

preliminary measures requisite to the formation of an association for the object contemplated, and, to that end, entrusted the work to an Executive Committee of twenty-one members, selected from those present at the meeting, with Mr. Gershom Kursheedt as Chairman, and David C. Labatt as Secretary.

And at a meeting held in the rooms of the Howard Association, on the first day of March 1855, the members present subscribed the charter, and thereby formed themselves into the "Association for the Relief of Jewish Widows and Orphans." The following are the names of the incorporators, viz:

Gershom Kursheedt,  
D. C. Labatt,  
L. B. Cain,  
M. M. Simpson,  
Benjamin Florance,  
Joseph Magner,  
Joseph Cohn,  
Joseph Simon,  
James K. Gutheim,  
E. Solomon,  
M. Stievel,  
Daniel Goodman,  
Isaac Hart,  
L. L. Levy,  
Samuel Friedlander,  
Louis Rose,  
Joseph H. Marks.

This charter is recorded in Records of Mortgage Office, in the Book of Societies No. 3, Folio 273, and following March 14, 1855. It was to continue for 25 years.

The first meeting of the incorporators, inviting theretof all those who had subscribed towards the establishment of the Association, was held by a call of the Executive Committee, on Sunday, the 18th of March, 1855, in the Masonic Hall, with the following gentlemen present, viz:

Messrs. L. Friedlander, James K. Gutheim, Geo. Jonas, L. L. Levy, J. Sartorius, M. Goldman, L. Hertz, A. J. Ezekiel, D. C. Labatt, L. B. Cain, M. M. Simpson, Benjamin Florance, Joseph Magner, G. Kursheedt, Jos. Cohn, Jos. Simon, E. Solomon, Daniel Goodman, L. Goldsmith, S. Forcheimer, E. Forcheimer, B. B. Hart, J. Abrahamson, B. Da Silva, J. H. Marks, Isaac Hart, L. Rose, and H. M. Hyams.

The Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. G. Kursheedt, presided, with Mr. David

C. Labatt at the Secretary's desk.

After the charter of incorporation had been read, the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That such Israelites as are present, who have paid the sum of five dollars or more, for the benefit of this Corporation, be, and they are hereby elected, members of the Association.

On motion, duly carried, the meeting went into an election for officers of the Association, which resulted in the unanimous choice of the following:

M. M. Simpson, as President.  
Isaac Hart, as First Vice President.  
H. M. Hyams, as Second Vice President.

Joseph Cohn, as Secretary.  
Daniel Goodman, as Treasurer.

Directors for one year: Joseph Simon, M. Goldsmith, L. L. Levy, L. Rose.

Directors for two years: B. Florence, J. H. Marks, L. B. Cain, E. Solomon.

It is just to state, in this connection, that the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. G. Kursheedt, had declined the nomination for President, being obliged to accompany Sir Moses Montefiore to Jerusalem to carry out certain bequests of the late Judah Touro.

The election of officers having been effected, and the organization completed, the Constitution, By-Laws and Rules of Order, which had been prepared by the Executive Committee, were submitted to the meeting, but in view of their importance, and the discussion to which they would have to be subjected, the meeting of the Association was adjourned to March 25th, 1855, when, after a long debate and some amendments, they were adopted, only one member voting in the negative.

Article II of this Constitution, speaking of the object of the Association, reads:

"The object of the Corporation shall be to establish a Home or Asylum to receive, under its care and support, indigent Hebrew widows; also to receive, foster, provide for, maintain and instruct Jewish orphans and half orphans of both sexes."

The reader will, in perusing this article, perceive that there is no mention, nor meaning to

confine or limit the benefits of the Home to the population of the City of New Orleans. The originators of the movement, animated by the most liberal spirit, desired to extend these benefits beyond its limits, though they well knew that the burdens resting upon our Jewish citizens, in pursuance of this policy, would be heavily increased.

And thus the Association was born, that was to be a blessing to humanity and a glory to our Jewish community.

At its inception, it had but thirty-five members, and every effort was put forward by the Board to increase this number, so that on April 27, 78 members were on the rolls, as the fundamental basis of its future success.

The first meeting of the Board of Directors was held on the 27th day of March, and at once a committee was appointed to obtain subscriptions towards the purchasing of ground and the erection thereon of a "Home."

The original Executive Committee had, before this, succeeded in collecting a considerable amount of subscriptions, so that they were enabled to turn over to the Treasurer of the Board the sum of \$5,713.50. On the tenth day of April, the Treasurer reported the receipt of \$2,000.00 from the Hebrew Benevolent Association, which that body voted towards the purposes of the new Association, and \$1,000.00 from the Hebrew Ladies' Benevolent Association, generously donated by this Society.

It is a noteworthy fact, that the subscriptions came alike from Jew and Gentile. The idea of the establishment of a Home for Widows and Orphans had impressed itself upon the hearts of the community in responsive sympathy, and, for the glory of the city, let it be said, that ever since, in any enterprise of a charitable character, undertaken by the Israelites therein, this sympathy has come down from father to son, from mother to daughter, and, in hundreds of instances, has been revealed in shining glory.

As soon as the Board had organized, and the several standing committees had been appointed, the Committee on Application and Relief, took in hand the cases

of such widows and orphans as had formerly been relieved by the Hebrew Benevolent Association, and stipends were paid to them, until a Home could be established for their reception.

At the meeting of the Board of Officers, held on the first day of May, 1855, Mrs. Ann Depass was elected matron, and Dr. I. L. Gracour was elected physician.

On the eighth day of May, the Board resolved upon the purchase of six lots of ground, situated corner of Jackson and Chippewa streets, at a cost of about \$4,000.00. These lots measure sixty-six and one-half feet front on Jackson street, by a depth of 141 feet on Chippewa street. A motion was also adopted, directing the Committee on Building and Repairs to invite proposals and plans for the building of a Home.

On the 13th of May following, the Board of Directors went into an election for Honorary Matrons, to serve for six months, with the following ladies being elected:

Mrs. Widow E. Abrams, Mrs. Widow C. Hyams, Mrs. A. Haber, Mrs. George Jonas, Mrs. M. Goldsmith, Mrs. Isaac Hart, Mrs. D. Goodman, Mrs. Benjamin Florance, Mrs. S. J. Wellman, Mrs. L. Goldsmith, Mrs. Samuel Harby, Mrs. Joseph Simon, Mrs. Joseph Cohn, Mrs. Klopman, Mrs. G. Stadeker.

At a meeting held on the 20th of June, the plan of Mr. W. A. Freret, for a home, was adopted, and on the 10th of July the Building Committee reported having contracted with Mr. G. P. McConnell for the building, at a cost of \$10,700.

The corner stone was laid on the 7th day of August, Rev. James K. Gutheim delivering the oration. In a masterly manner he set forth the obligation of a community to provide for the poor widow and orphan; he described all that had been done, up to the present time, by the Hebrew Benevolent Association and the Hebrew Ladies' Benevolent Society, to meet the calls of distress; he alluded to the strenuous labors performed by the Board of Directors in the furtherance of the object of a "Home"; he lauded the benevolent spirit of Judah Touro, who, after a life of noble deeds, thought of bestowing a Jewish Hospital upon our