
THE JEWS IN CURAÇAO: According to Documents from the Archives of the State of New York

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THE JEWS IN CURAÇAO.¹

ACCORDING TO DOCUMENTS FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE
STATE OF NEW YORK.

CONTRIBUTED BY G. HERBERT CONE.

At a meeting of the Society held in New York in December, 1897, some interesting and valuable notes gathered from the unpublished archives of the State of New York by Mr. G. Herbert Cone on the above-entitled subject were presented, but as they were without introductory matter or comment, it was determined that they should be presented again at the present meeting, with the necessary explanatory statement. It was fortunate that this course was adopted, for, since then, a valuable little booklet on the same subject by the Rev. Joseph M. Corcos, of Curaçao, has come to hand, entitled, *A Synopsis of the History of the Jews in Curaçao*.² This seems to contain nearly all available data, except these original, hitherto unpublished, records from Albany, so that the two contributions complement and supplement each other in a marked degree. This coincidence illustrates anew how unlimited the field of the historian is to-day, when unpublished records in Albany are found to contain valuable original records illustrating the history of the Jews of Curaçao. While letting the

¹ Reported in December, 1898, by Committee on Dutch Records, Hon. Simon W. Rosendale, Chairman; report prepared by Max J. Kohler, Secretary.

² The full title is, *A Synopsis of the History of the Jews of Curaçao from the day of their Settlement to the Present Time*, by Rev. Joseph M. Corcos, Minister of the Congregation "Mikveh Israel," Curaçao, 1897.

Albany documents speak for themselves in their entirety in an appendix hereto, we will draw upon both of these sources for an outline of the principal events in the history of the Jews in Curaçao.¹

Years ago, Dr. Fischell, in his *Chronological Notes of the History of the Jews in America*, noted the fact that in 1650 Jews from Holland established a colony at Curaçao. This is still the earliest authenticated date in the history of the Jews of Curaçao. Mr. Corcos says (p. 7): "As early as the year 1650, sixteen years after Curaçao had been taken possession of by the Dutch Government, twelve Israelitish families were brought hither for the promotion of commerce and welfare of the island, namely: de Meza, Aboab, Pereira, de Leon, La Parra, Touro Aboab Cardoze, Jesurun, Marchena, Chaviz, Oleveira, Henriquez Cutinho. These twelve families were provided from the Council of Holland with letters to the then Governor, Mathias Beck, ordering him to give them sufficient land, and to provide them with negroes, horses, cattle, implements, etc., in order that they may pursue agricultural occupations which had been neglected by the Dutch settlers, who found the contraband trade with the Spanish Main more lucrative and more to their taste. On their arrival, a large tract of land was granted to them in the outskirts of the city, about two miles distant from the fortress, now 'Willemstad', which to this day is known as the 'Jewish Quarter'. It is very strange, however, that, although the Jews enjoyed equality of rights as citizens in the Mother country,² in Curaçao they had to accede to some restrictions; for, besides being looked upon as foreigners, they were not even permitted to be within the fortress later than nine o'clock at night; and if anyone infringed this

¹ Compare Judge Daly's *Settlement of the Jews in North America*, pp. 9, 14; *Publications* No. 2, pp. 2, 94, 95, 96, 99, 103; No. 3, pp. 18-20, 117, 118, 142; No. 9, pp. 149-150.

² This is not quite accurate. See Judge Daly's work, p. 4, and *Civil Status of the Jews in Colonial New York*. *Publications* No. 6, p. 81.

rule and was found there after that hour, he was liable to severe punishment. This, of course, is due to the great fanaticism that existed at that time, of which even Curaçao was not free. In this uncomfortable position this handful of Jews remained for the period of four years."

We have now reached the point where Mr. Corcos' records were scanty, and he can devote but a few lines to the interesting data included in Mr. Cone's contribution, for the reason that these facts were not available for him. Turning now to Mr. Cone's Albany excerpts (annexed hereto as Appendix I), we find that the directors of the Dutch West India Company wrote to Gov. Stuyvesant in March, 1651, that they were seriously considering the advisability of abandoning Curaçao because the island was not a source of revenue to them, when they attempted a further experiment with it, and made a contract with a Jew, Jan de Illan. "He intends," they write, "to bring a considerable number of people there to settle and cultivate the land, but we began to suspect that he and his associates have quite another object in view, namely, to trade from there to the West Indies and the Main. Be that as it may, we are willing to make the experiment, and you must, therefore, charge Director Rodenborch to accommodate him within proper limits, and in conformity with the conditions of the contract." On April 4, 1652, they wrote once more to Stuyvesant, and refer to later privileges granted by them to Joseph Nunes de Fonseca, alias David Nassi, "who is preparing to go there with a large number of people." The directors were still very half-hearted and distrustful, as is shown by their saying: "Time must show whether we shall succeed well with this nation; they are a crafty and generally treacherous people, in whom, therefore, not too much confidence must be placed." For the first time this grant of privileges, dated February 22, 1652, has been brought to light, and the grant is of prime interest and importance because it is the earliest charter of privileges

looking to religious liberty and toleration, granted to the Jews in the New World, which has yet been made public. It is not apparent that the earlier privileges, given to the arrivals of 1650, were granted to any body collectively, nor that they granted civil or religious rights: at any rate, they do not appear to be extant. Liberal grants of privileges were made by this Charter of 1652, including the right of selection of lands, exemption from taxes for ten years, etc. It is curious to notice that the fact that a Jewish settlement was being formed, was recognized even to this extent, that it was expressly provided that "whereas among these colonists some Christians may be found, it shall not be permitted to the patroon to compel them to any labor on the Sabbath of the Christians", nor shall anyone labor on that day. It is interesting to compare these concessions with the ones unearthed by Mr. Lucien Wolf, granted some years later, probably to Jews in Surinam, which he describes as the first attempt at Jewish emancipation.¹ A further letter, written in December, 1652, indicates that de Illan and his companions were clearing the island of logwood and trading with this article and horses to the Caribbean Islands. Measures to stop this commerce in the interest of New Netherland were taken by the directors. The next year, leave was refused to the Curaçao Jews to purchase negro slaves to be employed in agriculture there, from the same motives. Further restrictions on the trade of the Jews in Curaçao were imposed, but it is amusing to read, in correspondence of the year 1656, how the Dutch authorities in Curaçao sought to excuse themselves for entering into and sanctioning commercial dealings with an enterprising Jewish trader named Isaack de Fonseca, from Barbadoes, contrary to and in the face of the prohibitions which the company had established to uphold its own trade monopoly. In fact, de Fonseca's specific proposals looked to establishing free

¹See "Some Early American Zionist Projects", paper by Max J. Kohler in *Publications* No. 8, pp. 77-8, 91-96, reprinting Mr. Wolf's remarks, as well as this grant.

trade between the two islands. The company first made de Fonseca some unsatisfactory counter-proposals, but he declined these, and was about to proceed with his vessel to Jamaica, when they agreed to accept his terms. A letter of complaint from Stuyvesant, written in December, 1659, indicates that the Jews in Curaçao managed, after all, to induce the company to let them purchase negroes, and Stuyvesant demands that the company give to the Dutch settlers in New Netherlands, "if not more, at least the same privileges, and demand the same terms as from the usurious and covetous Jews."

But to return to Mr. Corcos' work: This colony would doubtless have failed, had not numerous refugees, expelled from Brazil, seasonably appeared. Of them Mr. Corcos well says: "The large number of Israelites that came from Brazil and the immense quantity of wealth they brought with them, caused the old prejudices against the Jewish nation to disappear. They were allowed to take up their abode in any part of the country they wished; and later, they not only possessed the best houses in the city, but also lands, and almost the entire commerce of the Island was in their hands. Thus the youthful community grew in prosperity and affluence from year to year; and to this day their direct descendants, of whom the present community consists, hold a prominent and distinguished position, both socially and commercially."

In 1656 the cemetery laid out by the original twelve settlers was turned over to the new community, and Mr. Corcos gives a long list of early settlers, compiled from the tombstone-inscriptions, which may be of service in identifying Jewish settlers here and elsewhere in other connections (pages 10-13). A congregation was formed and a synagogue secured the same year, 1656, their treatment having been more liberal than that experienced by their co-religionists in the sister-colony, New Netherland. Mr. Corcos traces, in some detail, the history of the religious community, includ-

ing the erection of a new Synagogue in 1692, and the departure of a number of the Jewish inhabitants, about 90 in number, for Rhode Island in 1693, which body is supposed to have included the families of Touro, Gomez, Molina, De Meza Casseres, Rodrigues Da Costa, Cohen Henriquez and Luis. Another contingent, principally Italian Jews, who had at one time been members of the Jewish colony in Cayenne, left Curaçao in this same year, 1693, for Venezuela, and established a colony there at Tucacas, (pp. 18-19) which community, some years later, in 1720, requested the Curaçao congregation to purchase a Sopher Thora for the latter's synagogue. Even the New York Shearith Israel congregation appears, in 1720, to have solicited a contribution for their new synagogue from the Curaçao community, and a similar request was made by the Newport Congregation some 36 years later.

A Jew named David Senior, seems to have been appointed to important civil office in 1722 by the Governor, Noah du Fay, and the Jews appear to have enjoyed equality of rights with other citizens. Some schisms or dissensions between the congregation and a wing of heterodox dissenters were terminated summarily by the orders of the Prince of Orange in 1750. Mr. Corcos sets out at length, the various details in the congregational and communal life of these settlers down to our own day, which are beyond the scope of the present report; they may be profitably consulted by any one interested, in this interesting little work.

In conclusion, it should be noted that there were vessels trading between New Amsterdam and Curaçao as early as 1657,¹ and that this trade, conducted principally by Jews in

¹In Vol. 12, p. 99, of Vanderkemp's translations of Dutch records (MS.), we find a copy of an invoice of goods exported from Curaçao to New Netherland, the invoice being dated December, 1656, and consisting of jewelry and other like goods; Joshua Mordekai En Riques is the name of the enterprising trader. Compare article on "Jewish Activity in American Colonial Commerce", (*supra*, p. —); Curaçao also note similarity of the name of this trader to those from tombstones, given *post* (p. 156) in the list from Mr. Corcos' book.

each place, was extremely serviceable in leading to the commercial development of both colonies.

APPENDIX I.

LETTER FROM DIRECTORS OF THE DUTCH WEST INDIA COMPANY TO
GOV. STUYVESANT, MARCH 21, 1651.

(Vol. 14 of Documents relating to Colonial History of the State of
New York, p. 135.)

“Although we have once before written about the island of Curaçoa, that, if we should have no revenue whatever from there it might be advisable to abandon it, instead of holding it any longer in hope of unexpected returns; we do not mean to say that we had come to that resolution, but used it only as an example. The enclosed contract made with a Jew, Jan de Illau will prove to you the contrary. He intends to bring a considerable number of people there to settle and cultivate, as he pretends, the land, but we begin to suspect, that he and his associates have quite another object in view, namely, to trade from there to the West Indies and the Main. Be that as it may, we are willing to make the experiment, and you must therefore, charge Director Rodenborch to accomodate him within proper limits, and in conformity with the conditions of his contract.”

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS IN HOLLAND TO STUYVESANT,
APRIL 4, 1652.

(Id. Vol. 14, Page 172.)

“You think we have done well in treating with Jean Dillan about establishing a colony at Curaçoa; we have now granted a like privilege to a Portuguese, Joseph Nunes de Fonseca, alias David Nassi, agreeable to the here enclosed patent, who is preparing to go there with a large number of people. Time must show whether we shall succeed well with this nation; they are a crafty and generally treacherous people in whom therefore not too much confidence must be placed.”

IN VOL. 8 OF VANDERKEMP'S MS. TRANSLATIONS OF THE DUTCH
RECORDS OF NEW YORK, IN THE STATE LIBRARY, AT ALBANY, PAGE

34 (see O'Callaghan's *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts*, Dutch Manuscripts, Vol. XVII, Curaçoa Papers, p. 329) appears the following, dated Feb. 22, 1652:

“PRIVILEGES AND EXEMPTIONS granted by the Directors of the West India Company, Department Amsterdam, to Joseph Nunes de Fonseca, alias David Nassi & Co., as patroon of the colony on the Island of Curaçoa, situated within the limits of the district of the aforesaid company.

—: 1 :—

The aforesaid Joseph Nunes de Fonseca & Co. are permitted to embark in their own or hired vessels to the island of Curaçoa and establish there a colony on the following conditions:

—: 2 :—

The skipper of said vessel or vessels must be provided with the usual commission, mentioning the name, tons, shape and crew of the vessel.

—: 3 :—

The private individuals, either colonists of the aforesaid de Fonseca or his partners, shall be obliged to give up their names to the Department of Amsterdam, to demand a permit for their embarkation, and engage themselves to execute the orders and the stipulations of the company faithfully.

—: 4 :—

The aforesaid de Fonseca, or his substitute on the island of Curaçoa, shall be obliged as soon as they are arrived in the island of Curaçoa, to address himself to the Vice Director of the aforesaid island, being now the person of Lucas Rodenburgh, and take there the oath of allegiance, acknowledging him and his council for his lawful sovereign, paying him obeisance as it ought to be in executing all his orders and commands.

—: 5 :—

It is further permitted to Fonseca and partners, in the form of a lease, to select and take possession of all such lands as he, with his colonists, shall be able to cultivate, to obtain every sort of produce, to increase the number of cattle in that country, except only the Salinas and the woods of stock fish hout, which the company reserves for her own use, the extent of said lands being calculated to the number of the settlers, viz: for fifty persons two miles along the coast; for one hundred persons four miles, and so in the same proportion, with the express condition that they shall be obliged to make a beginning with their cultivation within a year, and that they shall bring within four years the stipulated number of settlers in that country under the penalty of the forfeiture of said lands.

—: 6 :—

Said persons shall pay no tithes nor other recognition from their produce during ten years. But of wood, (stock vish hout) and other merchantable articles they shall pay at the same rate as the other inhabitants.

—: 7 :—

But they shall not be permitted to appropriate any wood chopt in behalf of the company, neither shall they depossess any individuals, either Indians or other persons, from the lands of which they have taken possession ; but it is permitted, if they can, by the consent of said Vice Director, obtain these lands at a reasonable compensation.

—: 8 :—

The aforesaid patroon and colonists shall bring the wares and merchandise which they intend to export from here, to the magazine of the company, paying for these at the rate of other persons, provided that nothing shall be paid with regard to victuals and other necessary articles which are required for the maintenance of the aforesaid colony.

—: 9 :—

The aforesaid patroon shall, if he does desire it, receive a commission from their high Might. to take any vessels of the Portugeese, provided that the captured vessels must be conducted hither to be submitted by the company to the judicature of the Admiralty upon such a commission as is paid by the other commissioned vessels.

—: 10 :—

The Directors shall command and instruct the aforesaid Vice Director that he may not in any manner trouble the aforesaid patroon and his colonists, but to the contrary, assist them as far as it may be in his power, so as the company takes them under her saveguard and protection, promising them that she is willing to defend them by all the means which are there in her power against any hostile attack, provided that in such case the aforesaid persons are willing to defend themselves; for which end every male person shall provide himself herewith with a gun or musket of the usual caliber at their private expenses or those of the patroon.

—: 11 :—

And whereas among these colonists some Christians may be found, it shall not be permitted to the patroon to compel them to any labour on the sabbath of the Christians, as neither he nor any others, being no Christians, are permitted,—although they are no Christians,—to work on that day, much less shall he disturb those in their religious worship or give them any offence, as such would be contrary to the intention of the company who therefore shall provide against it by her letters to the Vice Director.

—: 12 :—

Lastly, it shall be granted that all such privileges shall be enjoyed by said patroon as in future may be given to the patroons of colonies in New Netherland, as much at least as the present situation of that island shall permit, to which purpose a copy of all such privileges shall be transmitted to them to regulate themselves accordingly.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS TO STUYVESANT, DATED DEC. 13, 1652.

(Documents relating to the Colonial History of the State
of New York. Vol. XIV, p. 193.)

“You will please to forward the enclosure to Director Rodenborch by the next ship and to write him, not to fell any more logwood trees, or allow any to be exported except for the Company’s account, for we observe that the Colonist Jean de Illan and his companions do not intend, as they said, to cultivate the land and plant tobacco, indigo, cotton and other staples, but simply to clear it of the logwood and trade with it and horses to the Caribbean Islands; we wish, he had not been so much encouraged herein, and that he had not received permission to freight the ship “St. Joris,” Joris Javan skipper, with horses, for henceforth we desire that no more horses shall be exported from Bueneiro, Curaçao and Aruba, but that they shall remain there to be used in time in our province of New Netherland. We notice and receive daily information, that the best horses have been taken from the Islands and that in the end there will only be left there a lot of broken down animals; on that account we shall not grant any more colonies there.”

LETTER TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE WEST INDIA COMPANY FROM
DEPARTMENT OF AMSTERDAM, DATED JUNE 6, 1653.

(Vanderkemp’s MS. Translation of Dutch Records, Vol. IV, p. 101.)

We conclude from the informations which we receive now and then from Curacoa, that this colony is rather detrimental than profitable to the company, as a colonist, Juan Dilliano, and his adherents, have no aim to cultivate the soil and promote the increase of its products as the intention was of the company, but their only employ is limited to cutting away the stock visch hout and exporting the horses from the island of Aruba and Bonaires to the Caribbean and other neighboring isles, so that ere long nothing shall be left from either article on this island. As one

of their adherents is embarking here and did solicit our recommendation so that he might not be hindered in the chopping of stock visch hout, we deem it proper to warn your Hon^r that you might be on your guard and take such precautions that this fraudulent nation may not further proceed to destroy this wood and export it from the woods of the company, which they are no more permitted to enter than the salt licks, as is evident from the fifth article of the privileges and exemptions with which they have been favored, for which purpose it is required that the same woods be shewn to them and then reserved and marked, as we cannot permit that they, without having obtained from the company a license to collect salt and wood, should freight their vessel or vessels with it and export it to their colony and plantations from every part of this island and offer it for sale to any ship that might arrive there. We are informed that this Nation is so unwearied in this traffick that they not only neglect to cultivate tobacco, Indigo, cotton and other produce of the soil, but do not even provide themselves with the first necessaries of life, so that there is much reason to apprehend that they in time shall become a burthen on the magazines of the company. As all this is contrary to good order and the declared intention of the company, and especially contrary to the fifth article of the privileges and exemptions by which, among others, they were obliged to cultivate the lands which they had occupied under penalty of their forfeiture, so it is our express will and command that they shall conduct themselves in conformity to this rule or forfeit their rights agreeable to the articles of the privileges and exemptions with which they have been favored; All which your Honor will consider as a permanent rule for your conduct. * * * * *

(Signed) EDWARD MAN.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS TO GOVERNOR STUYVESANT,
AMSTERDAM, JULY 24, 1653.

(Vanderkemp's MS. Translation Dutch Records, Vol. 4, p. 113).

“You will convey the enclosed letter to Deputy Director Rodenburg at Curacoa by the first opportunity and as some of the Jewish nation who are associated with Juan Delino, colonist, on said island did solicit our consent to purchase a few negroes, if any were offered for sale in New Netherland, and export them to Curacoa to promote, as they pretend, their agriculture, we must inform your honor that we have declined to grant their request because the company did prefer to encourage first the population and agriculture of New Netherland, wherefore all servants ought to be kept there and no one permitted to leave the country, if it ever shall arrive to any degree of grandeur.”

LETTER FROM VICE DIRECTOR RODENBURCH TO THE DIRECTORS,
DATED APRIL 2, 1654.

(Vanderkemp's MS. *Translation of Dutch Records*, Vol. 8, p. 107.)

"We must use patience in collecting the money for the horses delivered to John Dylan, as it is very difficult to gather where scarce anything is: had we known that his partners in Fatherland were not sufficient and that your Hon. would not have arrested the goods brought over by Mr. Joris, then we would have detained these as a security. We owe him yet about f2,500 to 3,000 for flower and clothes which he delivered to the company's servants, which sum we shall retain and endeavor to collect the remainder.

We can scarce perform here anything else besides exhausting the company's servants, who ought and would be profitable to the company had they any cargos to dispose of. They now sell old curtains and other old shreds at three times the price for which these now can be procured in Fatherland. The patrolroon requested us lately to credit the Captain of the Indians 150 R. Doll., which he had delivered to him in goods. When we thereon inquired what articles he received to that amount, so was it estimated by the officers and two skippers, passengers that the whole would be valued in the Fatherland f25,—19, and this we give as a sample of which many more might be given, but we hope to put a stop to it, as his privelege must be soon expired if he does not fulfill the stipulations.

One is that he ought to have fifty settlers or forfeit all his priveleges, whereas now there are only ten or twelve in his colony, who all wished to get rid of him and become planters under the protection of the company without the limits of said colony, but I would not accept their offers before I had received your Hon. orders, by which I shall be instructed what to do."

The Directors replied to this, on the 7th of July in the same year, (id., p. 117) follows:

"We duely received by the vessel the Good Hope your letter with the books and papers of the 2 April, this year, to which we answer. And first we have with regret and great displeasure the misconduct and extortions made there by the Jewish nation and the colonist John de Yllan, in the sale of their wares and old shreds at such an exorbitant price; wherefore we command you to prevent this in future by all possible means, and that less opportunity may be given to such impositions, so is that we have resolved to supply you by the first opportunity with a few necessary articles. So well for the clothing of the soldiers, victuals and stationery, besides some ammunition of war, as you will see by the annexed lists. * *

Further we learned long since with deep regret that the colonist John de Yllan does not effect there a great deal, neither endeavors to promote agriculture, wherefore we communicated you our intention by our orders of 24 July last year how to act with him, to which we refer ourselves. Meanwhile you must not neglect to collect the debt which said Yllan is yet owing the company, and more so as nothing is obtainable here from his partners.

We believe indeed, that the few individuals ye in the service of the aforesaid Jew should be willing to leave him, but as long as they are well treated, they are in duty bound to remain in his service; which expired, they are at liberty to look out for other matters." * * * * *

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING IN THE LODGINGS OF THE VICE DIRECTOR,
M. BECK, (CURAÇAO,) MONDAY, 21 FEB., 1656.

(Vanderkemp's Translation Dutch MS. Records, Vol. XII, p. 79.)

Present: M. Beck, Vice Director, Bogert Hammart, Lieutenant, Jan Jacobs Bruyn, Ensign, Balthazar Van Essen, Cornet, Hans Gronwel, Sargeant.

It was proposed by the Honorable Vice Director M. Beck that the petition of the Jew Isaack de Fonseca, being a merchant on the ship named Constant Anna, which arrived here in the harbour from the Barbadoes on the 18th. instant, bringing hither a cargo of flower and brandy and with oil and dry goods—all delivered by the aforesaid Jew and agreeable to the invoice and requesting that he might be permitted to trade with these articles either with the company or with the inhabitants of this island, having for this end brought with him some letters of introduction and recommendation of the Governor of the Barbadoes, which have been read before and communicated to this meeting, declaring that if the company will allow here a free trade to the inhabitants of Barbadoes, a similar privilege would be granted to those of these islands on the Barbadoes, on which request the Vice Director desired to hear the opinion of the council and communicated them at the same time his doubts as, first he was not authorized by the company to admit here any trading whatever, particularly not to trade with horses (except) as compelled by the imperious necessity and want of victuals, and whereas the victuals are the smallest part of the cargo of this merchant and the remainder consists in dry goods and liquors, that by permitting of a free trade in this island not only a large part of the bleating stock of sheep and goats should be carried off and this island ere long should be left without them, but further that through the

high prices and artful trading of the Jewish nation the natives of this country would be soon destitute of their bleating stock, by which they would soon be bereft of the means of subsistence to the great loss and injury of the company. Secondly: That it had many difficulties, and thus deserved a mature consideration to give here a direct refusal not to exercise here any trade at all as the company in such a case might become excluded to trade in any manner at the Barbadoes or hold any correspondence with that island, even when circumstances might render it desirable. More so as the aforesaid merchant and the skipper of the ship who is an Englishman declare as certain that if from here, on account of the company, any vessels or ship arrived at the Barbadoes, they shall be admitted and permitted to trade there as freely as any Englishman; whereon it is the opinion of the Vice Director that if this is so and the company takes hold of this opportunity, in proportion of the increase of horses, and that some should be spared from these islands, the company would be benefitted and obtain an early profit which now is aimed at by the individuals who refore (?) the Vice Director pursuant to the aforesaid considerations and the council submitting it, and after mature deliberation it was decided unanimously that if the aforesaid merchant, Isaac de Fonseca will demand a reasonable price for his cargo and sell it to the company, provided he will agree to accept his payment at Aruba in horses of the company and some bleating flock if this can be spared, that then a trade shall be opened with him.

(Page 82, same heading. Meeting Feb. 23, 1656.)

De Fonseca having refused above conditions, had determined to pursue his voyage to Jamaica, when the Council on account of "penurious situation of company's magazine, with the uncertainty when from Holland or New Netherland fresh supplies might be obtained and the indifferent crops through which the negroes of the company and other residents of the country should require assistance to preserve their lives, &c., he was allowed to supply the garrison with victuals, &c., and to trade with natives, except Indians, for only those things that were necessary.

LETTER FROM M. BECK, MARCH 21, 1656.

(Id., Vol. XII, p. 231.)

Arrived on Feb. 18 a small vessel from Barbadoes named Constant Anna, despatched by a Jewish merchant residing at Barbadoes. He believes that ship's destination was to trade here instead of

Jamaica, as he might have heard of our famished condition. Bought 4,000 lbs. unbolted flour, 1 large vat of hard bread and about 5 or 6 hundred gl. in wares & merchandise, besides 1 pipe brandy, 6 vats of beer, amounting together above 3,000 gl., on which we delivered in payment 14 horses, such as well might be spared here at 150 car gl. each in conformity to the price established by company and the remainder in stock-fish hout, a ten gl. the hundred, being wood which was chpt here by a Jew on account of the company—in conformity to the price fixed upon by your Honor, viz; a thirty the hundred, but the wood is indeed so bad, that I should not dare to send it either to your Honor in New Netherland or to the Lord Mayor's in our Fatherland so as it is here known and even of public notoriety, and however as the aforesaid merchant wished to purchase it, more so yet as it had been chopt by a Jew as aforesaid, I agreed to part with it in his behalf at the aforesaid price, deeming it preferable to take hold of this opportunity and sell it, which would be a benefit to the company, rather than to convey it to the Fatherland at the company's loss. * * *

Three or four Jews solicited that they might be permitted to leave this island, in which I consented, as their presence here is more injurious than profitable.

Your affectionate servant,

M. BECK.

Curacoa in Fort,

Amsterdam 21 March 1656.

LETTER FROM STUYVESANT TO THE DIRECTORS, DEC. 26, 1659.

(Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York, Vol. 14, pp. 454-5.)

“On former occasions you have recommended and urged us, to encourage private individuals in this province to trade to Curacao with provisions and other merchandises for the sake of continuing the commerce and correspondence between the two places. This is highly necessary and desirable if it could be done with profit or at least without loss, but that is hardly to be expected and we see less inclination and no chance for a profitable trade, as long as the inhabitants and merchants sending goods here are and remain subject to the duty of 12 to 16 p. ct., while those who sent their goods to Curacao direct, pay only two p. ct. as the bearer hereof, skipper Jan Pietersen Groot, tells us, and goods sent directly from Amsterdam to Curaçao sell there cent p. cent; on the other side, goods sent here must first be exchanged for wampum, and this for beavers or tobacco; when disposed of at the best advantage with a great deal of trouble they

do not bring 20 p. ct clear profit, which of course can give only little encouragement for a trade from here to Curaçao. Furthermore, negroes brought there for 140 to 150 pieces of 8 in cash, cannot be sold here for that price in beavers or tobacco, so that the expenses and the risk of the voyage out and back are lost.

Your Honors hold logwood for your own account, agreeably to a contract made with some private parties; therefore nothing can be exported; salt remains at a low price and there is no hope of an advance for the private trader. . . . When the duties in both places are the same, it is pretty certain, that the intercourse and traffic between them will prevent the frauds and contraband trade, carried on by ships coming here via Curacao, as two of them have done lately. If you would further be pleased for the benefit and encouragement of agriculture to place a fair and fixed price upon negroes, whom your subjects might desire to import here for provisions, lumber or otherwise, as you have fixed the price for horses, imported here from Curacao, it would undoubtedly increase the trade to Curacao and provide the Island from here with plenty of commodities, timber, etc., so that it would never be in want of anything. The enclosure from Mr. Beck informs us, that for the benefit of the people on the Island, you sell negroes to the usurious Jews at a lower price than to Spaniards and other foreigners. We believe and are quite sure, that for the sake of promoting the trade between the two places, of encouraging agriculture and advancing the welfare of your subjects here, your Honors will give them, if not more, at least the same privileges and demand the same taxes, as from the usurious and covetous Jews."

APPENDIX II.

(From J. M. Corcos' *A Synopsis of the History of the Jews of Curaçao*, pp. 10-13.)

"The earliest interments we find there are the following:
 Ishack Henriquez Cotinho 5431—1670.
 Rev. Abraham Haim Lopez da Fonseca 22 de Menahem 5432—1671.
 Ishack Henriquez Morao 7 de Shebat 5432—1673.
 Eliaho Hizkiaho Touro 3 de Ab 5434—1673.
 Rachel Dovale 4 de Adar 5438—1677.
 Esther de Ephraem Jesurun Henriquez 6 de Tammuz 5439—1678.
 Rebecca de Mordecay Hizkiaho Henriquez 25 de Kislev 5440—1679.
 Menasseh Jesurun Henriquez 24 de Kislev 5446—1685.
 Jacob de Ishack Henriquez Cotinho 22 de Cheshvan 5447—1686.

Sarah Alvarez 21 de Sivan 5449—1688.
Sarah de Marchena 29 de Tebet 5449—1688.
Rachel de Ishack Gaon 22 de Iyar 5450—1690.
Rachel Vaez 9 de Shebat 5450—1690.
David Jesurun 15 de Adar 5451—1691.
David Abendana Pereyra 21 de Sivan 5451—1691.
Sarah Simha de Abraham de Marchena 26 de Nissan 5451—1697.
Benjamin Aboab de Paz 21 de Iyar 5452—1692.
Jacob Naar 27 de Sivan 5452—1692.
Benjamin Hizkiaho Henriquez 7 de Tishri 5453—1693.
Jacob Lopez Salsedo 8 de Tammuz 5453—1693.
David Raphael de Marchena 11 de Tishri 5453—1693.
Abraham Hizkiaho Leao 25 de Nissan 5454—18th June 1694.
Zillah Rachel de Leao 19 de Tebet 5458—1698.
Sarah filha de Abraham Chaviz 27 de Tammuz 5460—1700.
Joseph Da Costa Andrade 9 de Iyar 5464—1704.
Rachel Hannah Pereyra Atias 26 de Shebat 5465—1705.
Joshua Henriquez 9 de Cheshvan 5465—1705.
N. Z. J. David Raphael Lopez da Fonseca Hazan e Riby No Kahal
Kadosh Mikveh Israel en Curacao 28 de Tammuz 5467—1707.
Leah de Abraham Molina 29 de Menahem Ab 5467—1707.
Clara de Ishack Touro died 84 years old 5508—1748.

These might not be the oldest graves in the burial ground, as there are about fifteen or twenty bearing no epitaphs, and, according to tradition, they are the oldest.”