recent tribulations.

§ IV

The king and his advisers had not forgotten the flouting of his authority by the rioters and the loss to the Exchequer that had ensued. It was the administrative genius of Hubert Walter, archbishop of Canterbury, that devised a means for preventing a repetition of the disaster. When the justices went 'on eyre' that autumn, for the administration of justice in the various parts of the kingdom, they were enjoined to conduct an inquiry into the events of 1190. Any person who had been implicated in the attacks and had not yet compounded for his offence was to be arrested. A diligent inquiry was to be made into the state of the affairs of the victims before their death—what had been in their possession, what sums had been owing to them, and what pledges they had held. All this was to be 'taken into the king's hands', so that those responsible should be prevented from profiting from their crime.[1]

Finally, provision was made to safeguard the royal rights in case of future disorder. Two Exchequer officials (the first were William of Sainte-Mère-Église, future bishop of London, and William de Chimillé) were designated to supervise the affairs of the Jews, among other duties. Orders were given for all Jewish possessions and credits to be registered, and for six or seven cities (probably London, Lincoln, Norwich, Winchester, Canterbury, Oxford, and either Northampton, Cambridge, Gloucester, Nottingham, or Bristol) to serve as centres for all business operations in the future. In each of these places a bureau comprising two reputable Jews, two Christians, and two clerks was to be set up, under the supervision of a representative

the Jews in England at the close of the twelfth century, and have been drawn upon to a considerable extent in the course of the present study, are published in full in *Misc. J.H.S.E.*, part i. The relatively small number of London contributors is possibly due to the presence there of the headquarters of the great *consortia* and to the fact that the community was called upon for assistance at more frequent intervals.

[1] See Stubbs, *Select Charters* (ed. Davis), p. 253, for the text. The inquiry seems to have remained part of the regular functions of the Justices in Eyre: cf. *Annales Monastici*, i. 330, 338.

of the newly established central authority. All deeds and contracts were to be drawn up in duplicate, in the presence of these officials, the counterparts being deposited in a chest (*archa, huche*) provided with three locks and seals. As a final precaution every Jewish financier was to take a solemn oath upon the Hebrew Pentateuch, or Scroll of the Law, that he would register his transactions without concealment, and denounce to the authorities all forgeries or evasions that came to his notice.[1] Thus, however the Jews might be maltreated in future, the Treasury and its claims were safe; for the death of their creditors would merely place the debtors in the hands of the king, who was informed exactly of all outstanding claims. Thus also it became possible to control the affairs of the Jews themselves without leaving any loophole for evasion, thereby making the new system of arbitrary taxation temptingly simple.

This organization rapidly developed. The central authority reorganized in 1194 became extended into the institution of Wardens, or Justices, of the Jews.[2] When this office first emerged in 1198 it was filled by three Christians working in collaboration with one Jew (the first were Simon of Pateshall, Henry of Whiston, and Joseph Aaron on the one side, with Benedict of Talmont on the other).[3] After April 1200 this group ceased to figure: no Jewish name is included thereafter, the Justices of the Jews being exclusively Christian.[4] Their number varied between two and eight, though it was seldom that there were so many. The office was considered to be one of dignity as well as profit, and later on persons of the highest importance in the

[1] Stubbs, op. cit., pp. 256–7; and, for a more detailed account of the system in its final development, below, pp. 110–11. These innovations seem to have been imitated in France, where in 1198 the *Produit des Juifs* was established as a department of the Exchequer and after 1206 notaries were appointed in every town to register Jewish debts. For the *custodes judaeorum* in Normandy, see P.R. 1204, p. 39*b*, and Richardson, *J.A.K.*, pp. 206 ff.

[2] Below, pp. 112–13.

[3] Notwithstanding his name, Joseph Aaron was a Christian and in minor orders, holding a prebend at St. Chad in Shrewsbury (C.R. 1212, p. 116*b*: it is possible, however, that he was a convert). Benedict of Talmont (the royal residence near La Rochelle, to which centre he belonged) is mentioned as a Jew in P.R. 1202, p. 14, &c. He also had a Jewish clerk, Peter, possibly identical with Peter the Scribe mentioned in Pp.R. 1185–6, p. 182.

[4] The Jewish Arch-presbyter (below, pp. 30–31) and the Assessors at the Exchequer of the Jews were, however, sometimes styled 'Justices'; cf. C.R. 1249, pp. 163, 165, 177, 179, and 1252, p. 271.

administration were sometimes appointed to fill it, though without giving up their other functions.

The institution over which these officials presided became known as the Exchequer of the Jews—a department of the Great Exchequer of the realm. By degrees it expanded into something a good deal more important than the original plan had implied. There was a natural tendency for the financial departments of the central administration in England to develop judicial functions, as was the case with the Great Exchequer itself. In precisely the same way the activities of the *Scaccarium Judaeorum*, as it finally evolved, were not purely fiscal but at the same time administrative and judicial, though restricted to matters in which some Jewish transaction or activity was ultimately (though in some cases very remotely) involved. It naturally had complete control over the local centres. The half-dozen specified in the ordinance of 1194 were found insufficient —more by reason of the slowness of communications than pressure of business. Accordingly, a chirograph-chest was ultimately established in each of the principal Jewish centres in the country, some twenty-seven in number, including a few which were very small and owed their importance to the activity of a single individual. At times of popular unrest in subsequent years, the first object of the rioters would be to seize the *archa* and destroy the records of indebtedness that it contained.[1]

In connexion with this organization there evolved the office of *Presbyter Judaeorum*. This was not (as was once held) a 'Chief Rabbi', or spiritual head of the Jews of the country, but an officially appointed expert on Jewish affairs and activities—generally a wealthy magnate—who was selected without any necessary regard to the general desire.[2] The first incumbent

[1] The best account of the Exchequer of the Jews is still that by C. Gross in *Papers A.J.H.E.* (London, 1888); but there are important additions and amplifications by Rigg and Jenkinson in the prefaces to the *Exchequer of the Jews* and *Trs. J.H.S.E.* viii. 18–54, ix. 185 ff., and by Richardson, *J.A.K.*, 135–60, &c. See also below, pp. 111–13.

[2] There has been a great deal of discussion with regard to the exact significance of this office. H. Adler, in *Papers A.J.H.E.*, championed the older view put forward in the seventeenth century by Coke and Selden, that the office was ecclesiastical: while Prynne and, two and a half centuries later, H. P. Stokes (*Studies*, pp. 23–43) and M. Adler (*J.M.E.*, pp. 137–9) have maintained that it was essentially secular. Though this is certainly true, the title *Presbyter* and the occasional alternative *Sacerdos* clearly indicate something more than lay functions (the office was sometimes filled indeed by persons of recognized scholarship) and the incumbent's

known (1183) was apparently a certain Jacob of London, who immediately after Richard's death followed the new king to Normandy in order to urge his claim to office. In July 1199 he received at Rouen formal reappointment to the Presbyterate, together with a safe conduct home. Little is known as to his career, whether before or after confirmation, though the terms of his appointment are indicative of cordial relations at Court.[1] He was succeeded in 1207 by a person of more eminence—Josce fil' Isaac, a grandson of Rubi Gotsce. His father, Isaac fil' Rabbi, the great financier of his day, survived his rival Aaron by some years and in 1190 secured from Richard I a confirmation for himself and his household of the Charter of Privileges which the tragic events of the previous year had prevented the communities of the realm from obtaining as a collectivity. His son, the new Archpresbyter, inherited his father's position as a leader of London Jewry. He was, however, deposed some time before his death, being succeeded in turn by Aaron of York (1236), Elias le Eveske (1243), Hagin fil' Rabbi Moses of Lincoln (1258), and lastly Cok Hagin fil' Deulecresse (1281). To all of these we shall have occasion to return. With the development of this office, the organization of medieval English Jewry in its relation to the state was completed.

§ v

The benefits of the mechanism for the exploitation of the Jews, perfected by the ministers of Richard I, were enjoyed by his successor. The ruling passion of John's nature, his rapacity, was the key too to his attitude towards the Jews. At the outset of the reign their contributions to the Exchequer were considerable,

opinion must occasionally have been consulted in matters of religious as well as financial practice. (The continental 'Court Rabbi', &c., furnishes a close parallel.) Cf. now also Richardson, *J.A.K.*, pp. 120 ff.

[1] Recent research has made it virtually certain that as Jacobs conjectured Jacob of London's nomination in 1199 was a reappointment; he may thus be identical with the Jacob Presbyter mentioned in Pp.R. 1183, p. 15 in connexion with Exchequer activities. In the Memoranda Roll of I John he is associated with Benedict of Talmont: hence it is incorrect that the Presbyterate derived from the latter's office. A Christian officer in charge of Jewish transactions (Hugh Bishop of Coventry) is mentioned before 1194, while the practice of keeping separate Jewish accounts was already followed by 1186. It thus appears that the essential part of the structure of the Jewish Exchequer antedates the re-organization of 1194. For details of the successive occupants of the office see the chapter in Stokes, *Studies*, pp. 23–43, and below, pp. 51, 79–80, 112.

but not beyond their means. They paid therefore with good grace, and were rewarded by various privileges. Later, when his treasury was empty, the king set about extorting money from them by a series of desperate expedients which betray his short-sightedness. Thus he set the example of extortion which was followed with such fatal results, and over a far longer period, by his successor. The rebellious baronage moreover resented the assistance that the king derived from his Jewish chattels, who became identified more and more in their minds with the royal oppression. Hence the reign of John marks the beginning of the political, as distinct from the religious, reaction against the Jews amongst the English people.

At the outset, there was no reason to anticipate this. Though the first acts of the new sovereign included the pardon and restoration to his possessions of Richard Malebysse (the ring-leader of the York massacre of nine years before)[1] and the appointment of new Justices of the Jews,[2] this did not indicate the inauguration of an anti-Jewish policy. A Jew, Leo of Norwich, was royal goldsmith;[3] others received special grants of protection and favour;[4] and, in appointing Jacob of London *presbyter judaeorum* in 1199, John referred to him as 'well-beloved' (*dilectus et familiaris noster*)—a phrase generally reserved for the great officers of state. Two years later, on 10 April 1201, the old exemplary charter of liberties for the Jews of England and Normandy was reissued, confirming their right to dwell in the country and to enjoy all the rights and liberties granted by previous sovereigns.[5] This concession cost the Jews of the realm 4,000 marks —a sum so great in their reduced circumstances that they were compelled to pay it in four instalments.[6]

[1] Obl.R. 1199, p. 41 (Jacobs's version, *J.A.E.*, p. 190, is very inaccurate: for Norwich hawks read Norway hawks; for two leashes of leopards read two leashes of greyhounds). But Malebysse (ancestor of the Yorkshire family of Beckwith) had made a nominal composition some years before: see Pp.R. 1192, p. 221, and Stubbs, *Historical Introductions to the Rolls Series*, p. 218. It is curious to find Jews giving him further opportunity to default on his debts: C.R. 1205, p. 58*b*. By 1202 he was a Justice! (*Earliest Lincoln Assize Roll*, p. xxiv).

[2] Ch.R. 1200, p. 61.

[3] Ch.R. 1199, p. 62*b*; P.R. 1208, p. 81*b*.

[4] P.R. 1208, p. 27.

[5] Ch.R. 1201, p. 93. The alleged additions in John's reissue, from which Dr. J. Parkes draws significant conclusions (*The Jew in the Medieval Community*, London, 1938, pp. 169–70), are non-existent.

[6] Obl.R. 1201, p. 133.

This was only a minor detail of the revenue extracted by John from the Jews over and above their customary dues. He continued on a vast scale the example of exempting certain debtors, obviously for a monetary consideration, from the necessity of paying the Jews interest or even the capital of their debts; and he would generously make over to his favourites lands which had fallen into the hands of the mortgagees. The fines imposed on individuals rose to a fantastic level, the unfortunate Isaac of Norwich, for example, being mulcted in 10,000 marks, to be paid off at the rate of one mark daily over a period of nearly thirty years.[1] The cost of the French wars was in part defrayed by cancelling the debts due to the Jews by those willing to serve overseas.[2] When in 1205, in order to honour his mother's memory, John ordered a general release of all persons incarcerated in the kingdom, the Jews were among those expressly excluded from its scope.[3] This was presumably in connexion with an extraordinary levy recently made on them. Two high officials, including one of the Justices of the Jews, had been appointed to supervise it; peremptory instructions were sent to the sheriffs, urging them to greater efforts in their exactions, under dark threats that otherwise they would themselves be held responsible;[4] and the possibilities of evasion were minimized by an order forbidding the Jews to place their chattels in churches for safe-keeping.[5] The assistance derived by the king so ostentatiously from his Jewish subjects bore its inevitable fruit in a deterioration of the relations between the latter and their Gentile neighbours. In London, in 1203, feelings ran so high as to necessitate a peremptory communication from the king to the mayor, taking the Jews under his protection ('If I give my peace even to a dog', he wrote contemptuously, 'it must be kept inviolate'), and threatening summary vengeance in case any attack on them should take place.[6]

[1] P.R. 1218, p. 180. He was son of the Jurnet of Norwich mentioned above, pp. 10, 14. See for this fine below, p. 35, and for its payment (£604 for 3¾ years) C.R. 1221, p. 459.

[2] Lib.R. 1203, pp. 44, 48 ff.

[3] P.R. 1205, p. 54.

[4] P.R. 1204, p. 38*b*.

[5] C.R. 1205, p. 20*b*.

[6] P.R. 1203, p. 33 (29 July 1203; not 22 July 1204, as in Jacobs). It is made clear in the communication that elsewhere in England the Jews were unmolested.

§ VI

In 1206 there came a turning point in Anglo-Jewish history, as in that of England as a whole. From the moment of the Jewish settlement, a century and a quarter before, the country had been closely connected—politically, culturally, and linguistically—with northern France. It was thence that the Jewish settlers had come in the first instance, and they remained bound to it by manifold ties. Like the nobility, English Jewry was to a certain extent Anglo-Norman in character. In fact, the Charters of Privileges conceded by successive sovereigns, from Henry I onwards, were issued to the Jews of England and Normandy, implying an association of organization as well as of interest between the communities of the two countries. However, in the years 1204–6, Normandy was lost through John's military incompetence. Once more England became, politically, an island—a fact of importance in English history.

To the Jews the consequences were no less momentous than to the country at large. They, too, were henceforth cut off to a considerable extent from the great centres on the Continent. It was no longer easy for a Jewish family, like that of Rubi Gotsce, to carry on business simultaneously on both sides of the English Channel.[1] The influx from abroad was checked, the names of native scholars are henceforth more prominent, and England had to become intellectually self-supporting. The civil authorities accentuated this tendency, forbidding the Jews to appeal to continental scholars against the decisions of their own Rabbis.[2] On the other hand, it was his endeavours to recover Normandy which led John to weigh down the country with arbitrary taxation, and thus to hasten the decline of medieval Anglo-Jewry.

In 1207 there was demanded from the Jews, in addition to a tallage of 4,000 marks, a levy of one-tenth of the value of their bonds, of which they were ordered to furnish precise details.[3]

[1] Cf. Lib.R. 1203, p. 72, and Ch.R. 1203, p. 105*b*, for indications of the family's continental interests: Abraham, a grandson of Rubi Gotsce, had to sell his houses and lands in England and in Normandy to pay his debt to the Crown.

[2] Below, pp. 55, 116–17.

[3] J. C. Holt, *The Northerners: a Study in the Reign of King John* (Oxford, 1961), suggests that in this year the Exchequer began also to tighten the screw in respect of debts which had been owing to Aaron of Lincoln.

This proved the preliminary to the confiscatory operations of 1210—a black year in the history of medieval English Jewry. On the king's return to Bristol after his fateful campaign in Ireland, he issued instructions for the arrest of all the Jews of the kingdom (at least, that is, the men of substance), their charters being meanwhile seized and investigated.[1] There was thus obtained sufficient evidence of the withholding of information to justify widespread condemnations accompanied by confiscations on a very large scale and the imposition on All Saints' Day (1 November) of a tallage of unprecedented magnitude,[2] which was exacted with the utmost barbarity. Jewish officials were nominated in each county to distrain on debtors,[3] while the property of those who could not pay was confiscated outright, their houses being sometimes demolished so that something could be realized on the building-materials. Even those of the poorest class had to pay a levy of 40*s.* each or else abjure the realm: thus in effect all who did not belong to the capitalist element were expelled from the country.[4] Meanwhile, proceedings were pressed forward ruthlessly against those accused of concealing their assets. Some were hanged:[5] while Isaac, son of Jurnet of Norwich, purchased his pardon with the enormous fine spoken of above, which was still being collected so many years later.[6]

In the circumstances, England ceased to be a land of security and of prosperity, as in previous reigns. There was a considerable exodus from the kingdom, attaining such proportions that one chronicler actually speaks of a general expulsion in 1210; and in the following year several scholars joined a great pilgrimage of three hundred French and English Rabbis to Palestine—possibly to attend a synod on the writings of Maimonides.[7]

[1] The details are straightened out by Richardson, *J.A.K.*, pp. 167–71, where references are given.

[2] Contemporary writers speak of 66,000 or 60,000 marks (confirmed by *E.J.* i. 4) but according to Richardson this is only a term denoting an incalculable sum of money. B. L. Abrahams in *Trs. J.H.S.E.* viii. 179–80, also questions the amount and many details in the traditional account.

[3] That these officials were given the title of 'Sheriff' is an unwarranted detail of the English version in *E.J.* i. 4, cf. H. Cole, *Documents Illustrative of English History*, pp. 287–8.

[4] Cf. C.R. 1215, p. 186*b*.

[5] e.g. Isaac of Canterbury (Adler, *J.M.E.*, p. 64).

[6] Richardson, *J.A.K.*, p. 170; cf. above, p. 33, and below, pp. 41, 101.

[7] For the organization of this, it may be, Joseph ben Barukh of Clisson crossed

The arrears of the Bristol Tallage were inexorably levied in the ensuing period, together with fresh exactions. Hardly had there been time for the Jews to recover a little from their losses when in 1213 a further inquiry into their property was ordered.[1] In the following year the sheriffs again brought pressure to bear upon them to pay their arrears. On this occasion those who pleaded penury were imprisoned at the other end of the country: thus, the recalcitrant members of the few Hampshire communities were dispatched to Bristol to be shut up in the castle, while the wealthiest member of Bristol Jewry was sent to the Tower of London.[2] Throughout the country the houses of Jews were confiscated and made over to royal favourites.[3] Large numbers fled the realm, none being allowed back unless he could give security that he would pay his dues.[4] So reduced were the once wealthy Jews of London that in the words of the chronicler 'they prowled about the city like dogs'.[5]

The outbreak of civil war not long after made their position even worse. Violence became rife; and the barons, seeing in the Jews not only creditors but also the royal agents, considered them doubly deserving objects of attack. When London was occupied on 17 May 1215, the Jewry was the first objective of the insurgents. It was ruthlessly sacked, the houses being demolished and the stone used to repair the City walls.

When the Magna Carta was extorted from the king a short time later, the part which the Jews were forced to play as passive instruments of the royal exactions, and the unpopularity which they earned in consequence, was indicated by the tenth and eleventh clauses. In these it was stipulated that debts due to them or other usurers should bear no interest during the minority of the heir of a deceased debtor, and that if they fell into the king's hands in such circumstances (as might be the case, for example,

to England, where he was arrested and his precious burden of books seized (MS. Mich. Add. II in Bodleian Library, Oxford, f. 11; *MSS. Codices Hebraici Biblioth. I.B. De-Rossi*, ii. 111; cf. *Bibl.* A. 4. 60). The *Flores Historiarum*, ii. 139, specifically mention an exodus of Jews from England *prae maxima afflictione* as a result of the financial extortions of 1210; on the other hand, J. de Oxenedes, in the place above, suggests the expulsion of those unable to pay.

[1] P.R. 1213, p. 97.

[2] Adler, *J.M.E.*, pp. 200–5; cf. P.R. 1213, p. 102*b*, and Davis, *Shetaroth*, p. 371.

[3] Ch.R. 1214, p. 200*b*, &c.; C.R. 1213, pp. 152, 161 ff.; Roth, *Oxford*, pp. 14–15.

[4] C.R. 1216, p. 186*b*.

[5] *Chronicle of Lanercost*, p. 7; cf. J. de Oxenedes, ed. Ellis, p. 125.

if the creditor died) the capital only, without any interest, should be exacted. Similarly, a widow's dowry and the support of children under age was to be a first charge on every estate, debts contracted by the father being payable out of the residue only. These clauses, with the burning sense of grievance which underlies them, give some idea of the animosity with which the royal satellites were now regarded by those with whom they transacted their principal and most lucrative business. Had the reign continued, they would inevitably have known further attacks by the one side and further spoliation by the other. John's death in 1216, as he was preparing for his revenge, unquestionably saved them from much fresh suffering.[1]

[1] A most important new source for the organization of English Jewry at the close of the twelfth century is Benedict of Talmont's *compotus de debitis et finibus Judaeorum Anglie* for 1198–1200 included in the Memoranda Roll of I. John (Pipe Roll Society, 1943), pp. 69–72, which gives a detailed picture of the working of the new financial arrangements and of the structure of English Jewry at the period of John's accession.

reach of the working man which initiated something in the nature of a revolution in social life.

A majority of the new arrivals settled in London, whose Jewish population increased between 1883 and 1905 from 47,000 to 150,000; but Leeds, Manchester, and Glasgow also acquired communities which exceeded in number the entire Anglo-Jewry of a century before. Elsewhere in the country old synagogues were revitalized and new ones established, the area of settlement being increased beyond anything known in the past. The number of Jews in England, estimated in 1880 at 65,000, more than tripled by 1905. The Aliens Immigration Act of that year—a product of the agitation which had come to a head at the beginning of the century—stemmed the influx, which thereafter was on a much smaller scale. But, during the quarter-century over which it had continued, the face of Anglo-Jewry had been changed.[1]

The alembic of English tolerance has operated by now on the newer arrivals as well. Their sons have taken part in English life, contributed to English achievement, striven for England's betterment, shed their blood in England's wars. In this happy land they have attained a measure of freedom (and thereby of collaboration) which has been the case in scarcely any other. That this has been possible is due in no slight measure to the process of Anglo-Jewish history—a gradual acceptance based on common sense rather than on doctrine, consolidating itself slowly but surely, and never outstripping public opinion. Hence it has been possible for the English Jews to exemplify how men can enter a society by methods other than descent, and to absorb traditions which are not those of their physical ancestors. If their reaction to privilege has been to deserve it, it is because they have the good fortune to possess as their inheritance two noble histories.

[1] The recent history of the Anglo-Jewish community is described, for the close of the reign of Queen Victoria, by Wolf, *Essays*, pp. 355–62; and for the reign of George V by the present writer in *The Jewish Year Book* (London, 1937), pp. 356–75. Cf. also most recently V. D. Lipman, *Social History of the Jews in England, 1850–1950* (London, 1954) and the same author's *A Century of Social Service, 1859–1959* (London, 1959); L. P. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870–1914* (London, 1960); [C. Roth], *The Jewish Chronicle, 1841–1941* (London, 1949); the supplementary sections to James Picciotto's *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History*, ed. I. Finestein (London, 1956), and the ample bibliography comprised in *Nova Bibliotheca Anglo-Judaica*, ed. R. P. Lehmann (London, 1961).

ADDITIONAL NOTES

(The figures in parentheses are to the pages of the text.)

CHAPTER I

(*a*) The passages of the Penitential of Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury (d. 690) which seem to indicate the existence of Jews in England in the seventh century (cf. Jacobs, *J.A.E.*, pp. 1–2) are absent from the authentic text of that code as edited by P. W. Finsterwalder, *Die Canones Theodori Cantuarensis* (Weimar, 1929). The two allusions in the 'Excerptiones' ascribed to Archbishop Egbert of York (d. 766) are completely academic, and would signify nothing even if (as is improbable) that compilation were of English origin. A spurious charter of Witglaff of Mercia to the monks of Croyland (833), one of the fictitious 'Laws of Edward the Confessor', probably belonging to the reign of Stephen, and an unsubstantiated allusion by a sixteenth-century Hebrew chronicler, Joseph haCohen, to the immigration into England in 810 of Jewish refugees from Germany, need not be given serious consideration. There remains only a clause in the Latin paraphrase of a Law of Æthelred of *c.* 1010 which condemns the selling of Christians into slavery outside England, lest they fall into pagan or Jewish hands; but even this insignificant allusion is absent in the Anglo-Saxon original (see F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, i. 251, ii. 527–8). Jacobs (*J.A.E.*, pp. 5 ff.) calls attention to various biblical names in the Domesday Book, but there is not the slightest reason to imagine that those who bore them were Jews. It may be mentioned that St. Florinus, who worked in Switzerland and the Tyrol some time between the seventh and ninth centuries, is said to have been the son of a Jewess married to an Englishman ('Vita S. Florini' in *Analecta Bollandiana*, xvii. 199 ff.). (2)

(*b*) William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, iv. 317, states incidentally that the Jews of London had been brought thither by William the Conqueror. Since this author died *c.* 1146, this represents a very old tradition. So, too, in a recently discovered petition of 1275, the Commonalty of the Jews of England speak of their establishment in England 'pus le conquest de la terre' (*Select Cases in Court of King's Bench, Edward I* (Selden Society, 1939), III. cxiv). An often-repeated statement of Anthony Wood (*Annals*, i. 129) fixes the settlement of the Jews at Oxford about 1075, but this is based on nothing more solid than a misinterpretation of the spurious charter now printed in the *Oseney Charters*, iv. 5. Fuller (*Church History of Britain*, 1655) states that they arrived in Cambridge two years earlier, but this too can hardly be more than approximate, and in his *History of Cambridge University* he gives the date as 1106. (4)

(*c*) See H. W. C. Davis, 'London Lands of St. Paul's, 1066–1135', in *Essays Presented to T. F. Tout*. The date 1115, to which this record was previously ascribed, is now abandoned, and the preliminary reference to the

Ward of Haco is recognized to have nothing to do with the *vicus judaeorum*, which was clearly in the neighbourhood of the later 'Old Jewry'. It appears that the Jewry was mainly, but not exclusively, inhabited by Jews at this period: the parcel of land described in the Terrier was in Christian hands.[1] For grants of land in London in 1152 by the canons of St. Paul's to Benedict the Jew and Abraham fil' Simon, see M. Adler, *Jews of Medieval England* (= *J.M.E.*), pp. 255 ff. (The medieval term *fil'* will be used in these chapters in preference to the longer 'the son of' or the exotic Hebrew 'ben'. Abraham was probably spoken of in his day as 'Abraham fitz Simon'.) (7)

CHAPTER II

(*a*) Ephraim of Bonn's Hebrew account of the York Massacre, published in Neubauer and Stern's *Hebräische Berichte über die Judenverfolgungen während der Kreuzzüge* (Berlin, 1898), and incorporated in Joseph haCohen's sixteenth-century chronicle *Emek haBakha* ('*Valley of Tears*'), has not yet been published in an accurate translation in English. One is therefore subjoined:

Afterwards, in the year 4551 (l. 4550 = 1190) the Wanderers came upon the people of the Lord in the city of Evoric in England, on the Great Sabbath [before Passover]: and the season of the miracle was changed to disaster and punishment. All fled to the house of prayer. Here Rabbi Yom-Tob stood and slaughtered sixty souls, and others also slaughtered. Some there were who commanded that they should slaughter their only sons, whose foot could not tread upon the ground from their delicacy and tender breeding. Some, moreover, were burned for the Unity of their Creator. The number of those slain and burned was one hundred and fifty souls, men and women, all holy bodies. Their houses moreover they destroyed, and they despoiled their gold and silver and the splendid books which they had written in great number, precious as gold and as much fine gold, there being none like them for their beauty and splendour. These they brought to Cologne and to other places, where they sold them to the Jews.

This is virtually the only episode in medieval Anglo-Jewish history recorded in detail in the contemporary Hebrew sources, with the exception of the garbled account of the Expulsion (divided into two stages, with a thirty-year interval between them!) referred to below, note *e* to Chapter IV (pp. 275–6). While there are three elegies referring to the York massacre, there is no mention of subsequent events in any other of the very many similar compositions that are known. The later martyrologies speak in general terms of the 'martyrs of England', and somewhat more specifically although very succinctly of the London massacre of 1263 (above, pp. 61–62). It is desirable to mention this in order to emphasize the very slight prominence of English affairs in the eyes of continental Jewry, at least after the massacres of 1189–90, which clearly had a permanent effect. (24)

CHAPTER III

(*a*) The following table (mainly from Patent and Close Rolls, with amplifications from lists published by Elman in *Economic History Review*, 1933, pp. 153–4, and by Jenkinson in *Trs. J.H.S.E.* viii. 32 ff.) summarizes the

exactions of the reign so far as they can be ascertained; but it is not easy to trace in the Rolls some of the levies mentioned by the chroniclers, or to distinguish in some cases between arrears and new levies. The total between 1230 and 1255 seems to be at least one-quarter of the 950,000 marks which the king is said to have wasted in this period. After the middle of the century (by which time the worst spoliations were over) an annual tallage of 5,000 marks was regarded as moderate, that amount being paid by the Jews of the realm in 1253 on condition that they should be exempt from any fresh levy until the following Easter.

Year	*Amount (in marks)*	*Year*	*Amount (in marks)*
1219	?	1249	760
1221	1,000	„	10,000
1223	3,000	1250	500
1224–5	5,000	„	1,500
1225	1,000	1251	5,000
„	3,500	„	10,000
1226	4,000	„	1,000
„	1,000	1252	3,500
1229–30	6,000	„	10,000
1230	8,000	1253	5,000
„	1,000	„	100
1231 (*arrears?*)	8,000	1254	10,000*
„	6,000	„	5,000
„	10,000	1255	2,000
1233	10,000	„	500
1233–9	25,000	1255–7	8,500
1234	£500	1259	5,000
1236	10,000	„	500
1237	3,000	1260	500
1241	20,000	1261	3,000
1244	60,000	„	1,000
„	4,000	1267	500
1245 (*arrears*)	8,000	1269	1,500
„	4,000	1272	5,000
„	10,000		

* ? 1,000: cf. *Trs. J.H.S.E.* viii. 33. (45)

(*b*) Since the case at Winchester in 1192 there had been numerous indications that, in this city especially, the atmosphere was unchanged, but in each case hitherto a judicial inquiry averted serious consequences. In 1225, for example, a child whom the 'King's Jew', Deulesault fil' Soleus, was accused of murdering was discovered to be alive (C.R. 1225, p. 53*b*). That same year two other Winchester Jews were found guilty of the murder of a boy, but as three others implicated in the charge were acquitted, it is probable that no ritual object was alleged: ibid., pp. 50, 51). Seven years later another charge ended similarly, the mother of the alleged victim being imprisoned in place of the persons accused (C.R. 1232, p. 80). In