

# SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORY

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# Houses Divided that Remained Standing: Conflicting Loyalties within an Extended Southern Jewish Family

by

Jay Silverberg \*

**A**dolph Ochs was barely one year into his ownership of the *New York Times* in 1897 when the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) offered him membership. Aware of Ochs's southern upbringing, prominence in Chattanooga, and devotion to his Confederate-loving mother, the UDC was cognizant of the impact Ochs's acceptance would have on its nascent campaign to revise Civil War memory.<sup>1</sup>

While he artfully refused to join the organization, Ochs's letter helps illustrate his shifting personal views about reconciliation after the Civil War. Ochs belonged to an extended southern Jewish family—the Mayers—that was drawn into the societal impact of the Civil War, adapting to a New South while either opposing or supporting the Lost Cause narrative. Ochs's brothers and cousins in Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama were equally well established in the region before, during, and after the Civil War. The entire family, whether espousing Confederate or Union sympathies, balanced influences in their lives challenging their loyalty to each other, to other Jews, to their region, and to the country.<sup>2</sup>

Numerous newly identified primary sources add to the revelations of historians who have addressed the same or similar topics. Following the broader historiography, members of the Ochs and Mayer families can be portrayed as pragmatists, balancing religious, economic, and familial challenges before and after the war. The close-knit family also shared

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similarities with other southern—and northern—Jewish families, being “cosmopolitan, economically and geographically mobile, and willing to take controversial positions.” In her analysis of Jewish mobility, Shari Rabin offers the view that Jews “were not eager assimilationists, not adamant reformers, and not staunch traditionalists, but rather ordinary Jews who were flexible, open-minded and pragmatic.” Their lives teetered between a desire to embrace a progressive New South even as they were being enveloped by Lost Cause sentiments.<sup>3</sup>

Ochs’s response to the UDC in which he sought to remove himself from the debate about Civil War memory provides insight into his evolving viewpoints about the war’s place in collective memory during a forty-year period. He moved from an almost detached feeling toward the war to embracing pro-Confederate memorials and strong anti-Reconstructionist views, even supporting the disenfranchisement of Black Americans. In the letter written in 1897, he deferred to groups such as the UDC for their “sacred work” of memorialization, two years after his *Chattanooga* newspaper broached the beginnings of a revised Civil War memory in a similar manner to the white women of the Confederacy.<sup>4</sup>

A decade later, he became intertwined through his *Chattanooga Times* with a group of businessmen whose efforts significantly diminished, if not eliminated Black men from elective office, as happened in communities throughout the South seeking an end to the postbellum political and social progress Blacks had temporarily achieved during Reconstruction. In Mississippi, the Mayers also navigated regional sensitivities of war memory, memorials, and celebrations, maintaining their Judaism while working like their more famous cousin for economic and political progress amidst similar conflicts over social and racial equality.<sup>5</sup>

Ultimately this is a story about divisions between husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, and cousins, from generation to generation, on virtually every issue from the coming of the Civil War through Reconstruction, to the New South and Lost Cause mythology, and into the era of Jim Crow segregation. At the Republican convention held in Springfield, Illinois, on June 16, 1858, Abraham Lincoln famously maintained in opposition to Stephen Douglas that a “house divided against itself cannot stand.” Yet, for the Ochs-Mayer extended family, such divisiveness, contrary to Lincoln’s prognosis for the nation, failed to break ties of blood or religion.

*Natchez Roots: Confederate Mother and Union Father*

The patriarch and matriarch of the extended family, John and Jeannette Mayer—Ochs's great uncle and aunt—settled in New Orleans during the 1830s and moved to Natchez the following decade. Ochs's mother was Bertha Levy Ochs. Her father, Joseph Levy, and John Mayer were brothers from Landau, Germany.<sup>6</sup> Depending on the accounts, Bertha Levy's revolutionary leanings during the German uprisings in the 1840s placed her in a precarious position with authorities in Heidelberg, where she attended a private school. Levy's family removed Bertha from Heidelberg and sent her to Natchez to live with her uncle John and his family. She arrived in New Orleans on November 5, 1850. Her father, a prosperous businessman in Landau, sold the family's belongings and business and then emigrated with her mother, Regina, brothers Oscar and Dave, and sisters Fannie, Julia, and Amelia, arriving in New Orleans almost three years to the day after Bertha.<sup>7</sup>

*John and Jeannette Mayer.*

*(Courtesy of the Thomas H. and Joan Gandy Photographic Collection,  
Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections,  
LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, LA.)*

*Advertisement for a merchandise auction  
to be held by Joseph Levy, "merchant-  
tailor here." (Landauer Wochenblatt,  
April 27, 1853. Courtesy of the  
Manuscripts and Archives Division,  
New York Public Library.)*

Bertha Levy enjoyed the life of a southern belle in Natchez. Like so many Jewish immigrants, whatever strife she may have protested or lived through in Germany was quickly put aside as she transitioned into a privileged lifestyle amid the plantation-centered region where she settled. In 1855, her four years of relative comfort living with her family took a decided turn when she married Julius Ochs in Nashville about a year after they first met in Natchez. The two would make a formidable couple, challenged by ongoing economic struggles and their internal conflicts about the Civil War, countered by their lifelong devotion to each other and family.<sup>8</sup>

In 1845, Julius Ochs had followed his brothers and sisters to America. As many Jews before and after, Ochs began peddling. He eventually relied on his musical ability to entertain and his deep knowledge of Judaism to conduct services, skills that would provide for his family well into later years. The elder Ochs met with varied success as a merchant, as well as calamitous business experiences. A prosperous clothing store in Nashville burned in 1854, not long after the Levys had moved there from Cincinnati,

and he reunited with his future wife. After two years in Cincinnati and the birth of Adolph in 1858, the Ochs family returned to Nashville. When he heard the news about Fort Sumter, Julius spoke openly on behalf of the Union and was spirited out of town with his family in a friend's carriage back to Cincinnati. An abolitionist, his position was hardened by frequent peddling trips throughout the South that exposed him to the horrors of slavery.<sup>9</sup>

In 1861, Ochs mustered a group of volunteers in Cincinnati intent on preventing smuggling of arms and goods to the Confederacy. Troubles at home, however, soon began. "The women were fired with an almost ecstatic zeal for the Confederate cause," he wrote in his autobiography. "They were fierce, implacable in their hatred of the North. I was acquainted with many of them, for my wife, being sixteen when she came to Mississippi had imbibed the Southern spirit and entertained extreme animosity toward the North." Perhaps his wife, Bertha, maintained some of her youthful zeal for revolution as a witness to events in Heidelberg.

*Bertha Levy Ochs with Adolph Ochs, 1858.*  
(Courtesy of the Manuscripts and Archives Division,  
New York Public Library.)



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Regardless, she was caught once trying to smuggle quinine to Confederate soldiers bivouacked near Cincinnati and nearly jailed a second time joining women friends and fellow Confederate sympathizers denouncing Union authority in Cincinnati. In both instances, her husband's good standing as a Union officer amicably ended her difficulties.<sup>10</sup>

The family enjoyed a brief period of prosperity in the years just after the war when Julius was part owner of stores in Knoxville, but those ventures, too, ended in failure. Judaism, however, acted as an anchor for the elder Ochs. A descendent of Orthodox Jews, he had become fluent in

*Adolph Ochs as a young man, dressed  
in a Confederate uniform, c.1868.*

*Photograph probably by  
Theodore Moritz Schleier.  
(Courtesy of the Manuscripts  
and Archives Division,  
New York Public Library.)*

Hebrew by his late teens. Before departing Knoxville to join Adolph in Chattanooga, Julius Ochs became the spiritual and inspirational leader of a small group of Jews, but the family's faith continually challenged Adolph Ochs in the decades that followed. The young Adolph worked briefly for his uncle, Oscar Levy, a Confederate veteran, in Providence, Rhode Island, before returning to Knoxville to work for the local newspaper. By his late teens, Adolph emerged as the "emotional and economic fulcrum of his family," a role he never relinquished. In 1878, he bought the failing *Chattanooga Times* and began his rise to the pinnacle of American newspaper publishing. Devoted to his parents, he hired his father as the bookkeeper for the newspaper, thereby recognizing Julius Ochs's lifelong

acumen for numbers and efficiency, while acutely aware of his business weaknesses. He wrote loving letters to his mother for years, hoping that she was proud of him and his achievements.<sup>11</sup>

After Julius Ochs died in 1888, his wife spent time with family at their various homes, always “an unreconstructed southerner.” Her granddaughter, Iphigene Ochs Sulzberger, remembered during one of her grandmother’s visits to New York City, “we were to hear Booker T. Washington at Carnegie Hall . . . and this plan outraged her. ‘How can you be taking your child out to hear that darkie!’ Papa responded very calmly but very firmly, ‘Mr. Washington is a great man and Iphigene should hear him.’” In 1910, Booker T. Washington wrote to Adolph Ochs seeking the *New York Times*’s support for a national exposition commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. Washington asked for Ochs and the *Times* to endorse a U.S. Senate resolution supporting the exposition. The *Times* had been less than supportive of a national exposition, arguing that smaller, regional expositions might be more helpful to a commemoration than a larger, national event, which, if unsuccessful, would do more harm than good to Black Americans. Washington wrote that he would be opposed “to anything that would stir up racial strife or revive bitterness growing out of slavery and reconstruction days. . . . I believe that the Southern white people can be led to take as much pride in this Exposition as the Negro himself.”<sup>12</sup>

Bertha Levy Ochs died in 1908. Yet even in death, the lifelong dedication of Julius and Bertha Ochs to their respective causes presented challenges to the family. Adolph Ochs talked his mother into giving his father a modest military-style procession of Union veterans, as his casket, covered in the flag of the United States, was carried to his grave. Years later, Bertha Levy Ochs’s coffin next to her husband’s grave was covered by the Confederate Stars and Bars, the pin of the UDC Chattanooga unit of which she was a charter member attached to her burial shroud.<sup>13</sup>

#### *A Southerner in the North*

As the authors of *The Trust: The Private and Powerful Family Behind The New York Times* point out, Adolph Ochs “was a man of his era and region.” By the time the UDC approached him in 1897, he had owned the *Chattanooga Times* for nineteen years and maintained interests with his siblings, managing the paper even though he lived in New York. While he

attempted to use his youth as a means of deflecting the Civil War's impact in his UDC response, the war had never been far from him. During the postbellum era, family meals included debates about the Civil War. His brother George remembered, "my parents lived a wonderfully harmonious life, notwithstanding their opposed affiliations, for which they fought unrelentingly—a marvelous example of tolerance and humanism." Julius Ochs befriended two of the more noteworthy Tennesseans of the era—Andrew Johnson, who became Abraham Lincoln's vice president and successor as president, and Parson Brownlow, a newspaper publisher and Tennessee governor. Johnson and Brownlow opposed each other on secession, with the elder Ochs at times mediating their rows.<sup>14</sup>

By 1897 Adolph Ochs had emerged as one of Chattanooga's leading citizens, and his involvement in local matters through his newspaper's editorial coverage and policies provided early insight into his views about racial equity. In 1883, he withstood widespread criticism for his newspaper's opposition to proposed legislation that would have significantly curtailed Black political office-holding. His newspaper took an unpopular position when it lobbied for prison reform in response to the treatment of Black men frequently sentenced for minor or imagined offenses resulting in convict labor—essentially slavery in another form. Years earlier in Knoxville, his father, Julius, had directed efforts to improve conditions in the local "workhouse" or prison. *Chattanooga Times* readers canceled their subscriptions and businesses canceled advertising, costing Ochs thousands of dollars in lost revenue because of his opposition to the proposed legislation. Another controversy arose when Republicans appointed a Black man to the school board, and, although Ochs's newspaper agreed that the appointment should not have been made, his editorial position held firm—the appointment was not a sufficient reason to overhaul city government.<sup>15</sup>

The three Ochs brothers—Adolph, George, and Milton—were continually involved in Chattanooga's economic, social, and civic affairs. Milton, who remained in the newspaper business in Chattanooga most of his life, served as a vice president and director of the Lookout Mountain site before it became a national park. Adolph Ochs eventually deeded 2,700 acres on the slopes of Lookout Mountain that now include a national park encompassing the Civil War battlefield, the main highway in the area, and an observatory named after him. Ochs's uncle Oscar Levy and

*Cannon at Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, 1918*  
(Library of Congress.)

cousins, Simon Mayer and Simon Lehman, fought at Chickamauga as members of the Tenth Mississippi infantry regiment.

In 1895, Ochs served as chairman of the Chickamauga Memorial Association that planned the national park. This position stands in contrast to his UDC letter in which he hopes “people forget there ever was a Civil War.” His hopes, however, were swept aside by the momentum for something far different. The dedication of the Chickamauga Battlefield was among the most visible of any memorial efforts during the post-Reconstruction era of rising Jim Crow segregation. Ochs’s newspaper estimated that nearly fifty thousand people were in attendance in Chattanooga during the battlefield dedication in September 1895, a national show of purported Blue-Gray reconciliation.<sup>16</sup>

His newspaper devoted three days of coverage to the dedication, publishing impassioned memories from those who fought in one of the bloodiest battles of the war. "Yesterday was a great day," began an editorial comment in Ochs's *Chattanooga Times* on September 20, 1895. It recounted how the U.S. vice president, governors, Civil War generals, and other dignitaries attended the ceremonies: "They were all here to witness the last but joyful rites over the dead body of sectionalism. They buried the repulsive carcass on Chickamauga field, covered the grave with the soil made sacred by American patriots, planted it so deep that no trump of discord can ever revive it into life again." Although Ochs and his newspaper followed a central theme of the times—a unified country no longer divided by the sectional differences before and after the war—historians observe that this desire for reconciliation "offered both a white-washed memory of the war and vision of sectional healing on Confederate terms."<sup>17</sup>

The authors of a major book on his newspaper career state that Ochs keenly sought middle ground, having observed his mother and father continually at odds over the war. His letters to pro-Confederate organizations support that premise. However, he pivoted dramatically to embrace Jim Crow efforts resulting in Black disenfranchisement in Chattanooga. In 1911, city leaders began anew to dismantle nearly thirty years of political equity among Blacks and whites, pushing through redistricting laws that essentially ended any hope of Black men winning elective office and instituting hiring practices removing or significantly restricting Black people from working in city offices. Ochs and his Chattanooga newspaper stood at the forefront of those efforts even while he resided in New York. "We have no prejudice against the Negroes but dislike to be ruled and ruined by them," a *Chattanooga Times* editorial stated.<sup>18</sup>

Ochs and his Democratic businessmen friends saw Republican Black elected leaders as impeding their hope for economic progress and took steps to move them aside. These efforts reflected those of leaders of other cities throughout the South that ended years of Black social, economic, and political progress during Reconstruction. However, Ochs differed in one respect, according to historian Eric Goldstein, in that, while southern Jews usually supported Black disenfranchisement, they "shied away from high profile engagement with racial issues." In contrast, Ochs stood up in the middle of them.<sup>19</sup>

That same year, 1911, on the fiftieth anniversary of the start of the Civil War, Ochs's *New York Times* struck a conciliatory theme in its editorials, chiding readers for needlessly celebrating the war while reminding them that the soldiers who fought the battles on both sides were Americans—the same sentiments Ochs offered in his letters to the UDC. Nonetheless, news coverage in the *Times* concentrated on events memorializing the war, ignoring, either willingly or not, the profound political and societal changes during the period fueling the racist fury prompting Leo Frank's prosecution and the Lost Cause. Historians David Blight and Eric Foner suggest these changes emanated from the same racist white supremacist assault on Reconstruction.<sup>20</sup>

A telling anecdote about Ochs regarding the Ku Klux Klan suggests his willingness to ignore the organization's antisemitism while embracing a sanitized opinion of its racist underpinnings. In a column upon his retirement, *Knoxville Journal* publisher Alfred F. Sanford wrote in 1936 about a dinner he shared with Ochs and others. At some point, the KKK became the subject of conversation. According to Sanford, Ochs argued that the KKK leadership had misled the members, who joined as an outlet for their "native American patriotism" regardless of the organization's intolerant views.<sup>21</sup>

Ochs, who told inquirers that he was from Chattanooga and was proud of his southern roots, called upon his upbringing during the 1920s when he was challenged by organizations building monuments to the Civil War. In 1924, as controversy swirled around whether to build the Stone Mountain memorial in Georgia, a newspaper accused Ochs of opposing the project, and a second detractor challenged his upbringing. Ochs demanded that both check their facts, defending his heritage. He gave one thousand dollars to have his mother's name, Bertha Levy Ochs, inscribed on the Stone Mountain memorial.<sup>22</sup>

Four years later, the UDC sought his New York newspaper's support for the organization's efforts to be a part of the Arlington Memorial Bridge project and the Confederate Memorial at Arlington Cemetery in Washington D.C. The *Times's* Washington, D.C., bureau chief, at Ochs's request, provided details about the project in a two-page letter, suggesting that because the UDC lacked project specifics, the request for a news story touting the memorial project could be delayed if not indefinitely tabled. Ochs's *Times* had no further involvement in the project. Ochs did send two

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thousand dollars in memory of his mother to the UDC to help fireproof the chapel where Robert E. Lee is buried at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia. "I should be pleased to know if I can be of any further assistance in this effort to preserve and care for the South's most sacred shrine," he wrote in a letter with his contribution. He also sent two hundred dollars to help Silverdale Cemetery in Chattanooga, the gravesite of 150 unknown Confederate soldiers.<sup>23</sup>

Adolph's brother George shared some of the same beliefs about the South and its collective memory. George Ochs lived a life as accomplished as his brother, but in different environs. He won election as mayor of Chattanooga in 1893 when he was only thirty-one years old. His four-year term was noted for progressive achievements—the opening of the city's first hospital, planning for the city's first park system, improved financial management of city finances, and improvements to schools and public health. His career included positions as an editor and publisher for several newspapers and magazines, including key positions with the *New York Times*, president of the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce, and membership on the board of education. Speeches throughout his life show the sorts of conflict evident in Lost Cause memory. To high school students, he referred to the war as "the peculiar crisis." In a speech during a memorial service

George W. Oakes (Ochs)  
(Wikimedia Commons.)

in 1930 at Mount Hope Cemetery in Hastings-on-Hudson, New York, Ochs drew on the Civil War tropes of the period, suggesting the animosities of "that unhappy strife" had subsided, the healing complete because the grave of the unknown Confederate soldier would be next to the graves of Union soldiers in the Arlington national military cemetery, in the shadow of the "consecrated dwelling place of Robert. E. Lee." He said his mother was "saturated with the sentiments and ideals of the Mississippi slave-holding classes, hotly espoused the cause of the South; while my father, bred in a different school of thought, joined the Union forces."<sup>24</sup>

Adolph and George Ochs became visible parts of the national conversation about the Civil War and its aftermath. George Ochs's speech during the 1930 memorial service, while he served as the historian of the Sons of Confederate Veterans Chapter 985 in Chattanooga, mirrored so many others seeking a Blue-Gray handshake as a symbol of reconciliation regardless of the country's inability to accept or even recognize Black equality. Adolph Ochs, seeking understanding from Lost Cause organizations about his southernness, and his brother George, on the side of reconciliation, belonged to the movement to memorialize the war and those who fought in it, embracing their family members, some of whom defended southern causes on the very battlefield that they helped to dedicate. George Ochs, speaking as Chattanooga mayor during the park dedication, proclaimed, "This park is thus the symbol of the nation's second birth, the holy ground where amity and reconciliation have erected in granite and in bronze the record of a country's heroes, a country now eternally and indivisibly reunited." As Blight suggests, "The task was harrowing: how to make the logic of sectional reconciliation compatible with the logic of emancipation." Caroline Janney more succinctly concludes that by the 1920s and 1930s, "it seemed as if the Confederate memory of the war had eclipsed that of the Union."<sup>25</sup>

In his study of Adolph Ochs, Gerald W. Johnson maintained that part of Ochs's greatness was his single-minded goal to overcome the contradictions, if not challenges, in his life. Ochs "had no interest in nonsense posing as intellectual and spiritual activity," according to Johnson. He looked past the misdeeds of his parents' generation to push himself and those with whom he associated to a greater good while mindful of his love for his parents and his southern roots.<sup>26</sup>



*Influence and Conflict in Natchez*

Ochs and his Mississippi family, the Mayers, shared more than a bloodline. The Mayers in Natchez were tethered as well to the Confederate and Union causes and the decisions that would determine, in historian Blight's words, "the character of the new society that they were to build." The Mayers became one of the most prosperous merchant families in Natchez, surrounded by some of the wealthiest families in America—the planter elite who wholeheartedly embraced slavery, secession, and the inevitable war to preserve their plantation lifestyles and enslaved labor force. When John and Jeannette Mayer arrived in Natchez at the beginning of the 1840s, the town's economy was slowly recovering from the worldwide depression that had begun in 1837. The family adapted well, as did many other Jewish families who were accepted for embracing the tenets of a slaveholding region while maintaining their faith, largely without interference from their Christian neighbors.<sup>27</sup>

The family's business interests comingled with those of siblings, in-laws, and family friends. Brothers-in-law Henry Frank and Isaac Lowenburg, Union sutlers who met in Nashville in 1862 before reuniting a year later in Natchez, became Ochs's partners in Chattanooga real estate deals during the 1880s that resulted in financial losses for the investors. Mayer men also served as Confederate soldiers. "Many were the heated discussions between these 'Yankees' and our rebel family until Mother forbade political wrangling, but encouraged affinity, prompted by her usual tact and good sense," wrote family historian Clara Lowenburg in her memoirs. Frank J. Byrne argues that the family acted as the linchpin in the interplay of Confederate-Union sentiments. "The dynamics of all nineteenth-century families incorporated varying degrees of affection, materialism, paternalism, and racism, but the peculiar blend of these qualities within the merchant family made it unique. . . . [T]he merchant family not only exhibited characteristics similar to those of both the yeoman and planter classes; its values spanned the growing sectional divide of antebellum America," Byrne contends.<sup>28</sup>

During the Civil War, the Mayers' successful shoe and general merchandise store provided financial stability, while the family's slave ownership added another piece to their assimilation into southern society

and mores. Byrne asserts that families like the Mayers, as merchants and Jews, were sensitive to misconceptions about secessionist sentiments, and, at least for the Mayers and other Jews, maintaining ambiguous ties to the Confederacy was a necessity.<sup>29</sup>

Clara Lowenburg's memoirs, covering nearly eighty years of family history, offer additional insight into the contradictions and contrasts within the Ochs-Mayer family. Several of the stories Lowenburg recounts involve enslaved Blacks, an integral part of the Natchez family, as with many other southern white families. Enslaved Blacks outnumbered whites by nearly three to one in Adams County. "Slavery was an axiomatic foundation of the social pattern of the Old South," argues Bertram W. Korn. "Jews wanted to acclimate themselves in every way to their environment; in both a social and psychological sense, they needed to be accepted as equals by their fellow citizens." Lowenburg's entries about

*Clara Lowenburg Moses.*

*(Courtesy of the Thomas H. and Joan Gandy Photographic Collection,  
Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections,  
LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, LA.)*

enslaved individuals are a mixture of observational storytelling, repeating common interpretations seeking to minimize the Black viewpoint of slavery and the war while focused on the inequities inherent in her life and those of the Black people she encountered.<sup>30</sup>

She wrote about an enslaved woman named Ann who “nursed all of grandma’s children and refused to be free after the war. . . . [S]he told us wonderful stories about the war and the time she was a slave.” Lowenburg also wrote about her unease at witnessing Black roustabouts on a Mississippi River paddlewheel boat being mistreated. She recounted a story about the Mayers’ liveryman and an enslaved woman who also worked for the family marrying in the family home. The man joined an all-Black unit of the Union Army after Natchez fell and served until the war ended. A Mayer brother-in-law, Julius Weis, wrote in his memoirs of feeling repugnance after watching a whipping of an enslaved Black man. “I afterwards got somewhat accustomed to it, but I always felt a pity for the poor slaves. . . . I owned several slaves myself, but I never found it necessary to punish them in such a manner.”<sup>31</sup>

The Mayer family thrived amid the challenges of Confederate and New South initiatives because of their ability to adapt to changing times. Family members became integrally involved in a Natchez Confederate memorial project, a fraudulent election, equal but separate education for Blacks and whites, synagogue building, and confronting antisemitism, all while pursuing economic and political advancement. In many instances, these efforts coincided. Drew Gilpin Faust, in her examination of postwar attitudes, explains, “Independence and war reopened unfinished antebellum debates, intensified unresolved prewar conflicts, and subjected some of the most fundamental assumptions of the Old South to public scrutiny. In doing all of this, the Confederate effort to define a national identity produced a revealing record of southerners struggling to explain themselves to themselves.”<sup>32</sup>

For Simon Mayer, the Confederacy served as a way of life. The third of John and Jeannette’s fourteen children, he served with distinction in the Tenth Mississippi, one of fifteen Confederate units organized in Natchez. Simon’s cousins who fought with him in the Tenth included Oscar Levy, Bertha Levy Ochs’s brother, age nineteen, and first cousins Simon Lehmann, twenty-one, and Maurice Ries, twenty-four. A Mayer brother-in-law, Samuel Ullman, twenty-two, joined the Sixteenth Mississippi. When

*Simon Mayer in uniform.  
(Sizeler Family Collection,  
in possession of Jay Silverberg.)*

Simon Mayer resumed his place among the Natchez elite after the war, he remained steadfast in his pro-Confederate beliefs as noted in his diary, evident in postwar private correspondence, and in his involvement, among other endeavors, with a disputed congressional election in support of one of his unit's commanding officers.<sup>33</sup>

The diary, letters, and other sources provide insights into Mayer and his cousin, Oscar Levy. Simon Mayer linked the war's memory inextricably with persona. His military rank of "Major" was affixed to his last name as much as "Simon" during his postwar life. Oscar Levy, who settled in San Francisco and lived a successful life, largely left the war behind. Ullman, as well, moved past his war experiences. The Ochs brothers, who experienced the war differently than their Mayer cousins, balanced the memory of their parents' involvement with postwar business and personal interests that challenged their southern roots. The extended family's

experience of divided loyalties but with abiding devotion to each other before, during, and after the war was shared by other southern Jewish families as numerous historical accounts have shown. Nonetheless, the family persevered no matter the challenge, with little effect on their relationships, well past the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>34</sup>

*The "Peculiar Institution"*

An oft-repeated family story holds that John and Jeannette Mayer met onboard a ship to New Orleans, but immigration records indicate that no Jacob or John Mayer sailed aboard the *Dido*, the vessel on which Jeannette and her family arrived in New Orleans from Alsace, via Philadelphia, on January 15, 1835. Moses Ries officiated the marriage of his daughter and John Mayer in the Ries family home on April 25, 1835, about two years after John arrived in New Orleans. The Mayers bore their first three children in New Orleans by 1841, when the family moved 170 miles to Natchez.<sup>35</sup>

The Mayer family and the men who married into it followed typical chain migration patterns of Jewish families from the German and French areas of the Rhineland and Alsace. The Ries family arrived three years after the oldest son Solomon had established himself in New Orleans. John Mayer opened a boot-making and shoe store in Natchez. When the Civil War began, the Mayers boasted business interests, a rambling home overlooking central Natchez, and at least six enslaved individuals: two men, approximate ages seventy-five and thirty-one, and four women, ages seventy, fifty, forty-four, and thirty-one. Simon Mayer joined the Tenth Mississippi at age twenty-two.<sup>36</sup>

A letter Simon Mayer wrote to his family weeks after he departed from Mississippi was published on page one of the *Natchez Daily Courier*, October 14, 1862. Headlined, "From our Army in Kentucky," the letter recounting the unit's movements from Mississippi into southwestern Kentucky shows from a Confederate perspective the depth of understanding and objectivity about how some southerners the soldiers encountered did not support the war because of their economic interests or lack of slave ownership. Mayer wrote: "I will here remark that all along the route, from Camp Walthall to this place, the 'peculiar institution' was rather scarce, and fully explained the cause of the people's lukewarmness, since the commencement of the abolition doctrine, as represented and promulgated

*Letter from Simon Mayer to his family, April 17, 1864.*

*(Courtesy of Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University Special Collections.)*

by Lincoln and his party. The people not owning many, if any, slaves, their interests more with the North than the South—hence their favoring the former.”<sup>37</sup>

The Tenth was marching toward Munfordville, its second major battle of the war, where losses were significant. The images of war became embedded in Mayer’s memory. He drew arms numerous times and barely escaped five Union soldiers at the Battle of Franklin, Tennessee, firing at him from atop a steeply banked trench; the angle likely saved Mayer’s life as the bullets whizzed past him, one knocking off his hat. His family reasoned that his height—four feet, eight inches tall—likely saved his life. Clara Lowenburg tells the story of General Jacob Sharp, who, upon entering a Tennessee home for a meal, was invited to take the seat of honor. The hostess said the seat next to him “is for your little boy.” Sharp replied, “Madam, that little boy is my brave aide-de-camp, Major Simon Mayer.” Most of Mayer’s wartime experience was, in fact, as an adjutant—

assistant—to his commanding officers. His disdain for the Union never wavered, perhaps best exemplified in his notations about the Fort Pillow massacre in 1864: “Received particulars of the storming of Fort Pillow by Forrest and Chalmers, which is the most gallant thing of the war. All the garrison killed but 200, and pity that any were left.”<sup>38</sup>

Mayer refers to his faith on occasion and even writes of attending Christian services at churches and evangelistic sermons by a proslavery preacher. He makes several references to his faith—invoking the “God of Israel” at times in his diary. Judaism was an important facet of Mayer’s life after the war, but he fails to mention in his diary of any visible Jewish activity, a difficulty for most Jewish soldiers who comprised the largest non-Christian minority in either the Confederate or Union armies.<sup>39</sup>

On the home front, the war permeated the daily lives of Mayer’s family. In 1862, during the same month when Union gunboats bombarded Natchez, one newspaper story shows Mayer’s first cousin, Simon Lehman “with two associates, having run the blockade of New Orleans” planning to join “‘the Natchez Southrons.’ They will take all letters if left at the shoe store of J. Mayer & Son.” Lehman apparently broke through the blockade. John Mayer, at age fifty-six, was listed in an 1862 news story with 150 other Natchez men as part of a home guard called the Silver Grays, required to drill on the courthouse lawn. The men paid one dollar to join and had to provide their own weapons. His store was one of three that collected goods to assist soldiers’ families in Natchez. That same year, he spent \$11,500 for two homes—the family home in Natchez that cost eight thousand dollars and a second home in Washington, a few miles away, that cost \$3,500—investments clearly indicating that the war apparently did not affect them financially as much as others.<sup>40</sup>

During the brief Union shelling of Natchez in 1862, most of the family moved to Washington. In the main home, which still stands, seven-year-old Rosalie Beekman, daughter of a Mayer family friend, died of wounds from a burst Union shell, one of two fatalities from the bombardment. Such tragedies notwithstanding, southern families could maintain lasting friendships during the war while sharing different views. Rosalie Beekman’s father, Aaron, a successful Jewish merchant like John Mayer, was publicly sympathetic to the Union, as were others in Natchez who lived passively throughout the war regardless of their sentiments for either side. According to testimony before the Southern Claims

Commission, Beekman sought four hundred dollars in recompense for the loss of a horse, lumber, and cotton after the fall of Natchez, although the national government denied his claim.<sup>41</sup>

Regardless of divisions concerning the war, the Beekman family maintained its friendship with the Mayers and other Natchez Jewish families. Jeannette Mayer, Fannie Beekman, and more than a dozen other Jewish women worked in tandem during the postbellum era on behalf of the Hebrew Ladies Aid Association, and the families shared many events together for years after the war. The friendship underscores a larger theme that historian Dianne Ashton offers about family interrelationships during the period. She argues that women during the early decades of the nineteenth century were mostly responsible for ensuring the social connections for their families, while pointing out that in Jewish families, those responsibilities were lessened because Jewish men interacted frequently through business, synagogue, fraternal, or charitable activities. Historians point out that the Jewish economic networks grew nationally and worldwide. While the Civil War temporarily severed many personal or economic links, they nonetheless remained as bonds between Jews across the regions. Prototypically, the Mayers and Ochses maintained lasting relationships with each other and their communities through marriage, business, religion, and charitable work.<sup>42</sup>

*Concerns for a Sister and a Brother*

In mid-April 1864, Mayer's diary noted: "Heard that the Yankees at Natchez were playing the deuce and had arrested a large number of the ladies, Sister Ophelia among them, and had them all confined in Court House." Ophelia Mayer had been detained after the confiscation of a cache of letters written by Natchez women, their contents viewed as objectionable by the Union commanding officer, the target of some of the women's written remarks. Specifically, Ophelia Mayer wrote that the commanding officer was a "miserable tyrant." Union soldiers surrounded the family home, and the family store was closed for three days. Mayer wrote, "[Don't] let the scoundrels intimidate you. Afraid to come out and meet us on the battlefield like men, they, like brutes, make war upon defenseless women and children." He told his family they were "still free and knowing your rights, dare to maintain them." A week later, Mayer confided in his diary: "On the 23rd all quiet. Saw in the papers of the



*Isaac Lowenburg grocery store on Franklin Street in Natchez, 1870s. Courtesy of the Thomas H. and Joan Gandy Photographic Collection, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, LA.)*

banishment from Natchez of several ladies, among them a Miss Ophelia Mayer, and am fearful that it is my sister and hope soon to hear." Five days later, he heard from his commanding officer, "Your sister at home all right."<sup>43</sup>

She and the others were released after Isaac Lowenburg and Henry Frank, the sutlers who had befriended the family and would marry Mayer daughters after the war, interceded with Union officers, assuring them that the women would not repeat their indiscretions. Their involvement in removing the Mayer women from the controversy is indicative of the cooperation, strained at times, between locals in Natchez and the Union command, and reflects further family support even amidst recurring crises. Mayer's concern for his sister was perhaps second only to his ardent desire for his younger brother Henry to join the Tenth. Although the war was nearing its end, Mayer wrote in April 1864 beseeching Henry to enlist lest he saddle Simon with the ignominy of having a brother who refused to fight. Henry did not join his brother or his cousins on the battlefield because he was helping his family manage its store, while also apparently risking arrest or worse by traveling back and forth between Natchez and Matamoros, Mexico, which southern merchants had turned into a thriving

*Oscar Levy in uniform.*  
(Courtesy of the Manuscripts  
and Archives Division,  
New York Public Library.)

commercial center for buying and selling goods in response to the Union's Gulf of Mexico blockade.<sup>44</sup>

Letters from Adolph Ochs's favored uncle, Oscar Levy, are similar to those written by Simon Mayer. Oscar was nineteen years old when his cousin Simon lured him to Natchez to volunteer for the Tenth Mississippi. Oscar admitted lying to his parents about his whereabouts but left no uncertainty about his sympathies. He wrote to his family from several battlefields, including Chickamauga, never wavering in his devotion to the southern cause. His letters mixed the tedium and realities of war, longing for family, and, in Levy's case, awareness that he and his sister were on opposing sides from his brother-in-law. At one point, he urged that a letter containing his whereabouts be destroyed after it was read lest Julius Ochs, the Union captain, read it. Levy's participation during the battle of Franklin, Tennessee — one of the bloodiest of the war — served as the backdrop for a postwar reunion and another family connection to the war.<sup>45</sup>

Levy was a member of the Signal Corps, soldiers who waved flags in a specific manner to send messages between troops. He and a fellow soldier were huddled underneath a large tree with their commanding officer, General John Bell Hood, and his staff, watching the nighttime fighting. The two signal corpsmen separated after the battle, to be reunited forty-four years later via a news story in the *Nashville American*, whose publisher was Milton Ochs, Adolph's brother. The Ochs brothers mailed their newspapers to their uncle in San Francisco, who maintained a life-long connection to his nephews, especially Adolph, who in his late teens briefly lived with and worked for his uncle. After Oscar Levy read a story in the *Nashville American* about how a cane had been made from a tree that sheltered Levy and his fellow soldier, he wrote to his uncle about the battle. Milton Ochs published the letter, prompting Oscar Levy's Signal Corps companion to write to him. The former corpsmen met August 8, 1909, in the Hotel Manx on Union Square in San Francisco. A news story about the reunion read: "It was a reunion for the veterans; and when men have not met for forty-four years there is no use trying to detail what they talked about. Undoubtedly it savored of the military and the days passed in gray uniforms."<sup>46</sup>

Samuel Ullman faced similar war experiences. He returned to his Port Gibson, Mississippi, home shortly before the war after studying with a Louisville rabbi. He followed his contemporaries harboring Confederate sympathies, supporting southern Democratic candidates in opposition to Abraham Lincoln. One month after the shelling of Fort Sumter, he enlisted in the Sixteenth Mississippi. Listed as a musician in December 1861, he was close enough to subsequent battles to be wounded twice at the Battle of Cross Keys and the Battle of Antietam, where he received the wound that sent him home in December 1862. He paid a surrogate to complete his service time, but the man went AWOL and never returned to duty. "He rarely spoke of his Confederate experiences and never attended the popular reunions of soldiers that were held regularly," historian Margaret Armbruster writes.<sup>47</sup>

Had Julius Ochs, the only one in the family with formal military training, joined an active Ohio fighting unit, he likely would have taken up arms against his brother-in-law, Oscar Levy, or Simon Mayer. The family was one of many to experience "The Brother's War," but, unlike some families, relatives did not strike arms against each other. The fact that all

the men in the family who served during the Civil War survived is a rarity considering that one of every three southern households lost a soldier to the war. Nonetheless, postwar life was replete with challenges and tragedy as well as personal and professional accomplishments for the family's veterans and their families.<sup>48</sup>

*Living with the Civil War*

While soldiers fought the war, their families remained behind with untenable choices. "The ideology of antebellum and Confederate merchants contained a series of unresolved contradictions," Byrne writes. "These merchants embraced the South but were not of the South. They traded, haggled and invested their wealth in a slaveholding South where a planter elite created an agrarian society seemingly hostile to industry and urbanization. The skills merchants needed in order to succeed in the South also left them open to attack." The family managed. Compared with Vicksburg, Bayou Sara, Baton Rouge, and other Mississippi River port cities, Natchez remained largely intact as it transitioned to a center for Union command. The townspeople may have chafed with so much blue in their midst, but they had homes and daily lives at businesses that remained standing. Merchant families like the Mayers kept their city from ruin. As the officers aboard the Union gunboat *Essex* threatened to level Natchez in 1862, city leaders quickly surrendered. Historians point out that while the planter elite outside of the city busied themselves with saving their vast investments in land and enslaved Blacks, the merchants, including some in the Mayer family who had uneasily sided with the early war effort, understood that a devastated Natchez offered little hope for their future.<sup>49</sup>

After the war, Simon Mayer quickly resettled into home life. By mid-summer 1865, he had assumed control of his father's business. "These former Confederate soldiers constituted part of an emerging vanguard of merchant-entrepreneurs who would change the face of Natchez and the New South in the coming years," writes Aaron Anderson. "John Mayer almost certainly could not have known that day in 1863 when he met the Union sutlers that he would become a nexus of familial association that would bind the vibrant postwar Natchez Jewish mercantile community. Within a decade his three future sons-in-law, [Isaac] Lowenburg, [Henry] Frank and [Julius] Weis, would respectively own the largest plantation

supply and commission house, its most expansive dry good firm, and perhaps the most successful cotton factorage in the entire American South," concludes Anderson.<sup>50</sup>

The Mayer family became part of the much larger panorama of conflicting sentiments throughout the South, as evidenced in the family's personal letters, memoirs, speeches, and involvement in ongoing religious, political, and social activities. "The Lost Cause did not signal the South's retreat from the future, but, whether intentionally or not, it eased the region's passage through a particularly difficult period of change," suggests Gaines Foster.<sup>51</sup>

The Confederacy was never far from Simon Mayer, who lived forty-one years after the war. He married in 1869, and he and his wife named their first son, born in 1871, Robert E. Lee Mayer. In marked contrast to Samuel Ullman, Simon maintained lifelong correspondence with fellow veterans, traveled to Confederate reunions, and joined and assumed leadership positions in Confederate organizations. "Major Mayer" soon replaced his given name. "I enjoy these reunions for I always meet a lot of my old Army comrades from different parts of the state," he wrote to his son, Robert, in 1887, noting that he had spent time with one of his commanding officers, General Edward C. Walthall.<sup>52</sup>

*Simon Mayer.*  
(Courtesy of the Thomas H. and Joan  
Gandy Photographic Collection,  
Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley  
Collections, LSU Libraries,  
Baton Rouge, LA.)

His enduring friendships with his commanding officers demonstrate the strength of Mayer's tether to the Confederacy, if not the unwillingness of fellow veterans to shed their anti-Union beliefs. He described Walthall as an "intimate friend." From General Jacob H. Sharp came two letters that speak to the postwar relationships that helped to bind long-held sentiments among ex-Confederates. "Tell our people in this hour of defeat and isolation," Sharp wrote to Mayer, "to stand steady and together. The South is today the happiest and most prosperous spot on Earth. . . . [I]n a few years the people of the North will be calling on us to protect them from themselves." After the war, Sharp became an attorney, state representative, and newspaper editor in Lowndes County, on the eastern edge of Mississippi, 260 miles from Natchez. He also was a founding member of the Ku Klux Klan chapter in his county. In a second letter, he extended courtesies to Otis Baker, who like Mayer served with distinction in the Tenth Mississippi, and added touching sentiments from his wife to the Mayer family.<sup>53</sup>

Mayer's fondness, if not dedication, to the commanding officers he served was evident in ways other than his letters and diary. In 1880, his former commanding officer, James R. Chalmers, and a leading Black Republican and former enslaved individual, John R. Lynch, opposed each other for a Mississippi congressional seat. The general was wounded by the same shell that threw Mayer from his horse at the Battle of Stones River. Mayer had moved his family to Issaquena County, about one hundred miles north of Natchez, where he managed a general merchandise store and served as postmaster and Democratic Party leader. Why he uprooted his family from Natchez and moved is unclear, but his personal connection to General Chalmers and his Democratic Party affiliation speak to the larger motives of his party's election domineering, if not his personal interests, at the expense of Black office holders in post-Reconstruction Mississippi. Before Mayer moved, Issaquena County had become part of the so-called "shoestring district" during a gerrymandered redistricting in 1876 that located most of Mississippi's voting Black Republicans into a narrow area along the Mississippi River, with five other voting districts boasting white majorities.<sup>54</sup>

Mayer is mentioned in a congressional investigation into the 1882 congressional race that Chalmers won. Despite Lynch's claims that Democrats manipulated the ballot count, the House Committee on Elections,

controlled by Democrats, ruled against him. An Issaquena County election supervisor was arrested for perjury after he swore to the legality of the election. According to one newspaper report, "the ballots were stuffed." Mayer's role, according to testimony raising questions about the integrity of the election, was to order printing of ballots in his position as chairman of the Issaquena County Democratic Executive Committee. He remained as Democratic Party chair until 1882. The family's support for Chalmers extended to Natchez, where Mayer's brother-in-law, Samuel Ullman, attended the Adams County Democratic Party convention supporting Chalmer's candidacy. By the mid-1880s, Mayer and his family had returned to Natchez, where he continued his work in Democratic Party leadership and established an insurance agency that he and his son Harold managed for over twenty years.<sup>55</sup>

Mayer also had a lifelong friendship and exchanged letters with Natchez veteran Otis Baker. Both men signed as charter members of the United Confederate Veterans, Camp 20, in Natchez, served as leaders in the Natchez Confederate Veterans Memorial efforts, and directed yearly local activities to acknowledge Robert E. Lee's birthday. On Robert E. Lee Day in 1903, Mayer was honored with his cousin Simon Lehman and two dozen other Confederate veterans. Mayer joined thousands of Confederate veterans who venerated Lee while trying to reclaim lost glory through the efforts of Confederate women writing the mythology of the Lost Cause. "The idea of the Civil War as a chivalric, honorable contest owed a great deal in subsequent commentary to Lee's personal values, deportment, and behavior, including his dignity in surrender at Appomattox," observes Bruce Collins.<sup>56</sup>

Mayer's involvement in venerating Lee and his participation in numerous other postwar efforts promoting the Confederacy were consistent with that of many southern soldiers. "White Natchez men in the late 1800s devoted an enormous amount of leisure time to male fraternal associations, where members developed new post-Civil War self-identities, while also memorializing a local version of the Lost Cause," writes Susan T. Falck. The Adams Light Infantry, organized in 1876 as mostly a fraternal organization, provides a prominent example of a postwar, veterans-focused, pro-Confederate organization. The military titles bestowed on the members were mostly honorary and required little to no active involvement in the organization's activities. Mayer's close friend Baker was

its founding officer, but Mayer, surprisingly, is not shown on the roster. His younger brother, Benjamin, and Isaac Lowenburg's son Sim are listed as members. Isaac Lowenburg and Samuel Ullman were honorary members. None of the men showed any sentiment toward the Confederacy after the organization's founding. Many of the veterans also supported the Knights Templar, associated with the Freemasons. Ex-soldiers comprised nearly a third of the Knights' membership, which excluded non-Christians. Consequently, Jews organized their separate Freemasons group in Natchez to which Mayer became a faithful and devoted member.<sup>57</sup>

Historians Falck and Anderson suggest that these organizations helped Jewish men gain influence and assimilate further into Natchez society. Yet that Jews required a separate lodge indicates the difficulties of gaining acceptance. The linkage to the Confederacy for women in the Mayer family also lingered. Several joined or were honorary members of the Natchez Confederate Memorial Association (CMA), which resulted in a statue and time capsule being placed in a downtown Natchez park. The CMA prospered, but the Natchez UDC struggled in its initial year to gain traction as other chapters sprouted throughout the South and emerged as the linchpins in revising the war narrative. "UDC members aspired to transform military defeat into a political and cultural victory, where states' rights and white supremacy remained intact," Karen Cox argues. Wives of Tenth Mississippi veterans eventually assumed leadership roles in the local UDC. Natchez family members also belonged to the boards of the volunteer fire department, an orphanage, and numerous social groups. George and Milton Ochs supported many Chattanooga organizations as well, with noteworthy achievement beyond their business and political successes.<sup>58</sup>

The Ochs and Mayer families' ability to weave together wartime and postwar personal, business, and religious experiences can be attributed to what historian Stephen Whitfield terms the "braided identity of Southern Jewry." Whitfield poses that the dynamics evident in the extended family were part of a shared heritage with their fellow Jews and non-Jews. The theme is examined, as well, by other historians who suggest that southern Jews' day-to-day lives mirrored – with religion as the exception – the lives of neighboring gentiles, hastening their assimilation if not begrudging acceptance by the larger community. Whether it was Julius Ochs befriending a rival who had cast antisemitic accusations his way or John and Jeannette



Mayer accepting Union sutlers into their home, the family repeatedly demonstrated willingness to adapt and adjust as a blurring of mixed identities.<sup>59</sup>

### *Religion*

The Mayer and Ochs families repeatedly demonstrated the importance of their religion. Simon Mayer assisted other family members in founding B'nai Israel in Natchez, spoke often to confirmation classes about their responsibilities to the community, and in 1889 became president of the congregation, where even then his Confederate allegiances remained paramount. "My position before you today recalls an episode during the early days of the 'Lost Cause,'" he said in his opening remarks as synagogue president. He then spoke of a conversation with General Joseph E. Davis in 1861, who told Mayer and other soldiers "there are 2 [Davises] in the Confederacy, one brought forward by circumstances alluding to the Great Chieftain whose death a few days ago the Southland now mourns, and the other [himself] brought forward by merit." Mayer's brother-in-law Samuel Ullman spoke in 1872 at the dedication of B'nai Israel as its president. He was moved by the significance of the moment and the meaning of being Jewish. His devotion followed him to Birmingham and Temple Beth El, where he became a beloved leader of the Reform congregation.<sup>60</sup>

As previously indicated, the Mayer family women joined with other Jewish women as founding members of the Hebrew Ladies Aid Association in 1865. The women regularly held fundraising masquerade balls and dances to raise money for the building of B'nai Israel's synagogue. When the B'nai Israel cornerstone was laid in 1870, the newspaper noted the ladies aid association had received financial help from numerous local groups and elected leaders. Historians have pointed out that these efforts were typical of Jewish women throughout the South. "Filling important niches, they contributed vitally to creating and sustaining an evolving Jewish community life," writes Mark Bauman. "Without the work of these women, individuals in need would have suffered, congregations would have failed, programs would have either not been initiated or would have died, and the very survival of Judaism in many places would have been doubtful." Jennifer Stollman suggests that for these women "the physical presence of a synagogue demonstrated to Jews and Gentiles the real

existence of a Jewish community — one to be recognized and negotiated with.” After the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) was founded in 1893, extending the national and international benevolence of Jewish women in the United States, one of the Mayer daughters, Mrs. Melanie (Mayer) Frank, became an active participant.<sup>61</sup>

Like the Mayers, Ochs believed in Reform Judaism, likely embedded through the teachings of his father and lay rabbi, Julius. Adolph Ochs’s comments given during speeches spanning a forty-year period show the evolution of his belief that Judaism should remain within the temple and not with organizations or even people promoting the religion or Jewish causes. A *New York Times* colleague described Ochs as a “non-Jewish Jew,” averse to anything having to do with “the Jewish movement,” including Zionism, to which he, his newspaper, and his brother were opposed. These sentiments provide context concerning his initial ambivalence to involve himself or the *New York Times* in coverage of the Leo Frank case. He eventually directed his reporters to aggressively write about the case, a decision that deeply troubled him after Frank’s murder. A letter Ochs

*Adolph Ochs.*

*(Courtesy of the Museum of the*

*Southern Jewish Experience, New Orleans.)*

wrote to one of Frank's appeals attorneys, Louis Marshall, illustrates the depth of Ochs's conflict. "I have never had any sympathy with the idea that the people of Atlanta as a whole are any different than those of any other American community nor have I believed that race prejudice played so important a part as seems to be the prevailing opinion." After Frank's death, Marshall, a founder of the American Jewish Committee (AJC), wrote to Ochs asking that the *New York Times* publish an editorial to bring more public awareness about lynchings targeting Black individuals throughout the South. Ochs, apparently, did not reply.<sup>62</sup>

Ochs finally became convinced that racial hatred prompted the Frank lynch mob after stories published in the *Times* highlighted antisemitism as a cause, and Georgia newspaper editors told him that "outside influence of the Jews" inflamed the mob. Ochs was shaken. He did not want the *Times*, or himself, to be viewed as tied to Jewish causes, and he and the newspaper had done just that. His misreading of people he thought he knew was now thrust back at him in the period after Frank's death. Ochs and his brother George believed individual Jews, not Judaism itself, were the targets of prejudice because of individual actions and that Jews should assimilate by associating with non-Jews who accepted them without prejudice. "Don't be too smart, don't know too much," Adolph Ochs had told his fellow Mizpah Temple of Chattanooga members in the late 1880s, even though he repeatedly attempted to influence several issues of the day.<sup>63</sup>

Ochs's support of Mizpah Temple extended for decades. When the congregation needed a new building, Ochs contributed four hundred thousand dollars for its construction, with his brother Milton managing the project. The building was in honor of their parents, Bertha and Julius, and opened in March 1928, a major community event. Ochs used the opportunity to speak passionately about Judaism, exhorting his fellow Jews to put aside their fears of anti-Jewish sentiment and refuse to associate with those who did not want to associate with them. Throughout his life, Ochs exhibited a detached sense of Judaism, using his religion to suit his needs at particular points. As he launched his publishing career in Chattanooga and then New York, he suppressed his religion as he sought support from non-Jews in the business community. And yet, when called on to address the congregation in the city he considered his hometown, Ochs rose to the occasion. Far from unique, Ochs's positions reflected

those of many Classical Reform, upper-class, and acculturated Jews of central European origin.<sup>64</sup>

Ochs, perhaps as much as any member of his family, had been jolted by antisemitism on a public scale in the South. His brother George confronted it during his campaign for Chattanooga mayor, as did Lowenburg and Ullman. Ochs's admonitions to his fellow Jews mirror the premise that historian Leonard Dinnerstein describes as a keen awareness Jews had of their standing among a largely Christian South wracked with bigotry and distrust of outsiders. In his studies of the Reconstruction South, Anton Hieke concludes that southern Jews—in particular German Jews like the Ochses and Mayers—expressed an ambivalence about their connection to the South. Acceptance was conditional and not always certain based on how they were able to assimilate as Jews into “southern society, politics, and the racial mores associated with the Lost Cause.”<sup>65</sup>

*Public Life, Public Challenges*

Samuel Ullman, Isaac Lowenburg, Henry Frank, and Julius Weis married Mayer daughters Emma, Ophelia, Melanie, and Caroline in 1867, 1865, 1865, and 1868, respectively. For each of them, public service, national and international trade, plantation ownership, real estate, philanthropy, and family served as hallmarks of their lives as they dealt with the exigencies of Reconstruction. “The war at once destroyed the southern merchant’s financial world and opened new business opportunities in what would one day be termed a ‘New South,’” maintains Byrne. “Their deep involvement in the market, combined with their financial and political network across the South and the Atlantic Ocean, gave commercial southern families a distinctive worldview. To varying degrees, they believed themselves to be, and typically were, more cosmopolitan and financially adventurous than their neighbors.”<sup>66</sup>

Lowenburg and Frank, who first met in 1862, were counted among the most wealthy, prominent businessmen in Natchez, with a portfolio of brick-and-mortar businesses and real estate on both sides of the Mississippi River. Simon and his brother, Henry, also apparently enjoyed postwar financial success, according to a local plantation owner who wrote, “They are now just looking over the front steps of the crem de la crem, they themselves having but recently become of the consolidated milk of this society.” He wrote that “little Mayer made a fortune”

*Partial Ochs-Mayer Family Tree.*  
*(Courtesy of Jay Silverberg.)*

speculating in cotton, and the brothers “are regarded as the rising sons of Jacob, their father.” Weis moved to New Orleans in 1864 and became one of the most prominent businessmen, Jewish leaders, and philanthropists in the region until his death in 1909. Although his business success was more modest than his brothers-in-law, Ullman won acclaim for his leadership of the Jewish communities and school systems in Natchez and Birmingham. He also achieved international fame for a poem he wrote titled, “Youth.”<sup>67</sup>

Politics also called Lowenburg and Ullman to service. Like Adolph and George Ochs and their brother-in-law Simon Mayer, Lowenburg and Ullman were Democrats. This was largely the party of choice for southern Jews after Reconstruction if they aspired to public office, as well as continued business success with white customers. While Simon Mayer’s political involvement remained largely within the Democratic Party structure, Lowenburg and Ullman actively chose to seek elective and appointive public offices. Lowenburg mostly focused on efforts to improve the community’s economy, pushing to invest in railroads, industry, education, public health, and public safety. Ullman believed fervently that education offered the key to community progress, thus his decades-long involvement trying to improve the education

systems for white and Black students in Natchez and Birmingham. Their public profiles, however, presented them with uncomfortable choices and circumstances. Public officeholders like Lowenburg and Ullman were expected to “uphold racial hierarchy to which many white southerners desperately clung,” argues historian Jacob Morrow-Spitzer. As Eric Foner suggests, the Republican Party with its majority Black voting bloc reminded hard-lined white southerners of defeat and Black equality. Speeches, memorial days, and monuments were important, but during Reconstruction the ballot of the anti-Reconstructionist Democratic Party ultimately became the driving force for men in public office, Blight concludes.<sup>68</sup>

During his first campaign, Lowenburg was viewed as a progressive in opposition to the incumbent who, a local newspaper editorialized, promoted a “spirit of ‘bossism,’ a rule or ruin disposition on his part.” Lowenburg’s opposition attacked him for being a Jew, prompting the following from the *Natchez Democrat* on the day before the 1882 election: “The opposition to Mr. Lowenburg, one of the most active and enterprising citizens of Natchez, one who has been largely instrumental in the building up of a new prosperity for the city, has been placed upon the ground of his belonging to the Israelite race.” Mark Bauman suggests in his examination of ethnic politics from the Civil War into the early twentieth Century that attacks like those against Lowenburg ran deeper than a strict Democratic–Republican party schism and were rooted in antisemitism by larger forces resentful of Jewish businessmen and their interaction with Black customers. Nevertheless, Lowenburg won handily, the first Jewish mayor of Natchez, and the city prospered during his tenure. D. Clayton James’s examination of antebellum Natchez suggests that Lowenburg’s experience was atypical. While Natchez saw its share of election intrigue, the city’s political machines were not considered aggressive as compared to other communities. Democratic and Republican candidates usually campaigned and governed without rancor.<sup>69</sup>

The conflict with Democratic Party positions also loomed stark for Ullman and ultimately contributed to his undoing. He had spent nearly half of his life devoted to his family, Judaism, and educating Black and white children. “His father taught him what the schoolroom could not—the virtue of work, the necessity of perseverance and the value of family, democracy, liberty and tolerance,” Armbruster maintains. Based on his

sermons and public statements, Rabbi Bernhard H. Gotthelf likely taught Ullman during his teenaged years about the downfalls of bigotry and the virtues of equality for all people.<sup>70</sup>

Ullman relocated to Birmingham in 1894 amid the city's economic boom and became a dominant figure among local leaders who "believed that improvement in civic services fostered local economic development and population growth." Ullman joined Birmingham's first board of education, working with the school superintendent to transform local education from a "village school to urban system." Ullman and his colleagues worked tirelessly to ensure equal but separate access, a fair distribution of property taxes, and higher salaries for white and Black teachers. In 1901, a Black high school named for Ullman opened, and it became a cultural hub for Birmingham's Black middle class.<sup>71</sup>

In 1897, Ullman confronted largely baseless allegations about school system mismanagement that came from the Regents of the White Shield and the Trades Council. The White Shield was a white supremacist organization founded in 1896. The local Trades Council, focused on protecting jobs for its white membership, continued to badger Ullman, whose beliefs about equal access to education became a political liability for the mayor and city council, which appointed the school board. Ullman and the school superintendent were key to the early successes of an effort to provide better education across racial lines in Birmingham, which at one point garnered national recognition for the superintendent. Black leaders knew that education was critical to overcoming racist attitudes promoting their inferiority.<sup>72</sup>

In 1897, as the Alabama legislature considered whether to hold a constitutional convention, Ullman wrote in a local newspaper, "If there be one community in the state of Alabama above that of any other which bears the shackles of slavery, it is the city of Birmingham." He argued for a more equitable property tax assessment statewide that would benefit everyone, as opposed to the state's historical racist tax policies favoring whites, particularly for school spending, which would continue under the proposed new constitution. He was nominated as a convention delegate but withdrew his name when it became apparent he would not receive the necessary votes for selection. "Ullman fearlessly, almost innocently, placed himself in the forefront of the debate in Birmingham over the nature and extent of educational opportunities to be offered to blacks in the

city," Armbruster writes. Ullman was one of the few Jewish political leaders outspoken about Black equality and the South's record on slavery.<sup>73</sup>

The mayor and council removed Ullman from his school board post in December 1900, setting off a firestorm of protest. News coverage ran statewide, with accusations of political shenanigans leveled against the mayor and council while touting Ullman's achievements. Community meetings took place to no avail. He eventually won reappointment in 1902 and served with diminished influence until 1904. By 1905, his twenty years of work were largely ignored when Black citizens petitioned the school board for better facilities, only to be told their request was "ill-advised and insulting."<sup>74</sup>

Ullman lived long enough to see the results of his progressive policies. By 1922, the school board had built several large schools for Black students, moving many of them out of rickety and unsuitable buildings, despite the opposition from white labor organizations and the Ku Klux Klan. Blight and Foner suggest that whatever progress Birmingham had achieved and sought was ultimately overwhelmed by the white supremacist attitudes of the time — that emergence from the war, Reconstruction politics, and the new order of Black-white relationships were a volatile mix. Lowenburg, Ullman, and, to an extent, Ochs, willingly entered the post-Reconstruction milieu and succeeded despite occasional setbacks.<sup>75</sup>

### *Conclusion*

John and Jeannette Mayer lived sufficiently long to see their family thrive, with one notable setback. The Lowenburg legacy ended in controversy with the failure of First Natchez Bank in 1914, when bank officers, including Lowenburg's son Sim, could not meet debt obligations when the cotton crop failed. The Lowenburgs moved to New Orleans after court proceedings ended, and Sim Lowenburg paid a thirty-thousand dollar fine and attorney's fees. Dr. Phillip Beekman, son of longtime family friends, was one of the largest depositors affected by the bank's failure. He led the group critical of Lowenburg and bank management, one of the few times the Jewish community — and extended family — opposed each other. Nonetheless, by the early twentieth century, the older generation had largely given way to the grandchildren. The family maintained the bonds that had held it together for decades through many of the same linkages as the first generation — marriage, business, and social



connections. John Mayer died in 1882 followed by Jeannette Mayer in 1883. They are buried with Simon Mayer and other family members in the Jewish section of the historic Natchez City Cemetery. Simon Mayer was the one member of the immediate Mayer family whose Confederate legacy remained steadfast. Newspapers across the South published his obituary after his death in 1905 and prominently mentioned his wartime service, as would be expected. They lauded Major Simon Mayer for his many public deeds, his dedication to family and friends, his business acumen, and lastly, his dedication to the Confederacy. Anderson adds an epitaph to the Mayers and the extended family: "They were good businessmen. They emerged in a time of chaos and social change endowed with a keen eye for whatever opportunities came their way." Their contradictions and contrasts were wrapped into "the perplexing dichotomy of a class that at once used every unequal advantage to climb to the social and economic pinnacle."<sup>76</sup>

The experiences of the extended Ochs-Mayer family were neither unique nor typical for Jews or non-Jews. They bear telling for the nuances that they provide. Bertram W. Korn observes that Jews in the South tended to side with that region, and Jews in the North tended to place their loyalty there. Yet the stories depicted here complicate both interpretations and challenge monolithic views. They suggest that Jewish families within both regions divided their loyalties. Jews within each region identified with southern and northern mores and positions. Family and religion provided their enduring identities. Those houses — however divided — continued to stand.<sup>77</sup>

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## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> *New York Times* Company Records, Adolph S. Ochs Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations (hereafter cited as Ochs Papers), box 118, folder 12; David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Boston, 2001), 273.

<sup>2</sup> C. Vann Woodward brought the New South into historical focus in *Origins of the New South, 1877–1913* (Baton Rouge, 1951), where he discussed the breakdown of the antebellum-era aristocracy and rise of the middle class through a diversified economic structure no longer based on plantation wealth. The classic study is Paul M. Gaston, *The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking* (New York, 1970). Eric Foner and David Blight examine Reconstruction and its multiple social failures forming the foundation of the Lost Cause. Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (New York; 1988); Blight, *Race and Reunion*.

<sup>3</sup> Simon Mayer diary from 1862–1865, Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, and Breman Museum, Atlanta; Sizeler Family Collection, in author's possession; Aaron D. Anderson, *Builders of a New South: Merchants, Capital, and the Remaking of Natchez, 1865–1914* (Jackson, MS, 2013); Clara Lowenburg, "My Memories," unpublished typescript, in possession of author; Clara Lowenburg, *Aunt Sister's Book* (New York, 1929); Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia, SC, 2000); Margaret England Armbruster, *Samuel Ullman and 'Youth': The Life, The Legacy* (Tuscaloosa, 1993); Scott L. Langston, "Being Jewish in Columbus, Georgia: The Business, Politics, and Religion of Jacob and Isaac Moses, 1828–1890," *Southern Jewish History* 18 (2015): 1–61; Shari Rabin, *Jews on the Frontier: Religion and Mobility in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York, 2017), 6. The original Mayer diary is in two small, handwritten volumes, one held by the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati (AJA), and the other by the Ida Pearle and Joseph Cuba Archives for Southern Jewish History, Breman Museum, Atlanta, which has loaned its volume to the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience (MSJE) in New Orleans. The Sizelers are descendants of the Mayer family. Lowenburg's memoirs, a complete copy of which is in the author's possession, were partially reprinted in Wendy Machlovitz, ed., *Clara Lowenburg Moses: Memoir of a Southern Jewish Woman* (Jackson, MS, 2000).

<sup>4</sup> Ochs to Mrs. George R. Squire, corresponding secretary, United Daughters of the Confederacy, December 23, 1897, Ochs Papers, box 118, folder 12.

<sup>5</sup> Nancy J. Potts, "Unfilled Expectations: The Erosion of Black Political Power in Chattanooga, 1865–1911," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, 49 (Summer 1990): 112–28.

<sup>6</sup> The family has told the story of John Mayer changing his name from Mayer Levy to Jacob Mayer and leaving his Landau home in a dispute with his father, who wanted him to work as an apprentice shoemaker. He lived in Paris with his wealthy brother Rafael for a time before departing for the United States about 1833.

<sup>7</sup> One family account has Bertha Levy kneeling with a friend in protest next to the body of a revolutionary shot dead in the streets. Another has her dipping her handkerchief in the blood of a fallen revolutionary. An original of an advertisement in a Landau newspaper shows Joseph Levy, a merchant and tailor, auctioning household goods and clothing in May 1853; New Orleans Passenger Lists, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), M259, 1820–1902, 427; U.S. Passenger Lists, NARA, M259, New Orleans, 1820–1902, 406; Ochs Papers, box 20, folders 14, 15; box 128, folder 6; box 79, folder 15.

<sup>8</sup> Susan Tifft and Alex S. Jones, *The Trust: The Private and Powerful Family Behind The New York Times* (Boston, 2000); Ochs Papers, box 7, folder 15; box 79, folder 15; box 71, folders 8, 9, 10; box 28, folder 13; box 128, folders 6, 12, 13; box 126, folders 2, 3; box 29, folders 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13; box 29, folders 4, 5, 6.

<sup>9</sup> Ochs Papers, box 28, folder 13.

<sup>10</sup> *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies in the War of the Rebellion*, (Washington, DC, 1901). Ochs also wrote several paragraphs in his autobiography about the smuggling techniques he observed during his war service. Ochs Papers, box 28, folder 13.

<sup>11</sup> Adolph Ochs returned to Knoxville occasionally after his success had been established. Nonetheless, he considered Chattanooga his southern home. Susan Gilbert, "The Ochs Family in Knoxville, Tennessee," (master's thesis, University of Tennessee, 1980), accessed January 25, 2024, [https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk\\_gradthes/6356](https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gradthes/6356); Ochs Papers, box 79. In her book about Ochs, Doris Faber reprints a letter Ochs wrote August 18, 1896, to his mother shortly after he bought the *Times* in which he said: "If I have succeeded far beyond what is ordinarily man's lot, I owe much to the influence of a mother who is the noblest and purest of mortal beings. God bless her and preserve her for many years to see her son prove himself worthy of the good fortune which has befallen him." Doris Faber, *Printer's Devil to Publisher: Adolph S. Ochs of the New York Times* (New York, 1963), 58.

<sup>12</sup> *Chattanooga Daily Times*, May 21, 1886; Iphigene Ochs Sulzberger and Susan W. Dryfoos, *Iphigene: My Life and the New York Times; The Memoirs of Iphigene Ochs Sulzberger* (New York, 1981), 34. Washington to Ochs, Feb. 19, 1910, Ochs Papers, box 44, folder 20.

<sup>13</sup> Bertha Levy Ochs and her brother Oscar Levy were remembered during a ceremony in Chattanooga honoring the Confederate dead. She was described as a "great lover of the South" and he as a Confederate veteran, buried in San Francisco. The UDC also sent flowers in Bertha Levy's honor to the Mizpah Temple dedication in 1928. *Chattanooga Daily Times*, June 3, 1923; *Chattanooga Daily Times*, March 24, 1928; Tifft and Jones, *The Trust*, 19, 50; Ochs Papers, box 44, folder 20; box 113.

<sup>14</sup> Tifft and Jones, *The Trust*, 8; William M. Schuyler, ed., *The Life and Letters of George Washington Ochs-Oakes* (n.p., 1933), 390; Gilbert, "Ochs Family."

<sup>15</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, March 26, 1883; Gilbert, "Ochs Family"; Ochs Papers, box 52, folder 13.

<sup>16</sup> Ochs to Mrs. George R. Squire, December 23, 1897, Ochs Papers, box 118, folder 12; Caroline E. Janney, "'I Yield to No Man an Iota of My Convictions': Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park and the Limits of Reconciliation," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 2 (September 2012): 394–420. Blight suggests memory of the war had three interpretations that collided throughout the decades: the reconciliationist vision supporting how the country dealt with the war dead; the white supremacist vision that consumed the reconciliationist view through various means, including violence and terror; and the emancipationist vision, or the Black memory of the war and struggle for basic freedoms. He concludes that the emancipationist vision eventually was overwhelmed by "the forces of reconciliation." Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 2.

<sup>17</sup> Janney, "I Yield to No Man," 2. In *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation* (Chapel Hill, 2013), Janney argues that the desire for North-South détente was

more about reunion than reconciliation, that many Union veterans simply would neither accept a sanitized version of the war nor agree to reconciliation.

<sup>18</sup> Tift and Jones, *The Trust*, 8, 10; Potts, "Unfilled Expectations," 113; Ochs to Maj. Gen. David C. Shanks, October 22, 1924, Ochs Papers, box 133, folder 7; *Chattanooga Times*, March 24, 1883.

<sup>19</sup> Potts, "Unfilled Expectations"; Eric Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton, 2006), 58.

<sup>20</sup> Ochs to Mrs. George R. Squire, December 23, 1897, Ochs Papers, box 118, folder 12; Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 381, 361; Foner, *Reconstruction*, chapter 12. Blight points out: "The many myths and legends fashioned out of the reconciliationist vision provided the superstructure to Civil War memory, but the base was white supremacy in both its moderate and virulent forms."

<sup>21</sup> The date of the dinner is not mentioned, but it likely took place in 1928 when Ochs was in Birmingham on multicity stops through the South raising money for Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. Historians point out that this view of the KKK was often cited in post-Reconstruction years. *Birmingham News*, March 18, 1928; Ochs Papers, box 50, folder 13; *Knoxville Sunday Journal*, April 26, 1936. An Ochs contemporary, Bernard Baruch, shared a story in his memoir about discovering his father's KKK robe in the attic of his South Carolina home. He acknowledged the KKK's reputation but said "to children in the Reconstruction South . . . the original Klan . . . seemed a heroic band fighting to free the South from the debaucheries of carpetbag rule." Bernard M. Baruch, *My Own Story* (New York, 1957), 13.

<sup>22</sup> Tift and Jones, *The Trust*, 148; Ochs to Maj. Gen. David C. Shanks, October 22, 1924, Ochs Papers, box 133, folder 7.

<sup>23</sup> *World-News* (Roanoke, VA), January 14, 1927; Ochs Papers, box 109, folder 17. Ochs also sent twenty-five dollars to the UDC in 1907 to help with additional improvements to the Lexington cemetery. Ochs Papers, box 188, folder 12; *Chattanooga Daily Times*, February 13, 1907.

<sup>24</sup> Schuyler, *Life and Letters*, 337, 338, 356; *Chattanooga Daily Times*, June 2, 1930; Ochs Papers, box 28, folder 2.

<sup>25</sup> George Ochs changed his name to George Oakes (pronounced Oaks) after the sinking of the *RMS Lusitania* by German U-boats in 1915. He told his family that he was fearful of retribution because the name "Ochs" was German. Multiple sources mention Adolph Ochs's displeasure with his brother's decision, but with no apparent, lingering animosity between the two. Adolph Ochs, in his comments during an event in 1928 honoring his life and achievements in Chattanooga, remarked about the pronunciation of the family name. He said it is pronounced "Ochs, as in ox." Ochs Papers, boxes 50, 51; Schuyler, *Life and Letters*, 359; Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 31; Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*, 9.

<sup>26</sup> Gerald W. Johnson, *An Honorable Titan: A Biographical Study of Adolph S. Ochs* (Westport, CT, 1946), 81.

<sup>27</sup> Natchez area real estate and personal estate numbers appear in the U.S. Census. Eleven percent of the families show a total value of more than forty thousand dollars, about two million dollars in 2024; the Mayers are shown with a total of three thousand. Property records quadruple that number (\$390,000 in 2024), placing the family in the middle of the eighty-one merchant families like them. Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Adams

County, Mississippi. D. Clayton James writes that foreign-born residents comprised 31 percent of the 4,680 residents in 1850 and were Irish, German, English, Scottish, Scottish-Irish, and Italian. D. Clayton James, *Antebellum Natchez* (Baton Rouge, 1993), 164–66; Bonnie K. Goodman, *The Confederacy Safe Haven for American Jews: Jews in the South 1800–1865* (n.p., 2015); Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 19.

<sup>28</sup> Ochs Papers, box 12, folder 4; *Natchez Democrat*, January 19, 1913; Lowenburg, “My Memories”; Frank J. Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois: Merchant Culture in the South, 1820–1865* (Lexington, KY, 2006), 77. The Lowenburgs and Franks had a close relationship with Ochs and family. Clara visited frequently with the Ochs and traveled with the family. A brief local news story about Ochs indicates, “Mr. Ochs is a cousin of Mrs. A. Moses of this city,” a reference to her marriage to Abe Moses. Ochs and his wife visited Natchez at least once, the local newspaper writing about them, including a story quoting a letter from Adolph Ochs praising the community. *Natchez Democrat*, September 9, 1897, April 20, 1887, April 27, 1887; *Weekly Democrat*, May 11, 1887. In several of her published works, Joyce L. Broussard examines the role of Natchez women, many of them among the “nabob,” or wealthier families, and the unmarried, during and after the war. Still, she suggests that by assuming the role of mediators, Natchez women were able to successfully maneuver through difficult interactions after Natchez was occupied in 1863, eventually with five thousand Union soldiers. See Joyce L. Broussard, “Occupied Natchez, Elite Women, and the Feminization of the Civil War,” *The Journal of Mississippi History* 70 (2008): 179–207.

<sup>29</sup> Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 2, 122.

<sup>30</sup> Lowenburg, “My Memories”; Bertram W. Korn, “Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789–1865,” in *Jews and the Civil War: A Reader*, ed. Jonathan D. Sarna and Adam Mendelsohn (New York, 2010), 90. The history of Natchez and its families is recounted in numerous memoirs and diaries written by Natchez women. See Joyce Linda Broussard, *Stepping Lively in Place: The Not-Married, Free Women of Civil-War-Era Natchez* (Athens, GA, 2016) and Broussard, “Occupied Natchez.”

<sup>31</sup> Lowenburg, “My Memories”; Julius Weis, unpublished autobiography, in author’s possession; Machlovitz, *Clara Lowenburg Moses*, 18; Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, 1861–1865, Index to Compiled Military Service Records, NARA.

<sup>32</sup> Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge, 1988), 7. Blight promotes a similar theme in the South’s emergence postwar, suggesting that sectional reconciliation relied on a desire for social and economic progress—the “New South”—paired with “plantation legend” or the myth of the faithful slave. Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 220.

<sup>33</sup> Compiled Military Service Records, NARA (ages listed are for the men in 1862). Simon Mayer’s two brothers-in-law, Isaac Lowenburg and Henry Frank, remained in Natchez throughout the war. Testimony in the Contested Election of John R. Lynch vs. James R. Chalmers, from the Sixth Congressional District of Mississippi, U.S. House of Representatives Mis. Doc. No. 12, 47th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, DC, December 28, 1881), 45, 95.

<sup>34</sup> See Dianne Ashton, “Shifting Veils: Religion, Politics, and Womanhood in the Civil War Writings of American Jewish Women,” in Sarna and Mendelsohn, *Jews and the Civil War*, 279–306; David T. Morgan, “Eugenia Levy Phillips: The Civil War Experiences of a Southern

Jewish Woman," in *Jews of the South: Selected Essays from the Southern Jewish Historical Society*, ed. Samuel Proctor and Louis Schmier with Malcolm Stern (Macon, GA, 1984), 95–106; David T. Morgan, "Philip Phillips: Jurist and Statesman," in Proctor and Schmier, *Jews of the South*, 107–120.

<sup>35</sup> Mrs. Mayer's first name is spelled "Jeannette" in her 1818 birth record, on her daughter Emma's birth record filed in 1838, and in her obituary in 1883, but "Jannette" is on her gravestone. The *New Orleans Bee* reported on May 5, 1835: "MARRIED: On Wednesday evening 29th April, last by the Revd. Moses S. Reas of the Israelite Congregation. Jr. Jacob Myer to Miss Jeannette, daughter of Moses S. Reas. Also Mr. Penel Levy to Miss Minetta, second daughter of Moses S. Reas all of this city." A *ketubbah* for the Mayer couple is part of the Sizeler Family Collection. Teri D. Tillman cites a reference that Moses Ries listed his profession in French records as *chantre de la synagogue* (cantor of the synagogue). A notation in the family bible indicates the Mayers gave birth to a daughter, Caroline, in Natchez on December 14, 1841. Tillman believes it is likely the Mayers arrived in Natchez in 1841 based on census records showing John Mayer in New Orleans in 1840, but not listed in the Mississippi State census of Adams County taken between January and February 1841. Teri D. Tillman, e-mail to author, December 10, 2023; U.S. Passenger Lists, M259, 188, NARA, New Orleans; Brian J. Costello and Carol Mills-Nichol, *Dry Goods, Cotton and Cane: 250 Years of Jewish Life, Business and Agriculture in Pointe Coupée Parish, Louisiana* (Santa Maria, CA, 2022), 96; Bertram W. Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham, MA, 1969), 237; Teri D. Tillman, "Using Indirect Evidence and Linguistic Analysis to Trace Polin Ries of New Orleans," *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* (December 2011), 245–75; Passenger Lists Quarterly Abstracts, 1820–1875, December 1832, 12, NARA, New Orleans; Tillman, e-mail to author, February 6, 2024.

<sup>36</sup> In his autobiography, Julius Weis wrote that he paid eighteen thousand dollars for a Black man who was a barber. Mayer's first diary entry appeared on July 29, 1862. When he made his last diary entry nearly three years later, Mayer, his cousins, and their fellow soldiers in the Tenth Mississippi had walked three thousand miles, rode trains for 5,800 miles through eight states, and participated in significant battles at Atlanta, Chickamauga, Franklin, Jonesboro, Munfordville, Murfreesboro, Nashville, New Hope Church, and Resaca. Mayer's son Harold likely had the entire diary typed before he donated the original, leather-bound first volume, covering 1862 to 1863, to the AJA. The second original volume, covering 1863 to 1865, was donated to the Breman Museum and is on loan to the MSJE. Paulette Hunt French, *The 10th Mississippi Infantry Regiment, A Record of the Marches, Battles, Skirmishes, and the Men of the 10th* (Saline, MI, 2015) appears to be the only publication that liberally references Mayer's comments about the war. Mendelsohn points out that Jewish Confederates kept diaries more than their Union counterparts. Byrne's comments about diaries reflect Mayer's writings: "[T]he letters and diaries that onetime commercial men wrote tended to focus on a few broad topics, mainly the tedium of camp life, the spirit de corps of their units, and the battles they engaged in." Eighth Census of the United States, Slave Schedules, 1860, Adams County, Mississippi; Weis autobiography; U.S. Civil War Soldiers, 1861–1865, M232, roll 25, NARA; Adam D. Mendelsohn, *Jewish Soldiers in the Civil War: The Union Army* (New York, 2022); C. E. Dornbusch and Silas Felton, *Military Bibliography of the Civil War*, vols. 2, 3, 4 (New York, 1972); Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 137.

<sup>37</sup> *Natchez Daily Courier*, October 14, 1862. The “peculiar institution” is a term referencing slavery attributed to John C. Calhoun, a South Carolinian who served as a U.S. senator, secretary of state, and vice president. Calhoun defended the “peculiar labor” and “peculiar domestick institution” in the 1830s to portray southern plantation servitude as different from slavery in other countries, while having no impact on northern U.S. states. Historian Kenneth M. Stampp challenged benevolent portrayals of enslavement in *Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Antebellum South* (New York, 1956).

<sup>38</sup> Mayer gained the nickname “The Little Major” or “Too Short to Shoot” during the war. On April 12, 1864, Confederate Generals Nathan Bedford Forrest and James Chalmers attacked Fort Pillow, Henning, Tennessee, which was defended by white and Black troops. Confederate soldiers overran the Union ranks and, when they saw Black soldiers, massacred hundreds of them despite attempts by commanding officers to surrender. *Confederate Veterans Magazine* (January 1903), 18; Lowenburg, *Aunt Sister’s Book*; Mayer diary.

<sup>39</sup> Mendelsohn, *Jewish Soldiers*, 9, 137–89.

<sup>40</sup> Newspaper reports frequently mention soldiers who returned home during the fighting, then went back to their units. *Natchez Daily Courier*, September 10, 1862, August 16, 1862, June 12, 1863. William Ashley Vaughan, “Natchez During the Civil War” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern Mississippi, 2001), 15; Chancery Clerk, Adams County Mississippi, Deed Records v. NN, 1860–1866, image group 8318401, 330–31, accessed May 10, 2024, <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/252766>.

<sup>41</sup> Southern Claims Commission Master Index, 1871–1880, Adams County, Mississippi, 1875, Report 5, 42, NARA.

<sup>42</sup> See Ashton, “Shifting Veils,” 282.

<sup>43</sup> The word *deuce* has a number of connotations and can be used as reference to making trouble. A fellow soldier in the Tenth Mississippi, Isaac Gaillard Foster, mentioned the arrests in a letter to his father. Foster said the arrests “serve to make rebels only more rebellious.” Mayer diary; Lowenburg, *Aunt Sister’s Book*; Simon Mayer to his family, April 17, 1864, Simon Mayer Family Collection, Manuscripts Collection 815, box 1, Louisiana Research Collection, Tulane University; Isaac G. Foster to John Foster, April 17, 1864, Foster Family Correspondence, box 1, B:41, MSS 2184, Louisiana & Lower Mississippi Valley Collections (LLMVC), Louisiana State University. Ophelia Mayer was under the watch of the Union commanders in Natchez. She is listed in official war records with four other Natchez women who obtained supplies without having taken an oath of loyalty to the Union and traveled between Natchez and Vicksburg, likely with unauthorized supplies. No mention is made in the reports of any arrests, but the women were confined to Natchez. Major General N. J. T. Dana to Major C. T. Christensen, July 20, 1864, 186–93, and B. G. Farrar to Captain J. H. Odlin, July 20, 1864, 196–97, *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, ser. 1, vol. 39.

<sup>44</sup> In a letter from Oscar Levy to his family, quoted in a thesis by David J. Reiner, Levy mentions that he learned that Henry “has gone to Matamoros, Mexico, to make his fortune.” Lowenburg, “My Memories”; Lowenberg, *Aunt Sister’s Book*; David J. Reiner, “Oscar Levy: A Jew of the Confederacy” (rabbinical thesis, HUC-JIR, 2008), 24; Robert W. Delaney, “Matamoros, Port for Texas during the Civil War,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 58 (April 1955): 473–87.

<sup>45</sup> Reiner, “Oscar Levy,” 20–25.

<sup>46</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 9, 1909; Ochs Papers, box 20, folder 18.

<sup>47</sup> U.S. Civil War Soldiers, 1861–1865, NARA; Armbruster, *Samuel Ullman*, 15–18.

<sup>48</sup> According to Robert Rosen, about two thousand Jewish men fought for the Confederacy. Various sources state the death rate for all Civil War soldiers was one in five. While somewhat unusual, other families had as many or more soldiers than the Mayers fighting for the Confederacy. Julius Ochs, Simon Lehmann, and Oscar Levy returned from the war without being wounded. Ullman suffered significant hearing loss after a shell exploded near him during fighting at Antietam. Maurice Reis was captured and held as a prisoner of war in the Union brigade at Rock Island, Illinois, for almost two years until the war ended. Rosen, *Jewish Confederates*, 236; see Stanley L. Falk, “Divided Loyalties in 1861: The Decision of Major Alfred Mordecai,” in Sarna and Mendelsohn, *Jews and the Civil War*, 203, which outlines the challenges in another family with Union and Confederate loyalties; American Battlefield Trust, “Civil War Casualties: The Cost of War: Killed, Wounded, Captured or Missing,” accessed March 18, 2024, <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/civil-war-casualties>; Compiled Confederate Military Service Records, NARA.

<sup>49</sup> Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 2; Vaughan, *Natchez During the Civil War*, 378.

<sup>50</sup> *Natchez Courier*, July 7, 1865; Anderson, *Builders of a New South*, 41, 54.

<sup>51</sup> Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865–1913* (New York, 1987), 6.

<sup>52</sup> Simon Mayer to Robert Mayer, May 15, 1887, Sizeler Family Collection. Simon Mayer’s brother, born in October 1862 one month after the Union bombardment and surrender of Natchez, was named Joseph Eggleston Johnson Mayer, sharing the same three names as a famed Confederate general.

<sup>53</sup> Mayer also served with General Patton Anderson, who cited his work in an August 1864 report on the Battle of Jonesboro, GA. Sharp to Mayer, August 11, 1902, and November 21, 1904, Sizeler Family Collection; Southern Historical Society Papers, vol. 4, 1876–1959 (Wilmington, NC, 1992), 202; Mike Bunn, “Jacob Hunter Sharp,” Mississippi Encyclopedia, accessed March 18, 2024, <https://mississippiencyclopedia.org/entries/jacob-hunter-sharp>.

<sup>54</sup> *Vicksburg Herald*, July 27, 1881; *Natchez Democrat*, May 14, 1882; *Vicksburg Daily Commercial*, June 9, 1882; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Issaquena County, Mississippi; House of Representatives, Mis. Doc. 12, 47th Congress; *Jackson Weekly Clarion*, June 13, 1872; *Weekly Democrat*, October 13, 1880; *Natchez Daily Commercial*, July 19, 1880.

<sup>55</sup> *Natchez Democrat*, June 8, 1908; “Lynch, John Roy,” History, Art & Archives: United States House of Representatives, accessed March 15, 2024, <https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/17259>; *The Clarion* (Jackson, MS), February 3, 1881.

<sup>56</sup> Mayer to Baker, December 13, 1897, and November 23, 1898, Baker to Mayer, July 10, 1897, Sizeler Family Collection; *Natchez Democrat*, January 20, 1903; Rosen, *Jewish Confederates*, 393; Mary B. Poppenheim, et. al., *The History of the United Daughters of the Confederacy* (Raleigh, NC, 1956); Bruce Collins, “Confederate Identity and the Southern Myth Since the Civil War,” in *Legacy of Disunion: The Endearing Significance of the American Civil War*, ed. Susan-Mary Grant and Peter J. Parish (Baton Rouge, 2003), 33; Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 272.

<sup>57</sup> Benjamin Raphael Mayer is the author’s maternal great-grandfather. Susan T. Falck, *Remembering Dixie: The Battle to Control Historical Memory in Natchez, Mississippi, 1865–1941*



(Jackson, MS, 2019), 75, 90; "Roll of Adams Light Infantry," accessed March 19, 2024, <http://www.natchezbelle.org/adams-ind/a-lt-inf.htm>.

<sup>58</sup> The CMA was a men's organization, with women as honorary members. The memorial still stands, protected by Mississippi law that prevents removal of Confederate memorials. After efforts to remove the memorial failed, local leaders decided to install a memorial to Black Civil War soldiers. The memorial has not yet been completed. Falck, *Remembering Dixie*, 75, 90; Anderson, *Builders of a New South*, 166; *Natchez Democrat*, May 15, 1869; *Weekly Democrat*, April 20, 1887; Confederate Memorial Association (Natchez, MS) Minute Book, 1887–1923, Manuscript Collections, Z2269.000/S/box 1, Mississippi Department of Archives and History; Karen L. Cox; *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville, FL, 2019), 1; *Natchez Democrat*, June 5, 1883, April 14, 1899, June 6, 1899, and September 8, 1883; *Natchez Bulletin*, December 27, 1899; Lowenburg, "My Memories"; *Weekly Democrat*, April 20, 1881, March 30, 1887, August 15, 1887, August 21, 1887, and January 14, 1899.

<sup>59</sup> Stephen J. Whitfield, "The Braided Identity of Southern Jewry," *American Jewish History* 77 (March 1988): 363; John Shelton Reed, "Ethnicity in the South: Observations on the Acculturation of Southern Jews," in *Turn to the South, Essays on Southern Jewry*, ed. Nathan M. Kaganoff and Melvin I. Urofsky (Charlottesville, 1979), 137; Dianne Ashton, "Shifting Veils"; Anton Hieke, *Jewish Identity in the Reconstruction South: Ambivalence and Adaptation* (Berlin and Boston, 2013).

<sup>60</sup> Founded in 1843, B'nai Israel is the oldest Jewish congregation in Mississippi, according to its website maintained in partnership with the Institute of Southern Jewish Life (ISJL). The Sizeler Family Collection holds an undated, handwritten copy of Mayer's remarks on his company letterhead. Mayer said in his remarks that his predecessor as synagogue president resigned, thus the relevance of the story with General Joseph Davis, who died in New Orleans on Dec. 6, 1889. Ullman said, "It shall be our duty and pleasure to make this sacred spot a shrine to all those who may wish to drink of the waters of a pure and non-sectarian creed. By our actions and deeds we will endeavor to teach and perpetuate the principle that God is the Father of us, that all men are brethren." Jewish History of Natchez, accessed January 7, 2024, <http://www.natcheztemple.org/jewish-history-of-natchez.html>; Sizeler Family Collection; *Natchez Democrat*, March 14, 1872; Armbruster, *Samuel Ullman*.

<sup>61</sup> The Hebrew Ladies Aid Association minutes include mention of a \$2,600 gift it raised during a dance in support of the local Jewish burial society. *Natchez Weekly Courier*, February 12, 1870; Temple B'nai Israel Records, MS-540, AJA; Mark K. Bauman, "Southern Jewish Women and Their Social Service Organizations," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 22 (Spring 2003): 34–78; Lowenburg, "My Memories"; Jennifer A. Stollman, *Daughters of Israel, Daughters of the South: Southern Jewish Women and Identity in the Antebellum and Civil War South* (Brighton, MA, 2013), 40. See also Karla Goldman: *Beyond the Synagogue Gallery: Finding a Place for Women in American Judaism* (Boston, 2000); *Natchez Democrat*, February 2, 1870, March 7, 1872, December 8, 1895, November 6, 1898, November 20, 1899, and March 4, 1900.

<sup>62</sup> Leonard Dinnerstein, *The Leo Frank Case* (New York, 1968), 91; Tift and Jones, *The Trust*, 93–94; Ochs Papers, box 84, folder 26, box 57, folder 14, box 12, folders 5–7; *Chattanooga Daily Times*, March 24, 1928. For extensive media coverage of the Frank case see Eugene Levy, "'Is the Jew a White Man?': Press Reaction to the Leo Frank Case, 1913–1915," *Phylon* 35 (Second Quarter

1974): 212–22. For a detailed examination of Ochs's anti-Zionist beliefs see Jerold S. Auerbach, *Print to Fit: The New York Times, Zionism and Israel, 1896–2016* (Brighton, MA, 2019).

<sup>63</sup> Tift and Jones, *The Trust*, 51; Sandra Berman, "Leo Frank Revisited: New Resources on an Old Subject," *Southern Jewish History* 13 (2010): 5–12; Rudolph Franks to Ochs, December 17, 1914; Franks to Ochs, January 1, 1915; Franks to Ochs, October 15, 1914, Ochs Papers, box 4, folder 22, box 8b, box 84, folder 26–27.

<sup>64</sup> A speech Ochs gave in 1925 outlines his fervent support for Reform Judaism and his belief that Judaism existed only as a religion. Tift and Jones, *The Trust*, 51–52; *Chattanooga Daily Times*, March 24, 1928, April 20, 1925; Ochs Papers, box 84, folders 26–27.

<sup>65</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, December 10, 1923; Leonard Dinnerstein, "A Note on Southern Attitudes toward Jews," *Jewish Social Studies* 32 (January 1970): 43–49; Hieke, "Introduction," *Jewish Identity*; Anton Hieke, "The Transregional Mobility of Jews from Macon, Ga., 1860–1880," *American Jewish History* 97 (January 2013): 21–38; *Weekly Democrat*, February 29, 1895, April 1, 1891.

<sup>66</sup> Byrne, *Becoming Bourgeois*, 13. Michael R. Cohen explores the networks merchants such as the Mayer family were a part of before and especially after the Civil War in *Cotton Capitalists: American Jewish Entrepreneurship in the Reconstruction Era* (New York, 2017).

<sup>67</sup> Weis was not averse to controversy, paying a twenty-five dollar fine for violating Jim Crow laws in 1902 when he was seventy-six years old. He refused to give up his seat reserved for Black passengers on a New Orleans streetcar, telling the authorities all the seats were taken in the car reserved for whites. Weis's prominence was such that his arrest was reported in the *New York Times* and other newspapers. Anderson, *Builders of a New South*, 54; Michael Wayne, *The Reshaping of Plantation Society: The Natchez District, 1860–1880* (Baton Rouge, 1983), 165–66; T. Butler King Papers, file 443, p. 23, Southern Historical Collection–Southern Folklife Collection, University of North Carolina; Armbruster, *Samuel Ullman*, 46–65; *Natchez Democrat*, September 21, 1872; Weis autobiography; *Natchez Democrat*, January 4, 1910, December 2, 1902; *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, January 3, 1910, September 18, 1899, October 9, 1906; *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, September 18, 1899; *Natchez Weekly Democrat*, June 6, 1900.

<sup>68</sup> Jacob Morrow-Spitzer, "'Free from Proscription and Prejudice': Politics and Race in the Election of one Jewish Mayor in Late Reconstruction Louisiana," *Southern Jewish History* 22 (2019): 4–19; Foner, *Reconstruction*, 853; Anderson, *Builders of a New South*, 211–20; Stuart Rockoff, "Carpetbaggers, Jacklegs, and Bolting Republicans: Jews in Reconstruction Politics in Ascension Parish, Louisiana," *American Jewish History* 97 (January 2013): 39–64; Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 98–140.

<sup>69</sup> *Natchez Democrat*, December 10, 1882, December 12, 1882; *Weekly Democrat*, January 5, 1887; Mark K. Bauman, "Factionalism and Ethnic Politics in Atlanta: The German Jews from the Civil War through the Progressive Era," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 82 (Fall 1998): 533–58; Anderson, *Builders of a New South*, 59, 127, 142; James, *Antebellum Natchez*, 182. For a list of Jewish mayors of southern towns, see "Southern Jewish Mayors Throughout History," accessed March 18, 2024, <https://www.isjl.org/jewish-mayors-in-the-south.html>.

<sup>70</sup> Armbruster, *Samuel Ullman*, 15; *Louisville Courier-Journal*, May 6, 1863, September 11, 1866, April 25, 1867.

<sup>71</sup> Carl V. Harris, "Stability and Change in Discrimination Against Black Public Schools: Birmingham, Alabama, 1871–1931" *Journal of Southern History* 51 (August 1985): 375–416.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Birmingham Post-Herald*, November 7, 1897; Armbrester, *Samuel Ullman*, 38; "Introduction," in *Jews of the South*, ed. Leonard Dinnerstein and Mary Dale Palsson (Baton Rouge, 1973), 10.

<sup>74</sup> Armbrester, *Samuel Ullman*, 43.

<sup>75</sup> Harris, "Stability and Change," 388; Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 258; Foner, *Reconstruction*, 21.

<sup>76</sup> *Birmingham Age-Herald*, September 7, 1900; *Natchez Weekly Democrat*, February 9, 1887; Lowenburg, "My Memories"; Ochs Papers, box 7, folder 15; *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, November 21, 1905; *Savannah Tribune*, November 25, 1905; *Columbus Dispatch*, December 7, 1905; *Natchez Democrat*, November 21, 1905; Adams County Transcriptions of Original Signed Physicians Certificates and Hospital Record Cards, 1903–1908, accessed March 19, 2024, <http://www.natchezbelle.org/adams-ind/hospital.htm>.

<sup>77</sup> On August 30, 1987, Adolph Ochs's grandson, Arthur Ochs "Punch" Sulzberger, met the author and his family in their hometown of Thibodaux, LA, at the dedication of a new building housing the local newspaper, the *Daily Comet*. The New York Times Newspaper Group owned the paper, purchasing it from the company that bought it years earlier from the author's father.