

THE STORY OF BRITISH JEWRY IN THE WAR

BY THE REV. MICHAEL ADLER, D. S. O., S. C. F., B. A.

Thou hast given us home and freedom, Mother England,
Thou hast let us live again,
Free and fearless, 'midst thy free and fearless children,
Sharing with them, as one people, grief and gladness,
Joy and pain.

For the Jew has heart and hand, our Mother England,
And they both are thine to-day—
Thine for life and thine for death—yea, thine forever!
Wilt thou take them as we give them, freely, gladly?
England, say!

VOLUNTARY ENLISTMENT

The sentiment conveyed in these stirring lines by Mrs. Lucas represents to the full the spirit in which the Jews of the British empire came forward to play their part in the struggle that commenced in August, 1914. The number of men of our faith then attached to the regular branches of his Majesty's forces was comparatively small, about fifty being known to be in the Royal Navy, four hundred officers and men in the Regular Army, and about six hundred in the Special Reserve and Territorial Forces. In response to the appeal for volunteers, Jews came from all classes and from all parts of the world to uphold England's cause, and the lists published from time to time in the *Jewish Chronicle*, with the names of officers and men who were on Active Service before conscription came into force, gave a total of about 10,000, of whom 1,140 were officers. In the British Dominions (Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa), in the British West

Indies, and other colonies, the proportion of Jews who enlisted was very high. In Australia, for example, out of a total Jewish population of 19,000, there were 1,800 enlistments and 250 deaths in action. Of the families of English birth, the proportion of voluntary enlistment was something approaching 90 per cent of the available young men, whilst British-born sons of alien immigrants from countries like Russia and Poland contributed a large number to the ranks. Thus, from the well-known Jews' Free School in the East End of London, some 1,200 old boys joined up, and the Jewish Houses at the public schools of Clifton and Cheltenham can point to the proud record of practically every one of their present and past pupils of military age having taken a commission. It is further striking evidence of the enthusiasm of the English Jews in joining the forces at the outbreak of the war that the Jewish Lads' Brigade, which both in London and the provinces trained Jewish boys in military exercises without being regarded as a part of the army, contributed eighty officers out of a total of ninety young men who were serving as officers of the Brigade at the time.

CHAPLAINS

As soon as it was known that so many men joined up, active steps were taken to safeguard their religious welfare. An abridged prayer-book was prepared by the Rev. Michael Adler, the senior Jewish chaplain, for the use of sailors and soldiers. This book was afterwards enlarged under the editorship of the chief rabbi, and widely circulated, 101,000 copies in all being printed, of which about 11,000 were despatched to the troops of the United States, in France. Subsequently, an additional chaplain, the Rev. S. Lipson, was appointed,

and a number of ministers throughout the United Kingdom were designated by the War Office to take charge of the spiritual interests of the men in the various camps scattered throughout the country. Services were regularly held, and hospital visitation carefully organized. In January, 1915, the first Jewish chaplain to proceed on active service with the British Army went to the front in the person of the Rev. Michael Adler, to organize religious work among the scattered Jewish troops in the field. As a distinctive sign he wore on his uniform the Shield of David, which badge was officially accepted by the War Office in place of a cross, both on uniforms and as a memorial over the graves of Jewish dead. During the course of the war, sixteen other chaplains were appointed, and they served in various areas, whilst two chaplains accompanied the Australian forces in Gallipoli and France. The Very Reverend the Chief Rabbi (Dr. J. H. Hertz) visited the bases and front areas of France and Belgium in 1915 as the guest of Field Marshal Lord French.

JEWISH WAR SERVICES COMMITTEE

Until the middle of 1916, the Visitation Committee of the United Synagogue of London was officially recognized by the War Office as the authority in matters relating to Jews serving in the forces; but, owing to the remarkable growth of the work in all directions, a special body representative of all sections of the community was formed and called the Jewish War Services Committee, the chairman of which was Mr. Edmund Sebag-Montefiore, C. B. E., and the vice-chairman was Major Lionel de Rothschild, M. P., O. B. E. Major W. Schonfeld was appointed officer in charge of administration, and a large amount of valuable work was performed

in the interests of the Jews in the services. Towards the close of the war, the Central Council for the Welfare of Jewish Members of the Forces was established under the chairmanship of Mr. R. Waley Cohen, and a Jewish branch of the Y. M. C. A. opened in West London. In the general work of the Y. M. C. A., both at home and abroad, English Jewish communities took an active part, considerable sums being raised both in Australia and in the United Kingdom, and several huts being contributed. Lieutenant Harold Boas, of Australia, was officially attached to the Y. M. C. A. work in England and in France, with especial regard to the needs of the Jewish soldier.

HOSPITALS

Mention should also be made of the special work carried on in connection with the care of the sick and wounded. In addition to a number of physicians and nurses serving, a hospital called Beech House Military Hospital was organized in North-West London, and was entirely staffed by Jewish ladies and gentlemen under the direction of Dr. M. A. Dutch, Mrs. Marsden (Royal Red Cross Decoration), and Mrs. F. Davidson, M. B. E. Lady Samuel, the wife of Sir Marcus Samuel, Bart., placed her country residence, "The Mote," Maidstone, Kent, at the disposal of the authorities as a military hospital, and a Convalescent Home, established near Brighton by Mr. John Howard, was also utilized for a similar purpose. Towards the end of the war, Mrs. Bischoffsheim opened "Tudor House," Hampstead, London, as a military hospital for Jewish soldiers, with fifty beds—an institution which performed most valuable service.

RECORDS

In the early battles of the war Jews who were in the Royal Navy and the Regular Army took part, and on one of the first ships sunk in the North Sea, H. M. S. *Pathfinder*, Stoker William Stern, who had been a sailor for some time, was drowned. Lieutenant R. L. Q. Henriques, of the 1st (Queen's) Royal West Surrey Regiment, was the first Jewish officer to lay down his life at the battle of the Valley of the Aisne, in September, 1914, and to commence that long and sad casualty list which is now on record as evidence of the manner in which the Jews of England and the empire played their part.

The record of the number of Jews who were on active service throughout the whole war will never be accurately known, owing to the difficulty of compiling complete lists. The military authorities rendered, from time to time, both abroad and in the United Kingdom, nominal rolls of Jews who were serving, and, in addition, the chaplains and officiating clergymen, in the course of their ministrations, discovered many other men; but the experience of all associated with the work showed that only two-thirds, if as large a proportion, of the actual number of men on service ever became known. All figures, therefore, relative to the number of men in the army, number of casualties, number of honors and distinctions gained, must be qualified by this knowledge.

The total Jewish population of the United Kingdom is computed at 275,000. To these figures must be added the numbers in the Dominions from which men were recruited, a further 145,000, making, in all, a rough total of 420,000 for the British empire, including women and children. Among the male population, a large proportion of Jews of alien birth were not available as soldiers, so that the exact total of acceptable

men cannot be accurately ascertained. As far as existing records testify, some 50,000 Jews, from the beginning to the end of the war, were in some branch of his Majesty's forces. The manner in which Jewish officers and men were distributed among the thousand and one units of the forces renders the task of compiling exact records an unusually complicated one. The battalions and divisions recruited from the large centres of Jewish population in the United Kingdom, as London, Manchester, Liverpool, and Leeds, naturally contained the largest number of Jewish representatives, but they were also to be found scattered by ones and twos in every kind of formation.

JEWISH UNITS

In the early part of the war, the War Office gave facilities for an attempt to be made to enlist Jews to serve together in units on the principle of the "Pals" battalions which were so popular in some of the provincial towns, but the result was not a success. In Egypt, however, a unit was recruited, early in 1915, to be sent to the expedition in the Dardanelles, and, under the able leadership of a non-Jewish officer, Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. Patterson, D. S. O., this body of men, about 1,000 strong, was known as the Zion Mule Corps, and performed extremely valuable service in taking up supplies and ammunition to the forces on the Gallipoli peninsula. These Jews wore the badge of the Shield of David on their uniforms, and were recruited both from the Palestinian colonists, who had taken refuge in Egypt, and from among the Egyptian Jews. After they had completed their service, in January, 1916, the corps was disbanded.

Colonel Patterson was also prominently identified as the first commanding officer with the successful raising in England

of the "Judeans," or Jewish Units of the Royal Fusiliers, which came into existence early in 1917. In their desire to enlist Jews of Russian birth in the British army, the Government accepted a proposal for these men and other Jews to be placed in a regiment together, with special privileges as regards the practices of their faith, and later decided to send these units to Egypt and Palestine. In all, three battalions, the 38th, 39th, and 40th Royal Fusiliers, were despatched to the East. Over 4,500 men belonged to the "Judeans," including some 1,000 Russian Jews recruited from the United States, who were stimulated by their Zionist ideals to join the British army and fight for the possession of Palestine. The 38th and 39th battalions arrived in time to take part in the final advance, by which General Sir Edmund Allenby concluded the conquest of Palestine in September, 1918, and acquitted themselves with great distinction. The 39th battalion was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel E. Margolin, D. S. O., who had served as an officer in the Australian forces, and the 40th battalion was under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel F. D. Samuel, D. S. O., who, after taking part in some of the heaviest fighting in France and Belgium, was transferred from the 3rd London Regiment to take charge of this section of the Jewish Unit.

CASUALTIES AND HONORS

The large majority of Jews wearing his Majesty's uniform thus remained scattered in smaller or larger groups, and fought side by side with their comrades of other faiths. The record of casualties demonstrates that, whilst the largest number of deaths, over 1,800, occurred in France and Belgium, Jews took part in the fighting everywhere, and there was

scarcely a unit in the whole navy, army, and air force which did not include some Jews on its strength.

The casualties, as known up to the date of this article, number:

Officers Fallen in Action or Died in Active Service	316
Non-Commissioned Officers and Men.....	2008
Wounded and Missing	6350
Total	8674

The decorations and honors awarded for services rendered were, as far as have been ascertained, as follows:

Victoria Cross	5
Distinguished Service Order	50
Military Crosses	240
Distinguished Conduct Medals	70
Military Medals	250
Mentioned in Despatches	260
Foreign Honors and other Distinctions	230
Total	1105

THE VICTORIA CROSSES

The official records of the exploits of the five V. C.'s are as follows:

LIEUTENANT FRANK ALEXANDER DE PASS, late 34th Prince Albert Victor's Own Poona Horse.—“ For conspicuous bravery near Festubert on November 24th, 1914, in entering a German sap and destroying a traverse in the face of the enemy's bombs and for subsequently rescuing, under heavy fire, a wounded man who was lying exposed in the open. Lieutenant de Pass lost his life on this day in a second attempt to capture the aforesaid sap, which had been re-occupied by the enemy.”

No. 168a. CORPORAL ISSY SMITH (SHMULOVITCH) 1st Battalion, Manchester Regiment.—“ For most conspicuous bravery

on 26th April, 1915, near Ypres when he left his company on his own initiative and went well forward towards the enemy's position to assist a severely wounded man, whom he carried a distance of 250 yards to safety, whilst exposed the whole time to heavy machine gun and rifle fire. Subsequently Corporal Smith displayed great gallantry when casualties were very heavy in voluntarily assisting to bring in many more wounded men throughout the whole day, and attending them with the greatest devotion to duty regardless of personal risk."

PRIVATE LEONARD KEYSOR, 1st Battalion, Australian Imperial Force.—"For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty at Lone Point trenches in the Gallipoli Peninsula. On August 7th, 1915, he was in a trench which was being heavily bombed by the enemy. He picked up two live bombs and threw them back at the enemy at great risk to his own life, and continued throwing bombs, although himself wounded, thereby saving a portion of the trench which it was important to hold. On August 8th, at the same place, Pte. Keysor successfully bombed the enemy out of a position from which a temporary mastery over his own trench had been obtained, and was again wounded. Although marked for hospital he declined to leave, and volunteered to throw bombs for another Company which had lost its bomb throwers. He continued to bomb the enemy till the situation was relieved."

No. 18105. PRIVATE J. WHITE (WEISS), 6th King's Own Royal Lancs. Regiment.—"During an attempt to cross the river Diala (Mesopotamia), he saw the two pontoons ahead of him come under machine gun fire, with disastrous results. When his own pontoon had reached mid-stream, with every man except himself either dead or wounded, finding that he was unable to control the pontoon, Pte. White promptly tied

a telephone wire to the pontoon, jumped overboard, and towed it to the shore, thereby saving an Officer's life, and bringing to land the rifles and equipment of the other men in the boat, who were either dead or dying."

CAPTAIN ROBERT GEE, M. C., Royal Fusiliers.—"For most conspicuous bravery, initiative and determination when an attack by a strong enemy force pierced our line on November 30th, 1917, and captured a brigade headquarters and ammunition dump. Capt. Gee finding himself a prisoner killed one of the enemy with his spiked stick, and succeeded in escaping. He then organized a party of the Brigade Staff, with which he attacked the enemy fiercely closely followed and supported by two companies of infantry. By his own personal bravery and prompt action he, aided by his orderlies, cleared the locality. Capt. Gee established a defensive flank on the outskirts of the village, then finding that an enemy machine gun was still in action, with a revolver in each hand, and followed by one man, he rushed and captured the gun, killing eight of the crew. At this time he was wounded but refused to have the wound dressed until he was satisfied that the defence was organized."

ON SEA

British Jews bore their full share in the operations in every quarter of the globe. On sea, while their number in the navy was not large, they took part in every action of importance, and Jewish men are known to have served in every kind of vessel afloat and under the sea. In the famous naval operations for the blocking of Zeebrugge and Ostend, which took place in the spring of 1918, several Jewish officers and men took part, and Lieutenant-Commander R. Saunders was one of the seven officers who obtained the D. S. O. in recognition of

gallantry on that occasion. In the fighting around the British Isles—in the Heligoland Bight—the battle of Jutland (where a Jewish warrant officer was yeoman of signals on board the admiral's flagship), the battle of Coronel, the battle of Falkland Islands, and in the Adriatic Sea, representatives of Jewry are known to have had a share. In the attack on the town of Akaba in the Red Sea, early in 1915, a Jewish warrant officer, M. M. Bright of H. M. S. *Minerva*, was in charge of one of the landing parties that took the town. In the landing of the Dardanelles, Admiral de Robeck, in the course of his despatch describing the stirring fights at Gallipoli on April 25 and 26, 1915, recommended, for gallant service in action, a Jewish sailor from the East End of London, by name Lewis Jacobs, belonging to H. M. S. *Lord Nelson*. The admiral reported that "Jacobs took his boat into V Beach, unaided, after all the remainder of the crew and the troops were killed or wounded. When last seen, Jacobs was standing and endeavoring to pole the cutter to the shore. Whilst thus employed, he was killed." On board the cruiser H. M. S. *Sydney*, when it destroyed the German raider, the *Emden*, off the Cocos Islands in November, 1914, were two Jewish sailors, and in the Homeric struggle, when the torpedo-boat H. M. S. *Broke*, together with the *Swift*, defeated the enemy flotilla in the Downs in April, 1917, Jewish sailors were in action.

Among the other naval duties undertaken by Jews was that of mine-laying and mine-sweeping, submarine work, and the Royal Naval Air Service, which, later on, was amalgamated with the Royal Air Force.

ON LAND

The operation on land likewise saw Jews in every part of the war area. In the advance on German South-West Africa, General Botha had under his command a considerable number of Jews from Cape Town, Natal, and the Transvaal, many of whom afterwards took part in the fighting in German East Africa and later came to Europe with the South African Brigade. In the forces from the Dominions, the officer to reach the highest rank was Lieutenant-General Sir John Monash, K. C. B., etc., etc., who first landed in Egypt as a colonel, in 1914. Before the war he had been an engineer, and served as an officer in the Australian military forces. Subsequently he took part in the operations in the Dardanelles, arriving in France as a brigadier-general, in 1916, was given command of and trained the 3rd Australian Division in England as major-general, and accompanied his division to France. He achieved renown for his work in the battle of Messines in June, 1917, in which his division played a prominent part, and in April, 1918, when General Sir William Birdwood was transferred from the Australian Corps to take command of the Fifth Army at a most critical period of the war, Sir John Monash was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general and placed in command of the Australian forces on the western front. He led his men from victory to victory in the days from August 8th, when the British Army advanced and drove back the enemy, until the close of the war, receiving many distinctions, both from the British and foreign armies, for his successful leadership. The only other Jewish officer to reach the rank of general was Brigadier-General H. J. Seligman, D. S. O., who was a regular officer attached to the Royal Artillery and went through the war from beginning to end.

Many other officers of high rank who played a prominent part in the various campaigns deserve to be mentioned. Lieutenant-Colonel E. H. L. Beddington, D. S. O., M. C., who first proceeded to France in August, 1914, as a captain in the 16th (The Queen's) Lancers, went through all the early fighting, and was afterwards appointed staff officer to the Fifth Army. Lieutenant-Colonel C. J. Elkan, D. S. O., of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, was also a regular officer who fought at Mons and later became a well-known staff officer, first at one of the big bases and, later on, at general headquarters. Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. Levey, D. S. O., had originally been in the Regular Army as a private in the Scots Guards, and had seen active service in South Africa. At the beginning of the war he was sergeant-major to the 3rd Scots Guards. He was given a commission in the Gordon Highlanders, but, before proceeding to his battalion, was appointed chief instructor to the Royal Naval Division which saw active service in the Dardanelles, at Antwerp, and on the western front. Colonel Levey became a commandant of a corps school in France, and was given command of a battalion, 13th Royal Sussex Regiment, late in 1917, and won the D. S. O. in the battle for the Paschendale Ridge.

Other officers of similar rank who gained distinction were Lieutenant-Colonel H. E. Cohen, D. S. O., of the Australian Artillery; Lieutenant-Colonel Stanley G. Cohen, who led the 5th King's Liverpools into action; Lieutenant-Colonel H. J. Solomon, M. C., of the Army Service Corps, who was in charge of the main base depôt for the supply of the army in the field at Havre and, later on, at Salonica; Lieutenant-Colonel F. H. Kisch, D. S. O., and Lieutenant-Colonel R. H. Joseph, D. S. O., in the Royal Engineers; Lieutenant-Colonel

H. Weisberg, D. S. O., of the City of London Yeomanry, who fought in Gallipoli and Palestine; Lieutenant-Colonel W. H. Samuel of the 11th Middlesex Regiment, and Lieutenant-Colonel C. Beddington who was in command of the Divisional Mounted Troops of the 20th Division in France. Lieutenant-Colonel C. S. Myers, Royal Army Medical Corps, was one of the principal medical officers in France engaged on work in connection with nervous diseases and shell-shock, whilst Lieutenant-Colonel B. E. Myers was in charge of the hospitals of the New Zealand forces in the United Kingdom. Lieutenant-Colonel R. Q. Henriques was in charge of the engineers in the 60th London Division, both in France and Palestine. The post of divisional officer of signals and later that of principal signal officer of the Independent Air Force was held by Lieutenant-Colonel J. Waley Cohen, D. S. O., of the 16th (Queen's Westminster) London Regiment, whose brother Lieutenant-Colonel C. Waley Cohen, C. B. E., Royal Army Service Corps, held an important post in the Salonica forces. Another example of an officer to rise from the ranks and become a lieutenant-colonel of a battalion was J. S. Miller, D. S. O., who later was appointed in charge of the depôt of the Jewish battalions in training in England.

Major Sir Philip Sassoon, Bart., M. P., C. M. G., of the Royal East Kent Yeomanry, proceeded to the front as private military secretary of the first Field Marshal of the British Army in France, Lord French, and held the same important office throughout the whole war to Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig. Among the men to whom was due the invention of the tank, which weapon played so important a part in bringing about a successful issue to the war, was Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Albert G. Stern, K. B. E., C. M. G., a member of the well-

known banking firm of Stern Brothers, and the first group of tanks to be sent into action in September, 1916, were painted by the brush of Lieutenant-Colonel S. J. Solomon, the renowned artist of the Royal Academy. Lieutenant-Colonel Solomon was sent on a special mission to develop the art of *camouflage* at the front, and he spent the whole of the period of the war in this work. He also established a school of instruction for this purpose in London. Another artist to proceed to France at the invitation to the War Office was Professor W. Rothenstein who was commissioned to paint pictures of the war area for the Government.

Among the best-known families of the community to send sons into the war were the Rothschilds, of whom all three sons of Mr. Leopold de Rothschild were on duty. Major Evelyn de Rothschild fell at the head of his men of the Royal Bucks Yeomanry in a charge in the campaign in Palestine, and Captain Anthony G. de Rothschild of the same regiment was wounded in action at Gallipoli. The Sassoon family contributed ten officers, three of whom won the M. C. The family of Sir Isidore Spielmann, C. M. G., and his relatives who were engaged in the war number, in all, forty-one, who were all commissioned officers, and of whom Captain H. I. L. Spielmann, of the Manchester Regiment, was killed in action at Gallipoli; two others fell in France, and twelve were wounded. The Beddington family contributed in all thirty-seven members, and of the sons of Mrs. Arthur Sebag-Montefiore all five held commissions. Captain Robert, the eldest, of the Royal Horse Artillery, won the D. S. O. and M. C., and Captain William became a staff officer to the Heavy Batteries in France. Sir Charles Henry, Bart., M. P., lost his only son, Lieutenant Cyril Henry, Worcester Regiment; Sir Lionel

Abrahams, of the India Office, suffered the same bereavement with his son in the Coldstream Guards, and the second son of Sir Marcus Samuel, Bart., Lieutenant Gerald Samuel, fell at the battle of Messines. The elder son, Captain Walter Samuel, gained the M.C., and was a staff officer.

Jewish officers occupied important posts in the administration of the army, both at home and abroad, serving as town majors, railway transport officers, and interpreters, and were especially helpful in connection with intelligence work. Officers and men alike won distinction by their gallant conduct in such hard-fought fields as the battles of Flanders and the Somme, in the Dardanelles, and in Mesopotamia, and some were among the prisoners at the fall of Kut. Many were met by the chaplains in the expeditionary forces in Italy and on the Salonica front. Others were present at the capture of Bagdad, whilst in Palestine, in addition to the men in the Judean Units, there was a considerable body of Jewish soldiers in the 60th London Division who were at the taking of Jerusalem. In the lesser operations of the British army, Jews were also to be found. As an illustration of this, one may mention the daring march of General Dunsterville's small force from Bagdad to Baku, in 1917. This force held Baku for a short time, when it was almost overwhelmed by the Turks and obliged to evacuate the city. One of the survivors of this daring exploit was Sergeant Joseph Abrahams, of the 5th Royal West Kent Regiment, and another, Private N. Vigneskies, of the 7th Gloucester Regiment, both of whom ultimately returned to Mesopotamia in safety. In East Africa, Private R. Davis, of the 25th Royal Fusiliers, gained the Military Medal by helping to rescue the body of the famous hunter, Captain F. Selous, from the hands of the enemy.

Jews took part in the capture of Samoa by the New Zealand forces, and, besides serving in Siberia, helped to hold the lines against the Bolshevist troops in the North Russian expedition. A number of them were included in the troops sent to garrison India to take the place of the regular regiments who were despatched to the western front, and a special committee was formed in Calcutta to take charge of the spiritual interests of these men, so that at the high festivals, by the kind assistance of the army authorities, the soldiers were allowed to be billeted with Jewish families in various cities in India and to observe their religious ceremonies.

It is a striking fact that a large majority of Jews engaged on active service belonged to the fighting units of the army, such as the infantry, artillery, tanks, machine-gun units, and the special brigades of the Royal Engineers who were in charge of the gas operations. In the administrative departments they appear to have been comparatively very few in number; In the Royal Army Medical Corps, there was a considerable number of Jewish physicians, several of whom were killed, and most of the men are known to have acted as stretcher-bearers on the battlefields, and performed extremely good work under the most dangerous conditions, winning many honors. Attached to the medical staff of the Second Army in France, and afterwards in Italy, was Major M. Coplans, D. S. O., Royal Army Medical Corps, whilst Captain H. Lightstone, Royal Army Medical Corps, was in charge of the important work of evacuating the wounded from the front areas during the whole of the Somme battles, July to October, 1916.

The story of the deeds for which Jewish officers and men won their distinctions on the battlefield, if set forth in detail, would make a very thrilling narrative. The exploits of the men

who won the V. C. are told above. Two examples, in addition, may be given here. The first relates to Lieutenant Solomon Benzecry, a young officer of the 17th Royal Fusiliers, who was a student of the Jewish House at Clifton College, Bristol, reference to which has already been made. On November 30, 1917, the enemy made a sudden counter-attack which drove back the British front lines. As the men retired, Lieutenant Benzecry and his senior officer, Captain Stone, V. C., realized the danger in which their area was involved, and it was decided that, in order to enable the bulk of the troops to establish themselves in a new position, somewhere in the rear, it was imperative that the advancing enemy should be opposed and delayed as much as possible. Captain Stone, V. C., and Lieutenant Benzecry, with a handful of men, volunteered to remain behind, and bore the brunt of an attack of an overwhelming force of the enemy. No one escaped, but as a result of the self-sacrifice of the rear guard, the rest of the British troops were able to consolidate their position in time to meet the new advance that was made against them. Special mention was made in the official despatches of this gallant conduct, at Bournon Wood, on the part of this Jewish officer.

Another example of bravery refers to Lieutenant A. A. Robinson, an officer from Manchester. He obtained a commission in the 7th King's Liverpool Regiment, and won the M. C. in September, 1917, for the following action. In the course of some very heavy fighting, Robinson found himself the only remaining officer of the company. Although a junior officer, he took command, and captured his objective against intense machine-gun fire. In front of him he saw a trench occupied by the enemy, threatening the captured lines. He

forthwith advanced with four men, in spite of heavy fire, and took prisoner three German officers and thirty men. For three days he held his position until relieved, and set a remarkable example to his men. He was twice wounded, and, on returning home to England, he joined the Royal Flying Corps, and was sent to France in May, 1918, as a balloon observer. His balloon was attacked by enemy aircraft and riddled by bullets, and Robinson was compelled to make a rapid parachute descent. Though wounded, he immediately asked and obtained permission to ascend in another balloon, in which he carried on his observations. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in September, 1918.

Other typical examples of gallantry which were rewarded by receipt of distinctions are the following, which are a few selected from a large number :

SECOND LIEUTENANT FELIX JOSEPH BENZIMARA, M. G. C. Awarded Military Cross.—“For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty when commanding his section of guns in a forward position. He maintained his ground, in spite of intense enemy fire and hostile counter-attacks, by his timely aid greatly assisting to defeat the latter. Although twice buried and gassed, he refused to leave his post, and only reported sick on his return to camp on the following day.”

SECOND LIEUTENANT E. M. WOLF, Royal Irish Regiment, Special Reserve, attd. Tank Corps. Awarded Military Cross.—“He commanded his tank with the greatest skill and gallantry in very difficult ground, and, although it became ‘bellied’ early in the day, held on to his position in front of the infantry and kept the enemy fire down with his Lewis guns. Although 26 hours in action and very exhausted, he and his crew completely broke up a hostile counter-attack, and saved a critical

situation. He displayed throughout the day a magnificent example of courage and endurance."

CAPTAIN C. JACOBS, M. C., M. B., Royal Army Medical Corps, Special Reserve. Awarded Bar to M. C.—"For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in forming his dressing station under heavy fire. It was once blown in on top of him and five casualties occurred, but he remained at his post, and managed to evacuate all wounded. On the following day he cleared the battlefield in spite of heavy fire, and brought back twenty badly wounded cases."

CAPTAIN J. B. SOLOMON, Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry and Royal Flying Corps. Awarded Military Cross.—"He carried out a patrol lasting nearly three hours in a very high wind and low clouds, flying at an average height of 500 ft., and brought back a valuable report. During this flight he attacked and drove down an enemy two-seater machine under heavy rifle and machine-gun fire from the ground. He also made a valuable reconnaissance in very bad weather, flying at an average height of 100 ft., under fire from a hostile battery with his machine gun. He set a splendid example of courage and determination."

CORPORAL ARNOLD JACKSON, Army Service Corps. Awarded Military Medal.—"For rescuing his convoy of seven cars and men from an ambush at a considerable personal risk. He showed splendid pluck and resource."

CAPTAIN L. C. MANDLEBERG, Lancashire Fusiliers. Awarded Military Cross.—"During a raid, despite the failure to explode two Bangalore torpedoes, he personally directed the laying of a third torpedo under heavy machine-gun fire. When the party laying this became casualties, he at once reconnoitred for another means of entry through the hostile wire. Before

returning to our lines he carried back the body of one of the men killed, in the face of heavy machine-gun fire at close range. He displayed the highest courage and powers of leadership."

No. 26619 CSM. J. GILBERT, 16th Battn. Manchester Regiment. Awarded Distinguished Conduct Medal.—"For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. When all the machine and Lewis gunners became casualties, he mounted a Lewis gun under a hail of rifle and machine-gun fire, and effectually held up the enemy's enveloping attack on the flank. His coolness greatly encouraged the men, who put up a splendid fight, until re-inforcements arrived and the crisis was passed."

AVIATION

The air fighting, which led to the wonderful development of the Royal Flying Corps, afterwards called the Royal Air Force, attracted a large number of Jewish young men, many of whom gained distinction as aviators. In the first list published of the awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross, the name of Captain D. C. Bauer was included, and Major J. Kemper, who had risen from the ranks, originally in the infantry and afterwards in the Royal Flying Corps, was given charge of a large depôt near one of the bases. Captain Desmond Tuck was attached to the French Flying Corps in the Salonica area, where he won the Croix de Guerre. In the first raid made upon a German aerodrome, Major R. L. Marix took part, and won the D. S. O., and Captain J. I. Barnato flew one of the machines that dropped bombs on the city of Constantinople, feats which, in the early days of flying, created a great sensation. Among the rank and file of this corps was included a large number of Jewish tailors and other workmen

who were busily engaged in preparing the different parts of the machines, which were used in action, and in the photographic branch.

Towards the end of the war, numerous labor companies were formed of men who were unfit for the firing line, and a considerable number of Jews, mainly of alien birth, were found in these units. They did valuable work behind the lines, and some of them gained awards for gallant conduct during air raids and under other conditions.

A striking feature of the general utility of the Jewish soldier is to be noted in the number of Jews who were engaged in the necessary work of entertaining and amusing their comrades in the various divisional concert parties, where their talents as musicians and performers found full play.

In conclusion, reference should be made to the remarkably friendly relations which existed everywhere between Jew and non-Jew in every branch of the forces. The value of the work of the Jewish sailor and soldier was fully recognized, both by the authorities and by their brothers-in-arms, and the consideration shown by the authorities to enable the men to observe as much of their religious ceremonies as possible under the difficult conditions of war was one of the most pleasant experiences of the chaplains working among the men. The excellent literature, such as the *Book of Jewish Thoughts* and the books on Jewish history, circulated by the Chief Rabbi's Literature Fund, also contributed in a marked degree to a better understanding of the ideals and character of the Jew, and so helped to unite men of all faiths in a spirit of comradeship in the great task to which they had set their hands.