



Left: *Samuel Glaser*
Right: *Max Stadler*

(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)



Mid-nineteenth-century Cincinnati

(Courtesy Cincinnati Museum Center)

Beyond the Battlefield: Reevaluating the Legacy of the Civil War for American Jews

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The antisemitic canard that Jews are cowardly, preferring to run from war rather than serve alongside their fellow citizens in battle, surfaced in the nineteenth century as nation-states across Europe created citizen armies. Antisemites who pointed to a supposed shortage of Cohens in the ranks often made a second related argument. Jews, they claimed, not only put their energies into evading the recruiting sergeant but also into profiting from the blood sacrifices of their Christian compatriots. This claim built on a long history of Jewish military suppliers outfitting and financing the armies of central Europe. During the American Civil War, a similar charge was leveled in both the North and the South. In the first months of the war, as the Union Army struggled on the battlefield, the press and public in the North cast around for culprits. Loath to admit that the badly led and inexperienced armies were themselves responsible for their military failures, they displaced much of the blame onto military contractors who supplied the vast new volunteer armies with everything from tents and uniforms to rifles and artillery. Admittedly, in the pell-mell rush to outfit the troops, those private contractors who were inclined to be unscrupulous had ample opportunity to earn quick profits. The conspicuous presence of Jews among the ranks of the contractors did not escape those prone to antisemitism. Various cartoonists delighted in identifying Jews as the archetypal cunning contractor, not only refusing to enlist but actively undermining the war effort to turn a quick buck.¹

Despite—or perhaps because of this—one would be hard pressed to find mention of Jewish military contractors during the Civil War in most standard works of American Jewish history. Not so tales of the Jewish men who enlisted in the armies of the Confederacy and Union. Their exploits have long dominated the Jewish narrative of the conflict. In the decades after the war, several Jewish historians and political figures rushed to prove that Jews had fought for the Union and Confederacy in numbers proportional to their presence in the North and South. They did this by poring over military records, carefully highlighting episodes of Jewish bravery. In 1895 Simon Wolf, B'nai B'rith's representative in Washington DC, published a book of close to six hundred pages, of which more than half was devoted to listing the names of Jewish soldiers who fought in blue and grey. Given that he relied partly on “Jewish-sounding” names to determine who was a Jew, it is not surprising that on more than one occasion he accidentally ascribed circumcision to some uncut Christians. While most historians who write about Jews and the Civil War have given up on this obsessive counting of the Jewish contribution to the war and turned to various

underexplored themes, the small and relatively inconsequential role of Jews in uniform continues to receive outsized attention.²

This article argues that those who carped during the war about Jewish military contracting were correct—for all the wrong reasons—to focus their attention on the conspicuous role of Jewish suppliers. For although at least eight thousand served in blue and grey, the most significant impact of Jews on the war and the war on Jews came not on the battlefield but in outfitting the Union Army. Much less heroic than frontline gallantry and more problematic given the opportunities for profit, this role has been little remembered. Even if the war affected Jews in other ways, its most durable impact came in the commercial realm. By this measure, the consequences of the war for American Jews were monumental.

The drumbeat of war pushed Jewish firms into the front ranks of clothing manufacturing in the United States. Jewish dry-goods merchants, clothing dealers, wholesalers, and clothiers—some of whom had only relinquished the aching peddlers' pack a handful of years before—found themselves fortuitously positioned. They were in the right industry with the right skills at the right moment, a phalanx of foot-soldiers mustered into service by the Union's war economy. The Civil War, disastrous for so many, transformed their fortunes. The opportunities presented to sew uniforms for the Union Army propelled some Jewish entrepreneurs from small operators at the margins of the ready-made garment business into manufacturers on a substantial scale. This was a development of enormous consequence. The war supplied a boost that ensured that many of these same contractors were able, a little over a decade after the war ended, to employ hundreds of thousands of eastern European Jewish immigrants who began to flock to the United States. Indeed, without this impetus, the economic history of American Jews may have been very different.

This prospect looked unlikely in the latter months of 1860. In New York, clothiers and dry-goods merchants watched the escalating political crisis with trepidation. Much of the city's merchant class prayed for a Democratic victory, fearing that the election of Lincoln would be the death knell of the Union. Barring an unexpected turn of events, New York City appeared all but certain to be one of the largest losers if the South were to secede, robbing the metropolis of its largest market. At best, merchants would encounter new tariffs imposed by an independent South and greater competition from Southern ports. At worst, they would be separated from their customers by war. Clothiers who had struggled to resurrect their fortunes after the panic of 1857 now faced the prospect of slow strangulation. Businesses that depended on the Southern market shed workers. Although the worst pre-war predictions of New York's Cassandras quickly came to pass—trade between New York and the South all but ceased and Southern merchants suspended remittances—war provided an unexpected windfall.³



Uniforms of United States Volunteers and State Militia, Harper's Weekly 5, no. 244 (31 August 1861): 552-553.

(Courtesy Library of Congress)

On 15 April 1861, the day after the surrender of Fort Sumter, President Lincoln called seventy-five thousand militiamen into service to crush the rebellion. In mid-July, as it became clear that the conflict would not be soon resolved, Congress authorized a volunteer army of five hundred thousand. Within the first months of 1862, its ranks had swelled to more than seven hundred thousand. By the end of the war, more than two million had served in Union uniform. These uniforms were of material interest to those same garment manufacturers who had sat listless and despondent in the months before the first artillery shells were lobbed at the fateful fort in Charleston Harbor. The rapid mobilization overwhelmed the regular army, an institution familiar with outfitting the sixteen thousand within its ranks but unprepared for the avalanche of enlistees. At least in theory each soldier should have been equipped with an annual allowance of one cap and one hat, two jackets, three flannel shirts, three pairs each of trousers and drawers, and four pairs of stockings and the same of shoes. Whatever the eager enlistees wore in the spring and summer of 1861 needed to be produced in great haste and great quantity.

A Year of Plenty: Vying for the Uniform Business

During the first year of the war the federal and state governments operated parallel procurement processes. The states were delegated authority to purchase and requisition the supplies needed to equip locally raised regiments. Governors had little time to establish efficient supply bureaus. Speedily assembled procurement boards, stocked with political appointees, operated with little oversight and an overriding sense of urgency. They held the purse strings wide open. In 1860, Ohio's entire general revenue amounted to a little over \$800,000. The following year it spent close to three times that amount on military supplies

alone, slightly more than \$1 million of which was to purchase uniforms and blankets. This pattern was replicated on the national level. According to Mark Wilson, the leading historian of wartime military supply, clothing contractors were “easily the greatest of the North’s military suppliers” in volume of business over the course of the war. By his estimate, the Quartermaster’s Department spent twice as much on clothing and equipage than it did on weaponry. This entailed the manufacture of astronomical quantities of clothing—ten million pairs of trousers alone—by the end of the war. Soldiers were relatively expensive to clothe—the cost of the annual clothing allowance was double that of a rifle—and their uniforms, which stood up poorly to the rigors of campaigning, required replacement once in tatters, lost, or discarded.⁴

In New York, the period of plenty began inauspiciously. In the weeks after Fort Sumter several Jewish firms sent agents laden with samples of overcoats, drawers, caps, and cloaks to Albany to compete for the lucrative contracts disbursed by the hastily convened state military board. Those unfamiliar with the workings of the state capital quickly discovered that business was often conducted with a wink and a nod. Thomas Murphy, the Irish-born partner in an eponymous firm of jobbers based in New York City that specialized in hats, straw goods, and furs, recalled several months later that he had encountered “all the Jews in town up there.”⁵ (Once the states ceded control over contracts to the quartermaster general’s office at the end of 1861, many decamped for Washington DC and other major depots.⁶) Although Murphy’s claim that there were a “great number” of Jewish merchants and clothiers competing with other firms for business in Albany has a ring of truth, he did so as part of an inartful attempt to distract from his own avarice. Good political connections and a well-placed bribe secured Murphy & Childs a contract to manufacture fifteen thousand blue army fatigue caps at the inflated price of ninety-five cents each, beating out several lower bids, including that of L.J. & I. Phillips, an established Jewish-owned firm of cap manufacturers in New York City.⁷ Once Lewis Phillips, who had traveled to Albany to solicit orders, “saw and heard that the contract was not to be given out fairly,” he prudently decided to return home. Phillips’s hands were not entirely spotless. Lacking the requisite political connections, he offered Daniel Wormer, a competitor who boasted of his relationship with key figures on the military board, a share of the profits “if he would get a contract for me.”⁸

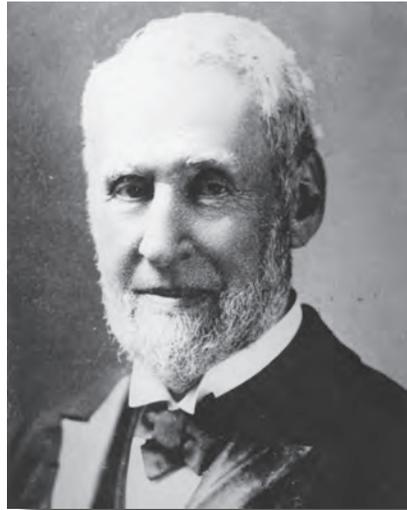
Murphy & Childs did not intend to manufacture the caps themselves. Instead they profited in a way not atypical of the times. Once he had contract in hand, Murphy encouraged the very firms he had defeated in the bidding process to compete to supply him with the hats he had promised to the state. This was a virtuous circle lacking only in virtue. Recalling his commercial triumph several months later, Murphy gloated that “every cap manufacturer was running in to see me to get me to let them make the caps.”⁹ Phillips, who

had originally bid to manufacture these same caps for 58 cents each for the state, was now paid 60 cents per cap to do so for Murphy (who made a 35-cent profit on each).¹⁰ Shopping orders to subcontractors was widespread among prime contractors.¹¹ In Wisconsin, E.B. Crawford and his Jewish partner Michael Friend won approval from the assistant quartermaster to manufacture twenty-five hundred infantry overcoats and, as he related, promptly “made an arrangement with Bernheimer & Bros. [of New York City] that they furnish the capital and cloth, and do all the work, and we receive one-third of the clear profits on the contract.”¹² Although their profit margins were smaller, subcontractors sidestepped many of the risks assumed by a prime contractor. Wormer, a contractor not short of gumption, took this process one step further, bidding for contracts in New York in the name of reputable firms—leading the state military board to believe that the goods would be produced by known parties—only to auction the contract to the highest bidder for a lump sum in order to pocket the difference.¹³ The outsourcing of orders created several problems. Some squeezed their subcontractors so hard they were compelled to cut corners. Other vendors overpromised to win contracts and then failed to deliver to specification. In other instances, the lengthy chain of responsible parties involved in any one contract bred irresponsibility.

Even if subcontracting became a standard practice within the industry—and a savvy way of soothing the sting of jealous competitors—Phillips was not mollified by Murphy. Irked that Murphy & Childs were awarded two substantial no-bid contracts for fifty thousand more caps, Phillips denounced the Irishman to a state committee of inquiry into corruption in the contracting process.¹⁴ Murphy tried hard to discredit his accuser. When interviewed by the committee he sought to play upon stereotypes of Jewish disloyalty and dishonesty, bombastically charging that New York’s Jewish merchants were guilty of not only manufacturing caps for the Confederacy—an act tantamount to treason—but also of seeking to “monopolize all the caps made at the North.”¹⁵ (Murphy’s first charge was not as outlandish as it sounds. Some clothiers in New York put profit before patriotism and continued to produce Confederate uniforms after the war broke out; in Baltimore a handful of Jewish clothing merchants were convicted for illegally bypassing the embargo on trade with the South.¹⁶) Marshaling all of his righteous indignation, Murphy unctuously told the committee that the “contract ought to be given and was given” to him “in preference to awarding it to Jews” because he was “a more responsible party.” The committee chair saw through this self-serving bluster, witheringly ending the interview by reminding the mendacious Murphy that despite his assertion that Jews could not be trusted to make “an honest cap,” he had relied on “a Jew, Mr. Fox, [who] made the sample, and the firm of L. & J. Phillips, [that] made the caps for you.”¹⁷ Even if Murphy escaped censure (and later became a state senator), his competitor had little reason—and even less time—to mope.

By their own estimate, L.J. & I. Phillips had manufactured “in the neighborhood of a million of caps” for the Union Army by early 1862.¹⁸

Shenanigans of this kind were not unusual in the first months of the war. In the rush to outfit the troops, private contractors had ample opportunity to profit. The military bureaucracy was rapidly overwhelmed. The Quartermaster’s Department had no existing plans for mass mobilization. Its overstretched officers struggled with the herculean task of coordinating a hydra-headed military-supply system that expanded apace in the first months of the war. At the start of the conflict the department employed only six inspectors assigned



Joseph Seligman

(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

to assess the quality of completed orders. Given the urgency of the times, orders needed to be placed in great haste with manufacturers who had little or no experience in supplying the army. Tasked with creating what became, in the words of James M. McPherson, the “most lavishly supplied army that had ever existed,” they were responsible for a gusher of dollars that could easily be misdirected.¹⁹ Unsurprisingly, exigency sometimes overrode concerns about cost. One potential alleviant—importing uniforms from abroad—was rejected after an initial order from France elicited howls of protest from domestic producers.²⁰

Some manufacturers were only too eager to exploit this atmosphere. Since large profits rode on the decisions of individuals who enjoyed considerable latitude and little accountability, some sought contracts by hook or crook. Some members of military supply boards exhibited few scruples in favoring one firm over another if the price was right. Even if the siren songs of contractors were particularly alluring during wartime, there was well-entrenched precedent for improper conduct by politicians and government officials. State governments had muddy records when it came to distributing tenders. Moreover, the Buchanan administration had wallowed in scandal; under its grubby auspices, the War Department had swilled contracts to Democratic Party donors. There were signs that business would continue as usual in the new Lincoln administration. The president’s first appointment as secretary of war came into the cabinet trailing more than a whiff of corruption. Simon Cameron had already earned the unfortunate nickname of the “Winnebago Chief” for his alleged role in swindling an Indian tribe. His conduct in office confirmed his dubious reputation. Cameron awarded contracts without competitive bidding and channeled orders back to

his home state of Pennsylvania. He became one of the highest-profile casualties of the swirling corruption scandals of 1861. Edwin Stanton, his hardnosed and incorruptible replacement, was brought in to clean the Augean stables.²¹

Stanton arrived too late to prevent a free-for-all in the first year of the war. Several Jewish suppliers proved as eager as their unscrupulous rivals to weight the process in their favor. Jesse Seligman, for example, conceded that his brother Joseph, who was stationed in Albany to win contracts for the family firm, had given a gift of a silk dress to the wife of then-state-treasurer Philip Dorsheimer. Jesse explained the gift away as a reflection of the “very friendly terms” Joseph enjoyed with Dorsheimer, a prominent Republican politician, since before the war. The payoff was even greater for Brooks Brothers, which not only gave Mrs. Dorsheimer a dress, but expensively outfitted her husband, her son, and the state attorney general.²² These sartorial schemes proved fruitful. Dorsheimer was instrumental in allocating contracts for military supplies. In the weeks following the fall of Fort Sumter, the Seligmans and several other leading New York clothing firms were awarded contracts to manufacture thousands of uniforms.²³ Over the summer the Seligmans bid on shirts, caps, jackets, overcoats, pants, and blankets, eventually employing twenty-five hundred workers to fulfill their obligations. By the end of the year the firm was the eleventh-largest military supplier to the state, having sold New York at least \$46,000 worth of uniforms and blankets.²⁴ (Brooks Brothers earned even larger profits, becoming the second-largest private contractor to the state during the first year of the conflict.) Later in the war, Joseph Seligman redirected his attention to hawking Union bonds in Europe, an experience that stood the family firm in good stead after Appomattox.

Joseph Seligman was certainly not alone in seeking to cultivate relationships with those with a controlling hand on the states’ spigots. Samuel Sykes, a Jewish clothier based in Detroit who became the single largest military contractor to the state of Michigan in 1861, was accused by a rival Jewish firm of having presented the wife of the quartermaster with a sewing machine and paying bribes directly to state officials.²⁵ While well-directed generosity could earn quick rewards, some may have worried that gifts might have been misinterpreted, particularly when seeking an initial state contract. Before securing his first order for uniforms from the state of Michigan, the Jewish clothier E.S. Heineman persuaded a local business operator to vouch for his bona fides with the quartermaster general. By the end of the year, Heineman was the second-largest recipient of state military contracts in Michigan; his emissary was compensated with a full suit of clothing.²⁶ Some state officials were less coy in seeking to profit from their office. In Indianapolis, the assistant quartermaster told the clothier J.C. Geisendorff that he expected a cash commission of 5 percent to 10 percent of the value of each contract as a quid pro quo. Geisendorff believed that other firms, including Glaser Brothers, were obliged to pay this kickback.²⁷

There were suspicions of a tainted tender process in Wisconsin as well. The largest supplier to the state was Marcus Kohner, a German-born Jew who settled in Madison in the 1850s and opened his own tailoring business in the year before the war broke out. It was no accident that Kohner and the two other major Jewish suppliers had strong local ties to the state capital.²⁸ Connections in Madison, not Milwaukee, mattered, even if the latter was a regional manufacturing center before the war. Soon after the surrender of Fort Sumter, Kohner began to aggressively court the quartermaster, visiting the supply office “two or three times every day” during summer of 1861. Proximity was clearly a plus. During the first year of the war Kohner received the largest share of contracts—several of which were not competitive—for \$96,000 worth of uniforms, most of which were supplied by his brother Joseph, who was based in New York City. This arrangement was not unusual. Such contracts were not without risks, particularly given the galloping inflation that could quickly raise the cost of textiles and labor. Fortunately Kohner found a forgiving friend in the quartermaster’s office. On two large contracts Kohner was paid extra per item over the originally contracted price to compensate for unanticipated expenses, an arrangement that was denied to one of his envious competitors.²⁹

Kohner’s success brought him into direct competition with his erstwhile employer, Samuel Klauber. Klauber immigrated from Bohemia in August 1847 and spent one year peddling in New York and three in Wisconsin before settling with his wife in the newly established state capital—then little more than a village—reputedly as Madison’s first permanent Jewish residents. He opened a clothing and dry-goods store, supplied with merchandise from New York, which quickly became a leading business. (Klauber’s new store was greeted with an advertisement by a rival merchant promising “Fifty Percent Saved By Not Buying Clothing of the Jews.”) Klauber’s timing was good. The town was experiencing a period of rapid expansion and prosperity. He was able to employ Kohner—perhaps a *landsleit*—as a clerk. Both became rooted in Madison’s lively organizational life, serving as officers in the masons and local congregation.³⁰

When the war broke out, Klauber must have been confident of securing a healthy allotment—if not the lion’s share—of contracts to outfit the trainloads of state volunteers who converged at Camp Randall before departing for the front. His was a long-established and reputable business, close to the capitol, with some experience in filling state contracts. Instead, he was chagrined to discover that his former employee, operating a newly started enterprise, was vacuuming up lucrative contracts in ways he suspected were underhanded. Over the course of the year, Kohner won at least six times more business from the state than Klauber. After losing a substantial contract to make uniform jackets and pants, an outraged Klauber confronted the assistant quartermaster, who with a “great deal of hesitation” showed him the rival bids. The evidence confirmed what Klauber suspected. Despite having proposed to produce the

items at a significant premium, Kohner had won the contract. This pattern was repeated in several transactions. Klauber and others offered the state cheaper deals, but the supply officers selected Kohner's higher bid. Calculating that his lost profits were substantial—he anticipated making 33 percent to 40 percent profit on larger orders—he denounced his former employee to the state corruption inquiry. Kohner, Klauber concluded bitterly, “was a favorite contractor with the Quartermaster and Assistant Quartermaster General. All contracts upon which large profits could be made were awarded to Kohner.” Klauber was not alone in sharing these suspicions.³¹

Shortages and Shoddy

Although Seligman and Kohner were far from alone in seeking tactical advantage over their competitors by cozying up to the quartermaster, Jewish contractors were singled out for special opprobrium. Wartime antisemitism interwove several strands of hatred in an atmosphere not short on nativism and suspicion. It did not help Jews that contractors soon became pariahs in the eyes of the public because of the exposure of some of their less-scrupulous methods. Nowhere was the scandal more acute than in the outfitting of enlisted men. The scarcity of heavy woolen cloth for uniforms persuaded several firms to innovate in the early weeks of the war, not always for the better. Some hoped to elude the inspector's eye by substituting coarser fabric for finer weaves. Others, following a dishonorable trail blazed by Brooks Brothers, scrimped by adulterating more expensive new wool with a woolen rag material that became synonymous with substandard wartime supplies: shoddy.³² The war provided a substantial boost for the shoddy industry. Before 1861, woolen rags collected by peddlers in America were of little value domestically. Without a substantial pre-war shoddy industry—most American clothing was made from cotton, not wool—America had exported these woolen scraps in bulk to Britain for reprocessing along with rags from Australia and Europe. The cotton shortage precipitated by secession and the demand for durable fabric for uniforms and blankets for the Union Army forced Northern manufacturers to scramble for alternatives.³³ Shoddy offered several benefits to parsimonious contractors. It was easily and cheaply available—shoddy mills and the ragmen who supplied them thrived during the war (bulk rag prices rose twentyfold in 1861)—and it was difficult to detect when mixed with new wool. In the early months of the war, contractors, expecting a rapid end to the hostilities, may have rationalized such economies. Why would soldiers need the finest fabrics if the war was to be over well before winter? Such arguments were more difficult to justify once the realities of the conflict became apparent. Nonetheless, some contractors continued to leaven their wares with shoddy through 1864.³⁴

Sensational reports of substandard uniforms—clothing “dropping to pieces after a few days wear” that left soldiers “almost naked”—soon scandal-

ized the public.³⁵ Some members of the officer corps expressed their outrage more soberly. Ulysses S. Grant, the occasionally bibulous commanding officer at Cairo, Illinois, at the end of 1861, complained that his troops had been clothed with uniforms “almost universally of an inferior quality and deficient in quantity.”³⁶ Shoddy captured the public imagination, beginning a rapid linguistic transmutation from a narrow technical term to one applied first to other substandard military supplies and the contractors who made them, then as an epithet for all manner of inferior goods. Several Northern newspapers hostile to the Republican Party led the charge. Army suppliers were lambasted in cartoons and satirical verse as “shoddy contractors” and “shoddy vampires.”³⁷ Contractors whose profits and ostentation were deemed dishonest and immoral were derided as a crass and ill-mannered nouveau riche “shoddy aristocracy.”³⁸

Although Jews were not exclusively blamed for shoddy manufacturing—Brooks Brothers and profiteering New York mayor George Opydyke came in for their fair share of flak—the term not infrequently assumed an antisemitic tinge. Here it drew on older associations of Jews with clothing, particularly the motif of the disreputable Chatham Street “old clo” dealer. (In a Southern variation on this theme, Confederate Secretary of War Judah P. Benjamin was jeered by the mob as a “King Street Jew, cheap, very cheap,” almost certainly referring to the cluster of Jewish clothing dealers in Charleston. He had it better than Benjamin Disraeli, who was met by crowds yelling “Old Clothes” and waving sticks spiked with bacon during an election in Maidstone in 1837.³⁹) In the first year of the conflict several Northern newspapers used the terms “Jew” and “contractor” interchangeably.⁴⁰ That many of the leading contractors were merchant capitalists who outsourced manufacturing to others did not help matters. “Middlemen” were held in particularly low esteem. As Mark Wilson has argued, Jacksonian ideas about the purity of labor and the iniquities of commerce informed thinking about wartime contractors. Middlemen were perceived to profit not only by unjustly interposing themselves between the factory and the supply sergeant; they also were seen to benefit from the miserly wages paid to seamstresses—some the wives, widows, and daughters of soldiers—by rapacious bosses. As a model middleman minority, this taunt was easily applied to Jews. Certainly a Cincinnati seamstress who wrote to Lincoln in protest against the diversion of orders from public factories to private contractors emphasized that it was “a class of *wealthy men*, mostly *Jews*,” who benefited from the “starvation prices” paid by subcontractors.⁴¹

Some Jewish firms were implicated in the shoddy scandals that inflamed popular opinion in 1861. One of the better publicized episodes involved a consortium of the Frowenfeld and Morganstern brothers, owners of two of the oldest wholesale clothing firms in Pittsburgh. The partners became the single-largest supplier to Pennsylvania in the first month of war, largely on the back of a contract to produce two thousand uniforms at a bargain-basement price. The

deal turned out to be too good to be true: The “rotten” cut-rate uniforms were “virtually useless,” even by the low standards of spring 1861. The siblings were charged with fraud and (falsely) rumored to have fled to Europe. The trial stalled after they challenged the court’s impartiality. While they escaped conviction, their reputations and businesses appear to have been ruined.⁴² The Seligmans were fortunate to escape such negative attention. Nearly half of the blankets supplied by the firm in the summer of 1861 were rejected as substandard.⁴³

Were Jewish clothing firms involved in an undue share of underhanded business during the first year of the war? While some pursued contracts using methods that mirrored those of their more aggressive competitors, the prominence of unscrupulous firms and the attention they attracted may well be misleading. By their nature, scandalized press reports and government inquiries—the prime sources on the contracting process—highlight malpractice, malfeasance, and fraud. As James M. McPherson has counseled on this subject, “The well-greased wheel that turns smoothly also turns quietly, leaving less evidence of its existence for the historian.”⁴⁴ Since we are left without evidence of the practices of the majority of contractors, Jewish and non-Jewish, we may presume that the uniforms and equipment they supplied met acceptable standards. Although the absence of evidence is not the evidence of absence—we can be sure that fraud and shoddy manufacturing passed unnoticed or went unreported—many more contractors conducted business legally than those implicated in scandal.

The Garment Trade Booms in the Midwest

Whatever the suspicions of prattlers and the press, most Jewish firms won contracts not through underhanded means but because they were well positioned to do so. This is seen most clearly in the Midwest. Reflecting on his firm’s disappointing fortunes during the first year of the war, Indianapolis dry-goods merchant William Glenn lamented that he had often been bested by “some Jews in Cincinnati.”⁴⁵ Glenn’s plaint, tinged with frustration at opportunities lost, was more faithful to reality than Murphy’s crude innuendos. Five of the twenty leading contractors to the state of Indiana were Jewish firms based not in Indiana but in the Queen City. (A sixth, which supplied the state with by far the most generous share of goods among private contractors, operated out of both Indianapolis and Cincinnati.) By 1860, Cincinnati was the commercial hub of the region—the third-largest industrial center in the nation—and its factories and wholesalers commanded trade up and down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Much of this economic activity was oriented southward. The city parlayed its natural advantages and proximity to its markets into manufacturing and distribution profits. Cincinnati more than tripled in size in the two decades before the war; in 1860, the census counted an urban population of more than 160,000. The Jewish community, fewer than ten thousand strong, clustered in the clothing trade and dry-goods business. By one estimate sixty-five of the seventy wholesale clothing firms in the city were owned by Jews.⁴⁶

Like the population at large, Jewish merchants in Cincinnati viewed the oncoming war with trepidation. As merchants, however, their interests lay in preserving the Union, and most probably greeted the war with a dolorous mien, their brows furrowed by premonitions of economic disruption and the disastrous loss of Southern markets. Even if many were reluctant to go to war and quick to agree to compromise if it would keep the Union intact, some expressed Republican views. Cincinnati had long been buoyed by its strategic location on the Ohio River upstream from its Southern markets. Now these same waters, churned by political discord, seemed more akin to the river Styx. But spirits were soon lifted by an



Henry Mack

(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

unexpected influx of dollars into the city. As Ohio mobilized for war—the state supplied 300,000 men to the Union’s armies—Cincinnati’s Jewish wholesalers found themselves in the catbird seat, able to draw on considerable manufacturing capacity, well-established relationships with eastern suppliers, and extensive connections across the region. In place of the anticipated financial disaster, the war presented a boon to manufacturers. Their political allegiances appear to have shifted to reflect this new reality. Certainly Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, drawn to the “Copperhead” politics of Peace Democrat Clement Vallandigham, was threatened with dismissal from his pulpit by Republican merchants within his congregation—if he accepted the nomination to run on the Democratic ticket for a seat in the Ohio Senate in 1863. While wartime circumstances may have contributed to the congregation’s unease, this may have also reflected a widely shared discomfort with clergy serving in government.⁴⁷

In Cincinnati, several of the leading commercial houses pursued a strategy not seen on the same scale in other Jewish communities. Erstwhile rivals banded together to form temporary alliances, a pattern also seen among a handful of the largest New York merchants. These consortiums enabled the partners to pool their capital, purchase raw materials in bulk, and bid more effectively for national contracts that demanded large-scale production and a more taxing financial commitment. They were aided by a major supply depot in the city that had significant responsibility for requisitioning supplies. By cooperating, these firms mitigated risk and appear to have bypassed the bidding wars that otherwise drove costs higher and profits lower. As a result, the largest houses in Cincinnati avoided much of the rancor and recrimination that resulted

from hot-blooded competition elsewhere. Although these firms had experience operating in challenging times—they had weathered the panic of 1857 and routinely shipped goods on credit to fickle southern and western markets—wartime presented additional uncertainties. After paying for many of its initial orders in gold, the federal government began to issue certificates and vouchers whose value was unstable. It was often slow to pay its bills. (In February 1862, soon after the federal government suspended payments to its creditors due to a severe financial crisis, the Seligmans wrote plaintively to the secretary of war that they were “pressed to the verge of failure” by roughly \$1 million worth of outstanding government receipts.) Borrowing costs ate into margins. In the early months of the war the heavy woolen cloth needed for uniforms was in short supply and rose exponentially in price. Workers, whose wages quickly declined in value in an inflationary environment and who sensed the profits made by their employers, demanded better compensation. And quartermasters were fickle, showering favored firms with contracts one year, only to turn their affections elsewhere the next.⁴⁸

In some instances these temporary alliances brought together firms of dramatically different size. Bavarian-born Jacob Seasongood and Philip Heidelberg, partners in a vast clothing and dry-goods business that generated annual sales of roughly \$1 million in 1860, collaborated with two smaller clothiers during the war. While this consortium brought relatively modest gains for Seasongood and Heidelberg—their sales grew to \$1.2 million in 1864—it propelled the junior partners into the forefront of the garment trade.⁴⁹ Their closest rivals were a formidable set of siblings, each the owner of a leading clothing or dry-goods business: the four Mack brothers, four Glasers, and three Stadlers. The constituent firms in this coalition competed against one another when bidding on state contracts but banded together when pursuing the gargantuan orders placed by the national Quartermaster’s Department. This strategy of pooling capacity proved prescient. In 1861, Mack, Stadler & Glaser became the second-largest supplier of uniforms to the Union Army. In one frenetic four-month period, from August to December of that year, the firm manufactured 191,548 articles of clothing for the infantry and cavalry: pantaloons, blouses, overcoats, blankets, shirts, drawers, and socks. The weekly *Israelite* bombastically crowed that the Union was marching off to war with the mark of Mack.⁵⁰ (The Macks are better remembered for their ill-fated partnership with Jesse Grant—father of the commanding general of the army of the Tennessee at the time—to smuggle Southern cotton northward, a speculative scheme intended to turn filial loyalties to best advantage. Several historians postulate that this venture was the proximate cause of Ulysses S. Grant’s General Orders No. 11, expelling Jews from the vast territory under his command.⁵¹) These orders were dwarfed the next year when the firm’s contracts with the Union more than tripled in value, elevating it to one of the largest businesses in the country. Despite a dramatic

decline in orders after 1862—the supply depot in Cincinnati shifted its ordering to eastern firms—both consortiums ended the war among the twenty largest suppliers of clothing to the Quartermaster’s Department, and the only two businesses outside the East Coast within this group. Each won more than \$1.5 million in prime contracts over the course of the war (along with uniforms, Heidelbach, Kuhn & Rindskopf also supplied thousands of blankets). These figures do not include subcontracts. When interviewed by a congressional committee in December 1861, Max Glaser estimated that his consortium had filled orders in excess of \$1.3 million in the first year of the war alone, at an average profit of 10 percent to 12 percent.⁵²

Cincinnati Jewish manufacturers were not only remarkably successful in their own state and at the national level but also in plucking plum contracts in neighboring states. The Midwest supplied more than 40 percent of the Union’s soldiers, a considerably larger share than any other region.⁵³ All needed the accoutrements of war. So large were the orders from Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri during fall 1861 that demand outstripped the capacity of Cincinnati’s manufacturers. In October Ohio’s quartermaster “had great difficulty in obtaining clothing at all. The soldiers suffered for want of clothing; colonels came in and complained.”⁵⁴ Such dependence on contracts from neighboring states was not without risk. Henry Mack moaned in March 1862 that his firm was still awaiting payment of \$300,000 for orders fulfilled for the state of Indiana: “Our profits are absorbed by the interest we have to pay.”⁵⁵ Heidelbach, Seasongood & Co. avoided this problem by secretly agreeing to sweeten the deal for Indiana’s crooked quartermaster general. He pocketed a hefty commission for ensuring prompt payment.⁵⁶

Cincinnati manufacturers were very well positioned to profit from the region’s needs for materiel. Mark Wilson argues that the weightiest challenge faced by firms competing for contracts was sourcing textiles for uniforms and distributing the finished goods, not the manufacturing process itself. This gave an edge to leading clothiers and wholesale merchants like the Macks, Seasongood, and Heidelbach, who could draw on pre-war systems for purchasing textiles, supplying credit, coordinating the work of thousands of outworkers, and channeling goods to retailers. The firms producing the largest quantities of ready-made clothing in antebellum Cincinnati and New York had already adopted a flexible and scalable system that employed an underpaid army of seamstresses who were hired and fired to meet seasonal demand. These same seamstresses—women and teenage girls who could be paid less than men and were available at a time of male labor shortage due to enlistment—were soon set to sewing uniforms as the firms ramped up production for the military.⁵⁷ Jewish firms in Cincinnati, whose partners almost invariably began their careers as itinerant traders, continued to rely on a geographically dispersed network of smaller retailers and pack peddlers to hawk their wares even after they attained

commercial success. They also established strong links to suppliers, creditors, and distributors in New York and Philadelphia. Kinship and commerce often overlapped in elaborate networks that connected them to other regional centers and eastern cities. In states that depended heavily on supplies purchased from out of state to fulfill equipment orders, such links to distant markets provided a distinct advantage. Several Cincinnati firms mobilized regional relationships during the war to pursue contracts in Indiana, Wisconsin, and Michigan. No one did this more successfully than the Glaser Brothers—Max, Julius, Samuel, and Lewis—who operated several retail and wholesale clothing stores in Indianapolis and Cincinnati during the 1850s and became the largest private contractor to Indiana in 1861.⁵⁸ Connections with suppliers in New York could also be deployed for tactical benefit when seeking to outflank local rivals. Marcus Kohner was not unusual in profitably acting as a middleman between a quartermaster in Wisconsin and his brother, who acted as his agent in New York.

Outside of Ohio, Jewish firms came closest to dominating the military market in Indiana and Michigan. In 1861 eight Jewish-owned businesses won more than half of all of the military orders tendered by the Hoosier state. In Michigan two Jewish contractors secured just under half of the state's business.⁵⁹ Both states depended heavily on goods imported from elsewhere, a fact that benefitted Jewish firms whose reach extended out of the region. The picture was different in other states, however. Although several Jewish-owned businesses won substantial contracts to supply Pennsylvania and New York with uniforms, they never attained the preeminence achieved in some midwestern states.⁶⁰ In New York and Philadelphia newer firms were obliged to compete with older, entrenched rivals. While only a handful of Jewish firms had penetrated the front ranks of the ready-made clothing business in these cities by 1861—able to compete with the likes of Brooks Brothers for contracts—many more profited less conspicuously during the war by filling orders for these prominent firms. In the Midwest, by contrast, the clothing industry had shallower roots. Jewish immigrants who began their careers as humble peddlers in the two decades before the war quickly rose to commanding heights in Cincinnati, Madison, Detroit, and Indianapolis. By forming consortiums, their firms were able to compete successfully with their eastern rivals for federal contracts. This pattern was not entirely even. In Illinois, Jewish firms were conspicuously absent from the ranks of the leading suppliers. The same was true for Massachusetts, although it was less surprising, given that the state had relatively few Jews, a long tradition of manufacturing, and an even longer one of ambivalence toward Jews.⁶¹

Confederate Contracts

Although not entirely absent from the ranks of uniform manufacturers in the South, Jews were rarely at the cutting edge of clothing the Confederacy. Even as Jewish peddlers, storekeepers, and wholesalers sold and distributed large

quantities of garments before the war, much of this clothing had come from New York and Cincinnati. Certainly several Jewish firms did enter production on a small scale. At the beginning of the war, a handful of Jewish clothiers in Richmond advertised uniforms “cut and made to order.” Lewis Lichtenstein, the owner of a clothing and dry-goods store in the Confederate capital, even boasted of his “experience in cutting, Trimming, and making Military Clothes in Europe for the Prussian army.”⁶² These dashing outfits were in demand not only from fashion-conscious volunteers who expected to be parading victoriously through Washington within weeks but from all enlistees, who were initially expected to supply their own uniforms. This market was crimped both by the blockade and the arrogation of this role by the Quartermaster’s Department. A handful of clothiers and dry-goods merchants had grander ambitions. Leon Godchaux, an Alsatian immigrant who began his American career as a pack-peddler along the lower reaches of the Mississippi River and became one of the leading clothiers in New Orleans, supplied Louisiana units until the Crescent City fell in April 1862. In Columbus, Georgia—a town that was transformed by war into one of the largest manufacturing centers in the Confederacy—Simon Rothschild & Brother, a dry-goods firm, produced fifty-five hundred uniforms by April 1862.⁶³

The Rothschilds were not the only Jewish firm in the Georgian town to thrive during the war. Positioned far from the front lines and well connected by river and railroad, various Columbus merchants prospered by opening small factories that transmuted their peacetime occupations into wartime profits. The Prussian-born Elias and Louis Haiman were typical of this trend. Reversing Isaiah’s biblical injunction to beat swords into ploughshares, the brothers converted their hardware store into an ironworks that poured out mess tins, bayonets, and cavalry swords.⁶⁴ Their firm was one of handful in Columbus that sent agents to Europe to purchase and ship supplies through the Union blockade. In June 1863 Elias departed for Europe intending to purchase quartermaster’s stores. By chance he departed Charleston on the same ship that carried the precocious Isidor Straus—the future department store mogul—to London to represent a rival Columbus consortium. Straus, who carried \$1,200 stitched by his mother into a body-hugging undershirt, became a skilled speculator in Confederate securities, returning after the war with \$10,000 in gold. His profits would have been larger but for heavy losses on Erlanger bonds. (Ironically, Straus survived the perilous Atlantic crossing on blockade runners but later drowned on the *Titanic*.) Haiman’s venture initially promised even greater rewards. He and a partner, David Rosenberg, contracted with James B. Ferguson Jr., the Confederate purchasing agent, to supply one hundred thousand uniforms and an equal quantity of shoes and blankets. This project foundered on the shoals of fate. Haiman’s partner, sent to Cologne to place substantial orders, instead absconded with the bulk of the capital. He was

later tracked down and confronted by Isidor Straus in Philadelphia, but it was too late to rescue the enterprise.⁶⁵

Front-line Sales: Peddlers and Sutlers

It was not, however, only Jewish clothing manufacturers in the North and South who benefitted from the burgeoning military market. The war provided an unexpected boon for those closer to the front lines who were involved in the retail trade. Some clothiers in Northern towns and cities sold uniforms and accoutrements to soldiers wanting to supplement or replace the kit issued by the quartermaster.⁶⁶ The same was true in the Confederacy, where several merchants in Richmond, Charleston, and Wilmington advertised military braid, blankets, buttons, and all manner of military clothing, some of it shipped in on blockade runners.⁶⁷ Arguably the war had a larger impact on itinerant traders. For many recent Jewish immigrants enlistment provided a tempting alternative to the tedium of peddling. The Union Army promised a reliable income and, before casualty counts revealed the ferocious attrition of musket and canister shot, the prospect of adventure.⁶⁸ Certainly not all peddlers chose to swap their own packs for those proffered by Uncle Sam. Indeed, the army itself provided a moving market for traders hoping to hawk their goods. Typical was the dyspeptic description by August Scherneckau of the First Nebraska, writing from his barracks in St. Louis in June 1864:

Jews and dealers of all kinds pester us here, praising their goods to get us as customers when we have been paid off. Some of our boys have already changed and appear in civilian dress a la mode or also in the assigned uniform, but made of better cloth usually worn by the officers. The officers are setting a bad example on putting on the nonmilitary apparel. However, I will be happy with the uniform issued by Uncle Sam. The prices are very high, especially for clothing.... In the afternoon, at two o'clock, our anticipation was finally fulfilled. The paymasters with their tin boxes full of greenbacks paid off the men at various locations at the same time. Jews, runners for all kinds of businesses, female peddlers, etc., swarmed immediately into the yard of the barracks, as if they had smelled that money had arrived.⁶⁹

Others complained that peddlers—nicknamed by some “land-sharks”—“infest camps, vending their trash at exorbitant prices” whenever a regiment “was paid off.”⁷⁰ Peddlers had good reason to flock to camps on payday. Soldiers were spendthrifts when they had money on hand: “Every trash and bauble found ready and contending purchasers at any price.”⁷¹

It was not only in the North that traders followed the march of the army. Julius Weis recounted shipping his stock of ready-made clothing from his store in Natchez to Memphis, “as that was nearer the seat of war, and there was a good demand for it from the Confederate soldiers.” There he succeeded in “disposing of most of the clothing for cash.”⁷² Tanchum “Thomas” Pearlstine and his son

*Petersburg, Va.,
Sutler's tent,
2d Division,
9th Corps,
November 1864*

(Courtesy
Library of Congress)



Isaac Moses Pearlstine, who peddled in the rural South, pursued their traveling trade during the war. Their wares now reflected the needs of soldiers and their families on the home front: homemade buckles, caps, and corn-cob buttons. Often poorly supplied by the quartermaster and commissary, Confederate soldiers were particularly eager to purchase shirts and trousers to replace those heavily patched and soiled from wear. This provided encouragement not only to peddlers but also to entrepreneurs within the ranks. One Virginian, who returned from furlough with spare clothing sewed by his wife, recounted to her in December 1862 that he had “sold my pants, vest, shoes, & drawers for sixty-one dollars so you see I am flush again.” Sensing opportunity, he urged his wife to

make me more pants and drawers, if you can raise the material make two pair of pants & four pair of drawers & I will have A pair of pants & two pair of drawers for sale in that way will get mine clear ... if you could make up a good supply of pants vests shirts and drawers, I could be detailed out to come after them ... [do not] tell any one what good pair pants will bring in camp if they knew it they would go to peddling in clothes keep dark whether you make any for sale or not.⁷³

While peddlers had limited access to army encampments, there were fewer restrictions on sutlers, civilian traders licensed to sell supplies to soldiers in the field. Each regiment was entitled to its own sutler, who carried his store with him in a wagon and set up shop in a canvas tent when the regiment bivouacked. The interior was an Aladdin's cave of articles chosen to appeal to the wants of the infantryman bored with his monotone diet and drab camp life. A soldier could replace worn-out or lost clothing, connect with news from home, and purchase items not supplied by the quartermaster.⁷⁴ Much of the purchasing was done

on credit advanced by the sutler against the soldiers' pay. Given the eagerness of soldiers to spend their wages, the near-monopoly enjoyed by each regiment's sutler, and the negligible oversight exercised by the military, the position was usually lucrative. Since the sutler was most often appointed by a regiment's commanding officer, this provided an enterprising colonel with considerable opportunity for patronage and profit. Although officers were warned neither to accept gifts from sutlers nor to turn their authority into a source of income, these directives seem to have been honored in the breach.⁷⁵

Even if Colonel Marcus Spiegel of the 120th Ohio Volunteer regiment was not alone in appointing a relative to the position, he did leave an unusually revealing description of his motives for doing so.⁷⁶ Spiegel, born in a small Rhineland village in 1829, arrived in New York as a twenty-year-old and soon moved west to peddle in Ohio. On the eve of the war he worked as a petty produce merchant in Millersburg, straining to support his wife and three young children. Spiegel enlisted as an officer in a locally raised regiment in the hope of becoming a quartermaster, a choice office he lost to another claimant.⁷⁷ Within a month of being mustered into the Union Army, Spiegel began to marvel at the profits made by sutlers: They were making "money as sure as the State Railroad of Ohio."⁷⁸ Capable and politically well connected, he began a steady rise through ranks winnowed by the grinding attrition of campaigning with Grant's army along the Mississippi. Elevated to a position of command Spiegel maneuvered to have his brother Joseph appointed as regimental sutler. He anticipated substantial rewards for both siblings: "We will make it pay with the help of God and as soon as it has paid pretty well we will 'leave the service.'" He needed the money to pay off his pre-war business debts, support his family, and create a solid foundation for postwar prosperity.⁷⁹

Joseph Spiegel joined the regiment at Millikens Bend in Louisiana, within fifteen miles of besieged Vicksburg, in March 1863. His brother's expectations were not disappointed. In his first three days at the camp, Joseph took in \$1,500. Marcus exulted to his wife that

Such a rush you never saw. Three of my Lieutenants sold for him all day; the seven hands were as busy as they could be. At night they had to work opening and fixing up. Joseph and [his assistant Aaron] Sinsheimer and Jim dit [*sic*] not get their breakfast yesterday till three o'clock in the afternoon. I am in their tent all I can but you know of course it would not do for me to sell anything; yet I think I am doing him a little good anyhow. He sold every Hat and every pair of Shoes he had at a good profit. If he had known as much as he knows now what was and brought down the Goods, he could have taken \$1000 a day for the next two weeks.

You have no Idea how popular he is already. Everybody likes him except the other Sutlers.⁸⁰

Aaron Sinsheimer was soon sent back to Chicago for resupply. By June the brothers were beginning to plan ahead: "Josey hopes to make about \$20,000 for him and Sinsheimer, and start a dry goods store [in Chicago] and have [me] go in as a partner." Fate intervened to dash all of Marcus's hopes. Joseph's business proved more fickle than expected. And on 3 May 1864, both Spiegel brothers were captured during an ambush. Marcus was fatally wounded. Joseph spent the rest of the war in a Confederate prison camp. After Appomattox he returned to Chicago and opened a small dry-goods store that grew into the Spiegel Catalog Company.⁸¹

Unsurprisingly, Jewish sutlers like Spiegel seem to have been drawn from a corps of peddlers and shopkeepers who were familiar with the challenges of itinerant commerce. What were wagon-borne sutlers but glorified peddlers with monopolies to sell goods to soldiers in the field? Jewish sutlers likely drew on a familiar supply system, stocking their wagons with goods purchased on credit from wholesalers and in turn extending credit to their customers.⁸² As the Spiegel siblings demonstrate, the position was not without risks unfamiliar to peddlers. Sutlers could easily lose their investments and sometimes their lives. When the army marched into enemy territory, the slow-moving sutler's wagon was a juicy plum to guerillas and raiding cavalry. During pell-mell retreat, the wagon and its stock were an unwanted encumbrance. Given these dangers, many sutlers preferred to base themselves well to the rear of the army. When regiments campaigned, sutlers could be absent for months, almost invariably timing their return to coincide with the equally infrequent visits of the paymaster.⁸³ (As one soldier in the New York State Volunteers said, "Before the poor and much disrespected representative of money made its appearance, it was as hard to see a sutler as a swallow in winter; but it no sooner came than they flocked as thick as a cloud of hungry and devouring locusts."⁸⁴) Even when safely ensconced in camp, the sutler's stock was vulnerable to the weather, spoilage (soldiers complained of rancid butter and dysentery brought on by dubious pies), and theft.⁸⁵ There are several accounts of soldiers plundering sutler's supplies while their commanding officers looked the other way.

Fragmentary evidence suggests that Jews like Joseph Spiegel and Aaron Sinsheimer were well represented in the ranks of sutlers in both the North and South. Several articles in Northern newspapers identified Jews as the archetypal profiteering camp follower; one cartoonist for a popular satirical magazine depicted a beak-nosed Jew as the hovering "Vulture of the Camp."⁸⁶ The rapacious Jewish sutler was a stock figure in memoirs written by soldiers after the war, more often than not described as receiving his comeuppance for his greed from the wily boys in blue.⁸⁷ At least some such episodes of theft and abuse by Jewish sutlers are borne out in other sources.⁸⁸ The sutler was little more popular among the army's senior leaders.⁸⁹ To the Union's General-in-Chief Henry Halleck, price-gouging was only one of the many evils of sutling. He

vented against the “incumbrance of the sutler wagons on the march and the nuisance of sutler-stalls and booths in camp,” the corrupting and morale-sapping influence of illicit alcohol sales, and the camouflage that sutlering provided for spies, smugglers, and contraband dealers.⁹⁰ Others pragmatically conceded that sutlers were a necessary evil, supplying articles otherwise unavailable. Certainly officers in the Army of the Tennessee hesitated before applying to sutlers General Grant’s infamous order expelling Jews from the area under his command. Revealingly, the bulk of the initial responses to the order came from subordinates inquiring whether sutlers should be expelled. At least four officers telegraphed Grant’s headquarters; in only one recorded instance were Jewish sutlers expelled.⁹¹

Jews also served as sutlers in the Confederate army. The French-born Confederate Isaac Stein became a sutler after losing an arm at Second Bull Run, trading out of a valise stuffed with silver watches and spoons (the proceeds of his sales) and forming a brief alliance with a soldier who had lost a foot in battle.⁹² Solomon Solomon, a balding and bearded resident of New Orleans in his forties who ran a liquor store before the war, applied to several regiments for the post of sutler. His daughter’s response to the news of the consideration of his candidacy suggests how so much could rest on this office: “I hope to God it may be favorable. God knows he is deserving of some good luck.”⁹³ Fortune did smile on his enterprise. By September he was in Manassas doing a booming business. A friend confidently predicted that “if the war lasts a year, he will be a rich man.”⁹⁴ He soon severed his relationship with his regiment, opening two stores that supplied “20,000 men from a number of Regiments that were *sutlerless*.” He boasted of “making a fortune as fast as men generally do,” selling “an immense quantity of goods.” He and his partner made profits in excess of six thousand Confederate dollars a month.⁹⁵ But war made for unpredictable fortunes. Although their business was lucrative, Solomon and his fellow Southern sutlers faced considerable challenges in sourcing supplies, struggled with inflation, and saw profits evaporate through the depreciation of their currency. Solomon’s initial prosperity proved pyrrhic—his store and stock engulfed in the flames as Confederate troops evacuated Manassas—but he soon rebuilt his business elsewhere. He suffered further reverses by the end of the war.⁹⁶

Ready-Made Legacy

Much like Marcus Spiegel, many sutlers hoped to save enough during the war to open retail stores once the conflict was over. Indeed, the bounding economic opportunities presented by the Civil War transformed the position of Jews in the clothing business. Already firmly entrenched in the foothills of the trade before the war began, the conflict carried Jewish peddlers, retailers, wholesalers, and manufacturers upward at a speedy double-march. Instead of

the calamity predicted in the months before the war, the conflict revolutionized the clothing business and the position of Jewish clothiers within it. The war broadened the horizons of those Jewish men who served in the army or worked as sutlers. After the war, a significant number of Jewish sutlers decamped to Southern towns where they had been stationed during the conflict to open clothing and dry-goods stores. They were part of a surprisingly large migration of Northern Jews to the South during Reconstruction.⁹⁷ These migrants benefited from a massive, pent-up Southern demand for clothing that was unleashed as soon as the war ended. Many arrived with enough capital to purchase land and connections with suppliers and creditors in the North that stood them in good stead well into the future. In addition, millions of newly emancipated African Americans provided a lucrative market for those willing to solicit their trade. The war also provided an extraordinary boost for the minority of Jews who were involved in manufacturing before the Civil War started. Immense wartime profits provided a springboard into various higher-status occupations. Several future bankers—Abraham Kuhn, Solomon Loeb, and Jesse and Joseph Seligman—not only earned substantial financial rewards from filling wartime contracts but also learned sophisticated financial skills in doing business with the government. Kuhn, Loeb, and the Seligmans were not alone in dipping a toe in the financial field after the war; many more dabbled in banking as a sideline to their manufacturing businesses. Others invested their wartime profits in property. Marcus Kohner, who had earned dubious profits from his relationship with the quartermaster in Wisconsin, wisely bought prime New York real estate and became a developer.

The most significant legacy of the war for Jews, however, was in the dramatic widening of Jewish participation in the manufacturing of ready-made clothing. Whereas before the war relatively few Jews were manufacturers on a substantial scale, after the war Jews found themselves dominant in several key sectors of the ready-made clothing trade. With bank balances swollen by wartime profits, most quickly turned to manufacturing for the civilian market. They also benefited from a major new wartime development: the recording and standardization of clothing measurements for the first time in history. Soldiers' measurements showed enough predictability to standardize sizes for the mass manufacturing of uniforms, and this became the basis for ready-made civilian clothing. Jews in the clothing industry were also beneficiaries of a considerable peace dividend. Returning veterans, with money in their pockets, were quick to discard uniforms for new suits of clothing. As the market for civilian clothing boomed and clothing became considerably cheaper, many Americans who had previously worn secondhand clothing now purchased new clothes. Once more, timing and location proved to be fortuitous. In the 1880s, some of the very manufacturers who had profited during the Civil War now benefitted from a tidal wave of Jewish immigrants arriving in New York City. These eastern

European Jewish immigrants provided a large, low-wage workforce to feed the voracious demand for cheap, ready-made clothing. Were it not for the Civil War, there may not have been a Jewish garment industry on the scale that we know it nor jobs for the flood of Jewish immigrants.

These developments came, however, at some social cost. The war hastened the infusion of racialized antisemitism into the American body politic. It was perhaps no accident that Joseph Seligman, a man who had conspicuously benefited from military contracting, was singled out for humiliating exclusion from the Grand Union Hotel in Saratoga, New York in 1877. Although the episode attracted considerable public attention, it was only the most prominent manifestation of a strain of antisemitism that spread during and after the war.⁹⁸ By the 1880s, therefore, the war had left a contradictory dual legacy for America's Jews. There were jobs aplenty in a garment industry that had been transformed into a Jewish ethnic economy, but also a new pattern of marginalization and exclusion from the wider society. Ironically this latter legacy played no small role in indirectly obscuring the role of Jewish Civil War contractors in the making of the American garment industry.

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Notes

¹See Gary Bunker and John Appel, "'Shoddy,' Anti-Semitism, and the Civil War: The Visual Image," *American Jewish History* 82 (1994): 43–71.

²Simon Wolf, *The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen* (Philadelphia: The Levytype Company, 1895). For a detailed assessment of the shortcomings of Wolf's listing, see Sylvan Dubow, "Identifying the Jewish Serviceman in the Civil War: A Re-Appraisal of Simon Wolf's *The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen*," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* LIX, no. 3 (1970): 357–369. On the historiography of the war see Jonathan D. Sarna and Adam Mendelsohn, *Jews and the Civil War: A Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 1–26.

³Edward K. Spann, *Gotham at War: New York City, 1860–1865* (Wilmington, DE: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 6–7, 10, 135–136; Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 864–868.

⁴Mark Wilson, *The Business of the Civil War: Military Mobilization and the State, 1861–1865* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 1, 5–6, 9, 11, 13, 19–22, 91; Mark Wilson, "The Business of the Civil War: Military Enterprise, the State, and Political Economy in the United States, 1850–1880," doctoral dissertation (University of Chicago, 2002), 436, 444–445. To get a sense of the scale of Union orders for uniforms, see *Report of the Secretary of War* (Washington, DC, 1862), 76–77. For Ohio's revenues in 1860, see George Ripley and Charles A. Dana, eds., *The New American Cyclopaedia*, vol. 12 (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1861), 502. For the mobilization in the North see James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 313.

⁵*Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, Fifty-Eighth Session, 1862, volume 7* (Albany: Charles Van Benthuysen, 1862), 378. Hereafter cited as *Documents of the Assembly, 1862*.

⁶Laura Cohen Apelbaum and Claire Uziel, eds., *Jewish Life in Mr. Lincoln's City* (Washington, DC: Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington, 2009), 130.

⁷On Murphy, see S.R. Harlow and H.H. Boone, *Life Sketches of the State Officers, Senators, and Members of the Assembly of the State of New York in 1867* (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, 1867), 125–127; *Documents of the Assembly 1862*, 62, 378.

⁸*Documents of the Assembly 1862*, 62, 138, 393.

⁹*Ibid.*, 63, 381.

¹⁰Wilson, “The Business of the Civil War,” 183.

¹¹Wilson, *The Business of the Civil War*, 262, fn. 25. For other examples in the cap business, see *Documents of the Assembly 1862*, 375, 380–381, 388, 390–392.

¹²*Journal of the Assembly of Wisconsin Annual Session of 1862, volume 2* (Madison: Smith & Cullaton, 1862), 1445–1447. Hereafter cited as *Journal of the Assembly of Wisconsin 1862*.

¹³*Documents of the Assembly 1862*, 88, 132–138, 393.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 31–32, 179–180, 285, 342–343, 380.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 386.

¹⁶Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 873 fn. 1; Philip Kahn, Jr., *A Stitch in Time: The Four Seasons of Baltimore's Needle Trades* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1989), 26–27, 29.

¹⁷*Documents of the Assembly 1862*, 388.

¹⁸The firm won contracts to supply for 533,000 forage caps in 1864 alone. *Documents of the Assembly 1862*, 378; *Report of the Minority of the Select Committee to Investigate the Transactions of the State Military Board*, reprinted in *Memoir of William A. Jackson* (Albany: Joel Munsell, 1862), 88; 131; Bruce S. Bazelon and William F. McGuinn, *A Directory of American Military Goods Dealers & Makers 1785–1915* (Manassas, VA: REF Typesetting & Publishing, Inc, 1990), 131.

¹⁹McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 324.

²⁰Philip Scranton, *Proprietary Capitalism: The Textile Manufacture at Philadelphia, 1800–1885* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 281.

²¹McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 217, 225, 260, 324. For a summary of contracting scandals during the war, see Stuart D. Brandes, *Warhogs: A History of War Profits in America* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 67–107.

²²*Documents of the Assembly 1862*, 31–32, 108, 121–129, 458.

²³*Ibid.*, 466.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 276, 330, 567; Wilson, “The Business of the Civil War,” 450.

²⁵Sykes claimed Mrs. Fountain paid for the sewing machine. *Documents Accompanying the Journal of the Senate & House of Representatives at the Biennial Session of 1863* (Lansing: John A. Kerr & Co., 1863), 10, 18–21.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 24–25.

²⁷*Reports of the Minority Committee on the Negotiation and Sale of Indiana State Bonds Made to the Legislature, 1864* (Indianapolis: W.R. Holloway, 1865), 532; Wilson, “The Business of the Civil War,” 209.

²⁸Michael Friend, of Friend & Crawford, which won \$35,000 of contracts in 1861; and Samuel Klauber, of Samuel Klauber & Co., which won \$16,000 of state business in the first year of the war. Figures from Wilson, “The Business of the Civil War,” 191.

²⁹*Journal of the Assembly of Wisconsin 1862*, 1439–1447; Bazelon and McGuinn, *A Directory*, 78. For Milwaukee's position as a manufacturing center before the war and the role of Jews in its development, see Margaret Walsh, “Industrial Opportunity on the Urban Frontier: ‘Rags to Riches’ and Milwaukee Clothing Manufacturers, 1840–1880,” *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 57, no. 3 (Spring 1974): 179–186.

³⁰David V. Mollenhoff, *Madison, A History of the Formative Years* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 44–59, quote on 67; Stuart D. Levitan, *Madison: The Illustrated Sesquicentennial History, 1836–1931* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 57; Lyman Draper, *Madison, the Capital of Wisconsin: Its Growth, Progress, Condition, Wants and Capabilities* (Madison: Calkins & Proudfoot, 1857), 41, 46; *The United States Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery of Eminent and Self-Made Men; Wisconsin Volume* (New York: United States Biographical Pub. Co., 1877), 53–54; Manfred Swarsensky, *From Generation to Generation* (Madison: s.n., 1955), 6–7, 14–15.

³¹*Journal of the Assembly of Wisconsin 1862*, 1445–1448.

³²On Brooks Brothers' supply of shoddy uniforms, see *Documents of the Senate of the State of New York, Eighty-Fifth Session, 1862, Volume 2* (Albany: Comstock & Cassidy, 1862), 193–194; Spann, *Gotham at War*, 46–47; Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, 875; Brandes, *Warhogs*, 70–73.

³³In 1875 the United States imported 123 million pounds. Samuel Jubb, *The History of the Shoddy Trade* (London: Houlston and Wright, 1860), 24–25, 32; John Ramsay McCulloch, *A Statistical Account of the British Empire*, vol. 1 (London: Charles Knight and Co., 1839), 629; Judith McGaw, *Most Wonderful Machine* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 66–67, 191–192, 195; Susan Strasser, *Waste and Want* (New York: Macmillan, 1999), 80–82, 85–87, 90, 95; Edwin Perkins, "Antebellum Importers: The Role of Brown Bros. & Co. in Baltimore," *The Business History Review* 45, no. 4 (1971): 446; S.M. Hunt, "Old days in the rag trade," *Paper Trade Journal* (27 June 1912): 54; "Parliamentary Reports on the Rag Trade of Foreign Countries," *Practical Magazine* 6, no. 5 (1875): 222.

³⁴*Hunt's Merchant Magazine and Commercial Review* (December 1861): 627–628; William B. Styple, ed., *Writing and Fighting the Civil War: Soldier Correspondence to the New York Sunday Mercury* (Kearny, NJ: Belle Grove Publishing, 2000), 51; Scranton, *Proprietary Capitalism*, 289–291.

³⁵*Hunt's Merchant Magazine and Commercial Review* (December 1861): 627–628. Some of these reports smacked of more than a little exaggeration. See for example *Supplement to the Hartford Courant* (11 January 1862): 5.

³⁶McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 323.

³⁷J.H. Robinson, *Barnaby, the Sandhillier, or the Planter's Ruse* (New York: Frederic A. Brady, 1862), 47.

³⁸Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, 877–878; Wilson, *The Business of the Civil War*, 149–150, 180; Brandes, *Warhogs*, 69–73.

³⁹C. Vann Woodward, ed., *Mary Chestnut's War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 288–289; Jane Ridley, *Young Disraeli, 1804–1846* (New York: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1995), 200–203.

⁴⁰The mayor unsuccessfully sued an Albany editor for libel for writing that "George Opdyke has made more money upon army contracts than any fifty Jew sharpers in New York." The resulting court case embarrassingly revealed the extent of the mayor's profits. Wilson, *The Business of the Civil War*, 180–181. On the antisemitic dimensions of the term, see Bunker and Appel, "'Shoddy,'" 43–71.

⁴¹Wilson, *The Business of the Civil War*, 3, 148–190. Quote on 103.

⁴²E. Frowenfeld and Brothers does not appear in city directories after 1861. *Valley Spirit*, 22 June 1861; Sarah H. Killikelly, *The History of Pittsburgh* (Pittsburgh: B.C. and Gordon Montgomery Co., 1906), 453–454; *Miscellaneous Documents, Read in the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, PA: A. Boyd Hamilton, 1861), 1036; George H. Thurston, *Directory of Pittsburgh and Allegheny Cities for 1860–1861* (Pittsburgh: George H. Thurston, 1860), 103, 207; George H. Thurston, *Pittsburgh As It Is* (Pittsburgh: W.S. Haven, 1857), 176–177; Wilson, *The Business of the Civil War*, 24.

⁴³*Documents of the Assembly 1862*, 330, 567.

⁴⁴James M. McPherson, *This Mighty Scourge: Perspectives on the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 47.

⁴⁵Wilson, "The Business of the Civil War," 209.

⁴⁶Wendy Jean Katz, *Regionalism and Reform: Art and Class Formation in Antebellum Cincinnati* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2002), 5; Jonathan D. Sarna and Nancy H. Klein, *The Jews of Cincinnati* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1989), 38.

⁴⁷Sefton D. Temkin, "Isaac Mayer Wise and the Civil War" in Sarna and Mendelsohn, eds., *Jews and the Civil War*, 171–175; Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2001), 49–51. On Vallandigham's support of causes important to Jews, see Frank L. Klement, *The Limits of Dissent* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1998), 29, 76, 237. My thanks to Matthew Semler for his help on the politics of Cincinnati Jews during the war and to Jonathan D. Sarna for his insights into congregational attitudes toward political engagement by clerics.

⁴⁸*Journal of the Assembly of Wisconsin 1862*, 1439–1444; Wilson, *The Business of the Civil War*, 127–131. On the financial crisis see McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 444–446.

⁴⁹Wilson, "The Business of the Civil War," 429, 449, 462. On Philip Heidelbach and Jacob Seasongood, see *The Biographical Encyclopaedia of Ohio of the Nineteenth Century* (Cincinnati: Galaxy Publishing Company, 1876): 408–409, 439; hereafter cited as *Biographical Encyclopaedia of Ohio*. For Seasongood and Heidelbach's New York operation, see Bazelon and McGuinn, *A Directory*, 62.

⁵⁰*Israelite*, 12 December 1861. For Max Glaser's and Henry Mack's description of the contracting process, see "Government Contracts," Part 2, House Report 2, 37th Congress, 2nd Session, ser. 1143: 765–767, 917–924.

⁵¹On Henry Mack, see *Biographical Encyclopaedia of Ohio*, 186–187; Michael Rich, "Henry Mack: An Important Figure in Nineteenth-Century American Jewish History," *Stammbaum—Journal of German-Jewish Genealogical Research* 23 (2003): 1–10.

⁵²See Max Glaser interviewed 31 December 1861, "Government Contracts," Part 2, House Report 2, 37th Congress, 2nd Session, ser. 1143:766; Wilson, *The Business of the Civil War*, 17, 124, 126, 235; Wilson, "The Business of the Civil War," 449, 463; "Clothing for the Army of the Union," *American Jewish Archives* 13 (1961): 174–175. For a rival consortium in Cincinnati—Henderson, Fecheimer, Krause, Frankel & Co.—see Bazelon and McGuinn, *A Directory*, 43.

⁵³James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 180.

⁵⁴George Clark, inspector of clothing, interviewed 11 March 1862, "Government Contracts," Part 2, House Report 2, 37th Congress, 2nd Session, ser. 1143: 974.

⁵⁵Henry Mack interviewed 10 March 1862, "Government Contracts," Part 2, House Report 2, 37th Congress, 2nd Session, ser. 1143: 920.

⁵⁶Samuel Thorner of Heidelbach, Seasongood & Co., interviewed 31 Dec. 1861, "Government Contracts," Part 2, House Report 2, 37th Congress, 2nd Session, ser. 1143: 769–770. See also 1066–1067. On the dubious dealings of Indiana's quartermaster see Wilson, *The Business of the Civil War*, 21–22.

⁵⁷Wilson, *The Business of the Civil War*, 121, 436; Wilson, "The Business of the Civil War," 198; Spann, *Gotham at War*, 152–153.

⁵⁸*Brevier Legislative Reports embracing short-hand sketches of the journals and debates of the General Assembly of the State of Indiana, Volume 5* (Indianapolis: Ariel and W.H. Drapier, 1861), 147; Wilson, "The Business of the Civil War," 192; Wilson, *The Business of the Civil War*, 17.

⁵⁹Based on the total monetary value of the goods ordered. Wilson, "The Business of the Civil War," 193–195, 463.

⁶⁰In addition to the Seligmans and L.J. & I. Phillips, other Jewish firms that competed for prime contracts in New York included Phillip Frankenheimer, Isaac Bernstein, P. Pfeiffer and Co., Bernheimer & Bros., and S. Wolff & Co. Among the twenty largest military suppliers in Pennsylvania were three Jewish-owned firms based in Philadelphia: Solomon Gans (the fourth-

largest contractor to the state), S. Mayer & Co., and Strauss & Goldman. See *Documents of the Assembly 1862*, 474, 478–480, 504.

⁶¹The absence of Jews from the prime contractors supplying Illinois may have reflected the chaotic arrangements (and poor record keeping) in that state. Henry Mack complained of the “great rascality” in the contracting process there. His firm battled to be paid the money owed for large orders of uniforms. Henry Mack interviewed 10 March 1862, “Government Contracts,” Part 2, House Report 2, 37th Congress, 2nd Session, ser. 1143: 923–924.

⁶²Quoted in Ron Field, *The Confederate Army 1861–1865, Virginia and Arkansas* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2006), 17. See also Bazelon and McGuinn, *A Directory*, 25, 83.

⁶³On Godchaux, see Bennett H. Wall, “Leon Godchaux and the Godchaux Business Enterprises,” *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 66, no. 1 (1976): 50–66; Bazelon and McGuinn, *A Directory*, 52. On Rothschild, see Bazelon and McGuinn, *A Directory*, 142; Mary A. DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit: Georgia’s Urban Entrepreneurs and the Confederate War Effort* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 50.

⁶⁴Reputedly, the factory was the largest producer of swords in the South. On Columbus and its merchants during the war, see Frank J. Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois: Merchant Culture in the South, 1820–1865* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 170–171; DeCredico, *Patriotism for Profit*, 32–34; Harold S. Wilson, *Confederate Industry* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2002), 82, 222, 354 n208; Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2000), 242; Harold L. Peterson, *The American Sword 1775–1945* (Mineola, NY: Ray Riling Arms Book Co., 2003), 248–249; David Williams, *Rich Man’s War: Caste, Class, and Confederate Defeat in the Lower Chattahoochee Valley* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1998), 66–67.

⁶⁵Isidor Straus describes the episode at length in his autobiography. See Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), 304–313. Harold Wilson incorrectly identifies the firm as German. Wilson, *Confederate Industry*, 175. The case is summarized in *Reports of Cases in Law and Equity, Argued and Determined in the Supreme Court of Georgia, at Atlanta, Parts of June and December Terms, 1869* vol. 39 (Macon: J.W. Burke & Co., 1870): 708–709.

⁶⁶In Indianapolis, clothier Joseph Kohn advertises “military goods constantly on hand.” Memphis had at least fifteen Jewish merchants selling military clothing in 1863. Bazelon and McGuinn, *A Directory*, 78; Rosen, *Jewish Confederates*, 263.

⁶⁷See Bazelon and McGuinn, *A Directory*, 74, 82, 122.

⁶⁸In reality pay proved a poor incentive, since it was miserly and often late in arrival. Louis Gratz, a recent immigrant who had struggled as a peddler, described enlisting after being “carried away by the general enthusiasm.” Jacob Rader Marcus, *The Jew in the American World: A Sourcebook* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1996), 223.

⁶⁹James E. Potter and Edith Robbins, eds., *Marching with the First Nebraska: A Civil War Diary* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 294; see also Francis A. Lord, *Civil War Sutlers and Their Wares* (New York: T. Yoseloff, 1969), 64; Styple, ed., *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 56.

⁷⁰J.S.H. of the 12th Regiment, NYSM writing from Harper’s Ferry, 15 August 1862, quoted in Styple, ed., *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 116.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 163.

⁷²*Autobiography of Julius Weis* (New Orleans, 1908), 16.

⁷³Quoted in Bell Irvin Wiley, “From Finery to Tatters,” in Michael Barton and Larry M. Logue, *The Civil War Soldier: A Historical Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 113.

⁷⁴David Michael Delo, *Peddlers and Post Traders: The Army Sutler on the Frontier* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1992), 103–110. For the prescribed list of wares, see Lord, *Civil War Sutlers*, 39, 67.

⁷⁵For the regulations governing sutlers, see *The War of the Rebellion, series 3, volume 1*: 938–940. For contemporary descriptions of (and complaints about) sutlers, see Styple, ed., *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 50–51, 69–70, 308, 319, 349.

⁷⁶For other examples of nepotism, see Lord, *Civil War Sutlers*, 68; see also pages 23–26; Edward Bacon, *Among the Cotton Thieves* (Detroit: The Free Press Steam Book and Job Printing House, 1867), 115–116.

⁷⁷Simon Wolf listed more than thirty Jewish quartermasters during the war; the most important was Abraham C. Myers, the quartermaster general of the Confederacy. On Myers, see Wilson, *Confederate Industry*, 3–41.

⁷⁸Jean Powers and Frank L. Byrne, *A Jewish Colonel in the Civil War: Marcus Spiegel of the Ohio Volunteers* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 47.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 209, 230, 249. Quote on 240.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 252–254.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 275, 315, 319, 339. Quote on 297.

⁸²For example, in the first year of the war, the three Spiegelberg brothers sold \$19,041.09 of goods on credit in New Mexico to members of the state militia. Delo, *Peddlers and Post Traders*, 118–119.

⁸³Lord, *Civil War Sutlers*, 68–69. This was a frequent complaint among soldiers. See Styple, ed., *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 56, 69–70, 116, 137, 163.

⁸⁴A Color Guard writing from Camp Near Falmouth, VA., 3 February 1863, quoted in Styple, ed., *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 163.

⁸⁵For examples of complaints about sutlers' wares, see Styple, ed., *Writing and Fighting the Civil War*, 250.

⁸⁶Bunker and Appel, “‘Shoddy,’” 57–59.

⁸⁷For examples see *Military History and Reminiscences of the Thirteenth Regiment of the Illinois Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War in the United States 1861–1865* (Chicago: Woman's Temperance Publishing Association, 1892), 223–229; Alan S. Brown, ed., *A Soldier's Life: The Civil War Experiences of Ben C. Johnson* (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University Press, 1962), 60–62; W.L. Curry, *Four Years in the Saddle: History of the First Regiment Ohio Volunteer Cavalry* (Columbus: Champlin Printing Co., 1898), 318–319; W.A. Neal, *An Illustrated History of the Missouri Engineer and the 25th Infantry* (Chicago: Donohue and Henneberry, 1889), 21–22; Thomas D. Cockrell and Michael B. Ballard, eds., *A Mississippi Rebel in the Army of Northern Virginia: The Civil War Memoirs of Private David Holt* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 75; Thomas H. Parker, *History of the 51st Regiment of P.V. and V.V.* (Philadelphia: King & Baird, 1869), 260–261; Rudolf Glanz, *The Jew in Early American Wit and Graphic Humor* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1973), 72.

⁸⁸See, for example, *House of Representatives Executive Document 23: Trial of Henry Wirz* (Washington, DC, 1868), 598.

⁸⁹Lord, *Civil War Sutlers*, 30–33.

⁹⁰*Report of the Secretary of War, December 5, 1863*: 43–44.

⁹¹John Y. Simon, *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, Volume 7: December 9, 1862–March 31, 1863* (1979), 53.

⁹²Richard B. MacCaslin, *A Soldier's Letters to Charming Nellie* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2008), 179–182, 312.

⁹³Elliott Ashkenazi, ed., *The Civil War Diary of Clara Solomon: Growing Up in New Orleans 1861–1862* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 28.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 156.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 188, 210–211.

⁹⁶Ibid., 80, 246–247, 261, 275, 316, 417, 440. For another example of a New Orleans Jew working as a sutler for the Confederacy see Mary Kwas, “Two Generations of the Abraham and Block Family: Internal Migration, Economics, Family, and the Jewish Frontier,” *Southern Jewish History*, 12 (2009): 89.

⁹⁷This migration is best described by Anton Hieke, “Some Among the Few: The German Jewish Immigrants of Reconstruction Georgia and the Carolinas,” doctoral dissertation (Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 2011).

⁹⁸See Naomi W. Cohen, “Antisemitism in the Gilded Age: The Jewish View,” *Jewish Social Studies* (Summer/Fall 1989): 187–189.