

*Dupl.*

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*Hilary Kuyfokw*

**THE INCEPTION AND FORMATION**  
**OF**  
**THE JEWISH WAR SERVICES COMMITTEE in India.**

*Inauguration Speech of the Rev. Mr. E. M. D. Cohen at a  
 Meeting held at No. 3, Kyd Street, on Wednesday,  
 6th February, 1918, at 6 p.m.*

Before proceeding with matters of greater import, I first wish to thank the Jewish Community of Calcutta for the kind interest they have taken during the past few years in the welfare of the Jewish Soldiers away from their homes and now in the East.

The entertaining in Calcutta of the Jewish Soldiers at Passover, New Year and Tabernacle Festivals, that has enabled them to keep these holy days, has been much appreciated by the men fortunate enough to obtain permission to be here, but, unfortunately, there has been at all times, a larger number of Jewish Soldiers scattered, a few here and a few there, all over the Indian Empire, in various stations and out of touch with the work done by the Calcutta Jewish Community. These men have consequently had no opportunity in any way of observing and keeping their religious festivals and faith in the same way as all soldiers of other denominations have been able to do.

There is still much to be done to cater and provide for the needs of all the Jewish Soldiers now in India. Although the total number is large enough, in our eyes, it is not sufficiently large enough for the War Office to grant us an Army Chaplain. But we have just received from the Army Headquarters sanction for an alternative scheme which will be detailed below. With the approach of Passover you will perceive that there is no time to be lost, and something must be done immediately, if we are to provide for all the Jewish Soldiers here, and, in any case the numbers will be too large to have them all in Calcutta.

We propose to form centres in Bombay, Bangalore, Rawalpindi, Ambala and Aranpoora Road in Rajputana, the Headquarters being in Calcutta, and to work in conjunction with the London Office. This last alone will entail a great deal of work—organising, details, collecting and keeping of records,

statistics, etc., and all other particulars which have to be regularly forwarded to the London Office. To meet this the following propositions are made—

- (1) Formation of the Jewish War Services Committee in Calcutta, as a branch of the London J. W. S. C. for which the sanction of the War Office has already been obtained.
- (2) Not being permitted to elect an Army Chaplain, we have in Lt. Loewe a Supervising Commissioned Officer who will have the power to write to regiments and units, look after the welfare of Jewish Soldiers and enforce discipline.
- (3) Two Assistants, one to manage the work of the Committee in Calcutta and the other to travel, investigate and make arrangements for the holding of religious services for the principal High Festivals and even in some depôts and stations to hold regular weekly services on the Sabbath, and to be ready at a moment's notice to visit the sick and perform the last rites to the dying.

The scheme is to divide India into centres where the Jewish Soldiers can assemble and which will obviate the necessity of all coming to Calcutta from such far-away stations as Bangalore, Karachi, N. W. Frontier depôts, etc.

Arrangements are to be made for visiting each centre, and provision made for supplying Kosher food at Passover; then, only the residue, exceptional cases and Jewish Soldiers in the vicinity of Calcutta will find it necessary to come here.

With regard to the men coming to Calcutta, they will be under strict Army discipline, being here ostensibly for a religious purpose and not on furlough (in the usual sense of the word). The men will be housed at some military institution, if possible; and arrangements will be made for food which will be supervised by a special Ladies' Committee.

Begging is to cease on the part of the men and the community can help in this direction by turning a deaf ear to any such personal appeals and refusing all individual philanthropy to the men.

Rules will be framed to enforce proper discipline and the Supervising Officer will return to his depôt any man not obeying orders, etc. Attendances at services in Synagogue and observance of Jewish laws will be strictly enforced and any violation will be punished by the Supervising Officer.

The co-operation of the community is therefore needed together with their financial support. It is rather difficult to make any estimate for expenditure for the first year when we hope to provide for 150 Jewish Soldiers.

I will now read the letter in this connection by Lieutenant H. Loewe to the Deputy Assistant Adjutant and Quarter-Master-General, Presidency Brigade, Fort William, Calcutta, and some other correspondence on the subject.

ARMY CLOTHING FACTORY,  
ALIPORE,  
Calcutta, 10th February, 1918.

FROM

SECOND-LIEUTENANT H. LOEWE,  
Supervising Officer for Jewish  
Soldiers in India.

TO

THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADJUTANT AND  
QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL,  
Presidency Brigade, Fort William.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit the following report for your consideration. I have indicated at the end the points on which I venture to ask your advice and help.

- (1) I enclose extract from a letter dated 17th October, 1917, from the Reverend E. M. D. Cohen to Lieut.-Colonel Shairp, Additional Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, in which the scheme is outlined.
- (2) The approval of this letter by the Government of India in their letter No. 56524-14 (A. G. 7), of 4th February, 1918, copy of which was sent you, sanctions the scheme.
- (3) For convenience I have made a précis as follows :—  
*The Situation.*
  - (a) There is no Jewish Army Chaplain in India, nor at present in Mesopotamia.
  - (b) Visiting of sick and wounded at the base or on the Frontier has not been undertaken.
  - (c) No facilities for regular religious worship exists same as is enjoyed by other denominations.

- (d) No complete return of Jewish Soldiers now serving in India—estimated at over 300—exists.
- (e) No periodical visitation of the men in various units has been possible.
- (f) Hitherto, Government has granted leave twice a year for Passover during March or April, and for New Year, Atonement and Tabernacles, during September or October.
- (g) Hitherto, all soldiers have been brought to Calcutta, entertained by the community, and all arrangements have been made by the Reverend E. M. D. Cohen.
- (h) The work is growing too much for him and although I have helped him unofficially, I had no authority to address Commanding Officers regarding leave, travelling, etc., hence letters had to be written by Reverend Mr. Cohen. Nor had I power to enforce discipline on the men while in Calcutta.
- (i) Concentration in Calcutta is undesirable because it necessitates long periods of leave and is too expensive to bring men from distant stations.

## (4)

*The Scheme.*

- (a) Appointment of myself as Supervising Officer, with Gunner Epstane, trained as a Rabbi, to visit, and Private Middlebrook to conduct Office.
- (b) Election of Jewish War Services Committee from Calcutta Community. This will be on the lines of the parent body in London which is sanctioned by the War Office. They will collect funds for the entertainment of soldiers, etc., and arrange local matters in connection with men on leave.
- It will be necessary to—
- (c) Obtain returns of all Jewish Soldiers in India—to be kept up to date, week by week, and alterations of arrivals and departures to be notified to the Jewish War Services Committee in London.
- (d) Divide India into Districts.
- (e) Arrange centres from which Prayer Books and specially prepared food for the Passover Festival will be distributed.
- (f) Notify all Brigades of the existence of this Office, so that telegrams may be sent here if a Jewish Soldier is dangerously sick to arrange for instant despatch of visitor, either from here or from nearest centre.

- (g) Furnish each Commanding Officer with a copy of Burial Instructions, drawn up by Reverend Mr. Cohen and printed by the Government of India as I. A. F. No. 41077-3 (A. G.-2), dated 5th March, 1917.

*My Questions.*

- (5) I am asking the community for funds for purposes of formation of Calcutta J. W. S. C. (*vide 4b*).

These funds will be needed for accommodating men, paying fares for men in some cases, and other charges. I should therefore be very grateful if the General Officer Commanding would lighten my expenditure by according such facilities as are possible in connection with the provision of an office, etc. I refer in particular to the following. All money which I can save in this way will enable me to spend more on the troops. I need the assistance of the General Officer Commanding Presidency Brigade in getting whatever help I may be entitled to in all or any of the following ways:—

- (a) Office in Fort.
- (b) Telephone.
- (c) Telegraphic Address.
- (d) Stationery.
- (e) Railway Warrants for journeys in performance of duty, and stamps for official communications.
- (f) How are notices to be published? Hitherto, dates of festivals, etc., have been notified in Indian Army Orders, being taken from Army Orders.
- Shall I send these up direct to the Government of India, signed by Reverend Mr. Cohen, or shall I send copies to each Division for publication in Divisional Orders?

- (g) Similarly, do the Reverend Mr. Cohen and I correspond direct with the Government of India as hereto or do we write through Presidency Brigade?

- (h) When men come here on leave, they are housed and fed by the community in the school, etc. It is obviously impossible for the Attached Section to look after them. It is largely for this purpose that I have been appointed. I should like to have the relation of myself to Officer in Command, Attached Section, discussed and settled with regard to Jewish Soldiers on leave for the festivals. As Gunner Epstane and Pte. Middlebrook will be called upon to take charge at the Jewish School, etc.,

when the men are here on leave, it would be very desirable to accord them the acting rank of Sergeant, and I venture to ask the General Officer Commanding to grant this privilege.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

(Sd.) H. LOEWE, Lt.,

*Army Clothing Factory.*

*Extract from a letter dated 17th October, 1917, from Rev. E. M. D. Cohen to Lieut.-Col. A. Shairp, Addl. Deputy Secretary, Government of India.*

"I must, however, preface my remarks by pointing out that although the number of Jews serving in India is as far as we know, about 300, that this figure does not include 250 Jewish prisoners of War at Sumerpur and at least 25 at Thayetmyo, ..... Jews are fighting at the Frontier, lying sick in hospital, perhaps even dying without the consolations of their faith, without their last rites, without proper internment....."

"I do not desire to abandon my present work but to subdivide it into two sections—1. The religious,.....2. Organisation. In this I have been greatly helped by 2nd Lieut. Loewe, ..... he has helped me unofficially during his spare time and he tells me that his superior officer has had no objection to his doing so ..... Lieut. Loewe tells me that if he can have two soldiers transferred to Calcutta to write letters, &c., under his direction, he is prepared to undertake the organisation ..... The idea is that Gunner Epstane will visit the units, when necessary, organise services, when possible, attend hospitals and generally look after the spiritual side..... they would arrange for board and lodging of soldiers on leave for festivals, and also take over my work of communicating with Officers Commanding Units regarding leave for festivals ..... but what I do want is :—"

- (1) An authorisation for Second Lieutenant Loewe to act as "Supervising Officer for Jewish Soldiers"..... this will enable him to have the necessary control over the men on leave here and enforce discipline. .... I want to be under your control and authority and to see everything done in a methodical military manner.

(2) ..... Both Lieutenant Loewe and the two men would naturally be under the orders of General Officer Commanding Presidency Brigade, Calcutta. ....

..... If you could save us the cost of travelling by allowing warrants to be issued for journeys undertaken in the performance of duty, and if you could allow us to use service stamps ..... it would be a great boon..... I venture to hope, sir, that you will see your way to accede to this suggestion.

No. 51331-1 (A.G. 7).

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

ARMY DEPARTMENT.

*Simla, the 30th July, 1917.*

Ecclesiastical.

To

THE REVEREND E. M. D. COHEN,

*13-A, Sudder Street, Calcutta.*

REVEREND SIR,

I am directed to refer to your letter dated the 4th July, 1917, to the address of the Adjutant-General in India, and to say that the question of the appointment of a Jewish Chaplain to minister to the Jews in the forces in India has received consideration. The Government of India regret that in view of the small number of Jews in the Army, they are unable to sanction the proposal.

I am, Reverend SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

(Sd.) A. SHAIRP, *Lieut-Colonel,*

*Addl. Deputy Secretary to the*

*Government of India.*

No. 51331-2 (A.G. 7).

Copy of the above forwarded to the the Department of Education for information.

13-A, SUDDER STREET,  
Calcutta, the 17th October, 1917.

From

THE REV. E. M. D. COHEN,  
Senior Minister,

Maghen David Synagogue, Calcutta.

To

LT.-COL. SHAIRP,

Additional Deputy Secretary to the

Government of India, Simla.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your No. 51331-1 (A.G. 7), dated the 30th July, 1917, in which you inform me that the Government of India regret that they are unable to consider my proposal to appoint a Jewish Chaplain to the Forces in India, in view of the small number of Jews in the Army.

I would not trouble you further but for the following two reasons, and I am venturing now to submit a scheme for your approval, which scheme will, without entailing any expense or labour to the Government, I venture to hope, fully meet the requirements of the Jews in the Army.

My reasons for reverting to the matter are two. First, the work has grown enormously; it is beyond my power to cope with it, and there is every reason to believe that the increase will be further augmented in the future. Secondly, I have received the enclosed letter W.S./17, dated the 5th July, 1917, from the Jewish War Services Committee, which is constituted by the War Office. You will see that the extra work and returns demanded are far too extensive for me to undertake unaided, and if I am unable to meet the requirements of the War Office, I shall not only be adding to the labours of the English Committee, but the spiritual interests of the Jewish Soldiers will be seriously imperilled. I ask you, therefore, to be kind enough to see whether you cannot help me in the manner which I have the honour to indicate below:—

I must, however, preface my remarks by pointing out that although the number of Jews serving in India is, as far as we know, about 300, that this figure does not include 250 Jewish prisoners of War at Sumerpur and at least 25 at Thayetmyo, and others in internment Camps. The very fact that they are scattered and few in number adds to my labours, and as no accurate statistics are available, the task is still more difficult.

Jews are fighting at the Frontier, lying sick in hospital, perhaps even dying without the consolations of their faith, without their last rites, without proper interment—although in connection with this last point I gratefully acknowledge your kind efforts in getting my responsum circulated as No. 41077-3 (A.G.-2), dated the 5th March, 1917.

I do not desire to abandon my present work, but to subdivide it into two sections:—I. The religious, which I will carry on; II. Organisation. In this I have been greatly helped by 2nd Lt. Loewe, 1st Gr. Bn. Lincolnshire Regiment, attached to the Army Clothing Factory at Alipore. He has helped me unofficially during his spare time and he tells me that his superior Officer has had no objection to his doing so and that his duties have in no way suffered by this voluntary advice and help. Lt. Loewe tells me that if he can have two soldiers transferred to Calcutta, to write letters, etc, under his direction, he is prepared to undertake the organisation without, of course, asking any fee from us or any extra pay. Lt. Loewe is a lecturer in Oriental languages at Exeter College, Oxford, and has had considerable experience in Jewish matters. The two soldiers are No. 223849 Gunner Epstane, W. Battery, R.H.A., Meerut, who has been trained as a Rabbi and No. 265778 Sergt. M. Dainow, 1/9th Middlesex Regiment, who has had excellent experience in the work that would be required of him. I may add that he has, on his own initiative, got in touch with many Jewish soldiers and has organised services. The idea is that Gunner Epstane would visit the Units when necessary, organise services when possible, attend hospitals and generally look after the spiritual side. For this he is highly qualified; indeed there is no one else who could do the work. Sergt. Dainow, who, as I mentioned, has since the commencement of the War been helping me privately, would conduct the office and prepare the returns under my personal supervision with the help of Lt. Loewe when he can spare time to do so: they would arrange for board and lodging of soldiers on leave for festivals, and also take over my work of communicating with Officers Commanding Units regarding leave for festivals: they would supervise the travelling arrangements of the men: organise voluntary committees in other Mofussil centres and get into touch with all Jewish soldiers. Mesopotamia is at present beyond our sphere, but we might think of extending our activities later on, if you thought fit. For all this work, I want no money from the Government of India. We will defray all expenses, but what I do want is:—

I. An authorisation for 2nd Lt. Loewe to act as "Supervising Officer for Jewish Soldiers"—or some such similar title

selected by you; this will enable him to have the necessary control over the men on leave here and enforce discipline. At present he is acting purely in a private capacity and cannot issue orders. The men are nominally under the attached section at Fort William, but it is obvious that I cannot burden the Officer in Charge of that section with my work. This work cannot be done adequately in an amateur way. I want to be under your control and authority and to see everything done in a methodical Military manner.

II. The transfer here of Gunner Epstane and Sergt. Dainow. Both Lt. Loewe and the two men would naturally be under the orders of the General Officer Commanding Presidency Brigade, Calcutta. I have only asked for Lt. Loewe on the distinct assurance of his C. O. that his military duties will in no way suffer, and indeed with the assistance of those two highly capable soldiers, there is not the slightest reason for fearing that this would occur. Lt. Loewe and the other two are personally known to me intimately, and I can vouch for the conscientious manner in which they perform their military work.

I said before that we would defray all expenses. If, however, you could save us the cost of travelling by allowing warrants to be issued for journeys undertaken in the performance of duty, and if you could allow us to use Service Stamps for letters, it would be a great boon. But I do not press this point: all that I ask for is the authorisation of Lt. Loewe and the services of these two soldiers.

In France, Salonika, Egypt and Palestine, we have Jewish Chaplains paid by the State. Here in India, in one regiment alone, the 25th Londons, which was commended for its work with the Waziristan Field Force, there are over 30 Jews; these feel very keenly the absence of religious services. One of the latest V.C.'s from Mesopotamia was a Jew—J. White, who was here a short time ago.

I venture to hope, Sir, that you will see your way to accede to this suggestion.

I have the honour to remain,

Yours faithfully,

(Sd.) E. M. D. COHEN,

Senior Minister,

Maghen David Synagogue.

55, FREE SCHOOL STREET, CALCUTTA.

Dated the 10th October, 1917.

To

REV. E. M. D. COHEN,

Senior Minister,

Maghen David Synagogue.

DEAR MR. COHEN,

I spoke to Major Eliot, my Commanding Officer, and told him fully what you wanted me to do and I explained that my work would in no way interfere with my Military duties. He has no objection to my helping you. But I cannot undertake the work unless you can get Dainow and Epstane transferred. Dainow will have to bring the post to me and receive instructions. He will bring me the letters to sign and I will call at the Office when my Military duties are over for the day. I know that these two men will work well and we shall be able to enforce discipline and make proper arrangements for services and visiting, the latter being more especially Epstane's task.

We will, of course, be under the orders of the General Officer Commanding Presidency Brigade.

I quite agree with you that the whole matter must be brought under Military authority—otherwise, I have no power to issue orders.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) HERBERT LOEWE.

THE JEWISH WAR SERVICES COMMITTEE.

Ref. WS./17/-

NEW COURT,

St. Swibbin's Lane,

London, E. C. 4.

5th July, 1917.

The REV. E. M. D. COHEN,

Synagogue, Maghen David,

109-110, Canning Street,

Calcutta, British India.

DEAR MR. COHEN,

I am sending you this letter in duplicate, the copy at a week's interval—in case, owing to present conditions, one

should not reach you. I recently read in the London Jewish Press descriptions of the great interest you take in the welfare of the Jewish soldiers serving with the colours in India.

My object in writing to you today is to ask you to help us in our work and also to enlist the services of other Clergymen in British India for the same purpose.

This committee is constituted by the War Office Authority and looks after the interests spiritually and otherwise of all Jews serving in His Majesty's Forces both at home and in all fields of operations abroad. In addition we look after the welfare of the sick and wounded and one of our objects is to compile records, which are to stand forth some day as a monument of Jewish heroism.

I feel that you can do a great deal in assisting us to carry out our objects and, for this purpose, have devised a plan, which I attach hereto and which I submit to you in the hope that it will receive your sympathetic approval.

You will see that it is divided into five sections:—

Section 1 is for the purpose of registering and forwarding to us the names and addresses, as far as is available, of all officers and other ranks who have come under your notice up to the time this letter reaches you.

Section 2 forms a continuation of Section 1, with this addition that the casualties are to be rendered separately on Form No. 13. All other records to be entered on Form No. 12. The casualties recorded on Form 13 need not, of course, be repeated on Form No. 12 and these two forms should be sent us weekly.

Sections 3 and 4 are obvious and Section 5 can be obtained from the Principal Medical Officer in British India and forwarded by you to us.

It will be clear to you that in order to bring this Scheme into effective working order, you will have to instruct other Clergymen to carry it out under your direction and for this purpose sufficient of the forms are being mailed to you for distribution among them. You will no doubt be good enough to ask them to make their returns direct to you and I shall be glad to receive them from you as and when they reach you.

You will see that by this means you can establish a proper working system throughout British India and we shall not alone be glad to hear all about our English and Colonial soldiers but also about our native Indian soldiers of the Jewish denomination.

We also issue to the Troops a Jewish Prayer Book, accompanied by a Book of Jewish Thoughts, copies of which I am sending you, and if you will let me know how many you require for distribution, I shall be glad to forward a consignment to you.

In conclusion, I may perhaps suggest that you also obtain the assistance of lay-workers in visiting the sick and wounded. In the United Kingdom alone we visit by this means no less than 720 Hospitals with a small army of about 200 visitors. In France this is being done by seven Chaplains one of whom is attached to the Australian Forces and in Salonica the Rev. M. Gollop has been sent out from here to do likewise. We are also endeavouring to get into touch in like manner with Malta and Mesopotamia. In Egypt there are two Chaplains, so that you will see India is the only country with which the work of this Committee has not yet been coordinated.

I do not know that there is anything else to add except to thank you for all the interest you have taken in the welfare of our Jewish lads, and to express the hope that this scheme may appeal to you and that with our combined efforts we may bring it to a successful issue.

With many thanks in anticipation,

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

(Sd.) WILLIAM SCHONFIELD,  
Major,

O, i/c. Administration,

The Jewish War Services Committee.

ARMY DEPARTMENT.

Simla, the 23rd October, 1917.

To the REV. E. M. D. COHEN,

Senior Minister, Maghen David Synagogue,

13-A, Sudder Street, Calcutta.

DEAR MR. COHEN,

I have received your letter of the 17th instant regarding the religious requirements of the Jews in the Army in India. The

points raised by you have been referred to the Adjutant-General and the conclusions that may be arrived at on the subject will be communicated to you in due course.

Yours truly,  
(Sd.) A. SHAIRP.

13-A, SUDDER STREET,  
*Calcutta, 30th October, 1917.*

To LT.-COL. A. SHAIRP,  
Addl. Deputy Secretary to the  
Government of India, Simla.

DEAR COLONEL SHAIRP,

I thank you for yours of the 23rd instant and for bringing my letter to the notice of the Adjutant-General. I shall be glad to furnish any further details which you may require. Perhaps the enclosed cutting from the "Statesman" of the 28th October, 1917, may be of interest to you.

Yours truly,  
(Sd.) E. M. D. COHEN.

#### JEWISH SOLDIERS IN INDIA.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

EXCLUDING the Bene Israel Jews on the Bombay side and leaving Mesopotamia out of account, there are over 300 British Jews serving in India. For the most part these are scattered far and wide. With the exception of two regiments, the Londons, in which there are 40, and the Middlesex in which there are 14, Judaism can scarcely muster more than three or four adherents in a battalion; in many cases there is only one single follower of the Old Faith. To the Jewish soldier in India, therefore, the advent of the New Year, Day of Atonement and Tabernacle festivals which have just concluded, and of the Passover, which falls about Easter time, means a great deal. The authorities have most considerately given leave and facilities to visit Calcutta and the result has always been a reunion in which religion, thoughts of Home, meetings with friends and association with old time customs and prayers have combined to strengthen the loyalty to Faith and Flag and rekindle enthusiasm which might tend to wane under the influence of distance and isolation.

It must be borne in mind that India has no Jewish chaplains. The Jewish soldier is, therefore, debarred from the spiritual ministrations with which his Church of England, Roman Catholic or Wesleyan comrades are provided. Nay, more, he has to work on his Sabbath and eat forbidden foods. Orthodox Jews have been known to follow the example of Daniel, who refused the King's ration; other cases are known too, when considerate sergeants have changed Saturday duty to Sunday for Jews, when possible. But in spite of this, the spiritual lot of the Jew is a hard one. Sick in hospital, dying on the Frontier, performing his daily round and common task, he has got to be self-reliant, for he has no co-religionist at hand to visit him when sick, to console him on his deathbed or to arrange Divine services except on the great festivals.

In England—in the Western theatres of War there are Jewish chaplains attached to the troops—the difficulty is minimised, first by the fact that Jewish congregations abound, and secondly by the War Office recognition of the Jewish War Services Committee, and it is hoped that an Indian branch may be formed in order to do similar work out here. Hitherto, everything has centered round Calcutta and the services for Jewish soldiers on leave owe their success to the work of two men, Revd. E. M. D. Cohen, Senior Minister of the Maghen David Synagogue, and Sergt. Dainow of the Middlesex, and to the lavish hospitality of the Jewish Community.

It was about December 1914 that the Territorial troops first arrived in India and among these was Sergt. Dainow. His efforts resulted in the organising of regular services in his battalion, which contained ten Jews, and later in getting into touch with many other Jewish soldiers in different units. Communications were opened with the Rev. E. M. D. Cohen, and the result has been that the Calcutta community took up the task of welcoming their co-religionists. Mr. Cohen devoted great zeal and labour to making all the arrangements and the following details will show the increase in the number of visitors.

For Passover 1915 there were 11 Jewish soldiers; New Year, 11; Passover 1916, 16; New Year, etc, 24; Passover 1917, 57; New Year, etc., 70.

The soldiers were housed in the Jewish Girls' School premises in Pollock Street, principally, a few being received as guests in private houses. Occasionally special services were held, in addition to the ordinary services, in order to introduce sermons in English dealing more particularly with the military life and Jewish hope as one of the results of this terrible war. The following are the names of some of the regiments



represented but the list does not claim to be complete. The numbers show the Jewish strength in each regiment:—

	Jews.	Jews.	
Middlesex Regiment ...	15	Royal Horse Artillery ...	1
London Regiment ...	40	Borders ...	3
Royal Flying Corps ...	2	Durham Light Infantry ...	2
Duke of Wellington's ...	2	Royal West Kents ...	2
Lincolns ...	2	Kents ...	3
East Yorks ...	3	North Staffords ...	1
Royal Sussex ...	4	Royal Engineers ...	1
Hants ...	3	Royal Irish Rifles ...	1
Royal Army Medical Corps ...	2	Somerset Light Infantry ...	3
South Lancs ...	1	Army Service Corps (Motor Ambulance) ...	1
Hussars ...	2	Manchester ...	9
R. E. Signal Troop ...	2		
Kent Royal Field Artillery ...	1		

The dispersion of the Jews will be seen from the foregoing, since twenty-four units contain 106 Jewish soldiers: it is clear that many others are unable, owing to the exigencies of military duties, to travel here for the festivals and are thus compelled to spend their years in religious isolation. It is therefore greatly to be desired that an Indian Branch of the Jewish War Services Committee will be formed, not only to carry on the necessary arrangements for the present and, if possible, to extend its activities to Mesopotamia, but also to lay the foundations of an organisation which will continue after the war, permanently to look after the religious interests of the Jewish soldier in India.

The Jewish community have, hitherto, resolutely avoided all public references to their work, which is by no means exclusively denominational, and for which they need no thanks. The object of these lines is threefold:—

- (1) to acknowledge the cordiality and kindness with which Commanding Officers have given leave.
- (2) to bring to the notice of Jewish soldiers who have hitherto not heard of the Calcutta community the fact that a welcome awaits them here.
- (3) to attract the attention of Jews in the Mofussil who would be glad to help in the work. These and Jewish soldiers should communicate with the Rev. E. M. D. Cohen, 13-A, Sudder Street, Calcutta.

13-A, SUDDER STREET,  
Calcutta, 9th December, 1917.

TO  
LIEUT.-COL. A. SHAIRP,  
Additional Deputy Secretary  
to the Government of India,  
DELHI.

DEAR SIR,

In continuation of my letter dated 30th October, 1917, I am extremely unwilling to trouble you but some time has elapsed since I had heard from you and the work is becoming so great that I fear great disorganisation unless I can get some assistance. I, therefore, beg of you to use your best efforts on our behalf to expedite matters.

Yours faithfully,  
(Sd.) E. M. D. COHEN,  
Senior Minister,  
Maghen David Synagogue.

ARMY DEPARTMENT,  
Delhi, the 14th December, 1917.

TO  
THE REV. E. M. D. COHEN,  
Senior Minister,  
MAGHEN DAVID SYNAGOGUE,  
13-A, Sudder Street, CALCUTTA.

DEAR MR. COHEN,

Your letter of the 9th instant. I have made the necessary enquiries and find that in his letter No. 56524/3/A. G. 7, dated the 22nd November, 1917, the Adjutant General has asked you to nominate a Jewish soldier to assist you in your work *vice* Sergeant Dainow whose services cannot at present be spared. On receipt of your reply to that letter, the matter will be expedited and the decision of Government communicated to you with as little delay as possible.

Yours truly,  
(Sd.) A. SHAIRP.

( 18 )

13-A, SUDDER STREET,  
Calcutta, 21st December, 1917.

To  
COLONEL SHAIRP,  
Additional Deputy Secretary

to the Government of India,  
DELHI.

I am very grateful to you for your prompt reply dated the 14th December to my letter of the 9th idem. It reached me on Tuesday the 18th and as I have not received the letter to which you refer, I wired to you the same night as follows:—

“ Yours of fourteenth instant. Adjutant-General's 56524/3-A. G. 7, dated 22nd November, 1917, not received. Please expedite copy.

Cohen.”

I shall be greatly obliged if you will kindly let me have a copy.

Not to lose further time and failing Sergeant M. Dainow, I suggest No. 75250 Pte. Abraham Levy, R.A.M.C., at Wellington, Southern India. He was in Calcutta on leave a few months ago. He is in civil life on the staff of the *Jewish Chronicle*, London, and has had excellent experience of Jewish Social and Philanthropic work, especially that of a religious nature. I hope he is still in India and can be spared to help us.

Yours truly,

(Sd.) E. M. D. COHEN.

No. 56524/4/A. G. 7.

ARMY HEADQUARTERS, INDIA,  
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S BRANCH,  
Delhi, 20th December, 1917.

FROM  
THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL IN INDIA.

To  
THE REV. E. M. D. COHEN,  
Senior Minister,  
Maghen David Synagogue,  
CALCUTTA.

MEMORANDUM.

Reference your telegram No. Nil, dated 8th December, 1917.

( 19 )

Copy of this Branch letter No. 56524-3-A. G. 7., dated 22nd November, 1917, is forwarded herewith.

(Sd.) H. W. CODRINGTON,  
Lieutenant-Colonel,  
for Adjutant-General in India.

Duplicate.

No. 56524-3-A. G. 7.

ARMY HEADQUARTERS, INDIA,  
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S BRANCH,  
22nd November, 1917.

FROM

THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL IN INDIA,

To

THE REV. E. M. D. COHEN,

Senior Minister,

Maghen David Synagogue, Calcutta.

MEMORANDUM.

With reference to your letter No. Nil, dated 8th October, 1917, to the address of Lieutenant-Colonel Shairp, Additional Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

Sergeant Dainow is at present employed as a Military Clerk in the Quartermaster General's Branch, Delhi, and it is much regretted that his services cannot be spared.

Would you kindly nominate another Jewish soldier to assist you in your work *vice* Sergeant Dainow?

(Sd.) H. W. CODRINGTON,  
Lieut.-Colonel,  
for Adjutant-General in India.

FROM

THE REV. E. M. D. COHEN,

Senior Minister,

Maghen David Synagogue, Calcutta,

13-A, SUDDER STREET,  
Calcutta, 27th December, 1917.

To LIEUT.-COL. H. W. CODRINGTON,  
for *Adjutant-General in India*,  
Army Headquarters, Delhi.

DEAR SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of duplicate of your No. 56524-2-A. G. 7, dated the 22nd November, 1917, which came to hand on the 18th instant. I am sorry the original letter did not reach me and it was only from Lieut.-Colonel A. Shairp's letter of the 14th instant in reply to my enquiry of the 9th idem, that I came to know of it. I telegraphed to Lieut.-Colonel Shairp on the 18th requesting him to send me a copy and followed it up with a letter on the 21st wherein I nominated No. 75250 Pte. Abraham Levy, R.A.M.C. at Wellington, Southern India, instead of Sergeant M. Dainow, which I have now the pleasure to confirm. I beg to enclose a copy of my said letter for easy reference and remain.

Yours faithfully,  
(Sd.) E. M. D. COHEN,  
*Senior Minister*,  
Maghen David Synagogue.

13 A, SUDDER STREET,  
*Calcutta*, 14th January, 1918.

FROM THE REV. E. M. D. COHEN,  
*Senior Minister*,  
MAGHEN DAVID SYNAGOGUE,  
CALCUTTA.

TO LIEUT.-COL. H. W. CODRINGTON,  
for *Adjutant-General in India*,  
Army Headquarters, Delhi.

DEAR SIR,

In continuation of my letter of 27th December, 1917, I am exceedingly sorry to trouble you again but time is so short and names of Jewish soldiers are already beginning to come in. Unless I can have assistance I shall be swamped by next Passover which commences this year on Wednesday afternoon, the 27th March, and ends on Thursday night, the 4th April.

I understand that Pte. Levy to whom I referred in my last letter has been sent to England, but I cannot state this for certain.

But I venture to suggest that if you could see your way to sanction the scheme, I could start with Lt. Loewe and Gunner Epstane, leaving the other soldier for selection as soon as possible.

If No. 50202 Pte. S. B. Middlebrook of the 6th South Lances, Bangalore, or Cpl. Lazarus, Army Clothing Factory Shahjehanpur, or No. 27190 Pte. A. M. Coleman, 1/1 Kents, Ferozepore, or No. 356414 Pte. H. Finn 1/9th Hants, (Signal, Section) Ferozepore, are available, I should be very grateful for the services of any one of them in place of Pte. A. Levy.

Thanking you for your kind and early consideration of the matter,

I remain,  
Yours faithfully,  
(Sd.) E. D. M. COHEN,  
*Senior Minister*,  
Maghen David Synagogue.

13 A, SUDDER STREET,  
*Calcutta*, 14th January, 1918.

DEAR COL. SHAIRP,

I wrote to you on the 21st December last confirming my wire of the 18th idem and at the same time suggesting No. 75250 Pte. A. Levy, R. A. M. C., at Wellington, in place of Sergt. M. Dainow.

On the 27th December I wrote to Lt.-Col. H. W. Codrington acknowledging receipt of the duplicate of his No. 56524-2-A. G. 7 of 22nd November 1917, enclosing copy of my above-mentioned letter to you and confirming the nomination of Pte. Levy in place of Sergt. Dainow.

Not hearing anything in reply and as our Passover Holidays are approaching, I wrote again to-day to Col. Codrington as per copy enclosed and shall feel very grateful if you will kindly expedite the matter as much as possible.

Thanking you in anticipation, I am,  
Yours sincerely,  
(Sd.) E. D. M. COHEN.

LIEUT.-COL. A. SHAIRP,  
*Additional Deputy Secretary*  
to the *Government of India*,  
DELHI.

13 A, SUDDER STREET,  
Calcutta, 21st January, 1918.

DEAR COL. SHAIRP,

In continuation of my letter, dated the 14th instant, I wired to you early this morning as follows :—

“Continuation my letter dated fourteenth instant. No  
“reply yet. Please expedite sanction for Loewe and  
“Epstane. Epstane ordered Mesopotamia on draft.  
“Can you please retain him. Matters very urgent  
“time short Passover approaching.—Rev. Cohen,  
“13 A, Sudder Street, Calcutta.”

and I have now the pleasure to confirm this.

I was obliged to wire when I came to know that Gunner L. Epstane has been ordered to Mesopotamia and might at any time leave India. It will be almost impossible for me to nominate anyone in his stead excepting Sergt. Dainow who is at the Quartermaster General's Office at Headquarters and cannot be spared. I first nominated Sergt. Dainow for the Jewish Chaplaincy in the Army in India as he is the son of a Rabbi and has from the very beginning interested himself in and worked for the religious welfare of our Jewish soldiers in India. When this was refused on the grounds of there not being a sufficient number of Jews in the Army in India, I suggested the alternative scheme, nominating Sergt. Dainow for the Secretarial, and Gunner Epstane for the religious part of the work. Gunner Epstane was himself trained to be a Rabbi and I do not know of anyone who could now replace him under the circumstances. I therefore wired requesting you, if possible, to retain him in India for this special duty which is of great importance to Jewish soldiers and for which he is most suited. I would also urge on you to very kindly expedite the matter.

I have now a personal favour to ask of you. My son is in Mesopotamia, wounded, and I have not heard from him since 28th December when I received his letter of the 12th idem. I have written to the Military Secretary to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief as per copy enclosed and shall feel very grateful if you could let me know anything about him. I would draw your attention to the concluding para. of that letter and would request that proper instructions be given in reference thereto. This will be a boon to all Jewish soldiers fighting in Mesopotamia. It is the only front in which there is no Jewish Chaplain and the appointment of one is an urgent need.

Hoping to be excused for any trouble I may be causing you, with grateful thanks, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) E. M. D. COHEN.

LT.-COL. A. SHAIRP,  
Additional Deputy Secretary

to the Government of India,

Army Headquarters, Delhi.

ARMY DEPARTMENT,

Delhi, the 25th January, 1918.

DEAR MR. COHEN,

Your letter of the 21st instant. I replied to your telegram of that date saying that all possible action was being taken. I have spoken to Colonel Codrington of the Adjutant-General's Branch, who has assured me that the question of the assistance you require in connection with Jewish religious work is being treated as urgent and that he hopes to be able to settle the matter shortly.

I am asking the Central Casualty Bureau, Simla, to furnish me at once with any information that they may have regarding your son Private Cohen. I shall write to you again as soon as I hear from the Bureau.

As regards your statement that Mesopotamia is the only front where there is no Jewish chaplain, I would mention that the General Officer Commanding the Expeditionary Force in that country has already addressed the War Office on the subject. I understand that a Jewish chaplain will shortly be sent for duty with the Force.

Yours truly,

(Sd.) A. SHAIRP.

TO

THE REV. E. M. D. COHEN,

Senior Minister,

MAGHEN DAVID SYNAGOGUE,

13A, Sudder Street, CALCUTTA.

ARMY HEADQUARTERS, INDIA,

ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S BRANCH.

Delhi, 25th January, 1918.

DEAR MR. COHEN,

With reference to your telegram, dated 21st January, 1918, to the address of Colonel Shairp, I have to inform you that

orders have been issued arranging the transfer to Calcutta of Gunner Epstane (who it has been ascertained is not under orders to proceed overseas) and Private Middlebrook, who, I am given to understand, is a good man and will be of great assistance to you in your work.

They have been instructed to report to you on arrival at Calcutta.

Yours truly,

(Sd.) H. W. CODRINGTON,

*Lieut-Colonel,*

*for Adjutant-General in India.*

13A, SUDDER STREET,

*Calcutta, 5th February, 1918.*

LIEUT-COL. H. W. CODRINGTON,

*for Adjutant-General in India,*

Army Headquarters, Delhi.

DEAR COL. CODRINGTON,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 25th ultimo in connection with my telegram to Col. Shairp, dated the 21st idem. I am glad to inform you that both Gunner Epstane and Private Middlebrook have arrived and are at work now.

Yesterday I telegraphed to Col. Shairp for authorisation to Lieut. H. Loewe to carry on as per my letter of the 17th October to the Army Headquarters. It is desirable that Lieut. Loewe should have the power to issue warrants for Gunner Epstane to travel and visit military stations and arrange for the Jewish soldiers to assemble in different centres for the proper observance of the approaching Passover and, later on, the other Holidays as well as to proceed at a moment's notice to visit the sick and perform the last rites to the dying.

If you will kindly see that the necessary orders are issued with as little delay as possible you will greatly oblige. Thanking you,

Yours truly,

(Sd.) E. M. D. COHEN.

13-A, SUDDER STREET,  
*Calcutta, 5th February, 1918.*

LIEUT-COL. A. SHAIRP,

*Additional Deputy Secretary*

*to the Government of India,*

Army Headquarters, Delhi.

DEAR COL. SHAIRP,

I thank you for your letter of the 25th January last in reply to mine of the 21st idem and the prompt action you have taken in reference to my son Private J. Cohen. I heard from him last week, the letter bearing a date subsequent to that on his military post card to his brother in Madras and he said nothing of his being wounded. I have now got the said post card and think that our trouble arose from the words "sick" "wounded" printed on the post card not being cancelled. I am glad to learn that a Jewish Chaplain will shortly be sent for duty with the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force.

I have the pleasure to inform you that both Gr. Epstane and Pte. Middlebrook are now in Calcutta and we have already started work. I telegraphed to you yesterday as follows :—

"Gunner Epstane and Private Middlebrook arrived. Please send authorisation for Lieut. Loewe to carry on as per my letter dated 17th October last."

It is desirable that Lieut. Loewe should have the power to issue warrants for Gr. Epstane to travel and visit military stations and arrange for the Jewish soldiers to assemble in different centres for the proper observance of the approaching Passover and later on the other Holydays, as well as to proceed at a moment's notice to visit the sick and perform the last rites to the dying.

Kindly expedite the issue of the necessary orders and oblige. Thanking you again, I am,

Yours truly,

E. M. D. COHEN.

No. 56525-14 (A. G. 7).

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

ARMY DEPARTMENT.

*Delhi, the 4th February, 1918.*

Ecclesiastical.

TO

THE REV. E. M. D. COHEN,

*Senior Minister,*Maghen David Synagogue,  
13-A, Sudder Street, Calcutta.

REV. SIR,

I am directed to refer to your letter dated the 17th October, 1917, in which you ask, that, in order to enable you to make satisfactory arrangements to meet the religious requirements of the Jews in the Army in India, the services of two soldiers be placed at your disposal and that 2nd Lieut. H. M. J. Loewe, Assistant Superintendent, Army Clothing Factory, Alipore, should assist you as Supervising Officer for Jewish soldiers.

2. In reply, I am to say that the Adjutant-General in India has, as you are already aware, issued instructions for the transfer of Gunner Epstane and Private Middlebrook to Calcutta for the purpose indicated above. The Government of India agree to the proposal that 2nd Lieut. Loewe should assist you in the manner suggested provided that this additional work does not in any way interfere with his duties in the Army Clothing Factory, Alipore.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Sd.) A. SHAIRP, *Lieut.-Colonel,*  
*Adtl. Deputy Secretary to the*  
*Government of India.*

No. 56524-15 (A. G. 7).

Copy of the above forwarded to:—

The Indian Munitions Board.

The Military Secretary to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.

The General Officer Commanding, 8th (Lucknow) Division.

The 22nd February, 1918.

DEAR COL. SHAIRP,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter No. 56524-14 (A. G. 7) Ecclesiastical, dated the 4th February 1918, and to thank you most cordially for your efforts which have resulted in the appointment of Lieut. Loewe as Supervising Officer of Jewish soldiers in India and the transfer here of Gunner Epstane

and Pte. Middlebrook. I am getting to work promptly and have already formed a Jewish War Services Committee in Calcutta to work in co-operation with the London Committee. I hope soon to have my organisation complete.

For this purpose 2nd-Lieut. Loewe, 1st Gr. B. Lincolnshire Regiment, and myself need a return of all Jewish soldiers at present in India.

*Secondly* we desire that all Commanding Officers should know of the existence of our Office so that they can telegraph us in case of need and apply to us on all matters connected with the Jewish Faith.

*Thirdly* we desire the usual sanction for leave on the ensuing Passover. We shall not require as much leave this year as usual for all the men, since we are forming various centres besides Calcutta.

We therefore venture to suggest the publication in Indian Army Orders of a Notification on the following lines:—

Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men of the Jewish Faith.

1. 2nd-Lieut. Loewe, 1st. Gr. Bn, Lincolnshire Regiment, has been appointed Supervising Officer for Jewish Soldiers in India.

The office is in Queen's Barracks, Fort William, Calcutta. And the telegraphic address is "Judaism", Calcutta.

All information relative to the Jewish Faith is to be obtained from the Supervising Officer who will also arrange for the holding of Services, Visiting of Hospitals and Burials.

In the event of any emergency, an express telegram should be sent to Calcutta so that a visitor may be detailed from the nearest centre.

II. Officers Commanding Units will furnish a return showing names and numbers of Jewish soldiers under their command.

Additions to the return should be notified at least once a quarter.

III. Jewish Festival of Passover.

Passover 5678 (1918) begins on the afternoon of Wednesday the 27th March and terminates after sunset on Wednesday the 4th April, 1918.

Subject to the exigencies of the Service, Officers Commanding Units may sanction leave for the observance of this Festival. Services will be held and unleavened food provided at various centres which will be arranged and notified when return has been furnished.

Officers, N.C.O's., and men of the Jewish Faith stationed at one of these centres may be excused duty and allowed to attend all Services on the first three and last two days.

In other cases leave is to be granted for the full period of the festival plus the days required for travelling to and from the centre.

Names should be submitted without delay to the Supervising Officer of the Jewish War Services Committee in India.

Again thanking you for all your kindness. I am,

Yours sincerely,

E. M. D. COHEN,

*Senior Minister,*

Maghen David Synagogue.

Lt.-Colonel A. Sharp,  
Additional Deputy Secretary to the  
Government of India,  
Delhi.