

Acknowledgements and sources

This covers a set of documents intended to enable students of the Cotopaxi pioneers to examine the primary and secondary documents regarding the colony. They are provided with annotations, cross references and an index. In addition the "Cotopaxi Papers" include a summary of findings and a collection of quantitative material, including demographic and financial data, plus a paper on mining employment and a paper on historiography. These are identified and acknowledged as follows:

Document	Principal providers of source material
CP-1 Summary of findings	As below
CP-2 Quantitative material	Generally as below plus Adam Fagin and Leah Klocek, Denver, Colorado, on behalf of author; and Jenny Moore Lowe, Cañon City, Colorado as published at http://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/cotopaxi/land.html ; and http://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/cotopaxi/family-names.html
CP-3 Schwarz. 29 July 1882	Andrew Eason, at that time of Bristol, England; and Rivka Schiller, New York City, on behalf of author.
CP-4 Tuska. c5 August 1882	Professor Adam Rovner, University of Denver, Colorado, in correspondence with author.
CP-5 Saltiel. 19 October 1882	As CP-4
CP-6 Schwarz. 23 October, 1882	Moshe Shaltiel, Miami, Florida, in correspondence with author.
CP-7 Saltiel, 27 December 1882	Author
CP-8 Kohn and Wirkowski. 5 January 1883	Leah Klocek, Denver, Colorado, on behalf of author.
CP-9 Meyer Hart. 8 February 1883	As CP-6
CP-10 Henry. 15 February 1883	As CP-8
CP-11 Schwarz, 2 March 1883	As CP-8
CP-12 Nussbaum, 13 March 1883	As CP-8
CP-13 Roberts. 1941	As CP-6
CP-14 Satt. 1950	Published by Nelson Moore, Cotopaxi Colorado, at http://www.cotopaxi-colony.com/flora-jane-satt-thesis.htm
CP-15 Shpall, 1950	As CP-8
CP-16 Gulliford. 1953	As CP-6
CP-17 The Bardine Assignment	Jenny Moore Lowe, Cañon City, Colorado, in correspondence with author.
CP-18 Historiography	As above, plus Yehuda Aharon Horwitz and Stephanie Ginensky, Jerusalem, Israel.
Index to CP-3 to CP-16	Compiled by Nic Nicholas, London, England.

All sources and providers are gratefully acknowledged. No third party is responsible for the views expressed herein. Save for CP-14, reproduction rights in original documents are taken to have lapsed or otherwise inhere to the public domain. As to CP-14, the present author appeals to the late author's heirs to make themselves known.

Publication information on back cover.

1 To the Editor of *The American Israelite*

2 In December last I was sojourning in Colorado, and while in those parts, visited Cotopaxi with a
3 view of personally investigating how our brethren were faring in their newly-made homes. As
4 anticipated, I found the colonists enjoying the best of health, as the Cotopaxi climate is very
5 salubrious, notwithstanding the expressed opinion of the Denver committee to the contrary.

6
7 A long residence in Colorado and some ten years of experience as a stock-raiser, justify me in the
8 above contradiction, as I am very well acquainted with the entire mountain range, climate and
9 soil all around Cotopaxi, clear to Fairplay and the Snowy Range, and have grazed my stock
10 during the summer and early fall in very close proximity to Cotopaxi, but was compelled to drive
11 my herd to the valley in November.

12
13 During the entire time of my abode in those parts we have had splendid summer pastures, but
14 grazing alone was profitable and not farming, as the season for the latter are entirely too short,
15 extending from June only to September, and under those circumstances, aside of being a rocky,
16 mountainous range, what colony, even if most completely equipped (which this is far from),
17 could succeed in making a living and supporting its families?

18
19 I am satisfied the H.E.A.S. would never have had the remotest idea of planting a colony in that
20 barren country had it not been for the instigation of Mr. E.H. Saltiel whose object the
21 circumstances only too plainly demonstrate, and he alone is to blame and is responsible for the
22 unsuccessful issue of the Cotopaxi Colony, and not the H.E.A.S., who have done everything in
23 their power for the promotion and welfare of the unfortunate emigrants, and they (the colonists)
24 are aware of it and are thankful and ever praying for the good health and long life of its
25 committee.

26
27 Had not the high-flavored, or, as Mr. Henry called it, "rose-colored" report of Mr. Julius
28 Schwartz, LL.D., appeared, no trouble would have been known and no Denver committee
29 needed.

Generally

The letter was published in the *American Israelite* on 23 March 1883.

The records of the Royal Gorge Regional Museum and History Center of Cañon City, Colorado, show the receipt on 20 June 1987 of a photocopy of this letter. The sender is identified as Flora Jane Satt, the author of CP-14, who included her thesis, CP-11 and other material in the package. See CP-18 for an examination of this donation.

Nussbaum takes a more-or-less even-handed approach to events, criticising Saltiel for the location of the colony, the "Denver Relief Committee" for exaggerating the misfortunes of the colonists, and Schwarz for his poverty of judgement and overblown reporting.

Nussbaum confirms that the colonists were deserted by HEAS over the winter and that they engaged in a campaign of letter-writing to press their case. This letter should be seen as one of the consequences in that campaign.

Lines 13 to 17

Nussbaum confirms that the area is better suited to stock-raising than farming.

Line 20

Nussbaum's error in transcription of Saltiel's name tells us that he was relying on the colonists' letters to him in Yiddish and that he had seen other documents only in part, if at all.

Lines 19 to 22

As far as it goes, Nussbaum is right: Saltiel did offer the land to HEAS, but no evidence challenging his good faith is to hand. He was simply wrong, as were many others.

Lines 27 to 29

Line 27 tells us that Nussbaum had seen at least part of H S Henry's letter (CP-10). Otherwise, however, these remarks are mistaken, as Schwarz' October report preceded HEAS' silence rather than brought it to an end. The annotation following explores Nussbaum's confusion about the sequence of documents.

1 Although adding the no doubt deserved LL.D. to his name, he does not possess good, sound
2 judgment, but, on the contrary, manifests his inexperience and downright ignorance of the
3 requisites of a new colony, peopled by strange people in a strange land, by forwarding a report
4 to the easily beguiled committee (who have reposed all confidence in him) that there was
5 nothing left undone and that the colony was in a very flourishing condition. Although at the time
6 the report was made (I believe in August) everything looked brighter. The crop, if such it can be
7 called, consisting solely of potatoes, was in the ground, yet, nevertheless, J.S., LL.D., brought his
8 great imaginary powers, "Col. Sellers"-like, to his aid, supported by his mathematical abilities,
9 and calculated upon a realization of at least two thousand dollars from the crop, which only goes
10 to show that he had as much knowledge of the fall and winter climate as he did of the potatoes.
11 His calculation went wide of its mark, and the unfortunate emigrants in course of time found out
12 the true state of affairs, but, of course, as is usually the case, after the barn door having been left
13 open, and instead of having potatoes to sell, they found themselves compelled to buy, and were
14 willing to work outside of the colony to meet their daily wants, but only a few succeeded in
15 obtaining work.

17 This state of affairs they communicated to some of the committee, but could get no reply; they
18 wrote again and again, but no answer was sent them.

20 It was plainly seen from the President's (Mr. Henry) report to the Denver Committee that he
21 imagined the colonists well supplied, and that they from choice alone preferred begging for
22 charity.

24 Now in the name of humanity and common sense, what could the poor emigrants do? Reply
25 from New York was denied them (as you can see by the letter they wrote to me), work to keep
26 body and soul together they could not obtain; they had no alternative but to lay their very
27 lamentable condition before the Denver Jews.

29 The Denverites sent a committee *Meraglem* out to them, and they, in return reported wrongly
30 and greatly misrepresented and exaggerated the matter, and in fact caused more real harm than

Line 1; line 6

Line 1 tells us that Nussbaum had seen Schwarz' letter of 2 March (CP-11), as this is the first document in which the latter identifies himself as LL.D.

By contrast, line 6 tells us that Nussbaum had not seen Schwarz' 23 October report (CP-6), but is relying on characterisations by others.

Line 8 et seq

"Colonel Sellers" was a fictional fantasist who appears as a comic character in Mark Twain's 1873 satire, *The Gilded Age*.

Nussbaum has some knockabout fun with Schwarz' calculations, but the underlying point is well made: the crops failed.

Lines 14 and 15

Nussbaum fails to capture the complications of the colonists' employment. In the third week of October 1882, Schwarz reported that some were working in mines and others on the railroad (CP-6, page 15 lines 11 and 12; and 17 to 21). In late December, Saltiel reported offering surface work to all comers, but few kept it up (CP-7). In January 1883, Hart wrote of railroad and mine working (CP-9, page 2, lines 1 to 6). In February, Henry and Schwarz reported the railroad firing colonists after they went on strike (CP-10, page 5, lines 12 to 15; CP-11, page 7, lines 9 and 10). In the first quarter of 1883, six colonists worked as miners as analysed in CP-17.

It is not clear if Nussbaum's remarks stem from his visit in December or representations by the colonist in their subsequent letter to him (line 25 below).

Lines 17 to 18; and lines 24 to 27

This confirms that the colonists approached the "Denver Jews" after HEAS' silence over the winter of 1882-3.

Line 25

This confirms that the colonists took note of Nussbaum's contact particulars during his December 1882 visit, then fielding him for Kohn's early 1883 PR campaign.

Line 29

"Meraglem" is a corrupt transliteration of the Hebrew, מרגלים, "meraglim" meaning spies.

1 good to the poor colonists. The ignorance displayed in reporting that a house sixteen by twenty,
2 doubly boarded, etc., costs only, together with stove and cooking utensils, one hundred dollars,
3 is perfectly absurd. I have seen the houses and have been in them, and have the figures of a
4 carpenter. It takes just thirty-five hundred feet of lumber to build the house and partitions, etc.,
5 but should not cost over one hundred and fifty dollars, not including any utensils – but there is no
6 use in crying over spilt milk now.

7
8 The houses are comfortable enough for eight or nine months of the year, but in the dead of
9 winter no one cookstove can keep them warm, and they have no other. They have plenty of
10 wood, not a great distance off, but have to hire it hauled, as they have only one span of horses
11 on a farm of twelve miles.

12
13 In conclusion, I will say that the emigrants of Cotopaxi are a set of hard-working, industrious
14 people, with good manners and behavior, and are willing to work, as work is what they want and
15 not *schnorring*. But work they cannot obtain in that forsaken spot, winter is hard upon them, and
16 burdened with families, what can they do but beg or wait until everything is exhausted and
17 starve to death with their families?

18
19 Had the colony been planted on a reasonably good tract of farming land where the change for
20 the display of sinew and muscle could have been had, I assure you your committee would have
21 been spared all this superfluous aggravation and trouble, and the emigrants would have been on
22 a fair way to prosperity and happiness.

23
24 But, nevertheless, this misstep must not, and shall not dishearten this most praiseworthy
25 H. E. A. S. of the United States, as all beginnings are difficult, but so much more gratifying is the
26 reward.

27
28 The moral this high-priced lesson has taught them, is not to take every one's word for selecting a
29 location to plant a colony. The selection requires a great deal of judgment and good common
30 sense, and, furthermore, an eye for the future and not greed for personal fame and gain, but to

Lines 1 to 6

Nussbaum criticises the "Denver Committee" for exaggeration. He then estimates the cost of housing at \$150.00, between figures from others. But his carpenter's sums seem low. Thirty-five hundred feet at \$22.00 per thousand (Henry in CP-9, page 6, line 14) or \$22.50 per thousand (Satt in CP-14, page 27, lines 1 and 2), is between \$77.00 and \$78.75.

CP-2, tables 6.1 to 6.6 resolve this controversy definitively, establishing that \$280 was a discounted price for houses, furnishings and utensils.

Lines 8 to 11

Over the winter of 1882-3, other Jewish colonists in Vineland, NJ, and Cimarron, OK, slept under canvas in army tents supplied by the US Government.* Indeed until very recently, it was a winter commonplace that only one room be heated - generally imperfectly. Such considerations make these lines a departure from Nussbaum's usual good sense, as complaints so unrealistic as to undermine him with anyone up with events. They are, nonetheless, valuable as attesting to his point of view and the effectiveness of the colonists' canvass.

Among third-party contemporaries, Nussbaum is alone in suggesting that the colonists lacked fuel. Once again, it is not clear if this is based upon his visit in December or representations by the colonist in their subsequent letter to him.

* Gilbert Osofsky, *The Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society of the United States, 1881-1883, Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 49 (Sept 1959-Jun 1960), 1-4; *AJHS Journal*, p. 173 *et seq.*, n26; page 7 of 15 in reproduced article.

Lines 13 to 17

Nussbaum's brief encomium rewards the settlers' canvass, as supporting their financial demands upon HEAS, of which he shows no knowledge.

He skirts the issue of morale raised by Henry (CP-10, page 4, lines 22-25) and Schwarz (CP-11, page 7, lines 23-29).

Line 15

Schnorrers are beggars, about whom Jews are conflicted. Giving alms is a *mitzvah*, blessing, and some religious Jews argue that beggars perform a service by enabling benefactors to obtain such blessings. This sits ill with the devotion of other Jews to self-sufficiency. This conflict is echoed in the correspondence.

1 put heart, hand and mind in concert to aid our unfortunate brethren to a future state of
2 prosperity and happiness.

3
4 I am of the opinion that a great deal of good may arise out of this controversy, as an exchange of
5 views as to the best plan of planting colonies is the proper question to arrive at now.

6
7 In my opinion, timber-land in close proximity to a river would be the most suitable place, where
8 an opportunity for improvement and display of energy could be had, and I would kindly request
9 our co-religionists who have this matter at heart to express their views upon it and let us all have
10 the benefit of it.

11
12 Yours respectfully,

13 Ph. Nussbaum.

14 Bradford, Pa.

15 March 10, 1883
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30

Lines 7 to 10

On its face, this is odd advice as lumber is not the most rewarding agricultural product. In the nature of things, moreover, it lends itself imperfectly to the permanent settlements which the pioneers sought.

Lines 12 to 15

Although a stockman, Nussbaum was active in the "Hebrew Union Agricultural Committee", to whom he showed this letter before publication. (*American Israelite* 16 March 1883).

Published by
Miles Saltiel
London, England

August 2016

miles.saltiel@cotopaxicolony.com

The author places his own material
in the public domain