

## Report of Morris Tuska to HEAS

Mr. Morris Tuska, who was appointed by the Executive Committee to investigate the condition of the Cotopaxi colony, has made the following report:

I left for Cotopaxi on the 25th of July and arrived there on the 27th inst. I immediately called on Mr. Julius Schwarz, the General Manager of the colony, whom I found master of the situation and who willingly gave me all information required as to the details of E. H. Saltiel in whose care the colony was intrusted.

The general condition of the colony is, considering the many difficulties having arisen from the mismanagement of Saltiel and from his omission to furnish the colony with the necessary funds, a favorable one. Owing to the indefatigable perseverance of Mr. Schwarz, who rendered himself worthy of the trust put in him, the refugees were settled on Government land on 160 acres for each family. The lands are very fertile, full of phosphoric and almost surpassing growing power. The farms situated on the first division of the lands called Oak Grove Creek, are drained by a creek that is always supplied with water and is more than sufficient for irrigating purposes. Here three farms are located. A high mountain range separates these farms from the second division of the lands from the so-called Wet Mountain Valley. Here the rest of the farms are located. Mr. Schwarz told me that although the water is exact to irrigate still he is confident that the farmers will in the winter be able to care for the necessary supply of water to be used next summer, by digging a three mile long ditch and filling the same with water which is in abundance in the lake situated on the mountains that border the farms and adjacent Fremont County from Clear County.

The colonists succeed mostly potatoes, about 17,000 pounds altogether. Mr. Schwarz assured me that he repeatedly requested Mr. Saltiel to give him the means to sow a larger quantity of potatoes, as they are salubrious and greatly wanted, but Mr. Saltiel did not give him the funds required. Seventeen thousand pounds will, as Mr. Schwarz says, yield about 140,000 lbs.; 40,000 lbs. he intends to save for seed purposes, and 100,000 lbs. he will put on the market. The general price of potatoes varies from 1½ to 2 cts. per pound, thus about \$2,000 are expected from the potato crop. Cabbage, peas, beans, cucumbers, heads, turnips, etc., have been sowed, but owing to the sickness with which the horses have been built, or better said, owing to them not having been built at all, most of the potatoes were destroyed by grazing cattle, and what has been spared is just sufficient to cover the household requirements.

Had Mr. Saltiel used the money so readily put at his disposal for the purposes of the colony, for buying or hiring teams and ploughs, buying potatoes and other seeds, purchasing agricultural implements, erecting houses and laying wire for fencing, the colony not only would have been made self-supporting, but been able to repay every cent that has been spent for their sake. As matters stand at present, the colonists will be able to pull through; they must, however, be provided with cows and wire fences. Mr. Schwarz proposed to purchase twelve cows and wire fence for ten acres on each farm, and assured me that by means of the income of the crop and by means of the cows, that will furnish them the two chief feeding articles, namely, milk and butter, they will make a livelihood and will next year get along splendidly; so much the more so Mr. Schwarz has been offered labor for the refugees during the winter, which will help them towards defraying their expenses for living.

The financial condition of the colony. The facts are that Mr. Saltiel used the money put in his hands for his own purposes and left several thousands unpaid, which he said were paid to him. He did not build the houses, although having received the money for them, he thereby caused the colony great damage, much annoyance and distress. On account of his actions and fully trusting in the ability, integrity and honesty of Mr. Julius Schwarz, I took the charge of Mr. Saltiel's lands and put it into the hands of Mr. Schwarz, who in my strong belief is the only man that prevented the colony's final destruction. It is with much satisfaction that I note that the Society possesses a faithful, energetic, honest, persevering officer in Mr. Schwarz, who gives his heart, mind and all his time to his duties. Mr. Schwarz is now the only manager of the colony, and is ably assisted by Mr. Levin Folos, who acts as his overseer.

Permit me now to give you a statistical statement of the families that compose the colony. There have been on the 30th of July, fourteen families with 61 souls, 34 males and 27 females. One family consisting of six souls, I sent to Denver, on request of the head of the family, Abraham Moskowitz. Another family the Schochet Joseph Friedman, who was sent on recommendation of

Mr. Saltiel who promised to assist him, but failed to do so, was also sent to Denver, as there was no prospect for his making a livelihood in the colony. Since my leaving Cotopaxi, 15 more persons, relatives of the colonists were sent, thus making the total number of families 15, with 64 souls, 34 males and 30 females. The working force amounts to 25 persons.

The sanitary condition of the colony leaves nothing to be wished for. No serious cases of sickness have occurred. The refugees show a very favorable appearance, look well and robust, since Mr. Schwarz took charge of the colony. Kosher meat is procured from Denver and the people are satisfied with their food. The colonists are clean and neat and take good care of their children. The children will receive education at the public school, recently erected in Cotopaxi. Mr. Schwarz will see that the houses are cleaned and the crop sold for the best price. The colonists keep their religion in accordance with the ancient customs, keep the Sabbath and holidays, possess a Sephar' Thora donated by Rev. Dr. Bear and are on friendly terms with their Christian neighbors. The colony required thus far the following funds: — \$5,250 paid to Saltiel, \$200 paid to E. H. Hart by me, \$1,000 sent to Mr. Schwarz so far. Total \$6,450. Mr. Schwarz wrote me that \$500 more will be required for food, \$600 for cows and about \$350 for wire, making the sum of \$7,350 that this colony owe the society. The colonists are aware that they will have to repay the expenses laid out for them and I have no doubt whatsoever that the society will be partly repaid. I hope that despite of the many drawbacks the colony had to undergo—it will be maintained and stand as a monument of Jewish charity, and as the best proof of the laboring abilities of the refugees and of their strongly and completely to become farmers. Jewish farmers were looked upon with scorn, the Cotopaxi colony has and will render evidence that such scorn is nothing but prejudice, and that the Jew can make as good a farmer as any other human being.

— — — Respectfully submitted,  
(Signed) Morris Tuska.

Sent 25 August 1882

Republished in

American Hebrew, 4 October 1882

Jewish Messenger, 6 October 1882

Annotated by

Miles Saltiel

## 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 <a href="http://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/cotopaxi/land.html">http://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/cotopaxi/land.html</a> ; and <a href="http://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/cotopaxi/family-names.html">http://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/cotopaxi/family-names.html</a>
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 <a href="http://www.cotopaxi-colony.com/flora-jane-satt-thesis.htm">http://www.cotopaxi-colony.com/flora-jane-satt-thesis.htm</a>
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 Mr. Morris Tuska, who was appointed by the Executive Committee to investigate the condition  
2 of the Cotopaxi colony, had made the following report:

3  
4 I left for Cotopaxi on the 26th July and arrived there on the 30th inst. I immediately called on Mr.  
5 Julius Schwarz, the General Manager of the colony, whom I found master of the situation and  
6 willingly gave me all information required as to the doings of E. H. Saltiel in whose care the  
7 colony was intrusted.

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9 The general condition of the colony is, considering the many difficulties having arisen from the  
10 mismanagement of Saltiel and from his omission to furnish the colony with the necessary fund,  
11 a favorable one. Owing to the indefatigable perseverance of Mr. Schwarz, who rendered himself  
12 worthy of the trust put in him the refugees were settled on Government land on 160 acres for  
13 each family.

14  
15 The lands are very fertile, full of phosphate and of almost surprising growing power.

16  
17 The farms situated on the first division of the lands called Oak Grove Creek, are drained by a  
18 creek that is always supplied with water and is more than sufficient for irrigating purposes. Here  
19 three farms are located. A high mountain range separates those farms from the second division  
20 of the lands from the so-called Wet Mountain Valley. Here the rest of the farms are located. Mr.  
21 Schwarz told me that although no water is extant to irrigate still he is confident that the farmers  
22 will in the winter be able to care for the necessary supply of water to be used next summer, by  
23 digging a three mile long ditch and filling the same with water which is in abundance in the lake,  
24 situated on the mountains that border the farms and separate Fremont County from Custer  
25 County.

26  
27 The colonists sowed mostly potatoes, about 17,000 pound altogether. Mr. Schwarz assured me  
28 that he repeatedly requested Mr. Saltiel to give him the means to sow a larger quantity of  
29 potatoes, as they are saleable and greatly wanted; but Mr. Saltiel did not give him the funds  
30 required. Seventeen thousand pounds will, as Mr. Schwarz says, yield about 140,000 lbs.; 40,000

### Generally

This text comes from the *Jewish Messenger* of 6 October 1882, with no date for Tuska's original. This is arbitrarily shown as though immediately after his return from Colorado. Another version was published in the *American Hebrew* of 4 October which then published Saltiel's reply (CP-5) on 26 October.

The effect of the republication was disastrous. Intended to boost Tuska's nephew, Schwarz, ahead of the latter's banner report to HEAS (CP-6), it instead provoked Saltiel's CP-5. This contained criticisms of Schwarz, causing him to abandon the promises he had made to Cotopaxi interests and alter his report at the last minute.

### Line 6

"doings" sets the tone for Tuska's approach to Saltiel...

### Line 10

...and "mismanagement" makes his stance explicit.

"necessary fund", together with lines 28 and 29 below, and 8 to 10 and 21 to 23 on the following page complain that Saltiel has not made funds available to Schwarz or suppliers.

Saltiel has his own take on Schwarz in CP-5, which captures the nuanced relations between the two men, confirmed by the content and the silences of CP-6, Schwarz.

As to unpaid bills to third-parties, Tuska overlooks the role of part-payment as incentivising contractors.

### Line 15

Tuska is as enthusiastic about the phosphate soil as CP-5, Saltiel, page 8, line 13 and CP-6, Schwarz, page 5, line 8.

### Line 23

Tuska is silent on the cost of the irrigation ditch, in effect failing to support his nephew's request for funds in CP-3, Schwarz, page 3, line 5.

### Lines 27 to 30

It is impossible to evaluate Saltiel's response to this in CP-5, page 7, lines 19 to 22, as we do not have the "bills" of which he writes.

### Line 30

This is the first mention of potatoes. CP-18, page 10 traces how the story was distorted.

1 lbs. he intends to save for seeding purposes, and 100,000 lbs. he will put on the market. The  
2 general price of potatoes varies from 1½ to 2 cts. per pound thus about \$2,000 are expected  
3 from the potato crop. Cabbage, peas, beans, cucumbers, beets, turnips, etc., have been sowed,  
4 but owing to the slowness with which the houses have been built, or better said, owing to them  
5 not having been built at all, most of the garden stuff was destroyed by grazing cattle, and what  
6 has been spared is just sufficient to cover the household requirements.

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8 Had Mr. Saltiel used the money so readily put at his disposal for the purposes of the colony, for  
9 buying or hiring teams and ploughs, buying potatoes and other seeds, purchasing agricultural  
10 implements, erecting houses and buying wire for fencing, the colony not only would have been  
11 made self-supporting, but been able to repay every cent that has been spent for their sake.

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13 As matters stand at present, the colonists will be able to pull through; they must, however, be  
14 provided with cows and wire fences. Mr Schwarz proposed to purchase twelve cows and wire  
15 fence for ten acres on each farm, and assured me that by means of the income of the crop and  
16 by means of the cows, that will furnish them the two chief feeding articles, namely, milk and  
17 butter, they will make a livelihood and will next year get along splendidly; so much the more as  
18 Mr. Schwarz has been offered labor for the refugees during the winter, which will help them  
19 towards defraying their expenses for living.

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21 The financial condition of the colony. The facts are that Mr. Saltiel used the money put in his  
22 hands for his own purposes and left several bills unpaid, which he said were paid to him. He did  
23 not built the houses, although having received the money for them, he thereby caused the  
24 colony great damage, much annoyance and disgrace. On account of his actions and fully trusting  
25 in the ability, integrity and energy of Mr. Julius Schwarz, I took the charge out Mr. Saltiel's hands  
26 and put it into the hands of Mr. Schwarz, who in my strong belief is the only man that prevented  
27 the colony's final destruction. It is with much satisfaction that I note that the Society possesses a  
28 faithful, energetic, honest persevering officer in Mr. Schwarz, who gives his heart, mind and all  
29 his time to his duties. Mr. Schwarz is now the only manager of the colony, and is ably assisted by  
30 Mr. Leon Tobias, who acts as field overseer.

**Line 5**

This is the first mention of the "grazing cattle" debacle. Saltiel purports to pooh-pooh it in CP-5, page 7, lines 4 to 8, but Schwarz anticipates it in CP-3 page 1, lines 13 to 14 and repeats it in CP-6, page 12, line 18. Saltiel himself recognises the issue in his remarks about wire at CP-5, page 5, lines 14, 24 and 26.

**Lines 8 to 11**

Saltiel does not address plows in his letter of rebuttal but does convey that HEAS has failed to supply sufficient funds for wire CP-5, page 5, lines 14.

Housing completions are discussed in full in CP-1, Summary of findings.

**Line 11**

This lays the ground for the weak commitment to repay at page 4, lines 1 and 2.

**Lines 14 to 19**

Cows and wire represent a tidy sum - on line 29 of the following page Tuska calculates \$950, and this is low by the figures in table 8.

In CP-9, page 1, lines 27 and 28, Meyer Hart writes that the colony's funds were exhausted shortly after Schwarz took over, so wire was defrayed by HEAS funds as CP-6, page 17, line 12, and CP-11, page 1, lines 23 to 24, until exhausted and thereafter locally. See CP-2, tables 15 and 16.

**Lines 21 to 24**

As lines 8 to 11.

**Lines 24 to 30**

The thrust of the report, handily preceded by Schwarz' publicity campaign as CP-3.

1 Permit me now to give you a statistical statement of the families that compose the colony.

2  
3 There have been on the 30th of July, fourteen families with 61 souls, 34 males and 27 females.

4 One family consisting of six souls, I sent to Denver, on request of the head of the family Abr.

5 Moskovitz. Another family the *Schochet* Joseph Friedman, who was sent on recommendation of

6 Mr. Saltiel who promised to assist him, but failed to do so, was also sent to Denver, as there was

7 no prospect of his making a livelihood in the colony. Since my leaving Cotopaxi, 15 more

8 persons, relatives of the colonists were sent, thus making the total number of families 15, with

9 64 souls, 34 males and 30 females. The working force amounts to 25 persons.

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11 The sanitary conditions of the colony leaves nothing to be wished for. No serious cases of

12 sickness having occurred. The refugees show a very favorable appearance, look well and robust,

13 since Mr. Schwarz took charge of the colony.

14  
15 Kosher meat is procured from Denver and the people are satisfied with their food.

16  
17 The colonists are clean and neat and take good care of their children. The children will receive

18 education at the public school, recently erected in Cotopaxi. Mr. Schwarz will see that the

19 houses are finished and the crop sold for the best price. The colonists keep their religion in

20 accordance with the ancient customs, keep the Sabbath and holidays, possess a Sephar Thora

21 donated by Rev. Dr. Baar and are on friendly terms with their Christian neighbours.

22  
23 The colony required thus far the following funds:-

24 \$5,250 paid to Saltiel,

25 \$500 paid to E.S. Hart by me,

26 \$1,000 sent to Mr. Schwarz so far,

27 total \$6,750

28 Mr. Schwarz wrote me that \$500 more will be required for food, \$600 for cows and about \$350

29 for wire, making the sum of \$8,200 that this colony cost the society.

**Lines 3 to 9**

Generally as CP-6.

It is disputed as to whether the *Schochet* was procured by Saltiel or Schwarz, but it seems agreed that he left for insufficient work at the colony, with the settlers then getting kosher meat directly from Denver as line 15. This drew the settlers into contact with the city's Jewish community from the end of July.

The lack of local kosher butchery prevented the settlers from keeping chickens, even for eggs.

**Lines 11 and 12**

Tuska is mistaken. Three infants died, as CP-6, page 7, lines 5 and 6 and associated commentary.

**Lines 23 to 29**

The \$8,200 is the earliest authentic budget we have. Note that 15% of the budget goes to Schwarz, presumably in part defraying his salary, room and board, which CP-5, Saltiel, page 3, lines 23 to 25 and page 5 line 18 tells us greatly exercised him.

These figures exclude New York based expenditures on rail fare and such major overspends as subsistence. This is explored in CP-1, graphic 8 as supported in CP-2, tables 13 to 21.

1 The colonists are aware that they will have to repay the expenses laid out for them and I have no  
2 doubt whatsoever that the society will be partly repaid.

**Lines 1 and 2**

This is the weak statement of  
commitment to repay, prefigured by  
page 2 line 11.

3  
4 I hope that despite of the many drawbacks this colony had to undergo, - it will be maintained  
5 and stand as a monument of Jewish charity, and as the best proof of the laboring abilities of the  
6 refugees and of their capacity and competency to become farmers. Jewish farmers were looked  
7 upon with scorn, the Cotopaxi colony has and will render evidence that such scorn is nothing but  
8 prejudice, and that the Jew can make as good a farmer as any other human being.

**Lines 4 to 8**

Of a piece with Schwarz' hymn to the  
redemptive effects of agriculture upon  
Jews in CP-3, page 2, lines 6 to 11.

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10 Respectfully submitted,

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12 MORRIS TUSKA.

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