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"Ambivalent Relations: Acceptance and Anti-Semitism in Confederate Thomasville"

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ment in the trial. The death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, but Frank was lynched in 1915. Marshall was one of the defense counsels in the appeal to the Supreme Court. He regarded the case "almost as a second Dreyfus case." See Morton Rosenstock, *Louis Marshall, Defender of Jewish Rights* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1965), p. 92.

28. Document 1.

29. Ibid.

30. Document 2.

31. Document 4.

32. Document 5.

33. Ibid.

34. Mrs. Rosalie Loew Whitney, wife of Travis H. Whitney, referred to in Document 5.

35. The State Department cabled on May 29, 1920, to Grant-Smith in Budapest, and pointed out that "Rabbi Loewe [*sic*], a man of international reputation, is well connected in America and condemnation would create most unfavorable impression and arouse deep feeling." Grant-Smith is requested to "report facts immediately." NA 864.4016/10. He reported back on June 17, 1920, saying that he had taken the matter up with the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In order to repel American and probably other foreign intervention in this case, the Hungarians resorted to a counter-action of slander against Rabbi Loew, furnishing the American diplomat with extremely malicious information: "I am informed that he [Rabbi Loew] is not considered mentally sound by a number of his acquaintances, and according to information received, there would appear to be insanity in his family" (Grant-Smith to Secretary of State, June 17, 1920; NA 864.4016/18). Needless to say, this "information" had no foundation whatsoever. After his release Rabbi Loew resumed his office as chief rabbi of Szeged. In 1927 he was elected one of the two representatives of the Hungarian Jewish community in the upper house of Parliament. Rabbi Loew was a member of the council of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.

Ambivalent Relations: Acceptance and Anti-Semitism in Confederate Thomasville

Mark I. Greenberg

A sudden and unexpected rise in anti-Semitism occurred in the South during the Confederate era. Historians commenting on the increase argue that under the strain of wartime scarcities, inflation, and fear of military defeat, Southerners used Jews as scapegoats. As war profiteering and counterfeiting grew worse, the traditional, yet irrational, stereotype of the Jew as Shylock took on special meaning.¹ While this interpretation has validity, the "scapegoat thesis" does not account for the dynamics of community life in the South. The scapegoating of Jews in the Southern mind was tempered, even at the height of wartime tension and anxiety, by the recognition, especially in small towns, that Jewish merchants played an essential role in economic life. Southerners may have resented their dependence on foreign, non-Christian businessmen, but could not dispense with the vital services they provided.

The experiences of five Jewish households in Thomasville, Georgia, demonstrate that by recapturing the interrelationship of Jew and Gentile in a typical small town we can better understand the seemingly ambivalent character of Southern responses to the Jewish presence.² Thomas County serves as an especially interesting case study for the dynamics of Jewish-Gentile interaction because its demographic, economic, and social characteristics during the late antebellum period parallel those of other agricultural regions in the South. In addition, Thomasville holds a prominent place in the historiography of Confederate anti-Semitism.³

Created in 1825 and located in the southwestern portion of Georgia, Thomas County grew from a population of 3,299 persons in 1830 to 10,766 in 1860. Thomasville, home to 2,500 Georgians at the beginning of the war, served as county seat. Situated on fertile soil, the county had a predominantly cotton-based economy with approxi-

mately 600 families engaged in farming. The black population of 6,244 slaves and 34 freedmen exceeded that of whites by 1,790. Of the 4,488 whites in Thomas County, only 403 planters owned slaves. J. G. Fondren held 202 bondsmen, but most slaveholders possessed fewer than ten. Fifty farmers owned only a single slave.⁴

Until the arrival of the Atlantic & Gulf Railway from Savannah in April 1861, Thomasville remained relatively isolated from neighboring communities. Nevertheless, a wide assortment of business and professional men catered to the needs of the area's urban and rural residents. The county's largest religious denomination was the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which ran the only school, employing six teachers. Twenty-four residents described themselves as doctors in the 1860 census, although only seven physicians sought patients by advertising in local newspapers. The town had several ministers, two dentists, a few government employees, a jeweler, a photographer, various craftsmen, a butcher, and a tavernkeeper.⁵ The town also had a few Jewish residents who, within a short time of their arrival, had become successful merchants.

The August 1862 Anti-Jewish Rally

Community stability and the apparent acceptance of the Jews were short-lived, however, for on Saturday, August 30, 1862, a group of prominent Thomasville and Thomas County citizens met at the courthouse to denounce the area's German-Jewish merchants and peddlers. William G. Ponder, a wealthy slave trader, chaired the anti-Jewish rally, and T. J. Wombwell, a journalist from Fernandina, Florida, and editor of the *Thomasville Weekly Times*, served as secretary. James L. Seward, a former representative to both Congress and the Georgia legislature, spoke briefly at the rally.

Seward and the other speakers condemned the town's Jews on the alleged grounds that they had passed counterfeit bills, engaged in speculation, and held no allegiance to the Confederacy. The gathering resolved that if the Jews did not leave town within ten days they would be expelled by force. It also prohibited new Jewish settlers from entering the area. The organizers called for the creation of a Committee of Vigilance to "inquire into the mode and manner of

dealing with the local German Jews" and to investigate possible acts of extortion, counterfeiting, or unpatriotic behavior. Members of the committee included Dr. T. B. Little, Mayor Arthur P. Wright, and several city aldermen.⁶

Despite the harsh denunciation of the Jews and the resolutions calling for their expulsion, there is no surviving evidence that the town carried out any of its threats. On the contrary, the Jews of Thomasville continued throughout the war to purchase land and buildings, operate their stores, and participate in social events and civic duties. They fought in the Confederate army and supported the Southern cause. The meeting of August 30, 1862, served as a climax of growing fears and worries, and ostensibly had no lasting consequences for Jewish economic success or social integration. With the exception of this single anti-Semitic outburst, the townspeople lived in harmony.⁷

Jews in the Thomasville Economy

As a center for trade in the county, Thomasville contained approximately thirty merchants who dealt in merchandise ranging from general dry goods to luxury items.⁸ By 1866, Jews owned three of the town's largest dry goods stores: H. Wolff & Bro., established by Herman and Nathan Wolff; B. & L. Goldberg's, run by Louis and Bennett Goldberg; and J. Schiff & Bro., operated by Jonas and Philip Schiff. Two other Jews, Simeon M. Goldbach and Michael Rosenfeld, owned smaller stores in town. Each of the five Jewish households living in Thomasville during the war participated in the merchant trade.

Many Jewish merchants in the nineteenth-century South began as peddlers, and Thomasville's Jews were no exception to this pattern. Georgia law required that once a year peddlers obtain a license from the clerk of the Inferior Court in each county in which they desired to sell their wares.⁹ On March 12, 1858, and again twelve months later, Herman and Nathan Wolff applied to the Thomas County clerk, received a license to peddle "with one wagon only," and paid the county treasurer a fee of \$75.¹⁰ Louis Goldberg likewise obtained a license for the year beginning April 17, 1859.¹¹

Peddling had long provided a number of advantages for Jewish immigrants in the United States despite the hardship of carrying a 100-pound pack around the countryside. Lacking experience in farming because European governments prohibited Jewish ownership of land, many newly arrived Jews specialized in trade, an occupation that afforded them the freedom to set their own hours and observe religious holidays.¹²

Rarely an end in itself, work as a traveling peddler served as a stepping stone to an eventual store. Apprenticeship gave an aspiring merchant familiarity with supply routes and economic conditions. By seeking out customers, he knew in advance the extent of the demand for his goods and established a loyal clientele.¹³

Moreover, working as a peddler forced new immigrants to learn the language and local customs and to become familiar with a particular territory and its inhabitants. After a period of time catering to the needs of local residents, friendships developed. A farmer, for example, might offer a Jewish peddler a chair at the dinner table and even ask the guest to say the "Jewish" prayers over the food.¹⁴ This form of hospitality attests not only to the farmer's gratitude to the itinerant salesman for providing a needed service but also to an acceptance of or, at least, interest in the customs of his Jewish visitor.

Louis Goldberg and the Wolff brothers made the successful transition from peddling, and by the end of the war they had established prosperous merchant houses in Thomasville. County deed records indicate that in addition to Goldberg and the Wolffs, Michael Rosenfeld and the Schiff brothers bought property throughout the war years. In order to obtain the best price, they often purchased real estate at auction, occasionally with money loaned by a non-Jewish businessman.

Herman and Nathan Wolff acquired their first city lot and storehouse on Broad Street from Hamilton Sharpe in July 1860, with \$3,000 loaned them by Sharpe and William G. Ponder. Two years later Sharpe sold the brothers a house on an adjoining piece of property.¹⁵ Michael Rosenfeld paid David Holloway \$400 for three city lots in February 1860 and purchased another tract in July 1861 from William McLendon.¹⁶ Louis Goldberg bought his first piece of property on Broad Street in January 1863 for \$1,550 from the estate of Elzy

Thompson, and in August of that year he paid \$4,000 when Hansel R. Seward's brick storehouse came up at auction.¹⁷

Competition for customers required merchants to advertise aggressively the arrival of the season's new fashions. Promotions for Jewish businesses appear in the Thomasville newspapers throughout the 1860s. In 1857 and 1858 Jonas Schiff and his partner, Jacob Baum, plied the county with a cart selling blankets, men's and women's clothing, silks, shoes, firearms, and jewelry. In April 1860, they announced the opening of Baum & Schiff, a store located in neighboring Quitman.¹⁸ At approximately the same time, Jonas opened J. Schiff & Bro. in Thomasville with his brother Philip.¹⁹ H. Wolff & Bro. first welcomed customers in April 1860 and advertised in order to promote their "new Dry-Goods Emporium." They sold men's and women's ready-made clothing, footwear, cutlery, tobacco, and jewelry.²⁰ Stiff competition among the merchants prompted Benjamin F. Hubert to print the following announcement: "New Goods! New Goods!! Cheaper Than The Cheapest!! Great Excitement at Receiving Better Bargains Than Jews or Gentiles Offer."²¹ The wealth of Thomasville's Jewish merchants before 1870 is difficult to assess, as they kept most of their assets in inventory rather than more visible forms of property.²² Credit ratings submitted to R. G. Dun & Company in New York make it possible to surmise the strength of Jewish businesses immediately before and after the war. Local credit reporters, however, did not provide a systematic accounting of net worth. Nonetheless, their reports give some indication of the relative success of various enterprises.

The 1870 tax digest for Thomas County furnishes the earliest systematic measure of economic success. By all accounts, Thomas County residents fully supported Jewish-owned stores. As a basis of comparison for measuring affluence, two of Thomasville's largest merchants, I. Kubitshek & Brother and Remington McKinnon & Co., held merchandise valued at \$8,000 and \$24,000 respectively. County officials listed their net worth at \$13,050 and \$28,000.²³

On the low end of the scale, stock valued at under \$3,500 constituted a small mercantile establishment. Michael Rosenfeld had money and solvent debts worth \$2,000, and merchandise valued at \$5,000. The R. G. Dun & Company credit reporter described him as "a fine

businessman." When Rosenfeld died the following year, the county appraised his estate at over \$12,000. This sum included a storehouse on Broad Street worth \$4,500, goods in the store valued at \$3,035, and a \$1,000 life insurance policy.²⁴ At the time of S. M. Goldbach's death in 1891, officials appraised his estate at \$2,146. He owned a home and storehouse worth \$1,300 and goods amounting to \$720.²⁵ H. Wolff & Bro. were "doing a fine business" in 1866, and four years later possessed \$12,000 in merchandise and a net worth of \$16,300.²⁶ As the wealthiest Jewish business in Thomasville, Louis and Bennett Goldberg owned merchandise at their two stores estimated at \$9,000, and an aggregate value of all property near \$24,000. In April 1866 the R. G. Dun & Company credit reporter called them "the most active business men I know of."²⁷

Jews in the Thomasville War Effort

With the outbreak of war in April 1861, Thomasville's Jewish population joined the rest of the community in its support of the Confederate cause. Of the seven eligible men, three fought in the Confederate army. Herman Wolff, Nathan Wolff, and Louis Goldberg hired substitutes, and nothing is known about S. M. Goldbach's military career.²⁸ Michael Rosenfeld's name appears on the May 1861 muster roll for the Ocklockonee Light Infantry. He served as a private attached to Floyd House & Ocmulgee Hospitals in Macon, Georgia, until his discharge in April 1864.²⁹ Philip Schiff held the rank of 4th Corporal in the Thomasville Guards. He remained with the unit for ten months but hired a substitute in May 1862. His brother, Jonas, spent over three years in the Guards but received a discharge from duty in the fall of 1864, when sixty-three Thomasville residents petitioned the governor that Jonas's work as a tanner made him an indispensable member of the community. The signatures of two men who had attended the August 1862 meeting denouncing the town's Jews appeared on the petition.³⁰

Thomasville's Jewish citizens participated in civic affairs and supported the war effort by supplying the army with materials and money and assisting in humanitarian work. In 1863 Louis Goldberg and Philip Schiff served as Superior Court jurors. When the Inferior

Court met in February 1862, Herman Wolff was a juror; Louis Goldberg and Nathan Wolff served in February and June 1863, respectively.³¹

On at least one occasion a Jewish merchant from Thomasville sold goods to the Confederate military. H. Wolff & Bro. received \$140 for eight tin pans purchased by the army on January 25, 1864.³² The *Southern Enterprise* records that during a May 1861 fundraising drive to support two military companies from Thomasville, both the Wolff brothers and the Schiffs contributed to the cause.³³

The Wolff family became involved in two humanitarian efforts. During General Sherman's march through Georgia in late 1864, the Confederate authorities herded 400 Union captives from the nearby Andersonville prisoner camp onto an Atlantic & Gulf Railroad train bound for Thomasville. When they arrived, residents of the town came out to see the Union soldiers and found them "sick, lousy, hungry, and in filthy rags." A group of women, including Nathan Wolff's wife, Rachel, and Mrs. A. P. Wright, took pity on the captives and provided them with food, barrels of homemade soap, towels, and clean clothing.³⁴

A number of escapes occurred while the prisoners were still in Thomasville. On one occasion a prisoner fled in the middle of the night and sought refuge in the Wolff brothers' store. The fugitive appealed to Herman and Nathan as Masonic brothers not to turn him in. The Wolffs summoned Edward Remington, a Gentile merchant and fellow Mason, for advice. After some discussion the three men provided the prisoner with civilian clothes and money on his promise that he would not take up arms against the South after he had made his way back across the Union lines.³⁵

In addition to demonstrating the acceptance of Jews into Thomasville's social network, the episode with the Union prisoner suggests that the town's Jews had a sense that their position in the community was precarious. Charged in the August 1862 resolutions with disloyalty to the Confederate cause, Herman and Nathan Wolff no doubt felt uneasy dealing alone with the escapee. They wisely called in a prominent Gentile merchant to give legitimacy to their actions and to deflect any charge that Jews had aided Northern prisoners to escape.

Anti-Jewish Sentiment in the Civil War South

Jews and Gentiles in Thomasville enjoyed a harmonious, peaceful relationship throughout most of the Confederate era. Feelings, though at times ambivalent, were largely positive, and patronage of Jewish businesses increased, as did social interaction. Non-Jewish residents acknowledged the contribution that Jews made to community life. Townspeople perceived their Jewish neighbors as hardworking, energetic, decent folk who sought success in their newly adopted home.

Despite all this, the stress caused by soaring inflation, a deteriorating standard of life, and the fear of invasion by Union troops led some people to seek simple explanations for the array of difficulties befalling the region. Rather than condemn the Southern economy or the Confederate army, they sought an external influence on which to lay blame. There was, they thought, nothing wrong with the Confederate army, their leaders, or Southern society. The problem—or so the argument went—lay with Jews bent on undermining the Confederate cause. As a result, anti-Jewish sentiment, latent in good times, rose to a level of consciousness during the summer of 1862, and resulted in the outburst of August 30.

The wartime crisis and resulting tensions that gripped Thomas County coincided with events occurring throughout the South. The anti-Semitic incident in Thomasville constituted only one episode in a series of outbursts against Jews during the war.

Because of the Union blockade of Southern ports and the disruption of supply lines from the West and North, planters could not sell their cotton or import basic necessities from abroad. In addition, prices began to rise as early as the autumn of 1861. One of the first items to soar in cost was salt, crucial for preserving meat. In Athens, Georgia, salt sold for 80 cents a bushel in January 1861, and by August had risen to \$1.25. At the end of 1861, it sold for \$3.75. The following May, people were paying \$25 a bushel, and in December the price had climbed to \$30.³⁶ Prices for all other commodities, including food, also spiraled, causing great hardship for the whole population.

John B. Jones, a Confederate quartermaster stationed in Richmond, described the South's economic plight. "The Jews are at work," he noted in his diary on September 7, 1861. "Having no nationality, all wars are harvests for them. Now they are scouring the country in all directions, buying all the goods they can find in the distant cities, and even from the country stores. These they will keep, until the process of consumption shall raise a greedy demand for all descriptions of merchandise."³⁷

Some Southern newspapers fueled the fires of prejudice with harsh statements against Jewish merchants and alarmist reports about the spread of counterfeit currency. *The Augusta Daily Chronicle & Sentinel* reprinted an article written by a Memphis correspondent. "The Israelites have come down upon this city [Memphis] like locusts. Every boat brings a load of the hooked-nose fraternity, with mysterious boxes under their arms, and honied words on their tongues."³⁸ From *Southern Punch* came the following: "Who are our capitalists at the present time? The dirty, greasy Jew peddler [*sic*], who might be seen, with a pack on his back, a year or two since, bowing and cringing even to Negro servants, now struts by with the air of a millionaire."³⁹ The *Florida Sentinel* printed a short article in July 1862 warning that over \$12,000 in fake bills had been discovered in Columbus, Georgia, and on August 26 the *Columbus Weekly Enquirer* published a front-page story on currency problems in the region.⁴⁰

The sentiments expressed in the media were echoed by some Southern politicians. Congressman Henry S. Foote of Tennessee made his feelings about Jews known in the Confederate House of Representatives during a debate in January 1863. He claimed that Jews had flooded into the country and controlled nine-tenths of its business. According to Foote, they engaged in illegal trade with the Union army, and "if the present state of things were to continue, the end of the war would probably find nearly all the property of the Confederacy in the hands of Jewish Shylocks."⁴¹

Harsh words against Southern Jews occasionally erupted into threats of expulsion and physical attacks. In Santa Luca, Georgia, in the spring of 1863, a group of soldiers' wives raided Jewish stores and made off with needed provisions at pistol point. They also accused Jewish merchants of speculating on shortages and making fortunes

while their husbands fought for the Southern cause.⁴² On October 6, 1862, John B. Jones noted the robbery of \$8,000 worth of merchandise from a Jewish store on Main Street in Richmond. He commented, "I apprehend there will be many scenes of violence this winter. . . . The supplies necessary for existence should not be withheld from a suffering people. It is dangerous."⁴³

One of the most striking examples of how good relations between Jew and Gentile could turn hostile occurred in late 1862 in Talbotton, Georgia. A grand jury presentment to the Talbot County Superior Court referred to the "evil and unpatriotic conduct of the representatives of Jewish houses who had engaged in this nefarious business [of extortion and speculation]." When Lazarus Straus, the town's only Jewish merchant, learned of the grand jury statement, he announced his intention to move away rather than permit the community to cast aspersions on his family's reputation.

Straus had lived in Talbotton since 1852, and his planned departure created such a sensation throughout the county that every member of the grand jury and all the area ministers came calling. They tried to assure him that the statement did not reflect negatively on *his* faith and *his* business practices.

The men did not explicitly state the real reason for their visit. They needed Straus's services and feared increased shortages and a loss of credit if he left the area. Unconvinced of the jury's benign intentions, Straus resettled his family in Columbus, Georgia.⁴⁴

Thomas County faced many of the same problems and reacted in much the same fashion as other regions in the South. Shortages of various provisions plagued Thomasville and environs. An article that appeared in the Thomasville newspaper on November 20, 1861, recounted how the governor of Alabama had seized 1,400 sacks of salt to prevent speculation. The article also noted that the previous Saturday Mayor A. P. Wright had presided at a meeting of Thomas County citizens at which they condemned speculation in basic goods and other articles, lauded the Alabama action, and called for a Georgia law against speculating in salt, fabrics, grains, medicines, and "all articles of necessity." Significantly, the speakers made no mention of Jews.⁴⁵ In August 1862, as the shortages continued, James L. Seward recommended to Governor Brown that he appoint Wright as salt

agent for Thomas and surrounding counties in order to assure the equitable distribution of salt to needy families.⁴⁶

Fear of invasion gripped the county in early 1862 as the Union navy threatened Florida's Gulf coast. Thomasville resident A. H. Hansell wrote to General Henry C. Wayne in February 1862, urging him to prevent Union troops from moving east from Pensacola and cutting off railroad communications with Savannah.⁴⁷ As the terminus of the Atlantic & Gulf Railroad, Thomasville seemed a logical target if Northern forces wished to isolate the Georgia coast from communities inland. Despite Hansell's pleas, his request was not implemented. However, Brigadier General Howell Cobb, who took command of the District of Middle Florida, received instructions to defend southwestern Georgia.⁴⁸ Union forces never entered Thomas County, and the railway remained in operation until December 1864, when Sherman's forces destroyed a section of track much farther east between Savannah and Doctortown.⁴⁹

Although scholars can describe the manner in which anti-Jewish sentiment was expressed, explaining the psychology behind these attitudes requires some conjecture. Suspicious of foreigners in general, small-town Southerners surely noticed that many Jews spoke English haltingly or with a German accent, shunned agricultural work, and tended to keep to themselves in business and social matters.

Negative attitudes stemmed also from the strong opposition of evangelical Christians to what they considered extortion. Drew Faust reveals how the Confederate nationalist ideology inextricably tied religious convictions to economic issues. Southerners identified themselves within a framework that made moral reform fundamental to the Confederate national purpose. Military victory could not be achieved without moral and social change, and the sin of extortion arose accordingly in religious and political discourse.⁵⁰ Clergymen considered avarice to be a sin, and politicians campaigned to make speculation and extortion a crime. Much of the Southern discussion of extortion lapsed into anti-Jewish sentiment founded not on the belief that Jews had killed or rejected the Messiah, but on the idea that Jewish business practices were un-Christian and therefore sinful.⁵¹

A fear and abhorrence of dependency may have also contributed to Southern resentment of Jews. The dominant local elite regarded bourgeois mercantile functions with disdain, but they also disliked relying on foreign Jewish merchants for the credit necessary to buy goods for their families and farms.⁵² During periods of inflation or uneasiness, the reliance that Southerners tolerated during good times became totally unacceptable, and they struck out at their "oppressors."

Jewish frugality and marriage patterns likely made Jews seem peculiar or aloof to their Gentile neighbors. Frugal living habits precluded the extravagant hospitality characteristic of men of means in antebellum Southern society. Jews tended to reinvest profits rather than spend on creature comforts and entertainment. Saving to pay for the passage of additional family members from Europe took precedence over lavish displays of wealth.⁵³

The Jews of Thomasville did not intermarry with their non-Jewish neighbors but actively sought Jewish mates. Nathan Wolff traveled to New York in search of his future bride, Rachel Hertz.⁵⁴ Louis Goldberg married Julia Grossman, the first cousin or sister of Michael Rosenfeld's wife, Sarah. The ceremony took place at Rosenfeld's home, and Rabbi Abraham Harris traveled from Savannah to officiate.⁵⁵

One can only speculate as to why the people of Thomas County did not enforce the anti-Jewish resolutions passed at the August 1862 meeting. In all likelihood the rally's organizers intended the gathering to serve as a vehicle for venting anger and anxiety and not as a forum for establishing policy. Amidst the various crises befalling the region, a public display of solidarity against perceived transgressors sent area residents a strong warning that unpatriotic behavior would not be tolerated. The message served also as a visible expression of Thomas County's support for the Confederate cause and its active participation in checking the spread of subversive activity.

No doubt community leaders fully appreciated the ramifications that would follow on the departure of the county's Jews. Jewish-owned stores in Thomasville comprised one-sixth of the thirty-odd area merchant houses in 1860. With the heavy demands imposed by military service, many merchants found it impossible to operate their

shops throughout the war, making the retail services provided by Jews all the more important.

Fraternal bonds in the Masonic Order and economic ties between Jew and Gentile acted as an additional obstacle to wholesale expulsion. Jewish businessmen owed money, and lenders had no intention of forgiving the debts. Also, store owners received only about one-fifth of the payments for their goods in cash. Much of the exchange between merchant and client took the form of liens and promissory notes.⁵⁶ Even if exiled from the county, the area's Jewish merchants could still petition the courts in order to foreclose on a lien or call in a loan.

The decision of Thomasville's Jews to remain in town and weather the anti-Semitic storm indicates how they perceived the actions of their neighbors. Whereas Lazarus Straus, the sole Jewish merchant in Talbotton, chose to leave town, the Jews of Thomas County understood their importance to the area and took comfort in the strength their numbers afforded. While they undoubtedly were concerned about the tone of the meeting, the threats to expel them did not produce a panic. Perhaps they believed that the community's leaders did not intend to enforce the resolutions and that within a short time peaceful, stable relations would resume. If so, the considerable success they enjoyed throughout the remainder of the war supported their perception of the situation.

Conclusion

Without question, a deplorable anti-Semitic incident occurred in Thomasville in 1862. In an atmosphere of economic crisis and wartime anxiety, a small group of citizens sought a scapegoat for the problems they faced. Their ambivalent feelings toward Jewish business and social practices placed Jews as a group on the fringes of society. But to take one example of anti-Semitic behavior and assume that the community lived in a constant state of agitation creates a distorted picture. Thomas County residents depended on the goods and credit that Jewish merchants provided. Jews recognized their importance to the region's economy and had the resolve to weather the sudden explosion of anti-Jewish sentiment. Not only did the Jews of

Thomasville remain in town throughout the Confederate era, they prospered.

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Notes

1. Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1951; reprint ed., New York: Atheneum, 1970), p. 188; idem, "American Judaeophobia: Confederate Version," in *Jews in the South*, ed. Leonard Dinnerstein and Mary Dale Palsson (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), p. 155; E. Merton Coulter, *The Confederate States of America, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1950), pp. 224, 226. See also Abraham J. Peck, "That Other 'Peculiar Institution': Jews and Judaism in the Nineteenth Century South," *Modern Judaism* 7 (February 1987): 103-104; James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 442.
2. For a discussion of ambivalence in Jewish-Gentile relations, see John Higham, "Social Discrimination Against Jews in America 1830-1930," *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society* 47 (September 1957): 2-5; Louise A. Mayo, *The Ambivalent Image: Nineteenth-Century America's Perception of the Jew* (Cranbury, N.J.: Associated University Presses, 1988), p. 18; Peck, "That Other 'Peculiar Institution,'" pp. 103, 109; Michael N. Dobkowski, *The Tarnished Dream: The Basis of American Anti-Semitism* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979), p. 79.
3. References to anti-Semitism in Thomasville appear in Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War*, p. 179; idem, "American Judaeophobia: Confederate Version," p. 141; Coulter, *Confederate States of America*, p. 227; Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), p. 50; Steven Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City: The Jews of Atlanta, 1845-1915* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1978), p. 25.
4. William Warren Rogers, *Antebellum Thomas County, 1825-1861* (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1963), pp. 61, 68; idem, *Thomas County During the Civil War* (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1964), p. 1; idem, "The Way They Were: Thomas Countians in 1860," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 60 (Summer 1976): 133, 135.
5. Rogers, "The Way They Were," pp. 136-38.
6. The *Thomasville Southern Enterprise* ceased publication in December 1861 and did not resume again until July 1865. In April 1862, the *Thomasville Weekly Times* began publication; however, no issue reporting on the August 30, 1862, meeting is extant. For a record of the meeting see the *Georgia Journal and Messenger* (Macon), September 10, 1862, and the *Savannah Daily Morning News*, September 12, 1862.
7. For another interpretation of the events of August 30, 1862, and their aftermath, see Louis Schmier, "An Act Unbecoming: Anti-Semitic Uprising in Thomas County, Georgia," *Civil War Times Illustrated* 23 (October 1984): 22-23; idem, "Notes and Documents on the 1862 Expulsion of Jews from Thomasville, Georgia," *American Jewish Archives* 32 (April 1980): 12; Richard M. McMurray, "Rebels, Extortioners and Counterfeiters: A Note on Confederate Judaeophobia," *Atlanta Historical Society Journal* 22 (Fall-Winter 1978): 45-51.
8. Rogers, "The Way They Were," p. 139.

9. The peddler had to provide evidence of good character and swear an oath not to use the license in another county or lend it to someone else. The law required the clerk to enter the oath and license in a book kept for that purpose and to provide a description of the peddler. The book in which peddlers' licenses were noted for Thomas County has been lost, but the Inferior Court Minutes for 1856-1859 contain the names of men granted licenses for those years. See R. H. Clark, comp., *The Code of the State of Georgia* (Atlanta: John H. Seals, 1861), pp. 310-311.
10. Thomas County Minutes Inferior Court 1849-1860, pp. 229, 294, Office of the Clerk of the Inferior Court, Thomas County Courthouse, Thomasville, Ga. (hereafter cited as Thomas County records).
11. Ibid., p. 296. Louis Goldberg operated the business alone until sometime in late 1865, when his older brother Bennett arrived in Thomasville.
12. Stephen J. Whitfield, "Commercial Passions: The Southern Jew as Businessman," *American Jewish History* 71 (March 1982): 343-344.
13. Elliot Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews in Louisiana 1840-1875* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1988), pp. 132-134; Louis Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough: A Jewish Peddler and His Black Customers Look at Each Other," *American Jewish History* 73 (September 1983): 44.
14. Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," p. 44.
15. Thomas County Superior Court Deed Records, bk. I, 151, 459, Thomas County records. Thomas County Superior Court Realty Mortgages, bk. A-M, 123, Thomas County records.
16. Thomas County Superior Court Deed Records, bk. I, 60, 355, Thomas County records.
17. Ibid., 510, 695-696. Following the arrival of Bennett Goldberg in 1865 the two brothers made numerous real estate purchases in 1866 and 1867.
18. Jacob Baum purchased a peddler's license in Thomas County in November 1856, and his brother Michael received a license in August 1859. Thomas County Minutes Inferior Court 1849-1860, 162, 318, Thomas County records; *Thomasville Wiregrass Reporter*, December 8, 1857 and April 28, 1858; and *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, April 18, 1860; Credit Reports, Georgia, vol. 33, p. 9, R. G. Dun & Co. Collection, Baker Library, Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration (hereafter Dun Collection). The author gratefully acknowledges permission from the Dun and Bradstreet Company and from Baker Library at Harvard University to cite from the R.G. Dunn & Company Collection.
19. *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, September 19, 1860, October 30, 1861, and November 22, 1865.
20. Ibid., April 4, 1860, December 25, 1861, and November 15, 1865.
21. Ibid., July 11, 1860.
22. Ashkenazi, *Business of Jews in Louisiana*, pp. 109-110.
23. 1870 Tax Digest Thomas County, District 637, Ga. Department of Archives and History, Atlanta; Ashkenazi, *Business of Jews in Louisiana*, p. 124.
24. 1870 Thomas County Tax Digest, District 637, Georgia Department of Archives and History; Court of Ordinary Inventory and Appraisements 1868-1883, bk. I, 154-56, Thomas County records; Credit Reports, Georgia vol. 33, p. 30, Dun Collection.
25. Court of Ordinary Inventories and Appraisements 1883-1901, bk. J, 225, Thomas County records.
26. Credit Reports, Georgia, vol. 33, p. 10, Dun Collection; 1870 Tax Digest Thomas County, District 637, Georgia Department of Archives and History.
27. 1870 Tax Digest Thomas County, District 637, Georgia Department of Archives and History; Credit Reports, Georgia, vol. 33, p. 30, Dun Collection.

28. Georgia Adjutant-General's Division, Enrollment of the Present Militia Co. District No. 637, Thomas County, December 1963, Georgia Department of Archives and History.
29. Georgia Adjutant-General's Division, Muster Roll of the Ocklockonee Light Infantry, May 18, 1861, Georgia Department of History and Archives; Lillian Henderson, comp., *Roster of the Confederate Soldiers of Georgia, 1861-1865*, 6 vols. (Hapeville, Ga.: Longino & Porter, 1960), 3:444.
30. Georgia Adjutant-General's Division, Enrollment of the Present Militia Co. District No. 637 Thomas County, December 1863, Georgia Department of Archives and History; Petition of Thomas County residents, August 8, 1864, in Letters to Governor Joseph E. Brown, 1860-1865, Georgia Department of Archives and History; Simon Wolf, *The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen*, ed. Louis Edward Levy (Philadelphia: Levytype Co., 1895), pp. 129-134.
31. Thomas County Superior Court Minutes 1858, 508, 534, Thomas County records; Thomas County Minutes Inferior Court 1861-1870, 53, 72, Thomas County records.
32. Invoice from H. Wolff & Bro. for Goods Sold, January 1864, Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, Micropublication 346, Roll 1135, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
33. *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, May 15, 1861.
34. S. W. Davis, "Federal Prisoners from Andersonville Brought to Thomasville," *United Daughters of the Confederacy Historical Collection*, I (1930), n.p. in the Elizabeth F. Hopkins Collection at the Thomasville Cultural Center Library, Thomasville; Rogers, *Thomas County During the Civil War*, pp. 83-84.
35. Rogers, *Thomas County During the Civil War*, pp. 88-90.
36. Coulter, *Confederate States of America*, p. 220; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, p. 440.
37. For this and other anti-Semitic slurs, see John Beauchamp Jones, *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary at the Confederate States Capital*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1866), 1:78, 165-166, 213, 221.
38. *Augusta Daily Chronicle & Sentinel*, July 17, 1862. See also *Richmond Examiner*, December 20, 1862, quoted in Eli N. Evans, *Judah P. Benjamin: The Jewish Confederate* (New York: Free Press, 1988), p. 200.
39. *Southern Punch* (Richmond), October 17, 1863, quoted in Evans, *Judah P. Benjamin*, p. 200.
40. *Florida Sentinel*, July 29, 1862; *Columbus Weekly Enquirer*, August 26, 1862. See also *Milledgeville Southern Recorder*, August 19, 1862; and *Macon Daily Telegraph*, August 30, 1862.
41. For this and other outbursts by Foote, see "Proceedings of the First Confederate Congress—Third Session," *Southern Historical Society Papers* 47 (December 1930): 122, 144; "Proceedings from the First Confederate Congress—Third Session," *ibid.* 48 (1941): 8-9, 185.
42. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War*, p. 179.
43. Jones, *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary*, 1:164.
44. After the war the family moved to New York, where in 1888 Lazarus's sons Isidor and Nathan purchased R. H. Macy & Co. Jacob Rader Marcus, ed., *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1955), 3:301-304; Korn, "American Judaeophobia: Confederate Version," p. 147.
45. *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, November 20, 1861.
46. James L. Seward to Joseph E. Brown, August 6, 11, 1862, in Letters to Governor Joseph E. Brown, 1860-1865, Georgia Department of Archives and History.
47. A. H. Hansell to Henry C. Wayne, February 2, 1862, in Letters to Georgia Adjutant-General, 1861-1865, Georgia Department of Archives and History.
48. Rogers, *Thomas County During the Civil War*, p. 18; McMurray, "Rebels, Extortioners and Counterfeiters," p. 51.
49. Rogers, *Antebellum Thomas County*, p. 21, 47; *idem*, *Thomas County, 1865-1900* (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1973), p. 102.

50. Faust, *Creation of Confederate Nationalism*, pp. 41-42.
51. *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.
52. Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 333; Ashkenazi, *Business of Jews in Louisiana*, p. 3.
53. Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, p. 332; Ashkenazi, *Business of Jews in Louisiana*, p. 163.
54. *Thomasville Southern Enterprise*, September 13, 1866.
55. Thomas County Court of Ordinary Marriage Record, bk. I, 1875-1880, 280, Thomas County records.
56. Ashkenazi, *Business of Jews in Louisiana*, p. 38.