

**"Amongst Our First and Best Members" or  
"The Despair of the Trade Union Official"?  
Immigrant involvement in the British trade  
union movement, 1865 - 1901.**

**With an in-depth investigation of the Alliance Cabinet Makers  
Association.**

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## **Abstract**

The coincidence of increased immigration into Britain in the late nineteenth century with the revitalisation of the trade union movement encourages the investigation of interaction between the two phenomena. This study seeks to determine the impact that immigrants had upon trade unions that were primarily created for workers born in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, whether through joining these unions, through the impact of their own independent unions, or as unorganised workers. Specifically, the Alliance Cabinet Makers Association, the primary furniture making union, is considered as an example of immigrant integration into British trade unionism of the period, revealing significant levels of immigrant participation, and therefore evidence for considerable acculturation into elements of British society. Ultimately, the historical investigation is compared to contemporary trends in immigration and trade unionism, both in the United Kingdom and the United States

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## Chapter I - Introduction

A history of how modern British society was formed that contained no reference to either trade unionism or to immigration would be one that neglected two of the most vital factors in its development. Out of the former came the labour movement, contributing to widespread implementation of social democracy across British society during the twentieth century; from the latter came millions of new citizens, both immigrants and their descendents, who were pivotal in shaping the direction of the nation.

Both movements had vibrant periods of activity at the end of the nineteenth century<sup>1</sup>: from the legislation of 1871 to the outbreak of the First World War, trade unions were revitalised and the 'new union' movement sought to organize many groups who had never previously belonged to any trade society; whilst from around 1881, the exodus of Russians and Poles, primarily Jews, from Eastern Europe saw a significant number of migrants arriving and settling in British cities. Many of these did so temporarily on the way to the 'Great Medina' of America, but a sizable number found, for a variety of reasons, that Britain was where they would remain.<sup>2</sup>

The attention attracted from the host populations of the countries affected was unprecedented. Reactions came from all levels of society, perhaps most significantly from the working classes to which the majority of the migrants belonged. These included representatives of the trade union movement, whose role in many elements of public life was itself becoming increasingly noticeable.<sup>3</sup> The consideration the political classes gave to these seemingly separate, yet interconnected phenomena can be demonstrated by the commissions that were set up to study the matters. A House of Commons Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration (Foreigners) sat in 1888; it was followed in 1891 by a Royal Commission on Labour, in which the role of trade unions featured heavily. Finally in 1903, a Royal Commission on Alien Immigration sat, and came up with the proposals that led to the introduction to the first piece of legislation in nearly 75 years to restrict immigration into the country.<sup>4</sup> In gathering evidence for their conclusions, all three enquiries questioned aliens, trade unionists, and those who were both.

It is curious then, that historians have not proceeded to consider the links between immigration and trade unionism in this period in more detail.<sup>5</sup> The rise of 'new unionism' and its influence on the

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<sup>1</sup> David Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews – Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840 – 1914*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 215

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 148-9

<sup>3</sup> Jose Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain, 1870 - 1914*, (London: Penguin, 1994), 143; John Lovell, 'Trade Unionism and the development of independent labour politics, 1889 - 1906', in Ben Pimlott and Chris Cook, eds., *Trade Unions in British Politics: The First 250 Years* (Second Edition), (London: Longman, 1991), 29

<sup>4</sup> Robin Cohen, 'Shaping the Nation, Excluding the Other: The Deportation of Migrants from Britain', in Jan Lucassen and Leo Lucassen, eds. *Migration, Migration History, History: Old Paradigms and New Perspectives*, (Berne: Peter Lang, 1997), 358

<sup>5</sup> Feldman, 215

movement have been dissected by historians and sociologists since the time of Sidney and Beatrice Webb and George Howell.<sup>6</sup> Immigration, too, attracted considerable contemporary attention in literary form, and has enjoyed sporadic bursts of study ever since.<sup>7</sup> Much of this has focussed, however, on the immigration of Jews, the most noticeable, the most numerous, and arguably amongst the most alien in this period. As a result, immigration of other groups has been comparatively ignored by historians, although figures such as Panikos Panyai and Lucio Sponza have sought to explore the nature of German and Italian migrations to Britain respectively.<sup>8</sup> In evaluating the impact that immigrants and trade unions have had on each other it is a similar story: even the existence of Jewish trade unionism, by far the most prevalent form of immigrant unionism, was only reluctantly acknowledged by some historians, with their role often viewed as distinct or subordinate to that of their British counterparts.<sup>9</sup> When the two do intersect, it is often as either antagonists, or as patrons and beneficiaries, rather than as equals. However, the role of immigrant Jews within trade unions that were predominantly native-based, has largely been overlooked, and as for other migrants, their unions, whether integrated or separate, have become almost invisible. A notable exception is the work of Anne J. Kershen on the tailoring unions in London and Leeds, where organisation of Jews and of Gentiles is compared.<sup>10</sup> As innovative as Kershen's book was, it was limited in its scope. Jewish trade unionists were not just confined to garment working, although it was perhaps their prevalence in that industry that made them so visible.<sup>11</sup> It is only with the wave of immigrants arriving after the Second World War, that immigrant participation in British unions gained mainstream attention. However a large number of these migrants were from British colonial possessions, and though they faced severe difficulty in acculturating due to their ethnic background, their prior experience of British culture meant that they faced different challenges to previous generations of immigrants.<sup>12</sup>

As a result, a significant element of multicultural history has been overlooked. British cities, and in particular London, were often far more cosmopolitan than traditional studies have emphasised, and boasted significant foreign populations.<sup>13</sup> Whilst the more noticeable immigrants were commented on by contemporaries, many acculturated, or even assimilated into the host population, thus passing with

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<sup>6</sup> Sidney & Beatrice Webb, *A History of Trade Unionism (Revised Edition)*, (London: Longman, 1920); George Howell, *The Conflicts of Capital and Labour 2nd Edition*, (New York: Garland, 1984).

<sup>7</sup> Colin Holmes, 'Historians and Immigration', in *Migrants, Emigrants and Immigrants: A Social History of Migration*, eds. Colin G. Pooley and Ian D. Whyte, (London: Routledge, 1991), 191

<sup>8</sup> Colin Holmes, 'Hostile Images of Immigrants and Refugees in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Britain', in *Migration, Migration History, History: Old Paradigms and New Perspectives*, eds. Jan Lucassen and Leo Lucassen (Berne: Peter Lang, 1997), 317-8; Panikos Panayi, *German Immigrants in Britain during the Nineteenth Century, 1815-1914* (Oxford: Berg, 1995); Lucio Sponza, *Italian Immigrants in Nineteenth Century Britain: Realities and Images*, (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988).

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle - The Jewish Immigrant in Leeds, 1880 - 1914*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), 59-60

<sup>10</sup> Anne J. Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors: Trade Unionism Amongst the Tailors of London and Leeds, 1870 - 1939*, (London: Frank Cass, 1995), 126-7

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 8

<sup>12</sup> Ron Ramdin, *The Making of the Black Working Class in Britain*, (London: Wildwood House, 1987), 331

<sup>13</sup> For example see the various chapters in the contemporary work of George R. Sims ed., *Living London* (3 volumes) (London: Cassell & Co., 1906), which provides vignettes of various ethnic groups in turn of the century London; E. H. Hunt, *British Labour History, 1815-1914*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1981), 177

little or no attention. The action of joining a trade union, at the very time of their expansion, could be a significant part of that experience.<sup>14</sup> The purpose of this piece, therefore, is to find the traces of these immigrants within the trade union movement, to demonstrate their role as members, and to re-evaluate the attitudes of elements within the British working classes, many of whom have been labelled as reactionaries in the popular, and at times academic, record.<sup>15</sup>

A study of immigrant workers within the British trade union network raises many questions. To what extent did immigrants join trade unions, and was it proportional to their British counterparts? Did immigrants display similar levels of commitment to the union cause as British-born members, in terms of remaining within the union, participation in organised campaigns, and serving as union officials? Crucially, the form of immigrant unionism needs to be considered. How widespread were multi-ethnic unions, compared to ethnically segregated societies? Within mixed societies, did immigrant workers form their own branches, or did they join those primarily composed of the host population? The question of perspective is also problematic. Most of the surviving documentary evidence comes from British-born trade unionists, or British institutions, not from the immigrants themselves. Care must therefore be taken to avoid presenting the results too strongly from the point of view of the host population, and to discover what membership of trade unionism meant to the immigrants who joined. An immigrant identity must not be automatically seen as a handicap to employment or to membership of a union; indeed at times, many unions proved themselves anxious to bring as many immigrants as possible into the labour movement in one form or another.<sup>16</sup>

As inferred above, immigration to Britain was far from homogenous. Jewish migrants were long treated almost as an undifferentiated mass, but more recently it has been demonstrated that they were much more diverse than contemporaries cared to admit.<sup>17</sup> But Jews were not the sole migrants into Britain in this period, even if they were a majority. The transport revolution had made travel from Continental Europe easier than ever before, and a combination of Britain's imperial possessions and global trading links had brought migrants from almost every corner of the globe. Many of these were sailors, particularly from the Indian subcontinent and China, who settled in port cities, but this in no way accounts for all immigrants<sup>18</sup>. It will therefore be interesting to investigate whether ethnic background had any real effect upon trade union affiliation and commitment.

Given the vast expansion of trade unionism in this period, a complete overview is impracticable. Therefore, after a brief analysis of trade union attitudes to immigrants and immigration, and the type of trade societies to which immigrants belonged, the case study will evaluate immigrants within one particular British trade union, the Alliance Cabinet Makers Association. This was the leading trade organisation for furniture makers in this period. Founded in London in 1865, it had become a national

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<sup>14</sup> Buckman, 59, 62

<sup>15</sup> Kershen, 157; Kenneth Lunn, 'Immigration and Reaction in Britain, 1880-1950: Rethinking the Legacy of Empire', in *Migration, Migration History, History: Old Paradigms and New Perspectives*, eds. Jan Lucassen and Leo Lucassen, (Berne: Peter Lang, 1997), 336

<sup>16</sup> TUC Annual Report 1894, p32; TUC Annual Report 1895, p46

<sup>17</sup> Lunn, 338; Feldman, 328

<sup>18</sup> Lunn, 339; G. R. Searle, *A New England? Peace and War, 1886-1914*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 19-20.

organisation by the middle of the 1870s, and remained so until an amalgamation with other societies produced the National Amalgamated Furniture Trades Association in 1902. In studying the role of (and attitudes to) immigrants within the union, the surviving minute books of the Association's Executive Committee have been consulted, as well as the society's Annual Reports. In addition to analysing the documentary evidence of the role of immigrants in this society, there will also be an evaluation of the composition of the society at two decennial points in two of its major centres, London and Manchester. In this way, it is hoped that a broad picture of the scale of immigrant membership within this society can be displayed, and the changes that took place over time discovered and explained. The introduction of a regional variable will help demonstrate the variations in strength that trade unionism had in different parts of Britain, as well as possibly indicating any distinct local attitudes toward immigrant organisation.<sup>19</sup>

At this point it may be appropriate to discuss the methods by which the results will be collected. Although an invaluable collection of documents, the British censuses are not to be used without considerable care. As well as discussing the inspiration for the methodology, this section will also describe some of the potential problems as well as the limitations encountered in the compiling of the information.

The inspiration for the study came primarily from the work of Lucio Sponza, already referred to for his work on Italian immigrants in London. As part of his research, he used the decennial census records to track certain individuals across both the decades and the various administrative divisions of the city of London. In doing so, he was able to record their changing lifestyle, employment, familial and residential status, as well as gaining some perspective on their social networks.<sup>20</sup> Similar census tracking activity had already been carried out by M. A. Anderson in his study of particular towns in nineteenth century Lancashire, but Sponza not only applied this to an immigrant population, but also succeeded in creating greater individual identities for those he researched, in contrast to the broad statistical sweeps of Anderson's study.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, it was Sponza's focus on the individual as being a part of the wider trends that were affecting immigrants which was the main inspiration for the present study.

The recorded membership of the Alliance Cabinet Makers Association (hereafter the ACMA) was compiled through the annual publication of the benefit recipients, in addition to the branch and union officers, all of which were recorded in the Annual Reports. A database was created, and members referenced in each year's Annual Report, whether as an officer of the union or the branch, or as a claimant of benefit, were noted down. This was done for each year that a record was kept between 1874 and 1901, with the exception of 1885 when the precarious financial situation of the society precluded the publication of a full Annual Report.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, over the twenty seven years recorded, a considerable database was compiled. Some members could be recorded for a lengthy period of time,

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<sup>19</sup> Lunn, 337, 341-2

<sup>20</sup> Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*, 79

<sup>21</sup> Michael Anderson, *Family Structure in Mid-Nineteenth Century Lancashire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 19, 170

<sup>22</sup> ACMA E.C. Minutes, 17/2/1886.

although very few were present for the entire period. Once the database was completed, the names recorded were then compared against the online census catalogue.

Given that the lists exist for the period between 1874 and 1901, it would prove severely impractical to research every name listed. Aside from the vast number of men documented, it is more than likely that there are many duplications, due to different recordings of the same individual. As a result, the decision was initially taken to research only individuals who were recorded in the three applicable census years, that is to say in 1881, 1891, and 1901. In this way, an ethnic composition of the union could be built up for those three years, and changes over time could be demonstrated and analysed. Using the census records made available online over the past decade, the names recorded by the ACMA in the census years would be entered into the database, with all the relevant information available. Rather than research the whole society, only members of branches in London and Manchester would be considered. There were several reasons for this. Each city had multiple branches, covering various geographical locations and types of employment within the furniture trade. It would also be possible to compare how the two cities fared in appealing to their immigrant populations. While it was expected that the immigrant participation in London, the largest city in Europe at the time, would be much higher than in Manchester, the existence of a documented immigrant population in the latter city, as well as a Hebrew Branch, pointed to the strong possibility that immigrant cabinet makers were not only resident, but had joined the trade union there.

At this point, it would be appropriate to discuss the usage of the census as a research document. Considerable work on this has been done by Edward Higgs in his series of books on British census research, culminating in *Making Sense of the Census Revisited*.<sup>23</sup> In this book, Higgs outlines what the researcher can usefully expect to gain from census research, as well as many of the limitations of the census as a historical document. Chief amongst the latter is that the census is only a snapshot, not an exhaustive record of who lived where and how. The census was taken on one particular night every ten years, and it is more than likely that many anomalies were created by people being engaged in behaviour that was not necessarily typical for the rest of the decade. People would have been recorded away from home in the censuses under consideration here, meaning that anyone researching them may not have found them where they were expected to be.<sup>24</sup> As Sponza has noted, this means that the seasonal immigrant population, who tended to live and work in Britain during the summer months, would have been outside the country when the censuses were taken in early April, and therefore a significant amount of migrant workers would never be recorded.<sup>25</sup> However, it is unlikely that many of these workers would have ever been organised inside a British union, given their transitory background. Higgs also makes it quite clear that even the census as completed must not be taken as a reliable document. The census for these three decades were taken by the distribution of returns by an appointed enumerator, prior to the date set for the census. On the appointed night, the head of the

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<sup>23</sup> Edward Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census Revisited: Census Records for England and Wales, 1801-1901 - A Handbook for Historical Researchers*, (London: Institute of Historical Research, The National Archives of the U.K., 2005).

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 71

<sup>25</sup> Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*, 11



household was to record all those who spent the night (or typically spent the night) under his or her roof. The enumerator would then collect and compile the forms before submitting them to the Census Office.<sup>26</sup>

Whilst more effective than a door-to-door enquiry, which had proved impossible when trialed, there were significant problems with this manner of data collection<sup>27</sup>. Some households were missed off altogether, either through not receiving or returning forms, or due to clerical errors on the part of the enumerator.<sup>28</sup> The information that was supplied was not always to be trusted either. Those who were semi-literate, or worse, experienced a great deal of trouble when filling in the forms. Some were unsure of exact ages (this may account for the spikes in numbers around the beginning of particular decades), and Higgs has advised a variance of +/- 2 years in the estimation of ages.<sup>29</sup> Relationships might also have been subject to some embellishment, with common law marriages being upgraded to fully legal partnerships by opportunistic respondents. But from the perspective of the current enquiry, the areas where errors are most problematic are place of birth and employment.

For the respondent, place of birth could be problematic, although most could, at the very least, give the country of their birth. Nevertheless, as Higgs argued, the census could provide immigrants with a means of legitimising their place in British society. Just as foreign names could be Anglicised in the hope of projecting the fiction of lifetime inhabitation, it was just as simple to claim birth in Britain. It has been argued that Jewish immigrants were particularly prone to doing this, as a means of forestalling any potential aggression against them as newcomers to Britain.<sup>30</sup> The fact that a Jewish community had lived in Britain for some 250 years meant that the success of this tactic was not beyond the bounds of plausibility. For those who chose to be honest about their place of birth, this was no guarantee of accuracy. Some claimed that whilst born abroad, they had been born as British subjects, or had subsequently paid to be naturalised as one.<sup>31</sup> Given the expense of naturalisation, this was a means of depicting a stronger right to living Britain than was actually present in law. It is unclear how many who claimed to be naturalised in the census returns actually were. Those for whom English was not a first language also faced problems, especially if they had limited linguistic competence. The enumerator or neighbours were supposed to provide assistance if the respondent struggled to fill out the form on their own. But this was no guarantee that the information would be recorded accurately, and even if it made it completely onto the enumeration form, mistakes could still be made in transcription.<sup>32</sup> To prevent such problems, census forms were created to be used by those for whom English was not a first language to demonstrate how to correctly fill in a household schedule. These were distributed in East London for the 1891 and 1901 censuses and were produced in both German and Yiddish, indicating they

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<sup>26</sup> Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census Revisited*, 16-18

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, 13

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 117

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 142

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 91

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, 85, 92

were primarily designed for the Jewish immigrants who had arrived since 1881. Despite this, Higgs suggests that Jewish immigrants were significantly underrepresented in the census record.<sup>33</sup>

Employment was similarly problematic. Aside from communication problems that could affect the recording of other details, the census relied on the respondent being accurate and truthful. Those with more than one job chose to record the one they felt was most significant. It is probable that many who recorded themselves as preachers or scripture readers had alternative employment, but prioritised their faith above more material issues. The under-recording of female employment outside the domestic sphere was one that has plagued the efforts to accurately reconstruct the size of the Victorian workforce.<sup>34</sup> A further area for inaccuracy was created by the 1891 census. Prior to that, the respondent had only to supply the trade or area in which he or she worked. From 1891, the option was given to list the nature of the employment, whether the worker employed others, was employed themselves, or was self-employed. Obviously for this research, such a distinction is important. Employers were not eligible for membership of many trade societies, and the ACMA was no exception.<sup>35</sup> But as Higgs has noted, some no doubt took the opportunity to enhance their social status by listing themselves as employers when they were not.<sup>36</sup> Transcription errors were also a possibility. Therefore, with such problems, significant reservations must be considered before treating the census as a reliable document for historical research.

Despite such problems, the census can still be a valuable research tool, provided that enough care is taken. For the current study, parameters were set to limit who would be considered in the research. There was no upper age boundary, as though the ACMA generally restricted entrance to the society as a full member for those aged over 50, many retained their membership at an age considerably beyond that.<sup>37</sup> Bearing in mind Higgs's acknowledgement of inaccuracy regarding age, a lower age boundary of 15 years was set, although no member found was generally expected to be under 21.<sup>38</sup> Geographically, the range considered for the London branches generally corresponds to modern day Greater London. This means that not only are those recorded as living in various parts of contemporary London researched, but also individuals living in selected areas of Kent, Essex, Hertfordshire and Surrey, as well as all those recorded as living in Middlesex. For Manchester the process was more complex. Given that branches were created in nearby towns that are now satellites of Manchester, such as Bury, a radius of approximately ten miles from the centre of Manchester was eligible for consideration, although the likelihood was considered to decrease the further away the individual was recorded. In practice this meant only individuals from specific areas of Lancashire, and a very small area of Cheshire, were considered. This also meant that anyone absent from home by a considerable distance on census night

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, 35, 118

<sup>34</sup> Eleanor Gordon, *Women and the Labour Movement in Scotland, 1850-1914*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 16-17

<sup>35</sup> ACMA Rules 1895 Revision, Rule 1; Howell, *The Conflicts of Capital and Labour*, 165

<sup>36</sup> Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census Revisited*, 112

<sup>37</sup> ACMA E.C. Minutes, 19/1/1893, where new members aged over 50 were to be admitted only to the partial section of the society; 27/9/1895; 8/7/1897; 10/1/1901, where No.1 levied its members to pay the dues of older members.

<sup>38</sup> This is based on George Howell's idea that most unions admitted their members from the age of 21, although no doubt there were exceptions. Howell, *Conflict of Capital and Labour*, 165.

would not be recorded. Given the evidence of travel grants in the Annual Reports, and the anecdotal evidence of the E.C. minutes both suggest that employment away from home was not an uncommon practice, it is highly likely that a number of members would be lost this way.<sup>39</sup>

Surnames generally had to match exactly. For example, an individual recorded as *Matthews* would not be looked for in the census under those who had been recorded as *Mathews*, unless there was significant evidence that he had also been recorded in the ACMA lists under both names. This was relaxed somewhat for those with more unusual names that did not yield so many possibilities, but the original handwritten record had to bear a strong resemblance to the name recorded by the ACMA. Given the significant number of transcription errors in the census records, this makes it almost inevitable that some of those who have been researched would not be found.

The problems of employment listed above is added to by the myriad employments in the furniture trade. Cabinet making was generally seen as quite respectable, so there is less concern about individuals in this trade seeking to conceal their true employment. The employments considered were those outlined in the society rules of 1895. Upholsterers were generally not considered, as they did not belong to the society as a rule, particularly in London and Manchester. French polishers are somewhat more difficult to qualify, as they were eligible for society membership, but generally not in towns where polishers' unions were in existence.<sup>40</sup> Given that these existed in both London and Manchester, those listed in the census as French Polishers have not been considered as members of the ACMA. Of course, members of the society who had taken work as polishers might have continued to belong to the union, and in this manner they would not have been recorded. Similarly those who were recorded as furniture salesmen, but who also may have been craftsmen, have not been recorded.

Also recorded was the address of the individual, so that an idea of the general location of members of each branch could be drawn up. This allowed an expectation to be formed as to which parts of the city members of various branches could be expected to be found. The number of inhabitants of the household was also recorded to give an indication not only of living conditions but also family and social ties. For this reason any immigrants who lived in the building were also noted, as well as any of those employed in similar trades. In this way it was hoped to create a more detailed picture of the ties which members of the union possessed, however weak some of these might have been.

It will not be pretended that the methodology used in this analysis is without error. However, sufficient safeguards have hopefully been taken to obtain as accurate a selection of data as possible. Certainly it has proved possible to follow certain individuals, and to be sufficiently confident in a great many cases that the individual highlighted is the same one recorded by the union. Nevertheless, very few individuals have been confirmed as 'direct matches', when there is no shadow of doubt that the two match. In most cases, the individual has been listed as 'Unknown' with a qualification as to whether they were a native or an immigrant. Only in the cases where no reliable information could be discovered or if the

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<sup>39</sup> E.C. Minutes, 13/7/1887; 19/10/1894; 11/5/1899; 13/9/1900.

<sup>40</sup> Upholsterers were eligible for membership from 27/11/1891, but generally in towns with small branches of the society; see 8/11/1895, 3/1/1896, 13/11/1896 (for Manchester) for the rules on admitting polishers.

individuals identified failed to match a vital known detail, has the individual been recorded without addition as 'Unknown'.

Due to a vast underestimation of the time needed for such an analysis, only the 1881 research was completed in its entirety. For the 1891 research, only the London branches were considered, and the 1901 research was abandoned altogether. This was a severe disappointment, as it limited the ability to compare the development across time, and in particular between geographical regions. In retrospect, a less ambitious analysis should have been attempted.

Such analysis, however exhaustive it may be, is useless without a comparison with other contemporary societies. Chiefly this will be done by comparing the ACMA with the unions in the tailoring trade such as the Amalgamated Society of Tailors and the London Society of Tailors, using the secondary source material compiled by various historians, such as Anne Kershen and Joseph Buckman. Immigrants in other lines of work and other unions will also be considered, such as those in the hospitality trade, and those serving in the merchant navy. In this way, it is hoped that the significance of immigrant participation within the late-Victorian and Edwardian British labour movement will be demonstrated.

Despite the concentration on events a century past, this is an issue with strong relevance for modern employment and industrial relations. As both Europe and America attempt to deal with their most severe economic crisis for several generations, the trade union movement has the potential to regain a level of influence in public life it has not enjoyed for nearly half a century. If it were to do so, it would have to cope with a globalised labour market that sees workers at all levels often employed in nations far from their place of birth and with colleagues from a multitude of ethnic backgrounds. National trade union movements must therefore utilise a multinational dimension, and there are undoubtedly lessons to be learned from the way their predecessors attempted to do so, albeit on a much smaller scale. Therefore, it would be interesting to compare the results of this analysis with actions taken in the last two decades to revitalise the labour movement in the United States by successfully recruiting Latino and Latina immigrants, in particular in California.<sup>41</sup> Commonalities and dissimilarities in approach, even across a time-span of a century, may provide a methodology for the reconstruction and revitalisation of trade unionism in the Western economic world.

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<sup>41</sup> 'Immigration and the Transformation of American Unionism', Brian Burgoon, Janice Fine, Wade Jacoby and Daniel Tichenor, in *International Migration Review*, Vol. 44, No. 4 (Winter 2010), 952; "It's Time to Leave Machismo Behind!" Challenging Gender Inequality in an Immigrant Union', Cynthia J. Cranford, in *Gender and Society*, Vol. 21, No.3 (June 2007), 409; Ruth Milkman, *L.A. Story: Immigrant Workers and the Future of the U.S. Labor Movement*, (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 9-10

## Chapter II - Historiography

Immigration and trade unionism have separately proven fruitful topics for historians of modern Britain. Yet there is little work that directly seeks to investigate the two together, and where it does exist, for instance in the works of Kershner or Panyai, it is generally a side topic to the wider theme, such as trade unionism in the clothing trade or German immigration respectively. This chapter will therefore seek to give a brief outline of the dominant trends and influences within the historiography of immigration into Britain in the time period considered, and to British trade unionism of the era. A wider historiography of immigration and acculturation will not be discussed, due to the immense size of the canon, but relevant works will be discussed at appropriate points in the text.

The theme of immigration is one with which British historians have struggled to come to terms over the past century. It seems to be generally agreed that considerable neglect has been shown to an area that has had significant ramifications on the nation's history.<sup>42</sup> In part this may be due to the fact that immigration has remained an issue of intense political debate in contemporary life, and therefore no attitude on historical waves of immigrants can be offered without appearing to be a judgment on migrants both past and present. But immigration historiography has also suffered from over-specialization, which has seen several groups of migrants over-documented at the expense of others.

Exploration of the historical record of immigration has often been tied into the reporting of contemporary waves. As has been noted, the United Kingdom, along with much of Western Europe, took until the mid-twentieth century to recognize that it was a nation of immigrants as well as one of emigrants.<sup>43</sup> But even at the turn of that century, contemporary accounts were observing that Britain had become a receiving nation, and a vigorous debate had erupted as to how beneficial these immigrants were to the native population. Originally the focus was directed at migrants from Ireland; subsequently Eastern European Jews were also a cause for concern. That this occurred at the same time as growing concern about imperial decline was no accident, and many pamphlets were published regarding the threat that these immigrants posed to the British, particularly in the sphere of employment. Particularly influential was the work of Arnold White, who argued strongly for the state restriction of further immigration in his work, *The Destitute Alien in Great Britain*<sup>44</sup>. In response, the defenders of immigration cited the willingness of migrants and their children to assimilate to the British way of life, particularly with regard to learning English, and to the economic benefits migrants had brought. The mantle trade for ladies dressmaking was often cited as an industry that had not existed prior to the arrival of Eastern European tailors, and served as some rebuttal to the unfavourable comparisons that critics had made between the Jews and the Huguenot immigrants of the late seventeenth century.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Holmes, 'Historians and Immigration', 191

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>44</sup> Arnold White, 'Introduction', in Arnold White ed., *The Destitute Alien in Great Britain: A Series of Papers Dealing with the Subject of Foreign Pauper Immigration*, (London: Swan Sonnenschien & Co., 1892), 2-3

<sup>45</sup> *British Labour History*, Hunt, 184; *Uniting the Tailors*, Kershner, 102

With the post-colonial reconceptualisation of Britain as a destination for immigrants, historians have caught up with their colleagues in other areas of the social sciences and have begun to chronicle the impact of immigration on British life. However, certain groups have garnered more attention than others, as the criticism of Colin Holmes amongst others has noted.<sup>46</sup> For the period under consideration here, the main migrant groups discussed have, unsurprisingly, been the Irish, and the Jewish immigrants primarily from Poland and Russia. Continuing waves of immigration from the island of Ireland has maintained an interest in the history of Irish settlement in Britain, but it was not until the 1970s that active interest in Jewish immigrants took off. Works by figures such as Lloyd Gartner and Joseph Buckman sought to distinguish these new arrivals not only from the elite segment of Anglo-Jewry, who were well on their way to assimilation, but also between each other.<sup>47</sup> Buckman noted the significance of ethnic distinction between various Jewish groups, as well as the class tensions between immigrants who operated as entrepreneurs, and those who remained proletarian.<sup>48</sup> He was also careful to note the changing background of the Jewish migrant over the course of period, something which was later commented on by David Feldman in his examination of the migrants. They pointed out that whilst the earlier migrants moved primarily to escape persecution, later immigrants were also driven by economic considerations; similarly while the earlier migrants had been largely comprised of craftsmen and merchants from rural or isolated backgrounds, the later wave had been affected by the growing spread of industrialisation in Russia. As a result, they were more likely to already be urbanised and proletarian than their forebears.<sup>49</sup>

The criticism of more recent immigration historiography has largely been centred around Colin Holmes. Whilst acknowledging that historians have increasingly recognised the significance of immigration to British history, he has complained of several issues which have meant that the overview of British historiography is as not complete as it could be. Holmes notes that historians have failed to produce an overarching narrative of immigration to Britain that would demonstrate its role as a continuing theme in national life.<sup>50</sup> Instead an overwhelming focus has been given to the migration that took place after 1945, largely coming from Britain's former colonial possessions, at the expense of earlier waves of migration. This has meant that such movements of people have been viewed not as a continual process but as exceptional events.<sup>51</sup> The earlier migrations that have been considered in detail have focused on certain groups to the exclusion of others, such as the Chinese, who had begun arriving in Britain from the late nineteenth century onwards.<sup>52</sup> Whilst the size of an immigrant group has generally defined its attractiveness to historical investigation, Holmes notes that the wave of Belgian migrants who came in 1914-15 have almost entirely been overlooked, despite their numbers (more than 200,000) being equal

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<sup>46</sup> Holmes, 'Hostile Images', 317-8

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, 331

<sup>48</sup> Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 6

<sup>49</sup> Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 7-8; Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 150

<sup>50</sup> Holmes, 'Historians and Immigration', 191

<sup>51</sup> Dirk Hoerder, 'Segmented Microsystems and Networking Individuals: The Balancing Function of Migration Processes', in Jan Lucassen and Leo Lucassen eds. *Migration, Migration History, History: Old Paradigms and New Perspectives*, (Berne: Peter Lang, 1997), 73

<sup>52</sup> Holmes, 'Hostile Images', 322; Searle, *A New England?*, 19-20

to the total number of Eastern European Jews who settled in Britain between 1881 and 1914.<sup>53</sup> Whilst this view does have considerable validity, it is also likely that most of the Belgian refugees returned home after the cessation of hostilities, whilst many of the Jewish immigrants remained, and so played a more pivotal role in the development of Britain. Holmes has also criticised the focus of historians on immigration into London, admittedly the destination of many migrants, at the expense of those settling in the provinces, as well as Scotland and Wales. As a result, he felt that an overarching view of immigration into Britain was long overdue.<sup>54</sup>

This was a view supported by Kenneth Lunn, who noted that not only were groups of immigrants seen as homogenous by many historians, but so were patterns of adaptation by both migrants and the receiving societies. Lunn argued that these were determined by local factors and cultures rather than being part of a general model. In the case of labour history therefore, the attitudes of local trades councils to alien workers would be far more revelatory than that of the Trades Union Congress at a national level.<sup>55</sup> As a result, hostility to immigrants has been overemphasised by historians as it supported the ideas that they already had regarding the host population, whereas a more detailed investigation of attitudes would have revealed a much more nuanced picture.<sup>56</sup>

Despite their criticism, Lunn and especially Holmes were quick to point out those who had expanded on the traditional attitudes and boundaries regarding immigrant historiography. Holmes cited Bill Williams' history of provincial Jewry in mid-Victorian Manchester, which dealt with the arrival of German Jews in the city in the earlier half of the nineteenth century, and concluded before the traditional commencement of immigration in 1881.<sup>57</sup> Similarly Joseph Buckman's history was concerned with Leeds rather than London, and demonstrated the difference between the capital and provinces in the way that industrial and workshop development had advanced.<sup>58</sup> In the wider sphere of immigration historiography, Panikos Panyai and Lucio Sponza respectively investigated the arrival of German and Italian migrants in Britain during the nineteenth century, and sought to deal with the wide variety of migrants who made the journey, as well as how the British population reacted to them.<sup>59</sup>

In detailing the course of his study, Panyai echoed the complaints of Holmes about the lack of variety in the study of immigration, and noted that the enthusiasm of the historian, often driven by an ancestral link to past migrations, is vital for the development of the field.<sup>60</sup> However, as Nancy Green has pointed out in their analyses of American immigration, there is considerable peril in a historian identifying too strongly with the immigrant group being studied. Excessive specialisation therefore, risks the historian

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<sup>53</sup> Colin Holmes, 'Immigrants and Refugees in Britain, in Werner E. Mosse ed., *Second Chance - Two Centuries of German-Speaking Jews in the United Kingdom*, (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1991), 19

<sup>54</sup> Holmes, 'Historians and Immigration', 203

<sup>55</sup> Kenneth Lunn, 'Immigration and Reaction', 340, 341-2, 346

<sup>56</sup> Lunn, 'Immigration and Reaction', 345; Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 328

<sup>57</sup> Holmes, 'Hostile Images', 202; Bill Williams, *The Making of Manchester Jewry, 1740 - 1875*, (New York: Holmes and Meier/Manchester University Press, 1976); Williams expanded on this in his *Manchester Jewry: A Pictorial History, 1788-1988*, (Manchester: Archive Publications, 1988).

<sup>58</sup> Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 45-6; Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 169

<sup>59</sup> Panyai, *German Immigrants*; Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*.

<sup>60</sup> Panyai, *German Immigrants*, xi

mistaking commonalities of the immigrant experience with what is truly unique to a particular set of migrants.<sup>61</sup> This ties up with Holmes's call for a more overarching narrative in British immigration history that would recognise immigration as continuous rather than exceptional.<sup>62</sup>

In contrast to the historiography of immigration, that of trade unionism is much more developed, although with the economic changes and the decline of trade union influence from the 1970s onwards, it has become somewhat unfashionable. Nevertheless, the significance of trade unionism in British life during the twentieth century has been reflected by the extensive historiography that developed, which discussed its origins, motivations and even ultimate directions. This trend of general histories of the movement has continued, but labour history broadened to include micro-histories of individual trade unions and strictly defined geographical localities, and also to look at the history of elements within the working class who remained untouched by trade unionism. The diversification of trade union historiography should not, however, diminish the results of the frenetic levels of study it attracted in its earlier days. These date back at least to the period of 'new Unionism', when activists such as the Webbs and George Howell argued whether what was occurring was a departure from established practice, or even trade unionism at all.<sup>63</sup> The Webbs were responsible for creating many of the concepts that historians of trade unionism would utilise for the next century.<sup>64</sup> Their definition of a trade union as "a continuous association of wage earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the condition of their working lives" is one that has largely stood the test of time<sup>65</sup>. They also coined the term 'New Model union', to describe craft societies such as the ASE, which catered to the interests of their members, almost all of whom were skilled workers. These societies provided comprehensive benefit packages that were funded by significant contribution payments, and were long seen as the prototype for all the successful unions that emerged over the next three decades.<sup>66</sup>

'New' Unions were traditionally seen by historians as the first bodies to attempt to organise the semi- and un-skilled workers. It is commonly argued that the inspiration for these associations came with the strikes of 1888-90, most famously the match girls at Bryant and May, organised by Annie Beasant, the gas workers strikes led by Will Thorne, and the dockers' movement headed by Ben Tillett and Tom Mann.<sup>67</sup> However, the historical orthodoxy of these movements, becoming ground breaking and effective in moving trade unionism beyond simply the higher echelons of the working classes has been disputed from several perspectives. Attempts at the organisation of the unskilled has been backdated to

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<sup>61</sup> Nancy Green, 'The Comparative Method and Poststructural Structuralism: New Perspectives for Migration Studies', in Jan Lucassen and Leo Lucassen eds. *Migration, Migration History, History: Old Paradigms and New Perspectives*, (Berne: Peter Lang, 1997), 67, 71-72

<sup>62</sup> Holmes 'Historians and Immigration', 195

<sup>63</sup> Howell, vii; Sidney Pollard, 'The New Unionism in Britain: its economic background', in Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Hans-Gerhard Husung eds., *The Development of Trade Unionism in Britain and Germany, 1880 -1914*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), 47

<sup>64</sup> N. Baron, *British Trade Unions*, (London: Victor Gollancz, 1947), 113

<sup>65</sup> S & B Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, 1

<sup>66</sup> S & B Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, 224; Eric Hopkins, *Working Class Self Help in Nineteenth Century England*, (London: University College London Press, 1995), 122

<sup>67</sup> Ken Coates and Tony Topman, *The History of the TGWU, Vol.1 - The Making of the TGWU: The Emergence of the Labour Movement, 1870 - 1922, Part I 1870 -1911: From Forerunners to Federation*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 111



at least the beginning of the 1870s, precipitated by a trade boom that bore considerable resemblance to the one that occurred at the end of the 1880s. Certainly in London, which forms one of the two areas considered here, there was a great deal of potential for organisation, with the city described by Hobsbawm as "a trade union desert" compared to the greater union strength in the northern industries.<sup>68</sup> The collapse of this period of growth, and the severe economic depression that began from the middle of the decade supposedly restricted further efforts at organisation.<sup>69</sup> Secondly, it has been argued that the 'new' unions of the early 1890s struggled to survive as trade conditions worsened after 1891. After severe contractions in their membership, those that were able to survive, such as Thorne's Gas and General Workers Union, were only able to do so by paring back the unreliable elements of its membership and by introducing a similar model of benefits to the 'New Model' unions.<sup>70</sup> It was only during the period of protracted trade union activity between 1911 and 1913, when the position of labour organisations was aided by their new, state-sanctioned role in welfare provision that their membership was able to rise significantly above more than one-tenth of the population<sup>71</sup>. Thirdly, the more established unions benefitted more from the tide of 'new' unionism, or perhaps more accurately, the improved economic conditions that had stimulated it, which increased their memberships, and allowed them position themselves more effectively to gain advances in wages and working conditions.<sup>72</sup>

Such evidence conforms to the theory that the strength of trade unionism, in Britain at least, was heavily linked to the trade cycle, with membership waxing during good periods, and waning during depressions. Few historians have challenged this idea, and the empirical evidence suggests that trade union membership was strongly linked to the economic condition of Britain, and Western Europe as a whole.<sup>73</sup> The real difficulty for trade unions was not sustaining momentum when conditions in their trades were poor, but even maintaining the members and gains they had made. Consequently, unions had to shepherd their resources carefully, and the most successful and enduring knew when to move for advances in wages, and when to compromise. Of course, when trade picked up, unions sought to improve their members' wages and to organise new members to help improve their bargaining position. The scale of this should not, however, be overestimated. Although trade union historians have demonstrated that, when eligibility for union membership was taken into account, a higher proportion were affiliated than previously thought, it cannot be denied that in the period under consideration,

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<sup>68</sup> Quoted in James A. Schmiechen, *Sweated Industry and Sweated Labor - The London Clothing Trade, 1860 - 1914*, (London: Croom Helm, 1984), 80

<sup>69</sup> Kenneth D. Brown, *The English Labour Movement, 1700 - 1951*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1982), 165-66; Lovell, in Pimlott and Cook, 30

<sup>70</sup> Lovell, in Pimlott and Cook, 30-31

<sup>71</sup> H. A. Clegg, Alan Fox and A. F. Thompson, *A History of British Trade Unions since 1889, Vol.1: 1889 - 1910*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 467; Eric Hobsbawm, 'The New Unionism Reconsidered', in Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Hans-Gerhard Husung eds., *The Development of Trade Unionism in Britain and Germany, 1880 - 1914*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), 27

<sup>72</sup> Baron, 100

<sup>73</sup> A notable exception to this is Schnabel, who feels that the cyclical model of expansion and contraction linked to the trade cycle is not universally applicable. Claus Schnabel, 'Determinants of Trade Union Membership', in John T. Addison and Claus Schnabel, eds. *International Handbook of Trade Unions*, (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2003), 25

more workers were outside the trade union movement than those that affiliated.<sup>74</sup> Of course this does not take into account all those who had at one point been within a union, or those who were sympathetic to the goals of trade unionism without active participation. This so-called 'free rider' problem has continually dogged the effort of unions to organise and to achieve their aims.<sup>75</sup>

In many industries, union expansion meant not only trying to organise native-born workers, but also foreign labourers, who had immigrated into Britain to take advantage of its predominant position in world trade and the markets of its imperial possessions and dominions. It is increasingly clear that the British trade union movement cannot be viewed in isolation from activity in Continental Europe and America. Regrettably however, most trade union histories have failed to consider the international links, beyond cursory acknowledgements of the Second International, and International Trade Union Congresses.<sup>76</sup> It must be admitted that to such attitudes are somewhat justified. Such meetings were usually little more than talking shops that achieved little than to demonstrate the disparate attitudes between European workers, especially regarding variations of socialism. However the fact that such meetings took place at all, and that they occurred on a semi-regular basis, is indicative of an idealistic attitude within trade unionism that had little in common with the 'normal' attitudes of the late nineteenth century nation state. For example, the British TUC frequently hosted their counterparts from the American Congress of Labor, and usually made return visits to ACL conferences.<sup>77</sup> On one occasion, the TUC even welcomed labour delegates from as far afield as the Empire of Japan<sup>78</sup>. One glaring omission however, is the failure to include regular sitting delegates from the British imperial possessions, despite the logistical difficulties such an effort would have entailed. The failure of historians to address the wider question of internationalism within the British labour movement has handicapped the discussion about immigrants within it, and has led to it being largely viewed as an aberration, or in the case of Jewish unionism, as an inconsistent and almost unrelated offshoot.<sup>79</sup> The range of ethnic unions that existed leads one to question how marginal a phenomena immigrant participation in associations of workers really was.

One of the purposes of this work therefore, is to attempt to create a work which is free from any ethnic ties and to avoid unnecessarily overemphasising one immigrant group over any of the others. Whilst the mass arrival of Eastern Europeans into the labour force in this period means that they have attracted

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<sup>74</sup> S & B Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, 423-4, who estimated that only 20% of the 'adult male manual working class' belonged to a union in 1892; Hunt, *Labour History*, 296; Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 126, on the general limitations of trade unionism in London; Hew Reid, *The Furniture Makers: A History of Trade Unionism in the Furniture Trade 1868 - 1972*, (Oxford: Malthouse Press, 1986), 24, records that a majority of the trade remained unorganised until after 1945.

<sup>75</sup> Schnabel, 'Determinants of Membership' in Addison and Schnabel, eds. *International Handbook*, 15-16; W. Hamish Fraser, *Trade Unions and Society: The Struggle for Acceptance 1850 - 1880*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1974), 208

<sup>76</sup> Coates and Topman, 171-2, 231; Henry Pelling, *History of British Trade Unionism*, 5th Edition, (London: Penguin, 1992), 116, 147

<sup>77</sup> Pelling, *History of Trade Unionism*, 116

<sup>78</sup> Trades Union Congress Annual Report 1898, 28

<sup>79</sup> Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 59

grudging recognition from historians of trade unionism,<sup>80</sup> this work does not seek to unduly elevate their contribution to trade unionism above that of other workers, from Europe and beyond, who also participated in the British trade union movement at the end of the nineteenth century. As shall be demonstrated in the case study, although the Jewish workers were a growing force in trade unionism, they were far from alone, including in the case of the Alliance Cabinet Makers. In this way, this work should help to unify the disparate fields of trade union and immigration historiography, and to recognise that immigrants in this period played a much greater role in labour history than simply as antagonists or pawns of their employers. Nevertheless, contemporary trade union reactions to immigrant workers often started from that very assumption.

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<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

## Chapter III - Trade Union Responses to Immigration

The attitude toward immigration traditionally ascribed to the trade unions in this period has typically been one of hostility, usually represented by the three resolutions passed at the Trades Union Congresses held in 1892, 1894 and 1895. These votes instructed their Parliamentary Committee to attempt to have legislation introduced that would block the immigration of so-called 'pauper immigrants' into the United Kingdom.<sup>81</sup> The TUC was far from being alone in holding a restrictionist attitude within the labour movement. Many local trade councils passed resolutions favouring restriction of immigration in the 1890s<sup>82</sup>, and as far back as the 1870s, the London Stone Masons had struck in opposition to the importation of foreign labour.<sup>83</sup> But it would be a mistake to view these attitudes as permanent, or even universal, amongst trade unionists. Though the TUC had voted to support restriction of immigration, there were many prominent unionists who had spoken out against such a policy, and had criticised those who viewed foreigners as the cause of the problems in their industries.<sup>84</sup> Many actively tried to organise immigrant workers in various trades, whether into their mainstream unions, or into independent ethnic-based societies. These often relied on the sponsorship of kindred unions in the same trade. Both British and immigrant workers were also influenced by socialist ideology which promoted the brotherhood of the working class.<sup>85</sup> As solid a foundation as this could be for cooperation, it was not always enough to overcome hostile economic conditions. Therefore the actions of trade unions toward immigrants were often driven far more by context and pragmatism, than by any form of deeply held ideology.

Hostility to immigrant workers came more often from an economic, rather than a racial impetus. Labourers were frequently more concerned that alien workers would displace them from their employment, by offering (or being coerced) to work for cheaper rates and for longer hours.<sup>86</sup> The limited impact of racial ideology was in part due to the ethnic and social similarity of Western European immigrants to the host population, formed by the long standing links between various parts of the continent. The most notable examples of racial hostility were directed towards groups from the peripheries of Europe, first to the Irish, and later to the Jewish immigrants whose numbers became increasingly noticeable from the 1880s onwards.<sup>87</sup> Indeed it was the Jews coming mainly from the

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<sup>81</sup> TUC Annual Report 1892,p29, 69; 1894, p59-60; 1895, p 45-46

<sup>82</sup> Hansard, HC Deb 11/2/1893, v. 8, 1167, where the restrictionist Lowther claimed that '43 labour organisations, 6 town councils, 14 Metropolitan Boards of Guardians and 16 Boards of Vestries' had passed restrictionary resolutions.

<sup>83</sup> ACMA E.C. Minutes, 16/11/1877

<sup>84</sup> TUC Annual Report, 1895, p45 - 46, including the ACMA's Tom Walker.

<sup>85</sup> Brown, *English Labour Movement*, 175-76

<sup>86</sup> Schmiechen, *Sweated Industry and Sweated Labor*, 113; Eric J. Hobsbawm, 'Afterword - Working Classes and Nations', in Dirk Hoerder, ed. *Labor Migration in the Atlantic Economy: The European and North American Working Classes During the Period of Industrialisation*, (Westwood, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1985), 440; Leo Lucassen, *The Immigrant Threat: The Integration of Old and New Migrants in Western Europe since 1850*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005) 37; Montague Crackenthorpe, 'Should Government Interfere?', in Arnold White, ed. *The Destitute Alien in Great Britain A Series of Papers Dealing with the Subject of Foreign Pauper Immigration*, (London: Swan Sonnenschien & Co., 1892), 56

<sup>87</sup> Holmes, *Hostile Images*, 318; Walter Beasant, *East London*, (London: Garland Publishing, 1980), 193-4

Russian Empire who were the intended target of the campaign against 'pauper immigrants'.<sup>88</sup> It should also be noted, however, that Western European migrants were never present, in either the same numbers or concentration, as the Jewish or Irish migrants. Nor, in many cases, was the stated objection to the Jewish worker based predominantly on race, but on the working practices that were ascribed to the immigrants by British workers.<sup>89</sup>

Migrant labourers were a great concern of the trade union movement because of the fear that they would replace their members in the workplace.<sup>90</sup> This was particularly true during trade disputes, the success of which was often dependent on the ability of the strikers to prevent so-called 'blackleg' labour from replacing them. Although blacklegs were frequently native workers, the thought of substitute labour being brought in from outside Britain was disturbing to many trade unionists. Such fears were not altogether unfounded. The Alliance Cabinet Makers were concerned that an employer would use Belgian workers to break a strike, and as early as the 1870s miners in dispute in the North East were replaced by Germans or Scandinavians who had been shipped over.<sup>91</sup> Many immigrants would have had little knowledge of the conditions in the area and possibly of the fact that there was any trade dispute in existence. Many would not have spoken fluent English, and unionists were concerned that honest workers were being deceived by their employers into replacing strikers. As for those who had settled in Britain, the concern was that they would be prepared to live in more Spartan conditions than the average British worker, and therefore immigrant workers would be prepared to work at lower rates.<sup>92</sup> In the case of Jewish immigrants, however, some observers, such as Booth's investigator Beatrice Potter (later Webb), extended such evidence into apparent proof of the Hebrew love of profit.<sup>93</sup> There was the prevailing assumption amongst many unionists that immigrants were not trade unionists, and that their entry into established trades would be disastrous for union membership. The NUBSO was particularly concerned, noting the collapse of their membership in London coincided with the arrival of Jewish immigrants. As Schmiechen has argued however, immigration happened to coincide with a technological revolution in the trade that introduced deskilling.<sup>94</sup> Harry Ham argued that a similar occurrence had taken place in the furniture trade.<sup>95</sup> What this meant was that there was a potentially large labour pool who could replace the established, organised workers, especially in the event of a trade dispute

The campaign against blacklegging was directed far wider than the immigrant workforce. The vast majority of blackleg labour was British, particularly after the formation of William Collinson's National

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<sup>88</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, 7/7/1894; V. D. Lipman, *A History of the Jews in Britain since 1858*, (New York: Holens & Meier, 1990), 70, although he argues that the arrival of Southern Italian immigrants were also a motivation.

<sup>89</sup> Schmiechen, *Sweated Industry and Sweated Labor*, 113

<sup>90</sup> TUC Annual Report 1889, p49-50

<sup>91</sup> Pelling, *British Trade Unionism*, 78; Fraser, *Trade Unions and Society*, 61; ACMA EC Minutes, 11/12/1878 TU/FURNA/2/3.

<sup>92</sup> Evidence of George Keir before the RC on Labour, 17/3/1892, Q14693; Crackenthorpe, 'Should Government Interfere?' in White ed. *The Destitute Alien in Great Britain*, 53; Lucassen, *The Immigrant Threat*, 37, argues that the British also believed this about the Irish.

<sup>93</sup> Beatrice Potter 'East London Labour' *The Nineteenth Century*, XXIV (1888), in David Englander, ed. *A Documentary History of Jewish Immigrants in Britain, 1840 – 1920*, (London: Leicester University Press, 1994), 142

<sup>94</sup> Schmiechen, *Sweated Industry and Sweated Labor*, 34-37

<sup>95</sup> Evidence of Harry Ham before the RC on Labour, 17/3/1892, Q19925-26

Free Labour Association. This body was set up to provide employers with substitute workers to replace strikers, brought in from around the U.K. and on occasion from Europe.<sup>96</sup> Organised British blacklegs were also notorious for substituting their labour in European disputes, as well as in their own country.<sup>97</sup> But blacklegging could come from a more local level as well, and often strikers who had run out of patience and resources could return to work in defiance of their colleagues. In such cases the unionists had to convince the labourers to leave work, which usually meant paying them out of union funds, or helping them to return to their point of origin. For workers who came in from Europe, this could prove expensive, especially for smaller trade organisations; for instance the ACMA once paid out a sum of £9 19s (around £565 in today's money) to return four German blacklegs from Scotland to Hamburg.<sup>98</sup> As a result, unions cultivated relationships with their European counterparts, to prevent inadvertent blacklegging.<sup>99</sup> Violence against strike-breakers was not uncommon, despite the stringent legal provisions which limited the activity of pickets, and trade unions often had to expend considerable capital on their members who were prosecuted for watching and besetting workers at shops which they were picketing.<sup>100</sup>

However it was the immigrant who presented the more distinctive target and this led to trade union campaigns to prevent the immigration of those who they felt were most likely to 'scab' on them. The proposed legislation which eventually became law under an altered form in 1905, was intended to prevent those who had less than a certain amount of capital from entering the country. This would, therefore prevent competition with local workers, as well as protecting civic resources in the areas of potential settlement. Ironically the TUC had adopted a softer approach toward immigration by 1905, and many unions opposed the legislation.<sup>101</sup> It is unsurprising that the unions which were most involved with campaigns for restriction were those that had seen the largest alien entry into their trade, particularly those in footwear manufacture. Two of the leading proponents of restriction, William Inskip and Charles Freak, were prominent within the National Union of Boot and Shoe Makers, and it was their testimony that was used in the Parliamentary movement for restriction, as well as at the TUC.<sup>102</sup> Their attitude was inspired by the overwhelming number of aliens, particularly Jewish migrants, in the footwear trade, which they felt had displaced British workers, and they feared a similar situation in other trades.<sup>103</sup> Immigration alone, however, did not account for the decline of conditions in the boot

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<sup>96</sup> John Lovell, *Stevedores and Dockers: A Study of Trade Unionism in the Port of London, 1870 - 1914*, (London: Macmillan, 1969) 123

<sup>97</sup> Coates and Topman, *The History of the TGWU, Vol.1*, 170; At the 1910 TUC meeting, the noted trade unionist, Will Thorne, described the British as the worst blacklegs in Europe. TUC Annual Report, 1910, p132. It had also been discussed at the previous three annual conferences.

<sup>98</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1898

<sup>99</sup> Pelling, *History of British Trade Unionism*, 116-17; Coates and Topping, *History of the TGWU*, 172; ACMA EC Minutes, 3/11/1887.

<sup>100</sup> Fraser, *Trade Unions and Society*, 192; ACMA EC Minutes, 23/9/1890, where the families of imprisoned members were granted 30s. a week support, plus subscriptions from society members.

<sup>101</sup> TUC Annual Report, 1905, p48

<sup>102</sup> Hansard HC Deb 11/2/93 v.8 1221.; TUC Annual Report, 1895, p.45; evidence of William Inskip before the RC on Labour, 17/3/92, Q15949 - 16055;

<sup>103</sup> Evidence of Charles Freak before the RC on Labour, 23/11/92 Q33118 - 33203; W. J. Fishman, *East End 1888: A Year in a London Borough among the Labouring Poor*, (London: Duckworth, 1988), 149

and shoe trades, which had also been affected by mechanisation and deskilling, increasing the number of domestic workshops.<sup>104</sup> Immigrants working in a domestic environment were seen as the core component of the sweated workforce, and claimed efforts directed against sweating would be useless without dealing with the immigrants employed in such conditions. Yet others also noted the number of native workers, in particular women, within the sweated trades, and conversely argued that sweated conditions had predated the mass immigration from Eastern Europe, and therefore had to be dealt with first.<sup>105</sup>

But trade unionists were not universally hostile to immigrants, and by the first decade of the twentieth century many had come to the conclusion that the immigrants themselves were not the cause of their economic problems. Even at the height of the campaign against immigration in the TUC, the President's address at the 1894 conference maintained that it was more fruitful to bring immigrant workers within the union movement than to exclude them from entry into Britain. If they remained in their home nations, he argued, they would prove equally as competitive to the British worker, without the influence of trade union movement to channel their economic activity.<sup>106</sup> But even before this, many unions had come to the decision that organisation of immigrant workers was the optimum policy. Throughout the previous two decades, British unions had incorporated Western European immigrants within their unions, either in their own branches (the AST had a German branch in London as early as 1884), or within native branches.<sup>107</sup> Immigrants themselves often had experience of labour organisation that predated their migration, whatever their point of origin, and petitioned to join native unions.<sup>108</sup> More frequently however, they set up their own independent trade societies. Panyai highlights the preponderance of German trade societies in London, serving not only waiters and clerks, but barbers and bakers as well, and as we shall see, there were no shortage of independent Jewish trade unions.<sup>109</sup>

The reason for the existence of independent societies, when there were already established unions in the trades, is something that must be considered. In part there may well have been an exclusionary attitude on the part of native unionists, particularly where Eastern European Jews were concerned, and many unions had considerable doubts about the reliability of alien unionists. But this did not prevent native societies from rendering them aid. Some were influenced by socialist principles, but probably more believed that only by organising as many immigrant workers as possible, and ensuring that they

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<sup>104</sup> Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 121-22

<sup>105</sup> Schmiechen, *Sweated Industry and Sweated Labour*, 35; Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 7, 34-5; Sheila Lewenhak, *Women and Trade Unions: An Outline History of Women in the British Trade Union Movement*, (London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1977), 119; Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 13

<sup>106</sup> Reported in *Manchester Guardian*, 5/9/1894. The Chairman was F. J. Delves of the A.S.E., not notable as a union with many immigrant members.

<sup>107</sup> Panyai, *German Immigrants*, 125; Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 151; Also reported in *The Anti Sweater # 2*, August 1886, p4; *The Anti-Sweater* was the short-lived, but influential newsheet published by the activist Lewis Lyons. He also reported a Jewish AST branch, but whether this was comprised of Anglo-Jews, immigrants, or a mixture is unclear; *AST Journal Vol.1 # 2*

<sup>108</sup> Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 95; ACMA EC Minutes 26/2/1897, for the petition of Jewish Cabinet Makers in Leeds to open their own branch

<sup>109</sup> Panyai, 132,148, 192-93; Schmiechen, *Sweated Industry and Sweated Labour*, 109; Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 61, argues that the first wholesale tailoring union in Leeds was Jewish.

worked for the same rates as native workers, could they prevent a decline in wages and conditions. Such pragmatism helps to explain the activity of men like James Sweeney, the secretary of the NUBSO in Leeds, who also acted as the secretary of the trade union for Jewish tailors in the town for much of the 1880s. Only after a disastrous strike, and the increasingly radical direction of the union, did he cut his ties with the immigrants, and then it would not prove permanent.<sup>110</sup> Yet even those on the left of the British labour movement, figures such as Keir Hardie and Ben Tillet, were not immune from anti-immigrant (and occasionally anti-Semitic) sentiment, despite their socialist and outwardly Universalist principles.<sup>111</sup> Opponents of immigration used statements by such leaders to demonstrate that even the supposedly progressive element of the labour movement agreed with them on this issue.<sup>112</sup>

Such a dichotomy between attitudes of restriction and organisation is reflected in the figure of James Havelock Wilson, an M.P., but also the leader of the National Amalgamated Sailors' and Firemen's Union. The sailors had long struggled to organise, and the employment of foreigners had been amongst the founding grievances of Wilson's union.<sup>113</sup> Like most other societies, the NASFU had received a significant boost with the advent of 'New Unionism' after 1889.<sup>114</sup> The ship-owners were equally determined to break unionism amongst the sailors. The recruitment of immigrants and foreign sailors was seen as a cheaper and, due to their background, a less troublesome employment option. As a result, non-native sailors came to make up a large proportion of the crews aboard British merchant shipping.<sup>115</sup> In his capacity as an M.P., Wilson seconded a measure in 1893 that proposed the restriction of pauper immigrants into Britain. He noted that British sailors were often dismissed from ships at European ports and replaced by cheaper foreign crews. Yet as Wilson also admitted, restriction alone was not enough to defend the interests of his members, and as a result Anglophone immigrants were recruited into the union in an attempt to enforce a closed shop. Those ineligible to be admitted were charged a hefty fine, and so excluded from service. The union also had fifteen branches in European ports, and had members as far away as Constantinople.<sup>116</sup> This was not uncommon amongst British unions of the period. There were approximately 82 engineers' branches and 67 joiners' branches overseas in the late 19th century, mainly in the Dominions and the United States.<sup>117</sup>

It must be noted that Wilson worked hard to avoid presenting himself as being xenophobic. In public testimony, he recalled that foreign sailors had been amongst the 'very best members, and some of the very first' in his union.<sup>118</sup> Wilson's activity in admitting foreign sailors also forced rival unions of seamen to admit them as well.<sup>119</sup> Ultimately, however, it was not enough, and by 1894 the NASFU had been smashed by the powerful employers association, the Shipping Federation. When it ultimately re-emerged, the employment of foreign, non-union sailors continued to be one of its chief concerns, and

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<sup>110</sup> Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 64; Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 4, 84

<sup>111</sup> E. H. Hunt, *British Labour History*, 170, 186; Schmiechen, *Sweated Industry and Sweated Labour*, 105

<sup>112</sup> Hansard HC Deb 11/2/1893 v.8 1206

<sup>113</sup> Evidence of J. H. Wilson before the RC on Labour, 24/11/1892, Q9927

<sup>114</sup> Coates and Topman, *The History of The TGWU*, Vol. 1, 98

<sup>115</sup> Hansard, HC Deb 11 February 1893, Vol. 8, 1172-1173

<sup>116</sup> Hansard, HC Deb 11 February 1893, Vol. 8, CC1154 – 222; RC on Labour, 24/11/1892, Q9431.

<sup>117</sup> Alistair Reid, *United We Stand - A History of Britain's Trade Unions*, (London: Penguin, 2005), 89

<sup>118</sup> Evidence to the Royal Commission on Labour, 24/11/1892, Q9428

<sup>119</sup> Biography of J. B. Butcher in Bellamy and Saville eds. *Dictionary of Labour Biography*, Vol.3, 28



Wilson was still campaigning against the employment of Chinese sailors on British ships into the 1920s.<sup>120</sup> In his complex attitudes to the employment of immigrants and foreigners in his trade, Wilson illustrates the dilemma at the heart of unionist reactions to immigrants, recognition that in an increasingly globalised economic environment, restriction alone would not be enough.

Whilst pragmatism was most likely the reason behind many of the unionist responses to the organisation of immigrants, it does not account alone for the time and financial resources that some British unionists put in to this task. The Alliance Cabinet Makers Association, who will form the main basis for this study, not only expended considerable time in organising and bargaining for their immigrant members, particularly Eastern European Jews, but also financially supported the Jewish Independent Cabinet Makers Society after they had exhausted their funds in the Hebrew Cabinet Makers strike of 1896. The overall cost of this support came to several hundreds of pounds, which was no small sum for a society whose financial position was frequently precarious.<sup>121</sup> Tom Walker, the trade organiser, not only spent considerable time addressing meetings of immigrant workers, but defended them publically at the TUC.<sup>122</sup> At this time the society itself was moving in a much more socialist direction, and the commonality of workers' interests played a significant part in the decision to render aid. As we shall see, it was far from the sole occasion that the society contributed to non-native unionist causes.

The treatment of foreign immigrants can be compared to reactions to other groups often seen as problematic in the British labour market. In this case we also have a group that Victorian society considered almost foreign in the Irish, whose status as British subjects sat uncomfortably alongside the Roman Catholicism of many of the population, as well as the burgeoning Home Rule movement of the period. Leo Lucassen's analysis of the entry of Irish migrants to Britain has created an interesting model that many of the workers considered in this study may well fall into.<sup>123</sup> Religiously most were dissimilar to the majority of the English population. Although German workers were often Protestants whose creeds bore a strong resemblance to Anglicanism or the leading non Conformist faiths, they usually worshipped separately from their English colleagues, in specially constructed churches often funded by grants from Germany.<sup>124</sup> Immigrants from France or Italy were invariably Catholic, and therefore theologically more similar to the Irish than many of the English. The Jewish migrants arriving in large numbers at the end of the century were considered theologically alien even by the indigenous Jewish community.<sup>125</sup> Of course, all this implies religious observance, which, as statistics have shown, was considered to be in crisis even then, but the cultural implications of religious faith often outlived adherence to the faith itself, both in how someone perceived themselves, and in how they were perceived.<sup>126</sup> Migrants tended to be viewed as a very real source of competition in employment, and this was particularly the case if they were entering a particularly saturated segment of the labour

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<sup>120</sup> Holmes, *Hostile Images*, 322-32; Ron Ramdin, *The Making of the Black Working Class in Britain*, 70

<sup>121</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1897

<sup>122</sup> TUC Annual Report 1895, p46

<sup>123</sup> Lucassen, *The Immigrant Threat*, 28

<sup>124</sup> Panayai, *German Immigrants*, 150-2

<sup>125</sup> Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 293

<sup>126</sup> Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit*, 156

market. These were areas where the job was not considered particularly skilled such as labouring on the docks, or had been simplified due to mechanisation, as both the clothing and shoemaking trades had been.

It must also be noted that the trade unions were, if anything, more concerned about female workers in this period than they were about migrants, whether internal or external.<sup>127</sup> There was a pool of female labour already present, and it was considered inevitable that women would work for lower rates than either British or migrant male workers. This was because they were often not the primary wage earner in a household, and so could afford to work for a reduced rate, even if they were doing the same job as a male worker. Therefore trade unionists campaigned with much greater vigour for either equal pay for women or for their removal from the workplace, than they did against the immigrant worker.<sup>128</sup> When it came to organisation, many saw women as challenging as immigrants. They were viewed as workers who did not view their employment as being permanent, and therefore would not want, or not be permitted, to squander their wages on trade societies which would have little long term relevance to their lives.<sup>129</sup> As a result, trade unions were generally even more reluctant to organise women than they were foreign workers. A surprising exception in this case was the NUBSO which became one of the first unions to admit female members on equal terms with the men.<sup>130</sup> But it was in the white collar unions, such as the Shop Assistants, where female leadership was first appreciated, rather than amongst the NUBSO, the AST&T, or even the cotton unions of Lancashire in which women were numerically, if not politically, dominant.<sup>131</sup> Nevertheless an important distinction remains. Women, and to a degree even internal migrants, were bound into the host society in a way that aliens were not. Foreign migrants had to learn cultural practices that were transmitted to local workers from an early age, either from previous waves of immigrants, or from native colleagues and neighbours. As a result, whilst immigrants can be placed alongside female and unskilled workers as those who were often neglected or scorned by mainstream trade unionism of the period, the challenges faced by both groups were distinct from each other. Indeed, whilst an immigrant could come to be treated as a native, and a greener could become skilled, it was unlikely that a female worker would ever be given the same opportunities in the workplace as a man.

Ultimately, it is difficult to define a consistent trade union policy toward immigrants. Quite often, opinion tended to be directed by the prevailing economic conditions, and immigrant workers could provide convenient scapegoats for trade depressions.<sup>132</sup> Yet the effort to organise and aid immigrant workers was made, even if the motivation might often have been directed more by self interest than ideology. But it did demonstrate that, despite frequent differences of opinion and attitude, native and immigrant workers could cooperate within the trade union movement. Immigrant unionists (particularly

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<sup>127</sup> Keith Laybourn, *A History of Trade Unionism c.1770 - 1990*, (Stroud: Sutton, 1997), 77

<sup>128</sup> Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 75-75; Gordon, *Women and the Labour Movement in Scotland*, 77, 88-90

<sup>129</sup> Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 48

<sup>130</sup> Sarah Boston, *Women Workers and the Trade Unions*, (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1987), 45; Lewenhawk, *Women and Trade Unions*, 89

<sup>131</sup> Hunt, *British Labour History*, 302; Boston, *Women Workers*, 74; Gordon, *Women and the Labour Movement in Scotland*, 110

<sup>132</sup> Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 131-32

in Jewish societies) became an increasingly frequent presence in trade councils and at the TUC, and if anti-alien attitudes were never entirely eradicated, became more muted. Nevertheless the existence of separate branches and societies for immigrant unionists is indicative of the maintenance of a degree of segregation within the labour movement, albeit one that varied depending on the industry in question. The reasons for the failure of total integration, whether imposed by the native unionists, or preferred by the immigrant workers, will be considered below.

## Chapter IV - Immigrant Unionism

The activity of immigrants within the British trade union movement has rarely been considered in a systematic manner. As we have already seen, both labour and immigrant historiographies often fail to unite the two approaches. But the existence of immigrant unionism cannot be denied, nor can it be simply disconnected from the main trade union movements of the period.<sup>133</sup> The issues that affected immigrant workers in Britain were often the same as those that affected their British counterparts – complaints over long hours, poor pay, and intransigent workplace regulations. Therefore, it was only logical that immigrant unions were often to act alongside native unions in pursuit of the same goals. But this cooperation does not tell the whole story. Whilst unions whose membership was wholly comprised of immigrants have often been the ones that have attracted the most attention, from contemporaries and historians alike, immigrant presence in ostensibly ‘native’ unions cannot be ignored.<sup>134</sup> This raises the important question as to why immigrants might choose to join a trade union comprised mainly of British-born workers, rather than the ethnic unions that specifically catered for them. At the heart of this issue is the idea of assimilation and ethnic identification, but one also cannot rule out pragmatism in the strategy of many workers; what, for many, was the purpose of joining a trade union, if not out of a sense of pragmatism, and uncertainty over the future. But first we must consider the nature of immigrant unionism, comparing the various types of union to each other, and to the British unions they operated alongside.

The reasons immigrants joined unions were similar to those which motivated their indigenous counterparts. Joseph Buckman, in his history of the Jewish worker in Leeds, was amongst the first to explicitly argue the now commonplace view that the Jewish migrants were not one homogenous group, and that there were class divides just as there was in the indigenous society.<sup>135</sup> Indeed the focus has arguably been reverted too much the other way, and the organisation of Jewish workers obscures the less prominent, but no less crucial organisation of other non-native labourers. Workers were inspired to organise out of a desire to defend or to improve their working conditions. The strike was the most effective method of recruiting membership to the union, whether ethnic or immigrant. Determined and coordinated action usually created a sense of solidarity amongst the workers, and the provision of strike pay was useful in attracting those whose priorities were more material than ideological. But if the strike pay ran out without a settlement having been reached, unions often found it very difficult to retain members, or even to survive.<sup>136</sup> Even a successful trade movement could cause problems, as the writer Isaac Hourwich recognised. Writing in December 1904, he realised that "The Jewish worker can be

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<sup>133</sup> Lunn, 'Immigration and Reaction', 347; Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 59-60; Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 189, noted Barbara Drake's assertion that "The Jew is the despair of the trade union official"

<sup>134</sup> Schmiechen, *Sweated Industries and Sweated Labor*, 110-11; Sponza, *Italian Immigrants*, 90-91; Kersten, *Uniting the Tailors*, 11, 146-47, 149

<sup>135</sup> Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 4-5

<sup>136</sup> Schnabel, 'Determinants of Trade Union Membership', 18; Lovell, 'Trade Unions and the Development of Independent Labour Politics', 30; Chaim Bennett, *Point of Arrival: A Study of London's East End*, (London: Eyre Mathelen. 1975), 213; Evidence of Charles Whitley before the RC on Labour, 17/3/1892, Q20058

brought together by a strike or a lockout, but after the specific object...has been accomplished they lack the cohesive power needed to hold them permanently together".<sup>137</sup>

The union also provided a sense of security, especially the more sophisticated ones that offered benefits for times the member was out of work or sick. Like the friendly societies with which they coexisted, many unions also offered payments toward funeral costs, often a considerable expense to the household of the bereaved. As a result, trade unions appealed to those who wanted to ensure the security of their families, as well as those with strong ideological convictions.

The most noticeable variant of ethnic trade unionism was the independent body which was based entirely around immigrant membership. These were based around particular trades, and usually began as extremely localised bodies, often consisted of hundreds of members at most. For instance the Amalgamated Jewish Tailors, Machinists and Pressers Union (AJTMPU) in Leeds never exceeded many more than 1500 members before the outbreak of World War One, despite the prevalence of Jewish involvement in that city's garment trade.<sup>138</sup> The principle of trade unionism was hardly unique to Britain, and even many Eastern European migrants had experience of belonging to such bodies prior to their migration.<sup>139</sup> However, other immigrant unions modelled themselves on their indigenous neighbours.<sup>140</sup> In reality, migrant workers most likely combined the experience gained in their former lives, with the conditions they found in British cities.

Of all the immigrant unions, those in the tailoring trade are probably the most well documented. Anne J. Kershen's exploration of the unions based around London and Leeds depict transitory groups that were both created and undone by crises in employer relations. Whilst she also looked at the British tailoring unions, most notably the AST, her main analysis is devoted to the Amalgamated Jewish Tailors', Machinists' and Pressers' Union, which emerged in Leeds around 1893. At first sight, such unions might seem to have had an advantage over their British counterparts, particularly in their level of ethnic solidarity. Jewish communities in particular tended to be grouped together in residential areas, such as Whitechapel in the East End of London, Cheetham Hill and Strangeways in Manchester, and the Leylands in Leeds.<sup>141</sup> It might be thought that such a close living situation, combined with a common identity that was often starkly different to those that had been born in Britain, particularly in terms of language and belief, would bind the trade unions that did emerge closer together. This may have been the case, if it were not for the fact that many of the employers with whom the unions were formed to negotiate were immigrants themselves, and had often risen from being journeymen to employers.

Exclusive reliance on trade unions for institutional support cannot generally be supported. Historians, such as David Englander, have argued that Jewish communities also relied on their own friendly

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<sup>137</sup> Quoted in Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 226

<sup>138</sup> Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, Table 23, p206

<sup>139</sup> Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 95

<sup>140</sup> Panayi, *German Immigrants*, 148

<sup>141</sup> D. Englander ed. *A Documentary History of Jewish Immigrants in Britain, 1840 - 1920*, (London: Leicester University Press, 1994), 63; Reverend G. S. Reaney, 'The Moral Aspect', in Arnold White, ed. *The Destitute Alien in Great Britain*, 84; John K. Walton, *Lancashire: A Social History, 1558 - 1939*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 226

societies for support, to a much greater extent than they did trade unions. This was largely due to the fact that such groups, unlike trade unions, were open to all elements of immigrant society.<sup>142</sup> In addition, there were serious instabilities within many immigrant trades, a ready supply of replacement workers from Eastern Europe (at least prior to 1905), and the phenomenon of many workers in the more intensive trades to alternate between journeyman, master, and back again in a short space of time. As a result there were significant difficulties in maintaining organisation. The instability of independent immigrant unions was a frequent source of frustration for British trade unionists seeking industry wide movements.<sup>143</sup> However, this did not stop cooperation during intensive trade movements, such as those in London in 1889. The Jewish unions were frequently quick to ally themselves with their native counterparts, and this may have been the spur that influenced the widespread attempts to organise Jewish migrants throughout the 1890s. There is little doubt that the achievements of unions such as the dockers, the match girls and the gas workers in 1889 inspired many union campaigns, both immigrant and native.<sup>144</sup>

Much of what has been written above applied particularly to the Jewish unions, but ethnic unionism was not restricted to the immigrants from Eastern Europe, although they appear to have comprised most of the independent unions. A notable exception to this, however, were the unions formed for continental waiters, such as the London Hotel and Restaurant Employees, who, whilst technically open to all, operated and published their short-lived journal, in German; the London and Provincial Hotel Employees Society, which was based in Tottenham Court Road, London; and the International Hotel Employees society, a branch of a German union operating in London, in the same way that the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE) and other British unions maintained branches in North America.<sup>145</sup> Foreign involvement in the organisation of waiters was so extensive that the secretary of the Amalgamated Waiters' Union, the longest enduring society in that trade, was, for many years, Paul Vogel, a German.

Vogel was born in Germany around 1850, and had arrived in Britain before 1879. In that year he married an Englishwoman, and he resided in London until his death in 1913. By 1897 he had become the secretary of the Amalgamated Waiters' Society, and represented the union's 200 members at four of the six TUC conferences between 1897 and 1902. As one of the few non-British born delegates to the TUC, he was distinctive. Indeed, the official report of the congress, in a rare deviation from its sober and neutral tone, remarked in 1898 that "he spoke with a pronounced foreign accent" and "caused some merriment with his reference to the waiters' grievance with regard to the wearing of a moustache".<sup>146</sup> Vogel was also noted as reporting that the working hours of barmaids were extended beyond reasonable limits so that in their rest time "they had to do their hair and make themselves attractive in

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<sup>142</sup> A. Rosenberg, 'Jewish Friendly Societies - A Critical Survey' in 'The Jewish Chronicle', 8/9/1905, in D. Englander, ed. *A Documentary History of Jewish Immigrants in Britain*, 75-76; Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 314, referred to 150 Jewish Friendly Societies in the East End of London alone c.1898.

<sup>143</sup> Clegg et al., *History of British Trade Unions*, 182

<sup>144</sup> Schmiechen, *Sweated Industries and Sweated Labor*, 91; Coates and Topman, *The History of the TGWU, Vol.1*, 111; Hunt, *British Labour History*, 304

<sup>145</sup> Panayi, *German Immigrants in Britain*, 182-3, 192-3

<sup>146</sup> TUC Annual Report 1898, 86-7

order to bring more profit to their employers"<sup>147</sup>. But Vogel's contribution to the TUC was much more significant than reports on trivialities such as facial hair and the beautification of barmaids. He complained that waiters were often working only for their tips, and that their hours long exceeded those of other workers, describing himself and his members as "sixteen hour white slaves".<sup>148</sup> The Webbs describe him as a socialist, and the issues that concerned him at the TUC seem to bear this out.<sup>149</sup> He was a prominent speaker in the discussions regarding the limitation of hours of work, seeking to limit the weekly hours of under-18s in his trade from 74 to 60, and also served on the TUC subcommittee considering the Workman's Compensation Act.<sup>150</sup> Vogel was also one of the one hundred and twenty nine delegates at the Labour Representation Committee Conference in February 1900, a meeting that effectively created the modern British Labour party,<sup>151</sup> as well as representing his society at other conferences such as the meeting discussing Old Age Pensions, held in January 1902. At this meeting, Vogel pointed out the vulnerability of waiters to unemployment after the age of 30. He was quick to defend the workers in his trade, arguing that waiting was a skilled occupation, and should be recognised as such.<sup>152</sup> Acting as a representative of immigrant workers, he was also interested in what the circumstances for aliens who lived and worked in Britain would be under any potential legislation.<sup>153</sup> Therefore, we see a figure that, whilst aware of his immigrant roots, and those of many of his members, was eager to be an integrated part of the British trade union movement, and British society as a whole. Though many German waiters were seen as sojourners, spending a little time in Britain to learn the language, Vogel had clearly decided to settle for life.<sup>154</sup>

There were some trades in which immigrants were employed, where there had, hitherto, been no previous unionism. This was because the trade was introduced into the country by the immigrant workers themselves. The most significant example of this was the manufacture of ladies mantles, introduced to Britain by Polish and Russian Jews. The Mantle Makers' Union was based in London, and had come into existence by 1892, with Joseph Finn appointed secretary three years later. A Polish immigrant, he had worked in both Leeds and the United States, and shepherded the nascent society through the rest of the decade. Though a new industry, it became crucial for the clothing trade that the mantle makers became organised, and this took place as part of the campaign against sweated labour.<sup>155</sup>

It is perhaps not entirely surprising that so many independent Jewish unions were able to form given the large numbers that arrived in Britain during this period, and the close proximity in which they lived to each other. Other nationalities in Britain often lacked the critical mass to form effective, even temporary, labour societies, despite the example of the waiters. For those who wished, or felt

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<sup>147</sup> TUC Annual Report, 1898, 58

<sup>148</sup> TUC Annual Report 1897, 32

<sup>149</sup> S & B Webb, *History of Trade Unions*, 684

<sup>150</sup> TUC Annual Report, 1898, 58; TUC Annual Report 1902, 31

<sup>151</sup> LRC Conference Report, 26-27/2/1900

<sup>152</sup> TUC Annual Report, 1897, 49

<sup>153</sup> TUC Conference on Old Age Pensions, 1902

<sup>154</sup> Panayi, *German Immigrants*, 69-70

<sup>155</sup> Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 66, 145

compelled, to join a trade society, they often had to join unions in which the vast majority of the membership was native-born. This course of action had its advantages, but also several shortcomings. Unions with a largely British membership were more adept at working within the established framework of the labour movement. Their leaders had spent their entire lives acclimatising to the working conditions in Britain, and perhaps had a more instinctive understanding of what could be achieved, as well as what cooperation could be counted on from others. Therefore, whilst their actions could be more pragmatic, there was often a greater appreciation for the longer term approach. In contrast, the immigrant unions were often criticised for their haste and short term thinking by their British counterparts.<sup>156</sup> Immigrants who were members in a British union did have to face the problem that their aims, if they differed from the those of the union as a whole, could be reduced in priority, or even rejected altogether. They found there was often little enthusiasm to support their distinct causes amongst native born workers, and consequently they were expected to act in the same manner as native unionists, despite their frequently more challenging circumstances. It is not surprising therefore, that immigrant membership within British unions was rarely stable.

Membership in British unions could take several forms. Hardest to detect was individual immigrants joining mainstream branches of a union. This would most commonly be those who were not living in established ethnic communities, or those who worked in the same shops or yards as British workers and, for convenience, joined the same branch or association. Such men, particularly if they were passionate trade unionists could rise quite high in the hierarchy, and would therefore be particularly attractive to immigrant unions in other trades who could use their familiarity with mainstream unionism to cement their own position. For instance, Moses Sclare, who became Secretary of the IJTMPU in 1906, had never worked in the clothing industry, but instead was a branch secretary of the ASE in Scotland, despite his immigrant heritage. But his knowledge of British trade unionism made him an invaluable asset to the tailors, and he was certainly a more vocal figure at TUC conferences than his predecessor, Sam Freedman.<sup>157</sup>

More common was the existence of specific branches of immigrants within British trade unions. These could come about in several ways. Amalgamation of independent immigrant societies with their larger British counterparts was a tactic that could benefit both groups. Native societies could exert a greater level of control over labourers in their trade, whilst the immigrants gained access to the greater resources of the larger union, as well as their aid in organising. Indeed amalgamation was a key strategy of expansion for many unions, with local groups as well as with immigrants. The ACMA expanded beyond London mainly through absorbing local groups. In the case of the Continental Cabinet Makers Society, and various local Hebrew Cabinet Makers Societies, these amalgamations brought large numbers of immigrants into the organisation, but it was hardly restricted to immigrants. Indeed the

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<sup>156</sup>Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 10 4; Examples in the ACMA include the E.C. minutes for 1/7/1897, 13/1/1898, and 8/2/1900

<sup>157</sup>Kerшен, *Uniting the Tailors*, 88; Minutes of the AJTMPU, Leeds Branch, 18/3/1906.



largest amalgamation, which transformed the society into the NAFTA, was with their Scottish counterparts.<sup>158</sup>

Immigrants could also petition to join the society by creating their own branches. The ACMA had a strict procedure for allowing the creation of new branches of the society, requiring them to be numerically sustainable, and would not allow new branches in towns that they felt did not require them, as has already been demonstrated by the Jewish workers in Leeds. Separate Hebrew branches appear to have existed only in towns where the Cabinet trade seems to have had a well defined Jewish sector, such as in Manchester, Liverpool and of course, London. This was far from unique to the furniture trade. The AST had alien branches as early as the 1880s, when Jewish and German branches were both in existence.<sup>159</sup>

With both independent and affiliated groups of immigrant unionists coexisting within the labour movement, it is natural to consider which the more effective system was. It may be that independence or amalgamation suited different groups at different times. It is certainly possible that Jewish groups in particular may have been wary of external control after their experiences in Tsarist Russia. However, groups of German, Italian, and French workers were present in far smaller numbers, and so relied on the British unions to provide benefits and defend their conditions in a way that they could not have done autonomously. Of course, the vast majority of workers, both native and immigrant were not trade unionists, and all unions had to work hard to appeal to labourers and to prove that they could defend their interests. Quite often this was handicapped by the isolated nature of employees in small workshops and domestic sweatshops. In this case, a strong union was often a much more attractive prospect than smaller bodies that were isolated both locally and ethnically. Larger societies had more resources to organise workers and attempted to organise inspections of workshops, although, as the unions themselves admitted, this often met with limited success.<sup>160</sup>

Independent unionism was therefore a reasonably good indication of a strong ethnic cohesiveness amongst an immigrant community, created by past linkages, current circumstances, or a mixture of both. However, the focus of this paper is on how the immigrant communities interacted with native workers through the medium of the natives' own trade unions. For this, a union whose records have survived relatively intact and with sufficient detail has been selected. The Alliance Cabinet Makers Association was also chosen due to the existence of immigrant branches within the society, and therefore its records are the ones that will make up the main focus of the research conducted for this study.

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<sup>158</sup> Reid, *The Furniture Makers*, 30, 36, 43

<sup>159</sup> 'The Anti - Sweater' # 1, July 1886, ed. Lewis Lyons, p4; Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 11; Panayi, *German Immigrants*, 125, records 68 members of the German AST Branch in 1886

<sup>160</sup> Englander, ed. *Documentary History of Jewish Immigrants in Britain*, 159-60; Evidence of Harry Ham before the RC on Labour, 17/3/1892, Q. 19788, 19791.

## Chapter V - The Alliance Cabinet Makers' Association

The background of the Alliance Cabinet Makers' Association was fairly typical of many of the unions formed in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. The fundamentals of the society have already been outlined by Hew Reid in his book *The Furniture Makers*, but his main focus is on what the union became in the twentieth century, and consequently discussion of the ACMA, which was superseded in 1901 after amalgamation, is restricted to only a single chapter<sup>161</sup>. The society's foundation in 1865 was in the shadow of the 'New Model' unions that had been created over the past decade and a half, but it was not wholly inspired by such groups. The catalyst that brought about the formation of the union was a desire to improve wages and conditions in the East End of London, which were by no means the highest levels of the trade. As a result it was not the only society in the capital; the more prestigious West End Body represented workers in the more up-market areas, and it has been suggested that earlier in the century the cabinet trade was fairly well organized.<sup>162</sup> Unusually for a furniture union at this time, there does not seem to have been a demand for potential members to provide proof of their apprenticeship. This was beneficial to the expansion of the union, as apprenticeships, especially in London, were fast disappearing from the trade by that time.<sup>163</sup> The society gradually began to provide its members with a set of benefits that at least equalled the more established societies.<sup>164</sup>

Reid's analysis that the main objective of the ACMA in the nineteenth century was simply to survive is largely accurate, yet the tactics employed were not simply concerned with the careful husbanding of resources, but always with an eye toward expansion.<sup>165</sup> Although the union had begun as a society for workers in East London, it rapidly expanded across the capital, and beyond into the provinces. The minutes of the Executive Committee of the ACMA (hereafter the E.C.), based in London, frequently outline campaigns for increasing the membership, proposed by the individual branches, and the membership of the EC itself. The ACMA was also at the forefront of discussions for amalgamation with other unions in the trade, and branches which were created were often local societies which had chosen to amalgamate.<sup>166</sup> Whilst it rapidly became the largest trade union in the furniture industry<sup>167</sup>, its size remained small compared to the more prominent unions such as the ASE or the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners (AC&J). As the General Secretary from 1885-1901, Harry Ham, admitted, "We are not one of the staple trades of the Kingdom, therefore except in large towns our numbers must be comparatively small"<sup>168</sup>. Organisation remained difficult, even after the appointment of a dedicated

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<sup>161</sup> Reid, *The Furniture Makers*, 24-43

<sup>162</sup> S & B Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, 83

<sup>163</sup> Evidence of Harry Ham before the R.C. on Labour, 17/3/1892, Q.19795, 19921, 19923-4.

<sup>164</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1880, 1888

<sup>165</sup> The minutes of the Executive Committee of the Society are frequently concerned with the expansion of the union, often through public meetings and demonstrations, for instance on 19/10/1881, 24/7/1896, and many other occasions. Similarly concerned are the addresses in the Annual Reports. Examples include those for 1899 and 1900. The society also frequently expressed strong support for amalgamation with other unions, for instance on 16/3/1888, and 7/3/1889.

<sup>166</sup> Examples include both the Photographic and the Hebrew Societies in London (17/2/1893), the local society in Dublin (29/1/1897), and a local society in Manchester (Annual Report, 1873, 2<sup>nd</sup> Half).

<sup>167</sup> S & B Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, 432

<sup>168</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1888

official for the task, and bursts in membership were often rapidly followed by sharp collapses. This is also demonstrated by the often short lifespan of branches, which could often be broken by one strike.<sup>169</sup>

Therefore, the absolute growth in union membership was gradual rather than spectacular. At its foundation conference in 1865, 42 delegates represented 600 members.<sup>170</sup> By 1881, this had risen to 1543 members, although after the nadir of 1885 this had been reduced to 1052.<sup>171</sup> With the affiliation of the Hebrew Branch amongst others, membership had risen to 5337 at the beginning of 1893, and despite annual fluctuations, remained at around that level until amalgamation in 1902, with the final Annual Report recording a closing membership of 5251 members of the General Fund.<sup>172</sup> In contrast, the AST membership around the same period rose from 4006 in 1870, to 13969 in 1885, and 13439 in 1900.<sup>173</sup>

Membership in the union generally followed the traditional patterns of the time. Those eligible had to be working as journeymen cabinet makers, but membership was also open to journeymen employed as “Chair Makers, Shopfitters, Carvers, General Wood Turners, Woodworking Machinists, Athletic Wood Workers, Cabinet Case Makers, Coach Finishers, Upholsterers, and French Polishers”, although in practice the latter were only admitted if there was no branch of the French Polishers Society in the local area.<sup>174</sup> In special cases pianoforte makers and tennis bat stringers were also admitted.<sup>175</sup> Foremen who had been members as journeymen could retain partial membership, but this was restricted to the insurance of their tools.<sup>176</sup>

To protect the benefits of the society, strict age limitations on new members were observed. By 1895, no new member could be above the age of 45<sup>177</sup>, due to the very real concern that older workers were more subject to unemployment and ill health. Despite this, many members continued to belong to the society well beyond that age.<sup>178</sup> A prospective member had to be nominated by someone already in the union, most often a workshop colleague, and this nomination had to be seconded. This was, barring any vocal opposition, enough to grant the nominee membership, barring the payment of a nominal entrance fee of 4s., usually in instalments, and a promise to be loyal to the principles of the union. Those who were being readmitted to the union, or over whom the membership had significant doubts were liable

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<sup>169</sup> For example, the Glasgow Hebrew Branch, which closed less than two months after the settlement of their strike in April 1901, due to the pressures of industrial action, and financial irregularities; E.C. Minutes, 30/5/1901; Also 21/2/1891 for earlier attempts of employers to force the closure of branches in that city, and 26/6/1896 for Manchester Hebrew.

<sup>170</sup> Reid, *The Furniture Makers*, 25

<sup>171</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1881; ACMA Annual Report, 1886.

<sup>172</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1893; ACMA Annual Report, 1901.

<sup>173</sup> S & B Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, 746-47

<sup>174</sup> ACMA Official Rules, 1895 Revision, Rule 1; Upholsterers were only admitted from 1891. The rule regarding polishers was outlined in the E.C. minutes, 8/11/1895.

<sup>175</sup> E.C. Minutes, 5/2/1897 for the Tennis Bat Stringers; 12/3/1897 for the Pianoforte Makers, who had to be capable of Cabinet work.

<sup>176</sup> E.C. Minutes, 10/2/1898

<sup>177</sup> By 1897 this had been raised to 50. E.C. Minutes, 8/7/1897.

<sup>178</sup> E.C. Minutes, 2/8/1900. The members of No.1 were praised by the E.C. for raising money through a levy to pay the contributions of their older members who could no longer find regular work, 10/1/1901.

to be charged an increased fee.<sup>179</sup> Members had to pay their dues regularly (which also was also usually supplemented by a charge for insurance of tools), and attend the quarterly meeting nights, as well as any summoned meetings, and to serve as branch or society officials if elected. Punishment for transgressing any of these responsibilities was a fine, which could be increased to an expulsion if the fine went unpaid, or the infraction was repeated. Members would be erased from the Society's books if they fell more than eighteen weeks behind with their contributions.<sup>180</sup> It took time before a new member became 'free', or eligible to receive most benefits. In order to attract more members after the near-collapse of the mid-1880s, a partial benefit section was formed in 1887, offering a reduced range of benefits for much a smaller contribution, and with a much broader approach to admission.<sup>181</sup> Similarly, to take into consideration the regional variations in the trade, different scales were adopted by branches which set out the system of contributions and benefits. Different scales could even coexist within the same city, to appeal to all levels of the trade.<sup>182</sup>

Dispute and legal support could be granted immediately, but it took six months before one could receive unemployment benefit, and only a certain amount of either could be claimed within a twelve-month period.<sup>183</sup> The Sick and Insurance funds were kept separate from the General Fund, to protect them from exhaustion during lengthy disputes, as well as from any legal action taken by employers.<sup>184</sup> As a result, insurance against ill health was strictly optional, although also limited by age, and the provision of a doctor's certificate.<sup>185</sup> Other benefits, such as the emigration or funeral benefits accrued depending on how long the individual had maintained continuous membership of the society.<sup>186</sup> This meant that individuals who were recorded as receiving benefits in the Annual Reports had had to have belonged to the society for a significant length of time before they would even be recorded. Many members whose allegiance to the union proved more fleeting were lost within the figures of admissions and erasures.

Above the elected branch officials, which usually consisted of a secretary, a treasurer, a chairman or president, and a representative number of stewards<sup>187</sup>, were the Executive Committee. As the headquarters of the society were based in London, the membership was composed of those elected from the local branches. Initially, due to the small number of London branches, each gained their own representative on the E.C.<sup>188</sup> Later, nominees and votes were taken from the all London branches for the seven seats on the E.C. and ultimately all branches were allowed to vote for the members, though nominees had to be members of a London branch for reasons of practicality.<sup>189</sup> This was typical of other unions. The ASC elected their E.C. from a twelve mile radius around central London, and later Manchester, when the executive functions were relocated there, whilst the E.C. of the Bricklayers' Union

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<sup>179</sup> ACMA Official Rules, 1895 Revision, Rule 19, Clauses A and B

<sup>180</sup> E.C. Minutes, 3/8/1899

<sup>181</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1887; E.C. Minutes, 29/9/1887.

<sup>182</sup> E.C. Minutes, 26/8/1880

<sup>183</sup> E.C. Minutes, 27/12/1874; 29/3/1879; 17/12/1879; 13/4/1894; ACMA Annual Report, 1895.

<sup>184</sup> E.C. Minutes, 10/9/1880; 28/8/1893; 29/3/1900; 17/10/1901

<sup>185</sup> E.C. Minutes, 15/5/1896

<sup>186</sup> ACMA Official Rules, 1895 Revision, Rule 34 Clause B; Rule 35; Rule 36 Clauses A and B; p39

<sup>187</sup> ACMA Official Rules, 1895 Revision, Rule 10 Clause I

<sup>188</sup> E.C. Minutes, 8/2/1882.

<sup>189</sup> ACMA Official Rules, 1895 Revision, Rule 2; Rule 3, Clause B; E.C. Minutes, 27/9/1895

came from the region around the River Tyne in the North East of England.<sup>190</sup> Due to their relatively large membership, the Central Branch No.1 and the West End Branch No.2 often took the leading roles on the committee. Similar electoral procedures were followed for the appointment of the General Secretary of the union, and later for the trade organiser, although these posts were not always contested, and the incumbent often had the advantage of familiarity over his opponents.<sup>191</sup> Membership for all official society positions had to have had three years of consecutive membership, therefore ensuring that only committed trade unionists would be elected.<sup>192</sup> Representatives to the Trade Union Congress meeting were elected from throughout the society, although the numerical strength of the London branches often gave their nominees an advantage, and representatives to other important congresses or meetings were also elected by the membership of the whole society.<sup>193</sup>

The E.C. dealt with matters that were referred to them by the branches of the union. Most importantly, trade movements for the improvement of wages and conditions had to be sanctioned by the E.C. before they could be commenced.<sup>194</sup> The E.C. also sent out money from the General Fund to branches that needed it to meet unemployment or strike benefits, or to deserving societies recommended by their members.<sup>195</sup> They were the final court of appeal for complaints of members against their branches, and also dealt groups that sought admission to the Association as a new branch. Publically their members coordinated labour disputes, negotiated with employers, communicated with the branch membership at meetings, and generally represented the society. Therefore, nomination and election to serve on the E.C. was a considerable honour, and one that signified a high position of respect as well as participation within the union. The activity of immigrant members at this level therefore would signify a high level of acculturation within the union.

As seemingly a fairly typical union, in a fairly typical trade, the ACMA therefore seems ideally placed to be investigated for the presence of immigrants amongst their membership. The numbers are perhaps affected by several peculiarities of the furniture trade. Cabinet making, as Reid discusses, had a long tradition of relying upon foreign immigrants for providing innovation in the trade, dating back at least to the middle of the seventeenth century.<sup>196</sup> It was also a trade in which immigrants to Britain appeared to find themselves; indeed, nationally it was second only to the manufacture of clothing for immigrant penetration.<sup>197</sup> Whilst some had a background in woodworking prior to immigration, many found themselves operating as totally inexperienced workers, or 'greeners', on arrival in Britain. This was in part due to the collapse of the apprenticeship system in London, as outlined by Harry Ham in his testimony to the Royal Commission on Labour. He noted that London shops taught new employees from the capital only very select techniques, and therefore very few had enough knowledge to serve as well

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<sup>190</sup> W. Hamish Fraser, *Trade Unions and Society: The Struggle for Acceptance, 1850 - 1880*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1974), 32.

<sup>191</sup> E.C. Minutes, 24/11/1899.

<sup>192</sup> ACMA Official Rules, 1895 Revision, Rules 3, 6 Clause A, 7

<sup>193</sup> E.C. Minutes, 27/9/1895; 23/8/1900; ACMA Monthly Report, August 1901

<sup>194</sup> E.C. Minutes, 6/5/1897(where one month's notice for trade movements was stipulated); 17/6/1897; 12/1/1898.

<sup>195</sup> E.C. Minutes, 9/10/1896.

<sup>196</sup> Reid, *The Furniture Makers*, 6

<sup>197</sup> Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 163; Jerry White, *Rothschild Buildings: Life in an East End Tenement Block, 1887 -1920*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paull, 1980), 216

rounded workmen.<sup>198</sup> This meant that immigrant ‘greeners’ could start on at least a level footing of experience with British workers. Consequently, Ham argued, the best workers in London were immigrants from areas of Britain where apprenticeships still held sway.<sup>199</sup> This may well account for the large number of members born (like Ham himself) in the South West of England, where apprenticeships may have endured for longer. This was also advantageous to immigrants from outside Britain who had served their apprenticeships in the furniture trade in their home nations. Therefore, the changes within the trade presented opportunities for immigrants, whether experienced or not.

The expansion of the immigrant furniture trade was well documented by contemporaries, and the centres of Russian and Polish Jewish settlement in London rapidly became centres of mass production. Curtain Road in Bethnal Green was well known as a hub of both production and retail, whether through established outlets or through hawking.<sup>200</sup> In contrast, the West End of London saw the production of high quality furniture intended for sale in prominent retail outlets, such as Maples. However, this did not mean that a great deal of this ‘high class’ furniture was necessarily produced in the West End; much of it was often manufactured in East London, under allegedly sweated conditions.<sup>201</sup> The East End itself, as well as providing subcontracted work, was responsible for the production of cheaper furniture, down to what would have been considered ‘slop’ production in the tailoring industry.<sup>202</sup> Indeed the dichotomy of the furniture trade in London appears to have been echoed by other areas, including Manchester, which will also be considered in this study and provides a significant separation in the role of immigrants in the cabinet trade.<sup>203</sup> Immigrants working in the West End trade were often from Western or Northern Europe, often French, Germans, Italians or Scandinavians. The East End trade, which in the early days of the union had contained many Germans, was reinforced by considerable numbers of Poles and Russians, most likely Jews who had migrated from the beginning of the 1880s. Analysis of the geographical location of various branches of the union, and the background of their immigrant members strongly supports this hypothesis.<sup>204</sup>

Nevertheless, the presence of immigrants at all in mainstream British unions is interesting, and, as previously noted, has thus far been neglected by historians. Before analysis of the statistical data, I intend to outline the documentary evidence of immigrants within the ACMA, and their role within the union. It is also interesting to note the attitude of the union in general to immigration, how this alters over time, and how the union chose to use its resources with regard to its immigrant members compared to those who were born in Britain. Overall, this allows us to see how the ACMA compares with its contemporaries in the trade union movement with regard to its position on immigrants in general.

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<sup>198</sup> Evidence of Harry Ham before RC on Labour, 17/3/1892, Q 19793-96

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid*, 19797

<sup>200</sup> Lipman, *History of the Jews in Britain*, 52; White, *Rothschild Buildings*, 216; Evidence of Harry Ham before the RC on Labour, 17/3/1892, Q19959

<sup>201</sup> Evidence of Harry Ham before the RC on Labour, 17/3/1892, Q 19946-7, Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 188

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid*, 19959; Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 248

<sup>203</sup> Distinction between No.4 on one hand, and Nos. 86 and 97 on the other in Manchester outlined in E.C. Minutes for 27/9/1900, 5/11/1900; Monthly Report, August 1901

<sup>204</sup> See the statistical analysis in Chapter 6 and Appendix 1.

## Immigrants in the Life of the Union

From its inception, immigrants played an important role in the life of the ACMA. The death of its first General Treasurer Mr Vorweg, a German immigrant who had been a member of the society since its foundation, was noted with considerable regret in the Half Annual Report for the summer of 1872.<sup>205</sup> Immigrant members appear to have been present in most of the branches considered in this study, regardless of their core membership. An example was Adolfe Wise, a member of the Central Branch No. 1 who had been born in Baden in southern Germany. He was elected at least twice by his branch to serve on the E.C., and maintained his membership from at least the mid-1870s up to his death in 1888.<sup>206</sup> At one point he was even discharged from his employment, due to his trade union activities.<sup>207</sup> The West End branch had a significant number of immigrants amongst their members at many points of its existence, and this may have been part of the reason they were particularly forward in appealing for financial aid for unionists in foreign countries, as well as their strong opposition to the restriction of pauper immigration in 1896.<sup>208</sup> The West End Carvers' branch, established in 1883, appears to have had a substantial immigrant membership, petitioning the E.C. for the translation of important documents into German and French, and setting up a translation committee, not only to accomplish this, but to translate communications with trade unionists in other nations.<sup>209</sup> This branch also had a number of members who retained their affiliation whilst working abroad, as the unsuccessful insurance appeal from a worker in Paris, who lost his tools in a fire, demonstrated.<sup>210</sup> As shall be discussed below, this was only one facet of the ACMA's interaction with foreign unionists, both inside and outside the furniture trade.

However, there were also branches that were specifically designed to cater for non-native workers, which helped to reinforce something of a separate identity. The Continental Branch operated within the union as Branch No. 4 from 1872 to 1881, and from 1893 onwards there was always at least one defined Hebrew branch as part of the society, catering for settlements of Russian and Polish Jews. There was also a request from twenty five Italians to open their own branch of the society in London in 1899, although as nothing further was heard of this, it presumably did not occur.<sup>211</sup> Therefore immigrant membership was never something denied or concealed by the ACMA, yet as the records have shown, the cooperation of immigrants and British workers was not always simple. The history of the Continental Branch within the ACMA is a good example of this, in particular the activities of one prominent member, Adam Weiler.

The vagaries of official recording, and in particular the variables of spelling, mean that it is difficult to directly locate Weiler in the census records with absolute accuracy. He was certainly resident in London

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<sup>205</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1872 (1<sup>st</sup> Half)

<sup>206</sup> E.C. Minutes, 13/10/1876; 4/7/1877

<sup>207</sup> E. C. Minutes, 1/6/1881

<sup>208</sup> E.C. Minutes, 14/2/1896

<sup>209</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1897, where it was reported that 12s. 6d. was spent on translation and printing of the recently agreed working rules. Also 6/5/1889, 29/5/1891 and 28/10/1897, which all detail the translation of society literature into Western European languages.

<sup>210</sup> E.C. Minutes, 20/12/1895

<sup>211</sup> E.C. Minutes, 28/9/1899

by 1871, when he appears in the census for that year, and was recorded as a member of the Continental Branch of the ACMA by 1875. Indeed, it is probable that he was a member significantly earlier,<sup>212</sup> and may have been a member of the Continental Society prior to its amalgamation with the ACMA in 1873, which made it the fourth branch of that society in London.<sup>213</sup> Certainly, Weiler seems to have been a committed member by the time the strike began at Jackson and Graham’s workshop in Ogle Street during November 1874. The dispute, caused by an attempt by the employers to significantly alter the conditions and wages in their factory, lasted for four months. As was customary, the society mounted a picket line outside the disputed shop and in February 1875 Weiler was amongst five members of the society (including the future General Secretary Harry Ham) who were arrested there. The quintet were charged with watching and besetting, under the 1871 Criminal Amendments Act, and in May 1875 were convicted and sentenced to one month’s imprisonment in the Cold Baths Field Prison.<sup>214</sup> Weiler’s stance in this period was indicative of the participation of the Continental Branch within the union, and demonstrated to any doubting native workers that immigrants were prepared to defend their rights and observe their obligations alongside their British counterparts. The case, as Hew Reid has reported, became a cause célèbre. Support came from many quarters of the labour movement press, including *The Beehive*, *The Weekly Dispatch*, and *The Furniture Gazette*.<sup>215</sup> Upon their release from prison the five were greeted by a large crowd, treated to celebratory banquets and paraded at an open air meeting held in Hyde Park. The case was subsequently viewed as the catalyst for the alteration of the law by Disraeli’s incoming government.<sup>216</sup> But for Weiler personally, it cemented his place amongst the leading figures of the union. He frequently served as the Continental Branch’s representative on the Executive Committee and, on several occasions, was elected as one of the society’s representatives to the Trades Union Congress.<sup>217</sup> It is in this capacity that he appeared in Sidney and Beatrice Webb’s *History of Trade Unionism*, in which he is described as “an old member of the [First] ‘International’, and a personal friend” of Karl Marx himself.<sup>218</sup> Weiler delivered a well received paper at the 1878 Congress on the limitations of the hours of labour<sup>219</sup> (a cause that was to later become important to the ACMA) and described himself as “a German socialist”<sup>220</sup>, aptly indicating both his nationality and the variety of his socialism, whilst defending immigrant workers against irrational hostility. In the succeeding Congress, he spoke strongly in favour of the nationalisation of land, but to little effect, and also regarding the necessity of maintaining links with trade unionists in other countries.<sup>221</sup>

Such activism was not restricted to Weiler. The Continental branch proved to be one of the most politically engaged, taking a leading role in attempting to expand the membership of the society, ensuring that the society funds were adequately managed and utilised and even pressing the TUC

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<sup>212</sup> A reference in the records to an A. Weiter in the second half of 1874 is most likely him.

<sup>213</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1873, 2<sup>nd</sup> Half.

<sup>214</sup> S & B Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, 290; Reid, *The Furniture Makers*, 31-34

<sup>215</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1875

<sup>216</sup> S & B Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, 291

<sup>217</sup> E.C. Minutes, 15/9/1876; 14/9/1877; 2/9/1878.

<sup>218</sup> S & B Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, 389-90

<sup>219</sup> TUC Conference Report, 1878, 32

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid*, 27

<sup>221</sup> TUC Conference Report, 1879, 25, 40



Parliamentary Committee to raise the issue of manhood suffrage at a forthcoming session of Parliament.<sup>222</sup> It is interesting to note that whilst much of the society did not become engaged with the franchise question for several years, it was the immigrant members, whose background was a significant handicap to inclusion on the electoral roll, who were the most passionate about the extension of the vote<sup>223</sup>. This demonstrated the commitment of the members to their fellow unionists, seeking to build up the union politically, even without their personally gaining a direct benefit. Nevertheless, whilst such strong opinions, embodied in the person of Weiler, made him a useful representative for his society at the TUC and the Continental a substantial part of the union, it was these strong beliefs, that were to lead to their secession from the ACMA.

The split came in the autumn of 1881; although a careful study of the E.C. minute books reveal that it had been building for some considerable time. The E.C.'s decision to allow society members to return to work at Jackson and Graham's factory had been treated with hostility by a number of branches, including the Continental.<sup>224</sup> The branch was also one of the most vocal in communicating with the E.C., although their resolutions were often ignored or rejected by the society's leadership.<sup>225</sup> The catalyst for the split came over the selection of delegates for the annual TUC conference. The West End Branch No.2 had been the most vociferous in arguing that the Association's General Secretary, J. R. Smith, should not be eligible for nomination. This was based on the view that as the General Secretary, he had far more important business to attend to than spending a week at the TUC.<sup>226</sup> There was also the simmering resentment that as the public face of the society, he would automatically be elected by the membership by the virtue of being the most recognisable, thus depriving other worthy candidates of the chance to attend.<sup>227</sup> This motion had been presented by No. 2 for several years, but it came to a head in the summer of 1881, when, in short order, the General Secretary was barred, and then reinstated to the TUC delegation.<sup>228</sup> Both decisions caused considerable acrimony. It appears that not all members of the E.C. were informed of the meeting in which the restriction was imposed, at which the decision went through on the casting vote of the chairman.<sup>229</sup> Similarly the reinstatement occurred after the chairman, James Goggins (a member of No.2), had closed the meeting and left, giving the action the air of a coup d'état.<sup>230</sup>

Whilst the incident itself was trivial, it had far reaching implications. The London branches split in reaction to the controversy, and the West End and Continental Branches soon found themselves isolated. One branch condemned the "clique within the Executive Committee" that attempted "to insolently override the wishes of the association at the bidding of two branches".<sup>231</sup> The General

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<sup>222</sup> E.C. Minutes, 21/4/1879; 10/9/1880; 30/3/1881; 2/3/1881; Weiler also seconded a motion favouring the adoption of labour candidates at the 1879 TUC, TUC Conference Report, 1879, 39

<sup>223</sup> Clegg et al. *History of British Trade Unions, Vol. I*, 270

<sup>224</sup> E.C. Minutes 16/2/1877; 6/4/1877.

<sup>225</sup> E.C. Minutes, 16/3/1881; 30/3/1881; 3/8/1881.

<sup>226</sup> E.C. Minutes, 13/8/1879.

<sup>227</sup> E.C. Minutes, 28/7/1880; 6/9/1881; 12/8/1885.

<sup>228</sup> E.C. Minutes, 6/9/1881; 9/9/1881.

<sup>229</sup> E.C. Minutes, 5/10/1881.

<sup>230</sup> E.C. Minutes, 9/9/1891; 19/10/1881

<sup>231</sup> E.C. Minutes, 21 September 1881

Secretary attended the TUC regardless, and the situation may have been smoothed over had the Continental Branch not sent a letter to the E.C. in November 1881, seemingly seeking to prolong discussion of the matter.<sup>232</sup> When the Committee refused to reopen the issue, the delegate from the Continental, Matthew Endericks, at that point serving his third consecutive term as the vice-chairman of the committee, stopped attending the meetings.<sup>233</sup> The Continental branch also suspended its payments to the General Fund.<sup>234</sup>

This was not a complete impasse. The E.C. and the Continental Branch continued to correspond, but neither would give way: the Continental demanded their views were considered, the E.C. insisted they must first pay their contributions.<sup>235</sup> Several deputations attempted to reach a compromise, but eventually, in January 1882 the EC sought legal action to recover the money.<sup>236</sup> Weiler was one of the two members of the Continental Branch indicted to appear at Marlborough Police Court to answer charges, and the magistrate found in favour of the union, also inflicting a £5 fine upon Weiler and his co-defendant Christopher Corradi, the treasurer of the branch.<sup>237</sup> After a lengthy period, the money was recovered, although the E.C. continued to argue with the remnants of the Continental Branch over the ownership of the bookcases that had held the branch's library, which saw Weiler and Endericks forced to pay a further fine of £12 10s., plus costs.<sup>238</sup> Finally, on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1882, the Continental Branch was erased from the ACMA's records.<sup>239</sup> The following year, J.R. Smith, the General Secretary of the ACMA, outlined the causes of the split, as the E.C. saw them, in the Annual Report. This was unique in the Annual Reports, where the closure of branches usually passed without comment. Smith noted the "desire among a few of the members to separate" as "the other members and Branches were not sufficiently advanced in intelligence to meet their ideas", probably a reference to the socialism that Weiler himself had espoused<sup>240</sup>, and the condescending attitude with which the E.C. felt they were treated by the Continental members. Smith criticised the members of the branch for failing to "see the principle of unity in Branches as well as among members."<sup>241</sup>

The history of the Continental Branch within the ACMA should not necessarily be seen as representative of the interaction between native and immigrant unionists. The split that occurred was perfectly capable of having taken place within a native branch, and indeed had almost occurred between the E.C. and the Central Branch No.1 over the reopening of Jackson and Graham's shop to society men. During this disagreement, the branch's two members on the E.C. had resigned, and contributions were briefly suspended.<sup>242</sup> Yet perhaps it is telling that only one member of the Continental branch can be detected

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<sup>232</sup> EC Minutes, 9/11/1881, 21/6/1882

<sup>233</sup> He last attended a meeting on 9/11/1881

<sup>234</sup> EC Minutes, 7/12/1881

<sup>235</sup> EC Minutes, 19/12/1881

<sup>236</sup> EC Minutes, 30/12/1881, 8/2/1882

<sup>237</sup> EC Minutes, 3/5/1882; ACMA Annual Report, 1881

<sup>238</sup> EC Minutes, 9/8/1882, 8/11/1882, 22/11/1882

<sup>239</sup> EC Minutes, 6/12/1882

<sup>240</sup> An irony considering the aggressively Socialist position the ACMA's successor, the NAFTU would take after 1902.

<sup>241</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1882

<sup>242</sup> E.C. Minutes 16/2/1877; 7/3/1877.

as having subsequently rejoined the ACMA.<sup>243</sup> No doubt the acrimonious nature of the split precluded rejoining later on, and meant that those who had remained in Britain and wished to continue to participate in trade unionism chose alternative societies. As for Adam Weiler, he appears to have joined the Progressive Cabinet Society, a much smaller London rival to the ACMA, representing them at the 1883 TUC conference, before his death, recorded in the register as occurring in the first quarter of 1894.<sup>244</sup> It is probable that the leadership of the society were in some ways relieved that they would no longer have to deal with the demands of the foreign members, which they saw as out of step with the remainder of the association. For over a decade, there would be no branch within the society dedicated to representing immigrant members. But the withdrawal of the Continental Branch was far from the end for the participation of immigrants within the ACMA.

In some ways, the affiliation of a Hebrew branch to the ACMA echoed that of the Continental. The Hebrew Cabinet Makers Society had enjoyed an independent existence from at least 1888, when they contacted the ACMA for help in organising.<sup>245</sup> This event took place in build-up to the explosion of 'New Unionism' that was having particular resonance in London, and would benefit membership of the established societies even more than the new unions such as Ben Tillett's dockers and Will Thorne's Gas and General Workers. Foreign workers, including Russian and Polish Jews were no exception, and the immigrant tailors in London began to organise themselves and supported the dock workers in their struggle.<sup>246</sup> The immigrant Cabinet Trade too saw attempts at organisation, and at least two societies were founded in London, the Independent Cabinet Makers Society being created alongside the Hebrew Cabinet Makers Society. There also appears, for a time at least, to have been a significant increase in the immigrant membership of London branches. The West End Branch No.2 seems to have acquired several new Scandinavian members during the trade movements of this period, and there is substantial evidence to demonstrate the success of networks amongst immigrant Cabinet Makers. There are several examples of Danish immigrants, who were domiciled in the same household as lodgers, and appear to have joined the society together, although the duration of their affiliation with the union does not appear to have lasted more than a few years.<sup>247</sup>

The E.C. of the ACMA responded to the appeal from the Hebrew Society by dispatching Charles V. Adams, a leading member of the E.C., to serve as their temporary General Secretary, and to assist with organising Jewish workers.<sup>248</sup> This relationship endured for some years before the Hebrew Society amalgamated with the ACMA in 1893, bringing 306 members and £40-5-6 into the union, although only 167 members remained in the branch at the end of the year, perhaps due to the financial demands that

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<sup>243</sup> William van Santen, see Appendix III, record 27. Like Weiler, he was frequently the Continental Branch's representative on the E.C., and therefore may have forged closer links with native unionists than some of his fellow branch members.

<sup>244</sup> TUC Conference Report, 1883, 1

<sup>245</sup> E.C. Minutes, 1/12/1888

<sup>246</sup> Kersten, *Uniting the Tailors*, 78; Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 217

<sup>247</sup> See chapter 6; also Appendix III, records

<sup>248</sup> E.C. Minutes, 1/12/1888; 15/6/1889

were imposed on society members around this time.<sup>249</sup> The Independent Society had never sought such aid from the ACMA, although when the Jewish section of the trade began a movement for the improvement of wages and hours in 1896, the expenses (amounting to some £152) were largely paid by the ACMA when the ICMS's funds ran out.<sup>250</sup> Nevertheless, they resisted amalgamation, preferring to maintain a separate identity, dedicated (for a considerable period of time) to the preservation of piece work, which the larger societies were trying to extinguish in London in favour of payment by time worked.<sup>251</sup>

The relationship of the Hebrew branch, numbered 94 within the Union, with the E.C. was different to that which the Continental branch had had. To start with, the Continental Society had not been a satellite of the ACMA prior to amalgamation, as the Hebrew Society had. The Continental also maintained a relatively constant presence within the E.C., which the Hebrew Branch did not manage, although the number of London branches had expanded considerably in the interim. The only member of No.94 to sit on the E.C. was a man named Herman Steinberg, who served three terms on the E.C., before retiring in 1899, receiving the thanks of the E.C. for his service.<sup>252</sup> He served as a useful link between the E.C. and other Jewish unionists, on one occasion writing letters in Yiddish to communicate the position of the ACMA more clearly.<sup>253</sup> The Continental branch had also never relied upon external help for the auditing of its accounts. The reasoning for such administrative support is unclear: there is evidence in the minutes that the Hebrew branch specifically requested that its financial position be audited by members of the E.C., although this seems to have become a regular event, being described in 1900 "as per usual custom"<sup>254</sup>. But no other branch relied, so far as can be ascertained, on external auditing to such an extent, not even the other Hebrew branches that were created, and it had the unfortunate effect of making the Jewish branches within the movement seem more infantile than they were.<sup>255</sup> Number 94 also strongly relied, probably more than the majority of London branches, on the aid of the trade organisers, initially Tom Walker, and later James O'Grady, to conduct campaigns to increase their membership and to negotiate with employers.<sup>256</sup> Nevertheless, the Hebrew Branch was not noticeably more volatile in its membership than most of the other London branches, usually following the trends of rise and decline exhibited by the others. The main exception was in the early years of their affiliation, when a dedicated organising campaign meant that they generally increased their membership, whilst the rest of the society suffered from a lethargy following the end of the 'New Union' movement.<sup>257</sup> A key factor in this was probably the targeted trade movement to improve wages in Hebrew shops, which had succeeded by the end of 1896, and was hailed by the Annual Report as "one

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<sup>249</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1893; E.C. Minutes, 6/10/1893, 3/11/1893 for the enforcement of a levy on members, although the Hebrew branch was not eligible to pay this until 1894: 24/11/1893.

<sup>250</sup> E.C. Minutes, 13/11/1896; ACMA Annual Report, 1897

<sup>251</sup> Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 209; E.C. Minutes, 24/8/1896; 6/11/1896; 21/12/1899.

<sup>252</sup> E.C. Minutes, 28/12/1899

<sup>253</sup> E.C. Minutes, 23/3/1895

<sup>254</sup> E.C. Minutes, 20/12/1900

<sup>255</sup> It is possible that the other Jewish branches did rely on support from neighbouring Gentile branches, but that such local matters did not reach the attention of the E.C. in London.

<sup>256</sup> For instance, E.C. Minutes for 27/2/1894, 11/12/1896 and 22/2/1900.

<sup>257</sup> See Appendix II.

of the greatest reforms ever attempted in our trade", which secured the Jewish workers "the same conditions enjoyed by their fellow members of British and other nationalities".<sup>258</sup>

London was not the sole centre of Jewish union membership, and it was not long before other Hebrew branches were created in cities where the ACMA had a presence. However, with the exception of Manchester, they did not have as enduring a presence as their London counterpart. The Manchester branch, numbered 86 and founded in 1896, had a considerable crossover of membership with the East Manchester branch, Number 48, and flourished after the dissolution of that branch the same year.<sup>259</sup> Involvement in the trade movement in East Manchester meant that the branch had to endure strikes lasting up to eight months, which severely impacted upon its membership.<sup>260</sup> This meant that the branch was also somewhat more dependent on the E.C. than was typical. Early in its life, the branch was told to stop referring minor matters to the E.C., and to consult the rules first.<sup>261</sup> The E.C. also had to appoint the secretary of the branch in 1901 rather than leaving his election to the membership, after a number of issues which highlighted the 'lax manner with which the branch has been conducted'.<sup>262</sup> Despite this, by the time of amalgamation with the Scottish Society, the branch appeared much more stable.

Hebrew branches also formed in Liverpool, Hull and Glasgow, but all three were short lived. The Liverpool Hebrew Branch had formed out of an independent society, amalgamated in 1896, but had vanished by 1899.<sup>263</sup> In part the difficulties may have been caused by the hostility of their fellow members in Liverpool, some of whom had to be repeatedly reprimanded by the E.C. for discriminating against their Jewish comrades.<sup>264</sup> Anti-Semitism in the furniture trade seems to have been more noticeable in Liverpool than elsewhere, as the ACMA subsequently had to complain to the Amalgamated Union, whose members refused to work with Jewish members of the ACMA.<sup>265</sup> The Glasgow branch, founded in 1899, was, in an extremely rare directive, forcibly dissolved by the E.C. in 1901 after discovery of severe financial improprieties.<sup>266</sup> Unfortunately this only gave credence to a charge that was frequently levelled at Jewish trade unionists, namely that many of them were corrupt.<sup>267</sup> Similar attitudes no doubt reoccurred in 1906 when the secretary of the AJTMPU in Leeds, Sam Freedman, absconded to New York owing the society a considerable sum.<sup>268</sup> Yet as the ACMA's minutes show, officials of Jewish branches were far from alone in being responsible for irregular bookkeeping. The E.C.

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<sup>258</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1896

<sup>259</sup> E.C. Minutes, 17/1/1896

<sup>260</sup> The strike had begun before the 10/6/1897, and was concluded c. 11/11/1897. E.C. Minutes.

<sup>261</sup> E.C. Minutes, 19/8/1896

<sup>262</sup> E.C. Minutes, 22/3/1900; 4/7/1901; ACMA Monthly Report August 1901.

<sup>263</sup> E.C. Minutes, 6/11/1896; Last reference in the Annual Report is from 1898, when 14 members were recorded at the end of that year.

<sup>264</sup> E.C. Minutes, 19/11/1897; 7/2/1898

<sup>265</sup> E.C. Minutes, 7/9/1900

<sup>266</sup> E.C. Minutes, 30/8/1900; 29/11/1900; 30/5/1901

<sup>267</sup> Lipman, *History of Jews in Britain*, 104

<sup>268</sup> Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 87-88

was frequently forced to investigate predominantly native branches and many British-born members were taken to court and eventually forced to repay what they had appropriated.<sup>269</sup>

Therefore, by the end of 1901, only the London and Manchester Hebrew branches had survived. But it is clear that there was more inconspicuous immigrant membership of branches elsewhere. In 1897, 11 Jewish journeymen were recorded as petitioning the EC for the creation of their own branch in Leeds. The request was denied, due to the small number who petitioned, and the unlikely possibility of expansion. This was greeted with regret, not only by the Jewish workers, but also by the already existing branch in Leeds.<sup>270</sup> Yet the true position of immigrant Cabinet Makers in Leeds was revealed in 1892, with the testimony of the secretary of the Leeds branch of the ACMA before the Royal Commission of Labour. Charles Whitley described the eighty Jewish immigrants working in the Cabinet trade in the town, and estimated Jewish membership of his branch (with a total membership of about 100) at between eight to ten members.<sup>271</sup> Even excluding any other immigrants who might have been members, this meant that at least ten per cent of the branch was born outside of Britain, figures far more heavily weighted towards the immigrants than seen in native branches in London or in Manchester. Perhaps the native unionists in Leeds felt that Jewish workers were more likely to organise if they had their own branch, or there may have been a strain of anti-alien hostility which preferred segregated branches. Certainly this was more common amongst other industries in the town. Bristol and Belfast also reported the arrival of Jewish Cabinet Makers towards the turn of the century, and were instructed by the EC to accommodate or organise them within the trade union movement.<sup>272</sup>

It is therefore appropriate at this point to discuss the attitude towards immigrants within the union as a whole. Much of this is based on the attitudes toward Jewish workers, dating from the end of the 1880s onwards. The official records display no hostility to the Continental Branch or its membership on ethnic grounds, at least not until their departure from the union. This does not mean, of course, that such hostility did not exist, but certainly it was repressed, and given the continued participation of German workers within the union, no doubt it remained so. In contrast, there was a great deal of scepticism to the participation of Jewish immigrants within the society. Even before amalgamation, one branch of the union (the West End Branch No.2) objected to the amount of time that Adams was spending on the Hebrew society, to the neglect of his activities within the ACMA.<sup>273</sup> Their concerns were based more on the fact that the Hebrew Society was a 'rival society' more than any inherent ethnic bias. Adams replied that he believed his role as secretary of the Hebrew society was 'advancing the principle of trade unionism' and so remained in place.<sup>274</sup> Tensions eased after amalgamation, and no doubt the other branches in London found it easier to cooperate with the Jewish members now that they were all in the same union. Nevertheless there were occasional complaints from other branches about the activities of Hebrew branch members, particularly from the East London Branch, No. 20, which shared a

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<sup>269</sup> E.C. Minutes, 31/12/1889 [East London]; 18/6/1891 [Bath]; 20/4//1894, 27/12/1894 [East Manchester]; 11/9/95 [Cardiff]; 8/2/1896 [Clydebank] amongst others.

<sup>270</sup> E.C. Minutes, 26/2/1897; 12/3/1897

<sup>271</sup> Evidence of Charles Whitley before RC on Labour, 17/3/1892, Q 20006, 20047, 220057

<sup>272</sup> E.C. Minutes, 17/1/1901 [Bristol]; 30/5/1901 [Belfast]

<sup>273</sup> E.C. Minutes, 30/5/1889

<sup>274</sup> E.C. Minutes, 15/6/1889

considerable amount of organising territory with the Hebrew Branch. Their main concern was that Jewish Cabinet Makers were working on a Sunday, to make up time missed on observance of the Sabbath and other Jewish holidays.<sup>275</sup> Other branches in London, such as the Central No.1, placed considerable pressure on the E.C. for the Hebrew Branch to adhere to the same benefit system as the other branches in the capital. This was eventually achieved.<sup>276</sup> In some ways this was echoed later in the interaction with the Independent Society, when No.94 claimed that members of that union were undercutting their labour and not respecting trade union principles, an indication that at least some Jewish members of the ACMA had come to adopt the attitudes of their native comrades that they were so often criticised for neglecting.<sup>277</sup>

Such tensions were not limited to London. As has been seen above, there was difficulty between the Gentile and Jewish members in Liverpool. In Manchester, the Hebrew branch of the town, No. 86, became involved in a protracted dispute with its neighbouring No. 97 branch, Manchester Central, over the admission to the latter of two men who had been expelled from the Jewish branch.<sup>278</sup> This does not seem to have permanently soured relations however, as the two branches frequently cooperated in trade movements, and held a number of joint public meetings for the advance of organisation in the city. During No.86's administrative difficulties, the functions of running the branch were deferred to the leadership of No.97. Therefore, the two branches were usually found acting in concert for the good of the society and its members.<sup>279</sup>

In Leeds, the tension was perhaps more pronounced. Whitley was strongly critical of Jewish workers in his evidence before the 1892 Royal Commission on Labour. He denied their effectiveness when compared to native workers, and argued that if pauper immigration of Jews was restricted, the entire trade could be organised within six months.<sup>280</sup> As ambitious as this claim was, it does highlight the concerns that native trade unionists, even members of the ACMA had about Jewish immigrant workers. Whitley was quick to deny any xenophobic prejudice, praising Danish workers, both as craftsmen and as trade unionists.<sup>281</sup> Despite his argument that his only problem with Jewish workers was their habit of undercutting their fellow craftsmen, for which he provided examples,<sup>282</sup> his evidence to the commission suggested a scepticism regarding the feasibility and practicality of organising Jews in the trade. He claimed they only remained for the strike benefits, and declined to join in ordinary conditions, when they claimed an inability to speak English, and so communicate with their colleagues, an argument he treated with some scepticism.<sup>283</sup> In conclusion to his evidence, he urged the fashionable prescription of a ban on pauper immigration, and desired the London branches to restrict Hebrew entry into the trade.

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<sup>275</sup> E.C. Minutes, 9/9/1899; 28/9/1899

<sup>276</sup> E.C. Minutes, 13/3/1896; 18/6/1897; 9/9/1899 [Criticism by East London branch].

<sup>277</sup> E.C. Minutes, 30/9/1897; 8/7/1899; 2/11/1899; 21/12/1899.

<sup>278</sup> E.C. Minutes, 27/11/1896; 5/3/1897.

<sup>279</sup> E.C. Minutes, 29/6/1899; 24/1/1901; 4/4/1901.

<sup>280</sup> Evidence of Charles Whitley before RC on Labour 17/3/1892, Q 20049-53, 20093-4, 20141

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid*, Q 20096

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid*, Q 20055

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid*, Q 20058

<sup>284</sup>This testimony was made before the amalgamation of the Hebrew Society to the ACMA, and came at the height of the restrictionist movement within trade unionism. It is therefore unreasonable to assume that these attitudes remained as constant for the rest of the decade, but it does show that by no means all native members of the society were committed to organisation of immigrants. Despite his views however, his branch still had a considerable Jewish membership, as he himself noted.

Such attitudes regarding participation have inevitably raised the question as to why immigrant workers would choose to associate themselves in British trade unions in general, and the ACMA in particular. After all, alternatives could certainly be found. The ACMA may have been the most prominent furniture union, but it was far from the only one, and immigrants may have found a union more responsive to their needs if they had joined a smaller society, such as the Progressive or the Perseverance. Indeed there is no indication that this did not take place to some extent, but the benefit of the ACMA was that its size gave it the appearance of being more able to defend the rights of its members than the smaller societies. This is no doubt the reason the two Jewish societies in London came to rely on the aid and guidance of the ACMA, although to differing degrees; and why societies outside London, of whatever background, continued to amalgamate with the ACMA, even in periods when it was struggling severely with financial difficulties.<sup>285</sup>

But trade unionism was not necessarily an imperative course of action for workers in the furniture trade. For much of the period, the ACMA was too weak to attempt to take any action against non-Unionists working in shops, either to compel them to join, or to have them dismissed.<sup>286</sup> The phenomenon of the closed shop, although not entirely unknown, was much rarer than it would become. Indeed the hostility of many employers to trade unionism was an added incentive not to become a member, especially in times of a trade depression. Although the union provided a wide range of benefits, it was not unique in that, and, as the scale of membership in friendly societies during this period has shown, many trade unionists were almost certainly members of unrelated savings and insurance clubs. In this last decade of the century, these proliferated at a significant rate amongst Jewish immigrants, meaning that those who wanted to insure against difficulties did not have to join a trade union to do so.<sup>287</sup>

For immigrants, participation in a social network may well have been part of the attraction, to provide a sense of both stability and security. But fin-de-siècle London, at least, was an incredibly cosmopolitan city, with communities from all parts of the world. Many of these were documented in George R. Sims's series of essays, *Living London*, which also documented the various charitable and friendly societies that existed for immigrants.<sup>288</sup> Even outside London, significant foreign settlements grew up, and created almost self supporting communities. As indicated above, these were particularly prevalent amongst Jewish settlers, some of whom formed communities almost identical to those which had predated their migration, right down to the individual members. Religious institutions were recreated on exactly the

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<sup>284</sup> *Ibid*, Q 20100, 20145-7

<sup>285</sup> E.C. Minutes, 3/11/1893

<sup>286</sup> Evidence of Harry Ham before RC on Labour 17/3/1892, Q 19855, 19884, 19923-4; E.C. Minutes, 3/10/1896

<sup>287</sup> Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 312, 314; Englander ed. *Documentary History of Jewish Immigrants*, 75

<sup>288</sup> Sims, *Living London*, Vol.3, 61, 207



same lines as they had existed in Russia, Poland and Romania.<sup>289</sup> Desire for society and affiliation alone does not, therefore, in the majority of cases, explain why immigrants would necessarily choose to join a British union.

A number of reasons must therefore be considered. For an immigrant to join, and maintain membership in, a union, he must have considered himself settled, at least for a considerable period of time. Membership of a union, in particular the ACMA, was an indication of wanting to improve or maintain the conditions of their employment indicating the intention to remain for some time. No doubt social pressure played some part. There were a number of shops, both in London and Manchester, where native and immigrant branches had members employed, and the example of native unionists may have inspired their foreign co-workers, although there is no reason it could not have been the other way around. Membership of a native union also shows at least some desire to acculturate to the host society. The numbers affiliated would not have been maintained, nor would such considerable passion been aroused over organisation, if membership had simply been enforced by British colleagues, even if it had been achievable. This has been echoed, in the Jewish case at least, by the attitudes of community leaders and elements of the Jewish press, who advocated trade union membership in order to reduce the suspicion and hostility of British workers.<sup>290</sup> In this case, Anglo-Jewry was working from the motivation of preserving their position against anti-Semitism, rather than directly favouring the working class principles of many British unionists. But the position was reinforced by the activity of a number of left wing activists, who also saw the entry of the Jewish working class within the labour movement as key not only to their improvement, but to that of the working class in Britain as a whole.<sup>291</sup>

Therefore the existence of immigrant workers within the ACMA, whether in separate branches or fully integrated, was not simply a case of converging private interests, but a case of all groups being motivated by the same public desire. The methodology would often differ, as the example of the Continental Branch demonstrated, but the ultimate goal of improving the position of all workers in the trade remained, and increasing portions of the membership came to recognise that inclusion of alien workers, whether those from more familiar Western European nations, or Jews from Eastern Europe, was essential in maximising the opportunities of the ordinary worker in the furniture trade.

### **Interaction with Trade Unionists outside of Britain**

The ACMA seems to have quickly realised that the short distance that separated Britain and Continental Europe was by no means the impenetrable barrier that some in late Victorian society still supposed. The prospect of blacklegging was one that confronted both the ACMA and their European counterparts. On many occasions, appeals were received from societies representing European, and even American,

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<sup>289</sup> Fishman, *East End 1888*, 167; Lipman, *History of the Jews in Britain*, 95-96.

<sup>290</sup> Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 332-33; W. J. Fishman, 'Morris Winchevsky and the *Poilshe Yidl*: First Chronicle of the East London Ghetto', in Christiane Harzig and Dirk Hoerder, eds. *The Press of Labor Migrants in Europe and North America, 1880s to 1930s*, (Bremen: Publications of the Labor Newspaper Preservation Project, 1985), 124

<sup>291</sup> Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 332-33

furniture workers asking the E.C. to pass on to their members the existence of a trade dispute and asking them not to accept work in that locality.<sup>292</sup>

Despite this it does seem that several prominent members of the ACMA had worked abroad at some point. Harry Ham stated that he worked in Paris during the International Exhibition of 1868, and William Parnell, the long-time secretary of the West End Branch, was often the first choice to translate communications from French and Belgian societies, indicating that he had probably worked in France for some time.<sup>293</sup> Parnell seems to have been strongly in favour of the internationalist aspect of trade unionism, and emerged as one of its leading champions at the TUC. Also a delegate to several ITUC conferences, he strongly defended them against his more sceptical peers, arguing that "The sooner Englishmen got rid of their prejudices in regard to foreigners, the sooner that object [international trade unionism] would be obtained".<sup>294</sup> He felt that contacts between workers of different nationalities could only aid the ability of those workers to achieve common hours and conditions.<sup>295</sup> He also appears to have made subsequent visits to France for personal reasons, during which times he took the opportunity to pass the greetings of the ACMA to the Parisian furniture makers, noting that "he had never had more sympathy than he had had from his own trade in Paris".<sup>296</sup> Tom Walker, the long serving trade organiser of the ACMA also spoke at the TUC in favour of the need to organise immigrants and to encourage international unionism. What is more, he did so in 1895, at the peak of the anti-alien sentiment in the TUC.<sup>297</sup> Clearly neither Parnell nor Walker were representative of all unionists, or even all leading members of the ACMA, but it is clear that there was a strong internationalist sentiment at work amongst some native members of the union that may have made it much more accessible and inviting to immigrant workers.

The ACMA was also frequently contacted by European trade unionists seeking financial support for their trade movements, and such appeals were usually met with great generosity by the membership, when the E.C. published subscription lists.<sup>298</sup> In the aftermath of the Parisian furniture workers strike of 1880, which had endured for a number of months and to which they had contributed both financial and moral support, the E.C. were invited to attend a celebratory banquet to celebrate the success of the movement, a request that was reluctantly declined by the E.C.<sup>299</sup> Subsequently communications continued periodically between the ACMA and their Parisian equivalents, with copies of their rules, and monthly reports being exchanged.<sup>300</sup> When the French consulate asked the E.C. for a copy of their rules as part of a study of British trade unionism, the permission of the French society was sought before the

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<sup>292</sup> E.C. Minutes include 3/11/1887; 10/3/1891; 18/5/1894 [for Boston, U.S.A]; 4/1/1900; 27/12/1900

<sup>293</sup> Evidence of Harry Ham before RC on Labour 17/3/1892, Q 19912; E.C. Minutes, 10/11/1880; 6/6/1883; 12/12/1901

<sup>294</sup> TUC Conference Report, 1887, 40

<sup>295</sup> TUC Conference Report, 1896, 38

<sup>296</sup> E.C. Minutes, 20/12/1882; 13/6/1901; TUC Conference Report, 1887, 40

<sup>297</sup> TUC Conference Report, 1895, 46

<sup>298</sup> E.C. Minutes, 9/10/1896; 13/7/1898

<sup>299</sup> E.C. Minutes, 22/9/1880; 24/11/1880

<sup>300</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1883; E.C. Minutes for 6/6/1883 for exchanges with Antwerp, and 22/2/1895 for Amsterdam.

request was granted.<sup>301</sup> Like all relationships, the intensity of contact varied, and toward the end of the nineteenth century communication between London and Paris had, officially at least, become extremely sporadic. But the contact between the ACMA E.C. and foreign unionists, in particular the furniture workers of Paris indicate something more than simple mutual interest. This was demonstrated when the E.C. ordered a branch of the society to admit a member of the Parisian union to their branch on presentation of a clear union card, as if he had been transferring from a British branch. This was not even a privilege that they granted to the Scottish Society, whose transferring members had to join as if they were first time unionists.<sup>302</sup> It seems clear then, that the ACMA was, at least at its higher levels, committed to the furthering of their trade unionism in full cooperation with foreign workers, whether based in Britain or not.

Contact was not solely restricted to Paris, or even to France. The 1884 Annual Report boasted of contact with kindred societies in Paris, Brussels [sic], Antwerp, Amsterdam, and Boston.<sup>303</sup> Whilst not the heady range of Wilson's NASFU later in the decade, regular communication with a wide array of foreign organisations was no small achievement, and was indicative, besides pragmatism, of a broad mindedness not always associated with the trade union movement of the period. Financial support also went to a wide range of labour causes across Europe, from the Cotton Weavers of Lille, sent £5 in 1882, to trade movements in Budapest, Brussels, and Denmark (in 1893, 1896-7, and 1899 respectively).<sup>304</sup> Such issues were often raised by branches with strong immigrant membership, indicating that lines of communication were kept open by migrants to their home communities. The number of appeals from fellow furniture workers was only natural, but also indicates that foreign workers within the ACMA had learnt their trade before coming to the United Kingdom, and perhaps were bringing attention to the plight of their previous unions. Members of the society also pressured their fellow trade unionists in Britain to support their brethren overseas; it was Parnell and Walker, the delegates to the 1890 TUC Conference, who initiated the call to provide aid for trade unionists in Australia, who had ensured the success of the 1889 dock strike with a considerable financial contribution.<sup>305</sup>

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By the time the ACMA was transformed into the NAFTA at the end of 1901, the status of the union had completely changed from its position of the 1870s. Numerically and geographically, it had become much more extensive, and by associating itself within entities such as the TUC and the GFTU, the society sought to play a much more extensive role in national life. In the next few years the society's second trade organiser, Jim O'Grady, would become one of the first Labour M.P.s.<sup>306</sup> This symbolised a move to the political left that had taken place during the 1890s, encouraged by the resistance to trade unions such as the lockout involving the ASE, and the Taff Vale dispute. In the furniture trade, this had been

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<sup>301</sup> E.C. Minutes, 21/2/1883; 7/3/1883.

<sup>302</sup> For the admission of the Parisian member, see E.C. Minutes, 3/10/1883; for denial to the Scottish member, see 16/3/1899

<sup>303</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1884.

<sup>304</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1882, 1893, 1896, 1897, 1899

<sup>305</sup> TUC Conference Report, 1890, 44

<sup>306</sup> Reid, *The Furniture Makers*, 47

manifested in a lockout involving the Scottish union, described by Ham in the Annual Report as "the deadliest struggle that has ever faced us as a union". This affected not only the ACMA's Scottish branches, but also the funds of the society as a whole, as considerable financial assistance had been granted.<sup>307</sup> Even with such demands, the society was in a strong enough position to avoid a repeat of the nadir that had occurred in the middle of the 1880s. But despite such changes, there were still many elements that remained unaltered from the foundation of the society. It still maintained its open admissions policy to most workers in the trade, and remained forthcoming in aiding fellow trade societies in disputes or times of financial hardship. Crucially, it retained an immigrant membership that had begun with William Vorweg and his compatriots in 1865, and continued into the twentieth century. In that time the nature of the immigrants had changed, with Russo-Polish Jews replacing Germans as the numerically dominant group, but the role of the union in providing a bridge into British society had not. Conflicts between immigrants and natives still occurred, as the tensions between Jewish and native workers in Liverpool and Leeds demonstrated, but the union still represented itself as an agent of all workers in the trade, no matter where they had been born. Perhaps the expansion of the society had been detrimental to immigrant aims; after all, there seems to have been no immigrant member in a comparable position to Vorweg or Weiler. But this is to underestimate the universality of the society's aims, to secure fairer pay and working conditions for all its members. Campaigns to organise predominantly Jewish shops in London in the 1890s may have partly been carried out to protect the position of the trade generally, but it was also done to directly improve the conditions of the immigrant workers themselves. What was lacking somewhat is direct evidence of immigrant agency, and for this reason it is difficult to see the Jewish branches as being as in control as workers and as trade unionists, as members of the earlier Continental Branch had been, at least considering the evidence available.

What can be demonstrated, at least to some degree, is the actual numerical strength of immigrants in the union, and how it altered over time. The records of the ACMA, combined with the census data collected every decade, has presented the opportunity to trace individual members of the society, and so illustrate the potential ethnic makeup of a late-Victorian trade union.

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<sup>307</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1898

## Chapter VI - The Results of the Research

In seeking to define the makeup of the Alliance Cabinet Makers' Association through comparison of trade union documents with census data, a number of factors must be considered. As noted previously, the census can be an imperfect source of information, and as a result there were a considerable number of members recorded who could not be traced at all. Even those returns that could be linked to individuals often resulted in a multitude of possibilities. Whilst it is possible, by using additional knowledge of the likely characteristics of particular union members to identify a most likely candidate, such suppositions could rarely be confirmed with absolute accuracy. Therefore, individuals appearing in the records of the ACMA who could be directly linked to individuals in the census were in a decided minority. This was especially true when it came to the identification of immigrants. As Higgs has noted, the census schedule could prove a confusing document for many people, in particular those for whom English was not their primary language.<sup>308</sup> It is therefore unsurprising, although no less frustrating, that many whose names suggest an immigrant background have proved to be untraceable in the census records.

Even for those who could be identified, the census reveals only a limited amount of detail. It is impossible, without further evidence, to determine why immigrants chose to live and work in Britain. It is almost as difficult to determine their reasons for becoming members of a trade union, although the documentary evidence provided by the society itself has been of some assistance. No doubt some members had a strong commitment to the trade union movement, and had been trade unionists themselves prior to moving to Britain. The contact between the ACMA and foreign unions was substantial enough to suppose that the existence of the British union would have been common knowledge amongst furniture making unionists in many European cities. After all, the ACMA had often provided financial support for unions in Western Europe during periods of prolonged depression or extensive trade disputes. Workers who migrated to Britain, and who had belonged to the trade union movement, would therefore have known that there was an established trade society they could affiliate to. This is even more significant due to the fact that there seem to have been no branches of foreign unions established in the London furniture trade, as there were in other areas of employment, such as clerking or the hospitality industry.<sup>309</sup>

Other workers who became unionists may have been convinced to join during an organising campaign. These were periodic occurrences, during which specific shops were targeted by the society for recruitment, and to bring the conditions of the trade in a particular area up to a certain standard. Trade meetings, and addresses by senior members of the society, particularly the General Secretary and later the Trade Organiser were important tactics in bringing trade unionism into individual workshops and manufactories.<sup>310</sup> In these cases, peer pressure would no doubt have been significant, but those who joined as a result of such campaigns may well have been less ideologically committed than those who

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<sup>308</sup>Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census - Revisited*, 92

<sup>309</sup> Sponza, 106-07; Panayi, 132, 162, 192-93

<sup>310</sup> E.C. Minutes, 24/1/1901 for Manchester; 27/3/1897, 10/4/1897 for Liverpool Hebrew; 4/10/1895, for the occasion Tom Walker was arrested for holding a trade meeting in the street.

had joined of their own volition. It may then be possible to divide such individuals into 'hard' and 'soft' trade unionists, comprising the hardcore, long-term membership of the society, and those whose compulsion to join had been more external than internal. This is not to suggest that such groups were impermeable. Members who were recruited en masse as part of a campaign might well come to appreciate the benefits of society membership, and become aggressive advocates of organisation. However, they may as likely have been much more ephemeral members, performing the minimum of their responsibilities, and deserting the union at times of crisis. These were as likely to be native born members as immigrants, and Harry Ham aggressively railed against such workers for their failure to appreciate the importance of collective action in times of difficulty as well as prosperity.<sup>311</sup> But again, defining which individuals were 'hard' or 'soft' unionists is a difficult task, whether they were natives or immigrants. The most effective method is tracking the extent of their appearance in the union records. Since a complete list of membership is no longer extant, records of participation as a branch or society officer or the claiming of benefits are the best methods. However, if a member did not do either of those, they tend to disappear from the record, and the results that are gained may not be entirely accurate. Similarly, confusion can arise due to the similarity or even replication of names, even after a long period of inactivity. Therefore, a name that is recorded for the first time in over a decade may be the same individual, but it could well be another person altogether.

It is also significant to consider the question as to who we can consider an immigrant, or more accurately, for how long a foreign-born individual is to be regarded as one. For the purposes of this study, any individual born outside of the British Isles has been considered an immigrant, unless their census record states that they were born British subjects.<sup>312</sup> But is there a point at which such immigrants became natives in the eyes of their contemporaries? Legally this could be done by a process of naturalisation, by which a fee was paid to become a British subject. Such individuals were distinguished in the census data by the initials N.B.S. alongside their place of birth. However, the cost of naturalisation was prohibitive for many, and calls for its reduction were a frequent issue raised by Jewish unionists who attended the T.U.C..<sup>313</sup> As with those who misinformed enumerators about their place of birth, immigrants may have been prone to lie about their naturalisation to improve their social standing. In any case, legally becoming a British subject, whilst showing a determination to remain in the country, may not necessarily have reduced the 'alien' qualities of immigrants in the eyes of contemporaries .

Subsequent observers of immigration history often argue that an immigrant group can become naturalised when migrants who are considered more alien by the host population begin to arrive.<sup>314</sup> But it could also be argued that there were ways, apart from naturalisation, in which immigrants could

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<sup>311</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1897, 1898

<sup>312</sup> For instance, Henry A. Urie, a leading member of the society in the 20th Century, was born in Baghdad, but as a British subject and so was not recorded as an immigrant.

<sup>313</sup> TUC 1902, p75-6; 1903, p66-7; 1904, p92 (proposed by Freeman of the LJTMP, and carried unanimously); 1910, p158-59; 1911, p222 (raised by Freeman's successor, Moses Sclare).

<sup>314</sup> Richard Alba and Victor Nee, *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration* (Cambridge, Mass.; Harvard University Press, 2003), Chapter 3; Lucassen, *The Immigrant Threat*, 9, although he argues that other factors played a role as well.

proactively make themselves more 'native' and thus reduce their distinctiveness. Acculturation was a natural process over time, and the more enduring immigrant members of the ACMA would hardly be the same individuals when they ceased activity within the union as they had been when they joined. Marriage to an English woman was also probably indicative of acculturation, as was learning English, though the former is easier to track than the latter. Many of the immigrants recorded in the society were married to co-ethnics, indicating that marriage took place prior to migration, although many of their children were born subsequent to arrival in Britain. Of those confirmed or strongly believed to be immigrants in Appendix III, a third were married to coethnics, whilst over 30% were married to partners born in England, with a small minority being married to immigrants from elsewhere. When the sizable number who were unmarried are removed from the sample, the figures rise to 47.8% and 43.5% respectively. Therefore, it is apparent that whilst there was a strong trend toward endogamy, a significant minority intermarried with the local population, probably due to the fact unmarried migrant women were a limited element of the community. It is probable that if the 1901 survey had been completed, the Hebrew branches may well have reduced the levels of exogamy significantly. It is also unclear how many of the Englishwomen were second generation migrants themselves. Whether it was through marrying an English woman, or raising children within Britain, elements of acculturation were bound to seep through to some extent. The fact that these men belonged to a British union indicates that they were prepared to take a more active role in their integration, even if it may have been primarily driven by pragmatism for some.

Of course joining the union, however pragmatic a course of action it may have been, was also a form of interaction with British society. Therefore, how far a foreigner was viewed as an immigrant or as a native was not just dependent on the individual themselves, but on the people they came into contact with, and was extremely variable over time. As Reuben Manton, the representative of the National Federation of Fishermen, told the Royal Commission on Labour in 1893, they had several immigrants as members, but because they had been resident so long, and had married Englishwomen, they were viewed as natives.<sup>315</sup> Estimation of immigrant membership might be useful in showing the interactions between immigrants and natives, but it can never achieve a full image of the way these various groups managed to form a functioning society.

Despite such difficulties, comparison of the union records with the census has allowed an image of immigrants within the union to be created. Primarily, it is clear that they were present in a small but significant quantity, and that immigrant members can be recorded throughout the entire period under consideration. Given the challenges that the union experienced in this time, particularly in the middle of the 1880s, this is no small achievement. Immigrants must also have remained members of the society for some time. As has already been referred to, benefits could not be claimed in the first six months, so all those recorded, migrant or not, must have been members at least that long, and could not have simply joined on a whim, and then never paid any further contributions. What is also revealed is that immigrant membership was not confined purely to branches that were specifically designated as 'immigrant', such as the Continental Branch, and the variety of Hebrew branches that emerged in the 1890s. Immigrant membership was detected in both of the main London branches in both 1881 and

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<sup>315</sup>Evidence of Reuben Manton before the RC on Labour, 27/11/1892, Q11213

1891, and sporadically in other London branches as well. It is also clear that in several cases, such membership was long term. The aforementioned Adolfe Wise<sup>316</sup> was only one example, and William van Santen<sup>317</sup>, who started in the Continental Branch and was later found within the West End Branch, was another. It is probable though, that 'soft' membership may well have been more typical. Individuals like Angelo Cervo<sup>318</sup>, recorded over four years around 1891, and Victor Boittier<sup>319</sup>, detected only in 1891, may have been much more temporary members of the union. It is important to signify the distinctions between immigrant and native members who are recorded only for a short time. In both cases, an apathy toward membership of a society they had never felt especially enthusiastic about belonging to was probably a significant factor for many, especially during periods of economic difficulty when dues and levies seemed an onerous burden on a precarious budget. For others, the reason for their departure was less mundane. Several immigrants recorded in the West End Branch for 1891 may have regarded Britain ultimately as a temporary platform for further migration, particularly to British dominions such as South Africa<sup>320</sup>. Whether they had come to Britain with this idea already in mind, or had arrived at the decision whilst in Britain, is impossible to determine. The fact they had joined a union in the first place, and maintained their membership indicates a certain commitment to remaining in Britain, but changes of circumstance no doubt played their part. Union membership helped individuals such as Herman Wiese<sup>321</sup> and Robert Rost<sup>322</sup> pay for the expense of starting new lives elsewhere by granting them emigration benefits. Of those researched, only 10.6% are recorded as having emigrated. However, this only records those who were able to take advantage of the society's emigration benefit, which only became available after three consecutive years of membership, and in any case only applied to travel outside of Europe.<sup>323</sup> Those who returned to France, Germany, or even Russia, would therefore not have been eligible.

There were no doubt others who, rather than using Britain as a stepping stone, had probably intended far shorter stays in Britain, perhaps visiting to gain new skills and ideas. Union membership may have been influenced by the atmospheres of the shops in which they worked, or by personal ideology, but their disappearance from the records cannot necessarily be taken as dissatisfaction with the society. Finally union members left to become masters themselves. Starting out as a master was not necessarily very expensive, but it could be precarious. The union kept records of the numbers who resigned their memberships each year to become masters themselves, and no doubt some immigrants were amongst them. Certainly, there were a number of immigrant masters operating in London at this time.<sup>324</sup>

The in-depth analysis of the membership of the society also revealed some intriguing living patterns amongst immigrant members. Chief amongst these appears to be the inclination of some Danish

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<sup>316</sup> See Appendix III, Record 1 for micro-biography.

<sup>317</sup> See Appendix III, Record 27.

<sup>318</sup> See Appendix III, Record 34.

<sup>319</sup> See Appendix III, Record 57

<sup>320</sup> See Appendix III, Record 24 (John Hartmann), Record 32 (Christian Bangert), Record 37 (Martin Kindinger)

<sup>321</sup> See Appendix III, Record 56

<sup>322</sup> See Appendix III, Record 43

<sup>323</sup> ACMA Rules, 1895 Revision, Rule 35

<sup>324</sup> Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 194; an Association of Hebrew Employers was in existence by 1896: ACMA E.C. Minutes, 17/1/1896 ; there may have been as many as 74 at this time: E.C. Minutes, 7/11/1896



members of the society to live or lodge together. The cases of Niels Yagd<sup>325</sup> and Anton Moller<sup>326</sup>, and Edward Hansen<sup>327</sup> and Alfred Petersen<sup>328</sup>, show members of the society recorded in the same household, leading to the intriguing question as to whether union membership was influenced by joint living arrangements or vice-versa. Regrettably, only speculation is possible, although the fact that three of these four disappear from the union records within a short period after being first recorded indicates that they may well have been sojourners rather than settlers. It is possible that these individuals were known to each other prior to their arrival in London, or that they sought each other out due to a common nationality. But what is demonstrated is that the union formed part, however temporary, of their extended social networks, and had the potential to provide them with contacts beyond any immigrant enclave. This pattern was not repeated, so far as research has shown, amongst any other ethnic group, although immigrant and native members of the branch seem to have lived in close proximity in many cases. For example, Great Titchfield Street contained four members of the West End Branch, whilst Munster Square contained members of both the West End Branch and West End Carvers Branch.

In some ways, it is unsurprising to see migrant groups such as the Danes and the Dutch as belonging to the union. There were almost certainly insufficient numbers of these nationalities living in London to form any significant ethnic enclave.<sup>329</sup> Certainly they were not recorded in Sims's series of articles *Living London* which recorded the most significant ethnic groups such as the French, the Germans and the Poles.<sup>330</sup> Despite the number of Germans in London (and Germans had been the most numerous immigrant group until the arrival of the Russo-Polish Jews<sup>331</sup>) they probably comprised the largest immigrant group within the union in both 1881 and 1891, even after the secession of the German-dominated Continental Branch. This ties in to the anecdotal evidence that Germans were more prone to acculturation than, say, French migrants.<sup>332</sup> Nevertheless, there was almost no contact between German furniture unions and the ACMA up to 1901, and the survival of some form of ethnicity is indicated by the fact that the West End Carvers' Branch continued to print their rules in German, as well as French, for the remainder of the century.<sup>333</sup> Similarly the support for the Danish Cabinet Makers and Joiners enduring a lockout by their employers in 1899 seems to have been spearheaded by the West End Branch

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<sup>325</sup> See Appendix III, Record 36

<sup>326</sup> See Appendix III, Record 39

<sup>327</sup> See Appendix III, Record 35

<sup>328</sup> See Appendix III, Record 41

<sup>329</sup> Beasant, *East London*, discusses a small Dutch community around Spitalfields, with a single place of worship, 192

<sup>330</sup> George R. Sims, ed., *Living London*, 3 vols., including chapters on 'Russia in East London', 'Oriental London', 'Italy in London', 'Cosmopolitan London', and 'German London', all written by Count E. Armfelt; also S. Gelberg, 'Jewish London' and Paul Villars, 'French London'.

<sup>331</sup> Panyai, *German Immigrants*, 91-2

<sup>332</sup> Paul Villars, 'French London', in Sims, ed. *Living London*, vol. 2, 134; Walter Beasant, *East London*, 192, 204; Panyai, 119

<sup>333</sup> E.C. Minutes, 12/12/1901 for second hand contact with German Wood Carving societies; for evidence of documents published in French and German by West End Carvers' branch, see 29/5/1891, 28/10/1897.

No.2, probably due to the continued presence of Danish members.<sup>334</sup> It is even possible that some of the strikers were return migrants, who had once belonged to the ACMA themselves.

At this stage, it is necessary to emphasise that immigrants were decidedly the minority within the union, indeed within all investigated branches (bar the Continental) at all times. The highest level of immigrant membership recorded was in the West End Branch in 1891, when around 15% of the surveyed membership has been estimated to be immigrant or probably so. This amounts to 36 members out of a branch membership that was recorded between 518 and 536 for that year. Although this amounts to only 6.72% of the membership, this figure is undoubtedly a minimum, and the true density was probably much larger. This was also by far and away the strongest concentration.<sup>335</sup> Several branches investigated, such as the East London, or the Carvers', contained no members who could be interpreted as immigrants, although does not mean that immigrants were not present in these branches at all. The West End seems to have been a magnet for immigrant membership, possibly because it was easier to organise than the workshops in the east of the city. It is also likely that the background of immigrants in the West End was quite distinct from those of the East End. German immigrants were moving out of East London, and their place had been taken by the newly arrived Jews from Poland and Russia.<sup>336</sup> This dichotomy is seen elsewhere in Britain, as the EC minutes record: in Manchester, the Jewish members tended to be concentrated in the east of the city, whilst native membership was stronger in the more respectable west.<sup>337</sup>

No immigrants were recorded in the one Manchester branch that was investigated in 1881, although the creation of a Hebrew branch in 1896 indicates that immigrant membership must at some point have existed in the city. Due to the constraints of time, no further analysis was possible on the Manchester branches beyond the anecdotal evidence provided in the society records. The creation of a Hebrew branch, in Manchester and in other centres of production, does indicate there was something of a desire to belong to a trade society, however fleeting such enthusiasm may have proved for many.

In some ways, however, the evidence revealed by the study must prove to be something of a disappointment. Amongst Jewish immigrants, Cabinet Making was the third most popular trade, following clothing and footwear manufacture.<sup>338</sup> The relative absence of immigrants within much of the ACMA, prior to the creation of the Hebrew branches, raises severe questions as to the level of immigrant participation within the union generally. Either the union failed initially to actively recruit Hebrew members, or they were uninterested in joining a native union, or more generally any trade society. This may be somewhat harsh on both organisers and immigrant workers. It is clear that the ACMA strongly supported the independent Jewish trade unions and prior to amalgamation may have

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<sup>334</sup> E. C. Minutes, 13/7/1899; 20/7/1899;27/7/1899.

<sup>335</sup> The next strongest seems to have been the West End Carvers' No. 37, where there was a minimum immigrant density of 5.41%. For full details of all researched branches, see Appendix I.

<sup>336</sup> Montague Crackenthorpe 'Should Government Interfere?', in White ed., *The Destitute Alien in Britain*, 60; Panyai, *German Immigrants*, 96-7

<sup>337</sup> E.C. Minutes, 5/11/1900; 15/11/1900; ACMA Monthly Report, August 1901.

<sup>338</sup> White, *Rothschild Buildings*, 216. It had become the second largest by 1911, Englander, ed. *Documentary History of Jewish Immigrants in Britain*, 110. Lipman, *A History of the Jews in Britain*, 57, estimates that 10% of those born in Russia and Poland were involved in furniture manufacture c.1901.

directed potential Hebrew members into those societies, feeling that they would better be able to accommodate their needs. Similarly, Jewish migrants, as has been suggested, may well have been exploiting networks cultivated prior to their migration, and felt more comfortable associating with people familiar to them from their home regions.<sup>339</sup> The absence of Jewish members for the first decade of the migration is not a massive cause for concern, and indeed it would have been much more remarkable if they had immediately entered native unions. For other ethnic groups, it appears that their proclivity to organise was not dissimilar from the native population. Since in most cases, a fully formed ethnic enclave was unviable, it is not at all surprising that they chose to unite with British workers. Despite George Howell's idea that trade unionism was a distinctly 'English' phenomenon, there were enough parallels in trade conditions throughout Western Europe, and indeed beyond, to encourage the cultivation of trade movements.<sup>340</sup> Whether an immigrant encountered them first in their native country, or in Britain, many would have seen the advantages of combination did not change whether one lived and worked in London, Paris, Amsterdam or Hamburg. For the ACMA's part, they seem to have encouraged immigrant membership, through organisation meetings and the production of promotional literature, such as the society prospectus.<sup>341</sup> The fact that the vast majority of immigrants who recorded were detected by the fact they claimed society benefits for unemployment or illness demonstrates that trade unionism, at least in the furniture trade, could be as beneficial for those born outside the United Kingdom, as those born within.

Despite this, there are major limitations in what can be discovered by this method of research. Although it can be demonstrated that immigrants and natives cooperated within the union at the same time, any personal ties or animosities remain obscured. It cannot be said whether immigrant members socialised with their British born counterparts at the pub, played together in the society band, or marched together in the May Day demonstrations in which the society frequently participated.<sup>342</sup> Such minutiae, insignificant on the whole, but crucial to the formation of an integrated society, has largely vanished. But there are other clues that can help construct an image of the relationship between British-born unionists and immigrants generally. Cohabitation, as mentioned above, is certainly one, and it must be remarked that the founder and General Secretary of the Society, J. R. Smith, is recorded for the census of 1881 as having two foreign-born lodgers, a German and a Pole, living in his household. Neither were involved with furniture manufacture, but it is certainly demonstrative of an open attitude at the head of the society. It should not be forgotten that Smith's address, 3 Mitre Square in Aldgate, was at this point the headquarters of the union.<sup>343</sup>

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<sup>339</sup> W. J. Fishman, *East End 1888*, 133, 167; Lipman, *A History of the Jews in Britain*, 95, 152; Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, 233.

<sup>340</sup> Howell, *The Conflict of Capital and Labour*, 161

<sup>341</sup> E.C. Minutes, 18/1/1888; 4/9/1891 for promotional pamphlets No.37 intended to have translated.

<sup>342</sup> The society band was created in 1890: see E.C. Minutes, 2/10/1890; the London Hebrew branch intended to create their own: see 4/1/1895, 18/1/1895; the society formally marched in the regular May Day demonstrations between 1890 and 1894(18/4/1890, 17/4/1891, 22/4/1892, 24/3/1893, 6/4/1894) , and 1897 (24/4/1897)as well as in a demonstration for the extension of the franchise in 1883 (20/6/1883).

<sup>343</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1881

The research has helped to indicate other ties as well. Some of the more obvious were those of family, confirmed by the census returns. The case of Henry Kliens, who followed his father Andrew into both the furniture trade and the union, was an example of a first and second generation immigrant family finding a place within an aspect of British society.<sup>344</sup> Similarly it is likely that Henry Luhmann, a member of the West End Carvers born in Hamburg, was probably related to the W. Luhmann recorded as a member of the society over the same period, although this second individual could not be located in the census records. He must have remained in London though, as his membership in the branch is confirmed up to 1899, including his election as branch treasurer in 1896.<sup>345</sup> Native familial relationships are much more easily obscured by the increased similarity of family names, and only those living in the same household, whose relationship is expressly stated by the census enumerator can be confidently assumed.

One of the major regrets in completing this study is that there was insufficient time to evaluate the membership records gathered for 1901. This has meant that the Hebrew branches of the society, the first of which was established in 1894, could not be thoroughly researched in the same manner as the others. It is highly likely, given the secondary information, that many of the members of both the No. 86 branch, based in Manchester, and the No.94 branch, based in the East End of London, were immigrants, and many of the remainder would have been the children of immigrants. Therefore, it is more than likely that the proportion of immigrant members of the union increased significantly between 1891 and 1901. The Hebrew branches were amongst the fastest growing in this period, although also the most unstable, as the disappearance of three of the five branches founded indicates. Although it cannot be confirmed, it is also likely judging by the names recorded in branches such as the West End and East London, that there were increases in the number of immigrant members in those branches as well. However, numbers alone are an insufficient indicator of influence, and it does not seem that immigrant influence increased along with their numbers. For instance, in the study of the E.C. minutes, No.94, despite its' numerical advantage, only ever elected one delegate to sit on the committee. Apart from Adam Weiler, it does not appear that any foreign-born member ever represented the society at the TUC, although Adrien van Hooydonk, a Belgian born wood carver, represented the West End Carvers Branch at the International Trades Union Congress in 1888, when the event was held in London.<sup>346</sup> At a more basic level, it appears from the E.C. minutes that immigrant members of branches did serve as delegates to the EC over single issue concerns, such as demonstrations, nature of work conducted, and hours of labour<sup>347</sup>, but that no foreign born member (who was not born as a British subject) ever rose to be a branch secretary of a non-immigrant branch. In terms of proportion, this cannot be altogether surprising, and should not undervalue the fact that immigrants participated in the first place.

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<sup>344</sup> See Appendix III, Record 17

<sup>345</sup> See Appendix III, Record 59

<sup>346</sup> ACMA Annual Report, 1888. Hooydonk also stood for the E.C. in 1888, finishing bottom of the poll with 43 votes.

<sup>347</sup> E.C. Minutes, 11/7/1896 for demonstrations, attended by Christian Hansen (No.2), De Jung (No.74) and M. Kovawitch (No.94); 26/9/1893 for nature of work, with Schumann serving as part of a delegation from the West End Branch; 11/4/1890 for the issue of the eight hour day, attended by Schumann for No.2 and Schusler for No.1.

Yet the study of the census in relation to the recorded membership demonstrates that there was a small yet substantial immigrant membership, complementing the larger, more stable native-born core, which remained with the union for a considerable period of time. It also demonstrates that the society had little difficulty in attracting foreign born membership generally, although these tended to be isolated instances. When immigrants joined en masse, as in the 1870s and 1890s, the native-born membership could prove a little more cautious to the impulses of these members. Finally, the analysis has pointed not only to the continuing interaction of the ACMA with immigrants to Britain, but also with foreign societies, demonstrating a broad internationalism, and contacts that no doubt impacted on relations with foreign-born workers in Britain. Whether the ACMA's record with immigrants can be matched by other contemporary trade societies is a matter for further research. Given the attempts by other societies, particularly in immigrant-heavy trades such as clothing and footwear manufacture, to attract foreign-born workers to organising meetings, through multi-lingual advertising<sup>348</sup>, it appears more than likely that the ACMA's attention to foreign workers was not an abnormality. Any trade that contained a significant immigrant segment was more than likely to attempt to organise it, especially as it became clear that restriction and expulsion were not feasible tactics.

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<sup>348</sup> See Appendix IV

## Chapter VI - Conclusion

The chief object of this study has been to look at immigrants inside British trade unions at the end of the nineteenth century, to try and ascertain some idea of their penetration, and the impact of their contribution. In addition to this, the manner in which they were treated by trade unionists who were born in Britain has also been explored. In doing so, it is hoped that there would be some way to measure the level of integration amongst the working class population in major British cities, with London being given the greatest amount of consideration. Ultimately, it must be admitted that the impact of immigrants within British unions themselves was decidedly limited, at least in terms of directly influencing policy, and also in concrete achievement. However, this should not cause an underestimation of the role of individuals in certain circumstances. Whilst an immediate impact may not have been apparent, it is clear that the advent of immigrant trade unionists helped to move the labour movement generally to a much more moderate position on immigration, and helped to pave the way for more widespread amalgamations within the twentieth century.

From the perspective of the immigrants themselves, trade union membership could prove extremely beneficial. For those who belonged to ethnic groups which did not have considerable communities in Britain, such as the Scandinavians or the Dutch, belonging to a British trade union could help to provide a degree of security. It is possible to speculate that they may have been continuing a practice of trade unionism that had existed prior to migration, but such ideas are difficult to prove conclusively, and in any case would have been highly individual. For immigrants belonging to more numerous populations, such as the Germans, and later the Russo-Polish Jews, belonging to a British trade union could provide a foothold toward acculturation, and a means toward gaining contacts, and hopefully security, in wider British society. This should not be interpreted as an assumption that immigrants who joined British unions cut off ties with their ethnic communities. There was no reason that a Polish cabinet maker could not belong to the ACMA and also a friendly society based around his local *chevroth*.<sup>349</sup> Adoption of one did not necessarily have to mean the exclusion of the other. Immigrant identity has been recognised as one that is in a constant state of flux, and it is crucial that no immigrant group is seen either as homogenous or static in their associations.<sup>350</sup>

Looking from the perspectives of the unions, it is clear to see what they hoped immigrant membership would achieve for them. Bringing migrants within the union offered a greater chance of reducing any potential threat of competition they might pose. With immigrants having to follow union conditions with regard to hours worked and minimum wages paid, their ability to undercut native workers was limited. It was for this reason that many independent immigrant unions were amalgamated within larger British trade societies. The financial and logistical support they were provided with was paid for with the surrender of much of their autonomy over bargaining with employers. As in the cases of the AST and the

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<sup>349</sup> Bermant, *Point of Arrival*, 196; Fishman, *East End 1888*, 167.

<sup>350</sup> Lucassen, *The Immigrant Threat*, 19; Dirk Hoerder, 'From Migrants to Ethnic: Acculturation in a Societal Framework', in L. P. Moch and D. Hoerder, eds., *European Migrants: Global and Local Perspectives*, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996), 212. Hoerder also discusses the pragmatism of multiethnic trade unionism.

Gas Workers union, this did not always last.<sup>351</sup> But migrants were hardly the sole target of unions for this purpose. Most British unions were equally worried that unorganised native-born men, and in some trades, women, would be equally threatening to the maintenance of wages and conditions. Nevertheless, it was the immigrants' alien nature, in particular their linguistic and cultural differences, that raised the fear they would be harder to reason with, and therefore posed more of a challenge.

This analysis largely applies to the ACMA, although it appears that the socialist principles of internationalism and fraternity were becoming increasingly prevalent by the end of the nineteenth century. Whilst individual immigrants such as Adam Weiler, Adolfe Wise and, latterly, Herman Steinberg, made notable contributions, the role of individual members who happened to be immigrants was masked by the much larger native membership. A significant distinction must be drawn between the attitudes towards the Continental Branch in the 1870s and the Hebrew Branches in the 1890s. The former was much more self reliant, and treated as on equal terms with the other branches, at least prior to the schism of 1881. In contrast the latter had far less autonomy, and were much more prone to calling on assistance from neighbouring branches and the E.C., although it can be argued that the nature of the trade had changed over time. This is also not to say that the Hebrew branches should be seen as being drains on the resources of the ACMA. Bringing about a large increase in the immigrant Jewish membership, as the ACMA actively sought to do in the 1890s, helped to stabilise the position of the society. Though trade was significantly better than in the 1880s, assisting immigrant Jewish workers helped to reduce the concern that they were a threat to native-born workers, and reduced the potential pool of cheap labour that prevented the union bargaining for better conditions with employers. This was followed up with support for the Independent Cabinet Makers' Society, seemingly on the condition that they gave up their support for piece work.<sup>352</sup> Whilst the concerns of the union were eased by the entry of immigrant Jewish workers, who provided an example to their fellow ethnics who had hitherto remained unorganised, this does not mean that tensions disappeared. As we have seen, the Liverpool Hebrew branch had considerable difficulty in getting their fellows in the main branch to treat them on equal terms, and the Secretary of the Leeds branch remained disparaging towards Jewish workers despite them comprising some 10% of his members in the early 1890s. The tensions between the Continental Branch and the rest of the ACMA in the early 1880s must also not be forgotten. Fellowship within trade unionism was not an immediate panacea for concerns about immigration and security of employment. Indeed, in trades with high immigrant employment, and limited immigrant organisation, such as the boot and shoe trade, it could focus such hostility, by providing a platform for nativist grievances. Nevertheless, whilst immigrant members were capable of betraying the principles of trade unionism, native workers were equally likely to do so, and given the fluctuations in membership experienced by the ACMA and other unions over this period, the vast majority of lapsed members must have been born and raised in the United Kingdom.

Although the ACMA has been the main focus of this research, this should not overshadow the presence of immigrants within other British trade unions. Little more need be said about the presence of immigrant Jews within tailoring unions. The work of Anne Kershen has ably documented the interaction

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<sup>351</sup> Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 78, 146-47; Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle*, 101-03, 136

<sup>352</sup> ACMA E.C. Minutes, 6/11/1896; 23/3/1897; 10/4/1897; 7/3/1901.

between immigrants and natives in both Leeds and London in that trade, and practically all histories of working class Jewry deal with the topic to some extent. Nevertheless, the smaller non-Semitic immigrant groups present in the trade have been generally overlooked, such as the Germans who had their own branch in the AST in the 1880s, which was still in existence as late as 1898.<sup>353</sup> The continuation of the society to print notices in French, German and Yiddish indicates not only the presence of immigrant workers in the trade, but also the confidence that they could be organised. The same is true for the more localised London Society of Tailors as well.<sup>354</sup> Immigrant unionists were present amongst the sailors, the clerks and the waiters, to name only the most prominent, and as the affiliation of the Leeds tailors with Will Thorne's Gas and General Workers Union has shown, there were immigrants within the trade societies created in the period of 'new' unionism as well.

Nevertheless, it is with independent unions that immigrants have been seen to have had the most impact on the labour movement. The preference for independent existence is not necessarily surprising. Linguistically it was probably easier for co-ethnics to communicate with each other, than to feel isolated within a British union, and common origins also helped to engender trust, no small matter considering that many unions came about during labour disputes, and were reliant on solidarity for success. Independent unions were also able to focus solely on the aims of immigrant workers, rather than have them diluted within a larger, more diverse society, and also provided a sense of agency that could be lacking in a community environment which could appear very unfamiliar and even inaccessible to new arrivals. But despite their independent status, such unions rarely acted in isolation from the mainstream of British unionism. Though the anarcho-socialism of leaders such as Rudolf Rocker might have perturbed some British unionists, they could be invaluable in organising previously inaccessible workers.<sup>355</sup> As we have seen several times, in the example of the Hebrew cabinet making societies and the ACMA, and the Jewish tailors in Leeds and James Sweeney, nominally independent immigrant unions were taken under the wing of larger societies. It is likely that non-Jewish groups received similar support, although the evidence of their activities is limited, and in some cases, they may have been employed in such specific niches that such aid was unnecessary.

Care should be taken to avoid seeing a gradual progression from independent unions to amalgamation with British societies as inevitable. Although some did join with their native counterparts, such as several Hebrew societies which merged with the ACMA, the example of the slipper makers in the GGWU, and the transitory affiliations that occurred between Jewish and native societies in the clothing trade should demonstrate that amalgamation was not inevitable, and cannot be taken as a definitive sign of acculturation. The pressure to preserve ethnic identity, by retaining the freedom of action often restricted by amalgamation, was no doubt a reason why amalgamations did not always endure. This was true as late as 1915, when the Manchester Waterproof Garment Workers, who were almost entirely composed of first and second generation Jewish immigrants, swiftly disaffiliated from the United Garment Workers Trade Union formed only a short time before.<sup>356</sup> However, the ability to draw upon

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<sup>353</sup> Amalgamated Society of Tailors Journal, Volume 1 #2, May 1898

<sup>354</sup> See Appendix IV

<sup>355</sup> Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors*, 155

<sup>356</sup> *Ibid*, 171-72



greater resources was a significant temptation for immigrant unions, and the general pressures towards federation that were exerted at the end of the nineteenth century also played their part. As a result, independent unionism often tended to be a transitory phase for immigrant workers, although there was no reliable timeframe for its duration. Such variables were defined by the nature of the trade, economic circumstances, and the character of the immigrants themselves.

Although this study set out in part to highlight the attributes of non-Semitic European immigrants, and bring them alongside their frequently discussed Jewish counterparts, the scale of immigrant Jewish participation in trade unionism has somewhat overshadowed this. Nevertheless, the study has revealed areas worthy of greater consideration. The tensions within the sailing unions, and the large number of immigrants serving in the British merchant marine make it an area in which further research may well be carried out. This is assisted by the volubility of the founder of the leading union, J. W. Wilson, who used his position as an M.P. to discuss the issue in the most public forum imaginable: the House of Commons. In many ways, Wilson has served as the exemplum of British trade unionism of this period in the way it reacted to immigration and immigrant membership; often cautious and hostile, but capable of persuasion and frequently pragmatic regarding the inclusion of immigrant members.

If Wilson acts as our figurehead for the attitude of native unionists to immigrants, then Paul Vogel can be seen as a paragon for immigrant unionists. His actions were certainly exceptional, and it would have been unlikely for all immigrants to have proven as committed to the British labour movement as he was. But his participation in conferences and endeavours to improve the conditions of employment mark him out as exactly the sort of immigrant unionist that many labour leaders were anxious to see. His long period of settlement was almost certainly the key to this, and though there is no evidence he ever legally naturalised, he must have come to view London as his home. Though he fronted a minor union, Vogel's role in trade union politics of the period is deserving of greater investigation than this study has been able to afford it. Other trades in which immigrants participated strongly, such as employment in baking or as clerks, are areas that have not enjoyed as much consideration as the manufacture of clothing and footwear. Even though scholarly attraction has been generated by the hostility of native workers, the dynamics between the unions and immigrants in these trades too are ripe for much greater consideration.

The burgeoning trade union movement of this period contrasts strongly with the modern phenomenon of trade union stagnation in Britain, both numerically and in terms of influence. The most recent statistics published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in 2012 depicted a continuing trend of decline in membership of trade societies. Trade unions numbered only 23.6% of the male, and 29.2% of the female, workforce amongst their membership in 2010<sup>357</sup>, admittedly a significant advance on the one in ten who were members around the turn of the twentieth century, but a significant decline on the peak of 63.1% (amongst men), and 39.4% (amongst women) in 1979.<sup>358</sup> Amongst immigrant

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<sup>357</sup> James Achur, *Trade Union Membership 2010*, (London: National Statistics Publication/Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2011), 1, 20

<sup>358</sup> Chris Wrigley, *British Trade Unions, 1945-1995*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 29.

workers in the U.K, only 20.3% belonged to a trade society in 2010.<sup>359</sup> To put this in further perspective, immigrants made up 9.6% of trade union membership in 2010, whilst making up 13.3% of the workforce.<sup>360</sup> But as the results of the 2011 Census revealed, immigration to Britain reached an all time high in the ten years after 2001. 13% of the population (7.5 million people) were born outside the United Kingdom, with half of those arriving in the past decade.<sup>361</sup> Therefore it seems clear that any attempt of the trade union movement to expand its membership must rely, at least in part, on the recruitment of immigrant workers, as well as the native born. After all, immigrant workers are more likely to be employed in the low paid jobs in the remaining manufacturing industries and the public sector that have traditionally been seen as union strongholds, although as David Goodhart has recently argued, creeping privatisation and industrial decentralisation has also proved damaging to unionism in general.<sup>362</sup> The modern British labour movement has stood for the preservation of employment rights and social service provision implemented as part of the gradual creation of a state welfare system between 1906 and 1951. Given that the decline of union membership, in both numerical and proportional terms, has occurred during a period in which successive governments from all leading political parties have succeeded in rolling back the state, an increase in union numbers, and a carefully targeted campaign, could begin the process of slowing such an erosion. Such a view is perhaps overly simplistic, but in general the trade union movement has shown more adherence to the legacy of the post-1945 welfare settlement than any of the political descendents of those who implemented it. After all, it was part of this settlement that gave migrants from the British Commonwealth the right to settle in Britain, and opened up social provision for all inhabitants of the nation, no matter their place of birth.<sup>363</sup>

The fact that such organisation is not a hazy dream born of naivety and frustration has come, perhaps surprisingly, from the American labour movement. The American labour movement has had a complex historical relationship with immigration, which has been mirrored by the scholarly analysis.<sup>364</sup> Whilst too exhaustive to document here, it is sufficient to say that many of the more traditional unionists maintained considerable scepticism that Latino and Latina immigrants, a number of whom were undocumented, could be organised to the same extent as American-born workers. Indeed, as studies have shown, trade unionism is much more vibrant amongst immigrant communities than it is amongst white, native-born Americans.<sup>365</sup> Successful endeavours documented by Ruth Milkman, such as the Justice 4 Janitors campaigns beginning in the late 1980s, and the slightly later efforts of the dry stone wallers in Southern California have demonstrated that not only is organisation possible, but that the

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<sup>359</sup> Achur, *Trade Union Membership, 2010*, 7

<sup>360</sup> *Ibid*, 34.

<sup>361</sup> Information from the data abstract on the Office for National Statistics website:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/stb-2011-census-key-statistics-for-england-and-wales.html>

<sup>362</sup> David Goodhart, *The British Dream: Successes and Failures of Post-War Immigration*, (London: Atlantic Books, 2013), 220

<sup>363</sup> *Ibid*, 118-120

<sup>364</sup> Burgoon et al., 'Immigration and the Transformation of American Unionism', 934-35, 968

<sup>365</sup> Immanuel Ness, *Immigrant Unions and the New U.S. Labor Market*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005), 187

resources of immigrant communities are key facets in making such campaigns a success.<sup>366</sup> Immanuel Ness has followed up this line of study by recording instances of immigrant organisation away from the Latino community, and away from California. He portrayed immigrant organisation amongst three ethnic groups which had developed niches within New York City.<sup>367</sup> What both found was not only was spontaneous immigrant organisation possible, frequently relying on links formed prior to immigration or on common ethnic or linguistic bonds, but that cooperation with established native trade unions was also frequently a factor in their success, although the significance of this varied.<sup>368</sup> The parallels of immigrant and native cooperation in the labour movement between late nineteenth century Britain, and late twentieth century America appear compelling, and would likely reward further study.

But contemporary British trade relations has had no such chronicle, and therefore the ability to draw upon the examples of the past, of Adam Weiler and Paul Vogel, of James Sweeny and William Parnell, have been neglected. A study of trade movements of the past, of how immigrants participated in the labour movement through their own institutions as well as through established British ones, might perhaps provide something of a template for the revitalisation of a labour movement in the United Kingdom in which the immigrant workforce must surely play a significant part.

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<sup>366</sup> Ruth Milkman, with Kent Wong, *L.A. Story: Immigrant Workers and the Future of the U.S. Labor Movement*, (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 134-36, 170-71

<sup>367</sup> Ness, *Immigrant Unions*, 13

<sup>368</sup> Milkman, *L. A. Story*, 157, 173, 186; Ness, *Immigrant Unions*, 191

## **Appendix I - The Results of the Research: Records to Branch Membership**

**1881**

### **Central Branch No. 1**

283 (at the start of the year) - 298 (at the end of the year) branch members recorded in the Annual Report.<sup>369</sup>

114 records researched. (38.26% of branch membership).

24 Natives Recorded. Of these, 10 were born in London, 14 were born outside of London, but in England.

1 Immigrant recorded, who was born in Germany.

63 individuals recorded who were probably Natives, although no single record could be reliably isolated.

3 individuals recorded who were probably immigrants, although no single record could be reliably isolated; all these men were Germans.

23 records returned no results that could be interpreted to be members of the union, had places of birth that were unclear, or had multiple results with both native and immigrant possibilities.

Therefore, 21.05% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 41.6% (8.77% of the whole) were born in London, whilst 58.3% (12.28% of the whole) were born outside of London. 0.88% of members were confirmed as immigrants. 2.63% were probably immigrants. Added together this gives 3.5% of the sampled branch membership as immigrant or probable immigrant. 55.26% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 76.32% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 20.18% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, the vast majority of these men were native-born.

### **West End Branch No. 2**

237-255 members in the Annual Report.

88 records researched (actually 91, but three of the records are almost certainly duplicates). (34.51% of branch membership).

25 Natives recorded. Of these, 8 were born in London, 15 were born in the contemporary United Kingdom but outside of London, 1 was born in the Channel Islands, and 1 was born at sea. 10 of those born outside London were born in England, 1 was born in Wales and 4 were born in Scotland.

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<sup>369</sup> In cases where two figures have been given, the higher one has been used. Given the number that moved in and out of a branch in a single year, it is reasonable to assume that the true figure was probably a little higher.

1 immigrant was recorded, who was also registered as a British subject, although born in Germany. His wife and children were all born in England.

4 records contained individuals who were almost certainly born in Britain, but who could not be narrowed down to one particular return.

42 individuals recorded who were probably natives, although no single record could be reliably isolated. Of these one, a Frederick Schmidt, was a second generation subject, his parents both being born in Germany.

3 individuals recorded who were probably immigrants but no single record could be reliably isolated.

13 records returned no clear results that could be interpreted as members of the union.

Therefore, 28.41% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 32% (9.1% of the whole) were born in London, whilst 68% (19.32% of the whole) were born outside of London. 40% of those born outside of London were born in England (11.36% of the whole), 4% (1.14%) were born in Wales, 16% (4.55% of the whole) were born in Scotland, 4% (1.14%) in the Channel Islands, and 4% (1.14%) at sea. 1.14% of members were confirmed as immigrants. 3.41% were probably immigrants. Added together this gives 4.55% of the sampled branch membership as immigrant or probable immigrant. 52.27% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 80.7% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 14.77% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, the vast majority of these men were native-born.

### **Fancy Cabinet Branch No. 3**

10 - 8 members in the Annual Report.

5 records researched. (50% of branch membership).

1 native recorded. He was born in Rotherhithe in London.

No immigrants recorded.

3 records were probably those of natives. One of the possibilities was born in Russia, but as a British subject. Therefore, even if it were him, he would still count as a native.

1 record returned no clear result that could be interpreted as a member of the union.

Therefore, 20% of the branch members sampled were confirmed as natives. 100% (20% of the whole) were born in London. No immigrants were recorded. 60% were probably native-born. Added together this means that 80% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 20% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, this man was a native.

### **Continental Branch No. 4**

75-58 members in the Annual Report

20 records researched (actually 22, but two are almost certainly duplicates.) (26.67% of branch membership).

No natives recorded.

2 immigrants recorded

4 records were probably immigrants.

14 records returned no clear result that could be matched to members of the union. One of this was the pivotal figure of Adam Weiler, recorded in the 1871 Census, but not subsequently.

None of the records sampled were found to be natives. 10% of those sampled were confirmed to be immigrants, whilst a further 20% were probably immigrants. Therefore, 30% of the sample were confirmed or likely to be immigrants. 70% of the records sampled could not be matched. It is likely that most, if not all of these were immigrants, given the nature of the Continental Branch.

### **Manchester**

106-99 members in the Annual Report.

56 records researched (actually 58, but two are almost certainly duplicates). (52.83% of branch membership)

20 Natives recorded. Of these, 6 were born in Manchester, 4 were born elsewhere in Lancashire or Cheshire, and a further 4 were born elsewhere in England. 3 were born in Wales, 1 in Scotland, 1 in Ireland, and 1 in the Channel Islands.

No immigrants were recorded.

There were 21 records that were probably those of natives, and 1 (that of John Smith) who was most likely a native, but could possibly have been an immigrant from Belgium.

There were 14 records that could not be matched to any individual.

For this branch to be viable, it is clear that it had to admit those who classed themselves as wood carvers as well as cabinet makers.

Therefore, 35.71% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 30% (10.71% of the whole) were born in Manchester; 70% (25% of the whole) were born outside of Manchester. Of these 20% of the native-born (7.14% of the whole) were born in Lancashire or Cheshire, and a further 20% (7.14%) were born elsewhere in England. 15% (5.36%) were born in Wales, whilst those born in Scotland, Ireland and the Channel Islands each account for 5% (1.79%). No members were confirmed as immigrants. 39.29% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 75% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 25% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, the vast majority of these men were native-born.

### **Carvers' Branch**

33 -40 members recorded in the Annual Report.

21 records researched (actually 22, but one is almost certainly a duplicate). (52.5% of branch membership).

9 Natives recorded. Of these, 8 were born in London, and 1 was born elsewhere in England.

No immigrants were recorded.

There were 10 records that were probably those of natives, but could not be completely confirmed.

There were 2 records that could not be matched to any potential members of the branch.

Therefore, 42.86% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 88.8% (38.1% of the whole) were born in London; 11.1% (4.76% of the whole) were born outside of London. No members were confirmed as immigrants. 47.62% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 90.45% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 9.52% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, the vast majority of these men were native-born.

### **South London**

34 - 40 members in the Annual Report.

17 records researched. (42.5% of branch membership).

7 Natives recorded. Of these, 3 were born in London, 3 were born elsewhere in England, and 1 was born in Scotland.

No immigrants were recorded.

There were 8 records that were probably those of natives, but could not be reliably matched.

There was 1 record that was probably that of an immigrant. This was Retrus (probably Petrus) R. Pellen (although a variety of alternatives were recorded over the years).

There was 1 record that could not be matched to any potential member of the branch.

Therefore, 41.18% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 42.86% (17.65% of the whole) were born in London; 42.86% (17.65% of the whole) were born elsewhere in England, and 14.29% (5.88%) were born in Scotland. No members were confirmed as immigrants. 47.06% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 88.24% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 5.88% were probably immigrants. 5.88% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, the vast majority of these men were native-born.

### **North West London**

78 -74 members in the Annual Report.

40 records researched. (51. 28% of membership.)

There were 6 records that could be classified with certainty as native-born members of the union. Of these, none could be reliably ascertained as having been born in London. For the record of David Parlett, it was unclear which of the two men it was, one being born in London, and one in Norfolk. Of the remaining five, 4 were born elsewhere in England, and 1 was born in Scotland.

No immigrants were recorded.

There were 23 records who could not be reliably identified, but were probably natives. Many of these had considerable crossover with the membership of the South London branch, indicating some transferring of members at this time. It is also clear that at this point the membership of the branch cannot be restricted solely to Chair Makers.

There were 11 records that could not be reliably matched to any potential branch member. Of these, three had already appeared in the records of the South London branch, but there was no appropriate member amongst them.

Therefore, 15% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 0% (0% of the whole) were born in London; 66.7% (10% of the whole) were born elsewhere in England, and 16.7% (2.5%) were born in Scotland. 16.7% (2.5%) could not have their birthplace reliably identified. No members were confirmed as immigrants. 57.5% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 72.5% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 27.5% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, the vast majority of these men were native-born.

### **East London**

28 members recorded in the Annual Report.

10 records researched. (35.71% of branch membership.)

6 Natives recorded. Of these, 4 were born in London, and 2 were born elsewhere in England.

No immigrants recorded.

There was 1 record that could not be directly matched, but was probably a native.

There were 3 records that could not be matched to any potential member of the branch.

Therefore, 60% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 66% (40% of the whole) were born in London; 33% (20% of the whole) were born elsewhere in England. No members were confirmed as immigrants. 10% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 70% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 30% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, the vast majority of these men were native-born.



### **Chairmakers' Branch**

0 -23 members recorded in the Annual Report.

4 records researched. (17.39% of branch membership).

3 Natives recorded. Of these, 2 were born in London, and 1 was born elsewhere in England.

No immigrants recorded.

There was 1 record that could not be matched to any potential member of the branch.

Therefore, 75% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 66% (50% of the whole) were born in London; 33% (25% of the whole) were born elsewhere in England. No members were confirmed as immigrants. 25% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, the vast majority of these men were native-born.

### **1891**

#### **Central Branch**

340 -312 members in the Annual Report.

117 records researched. (34.41% of branch membership).

16 Natives recorded. Of these, 9 were born in London, 6 were born outside of London, but in England, and 1 was born in Ireland.

1 immigrant recorded.

There were 70 records that were probably those of natives, and 1 that was almost certainly of a native. Most notable was Henry Klein, a second generation immigrant, whose father Andrew was a member of the same branch.

There were 4 records that were probably those of immigrants.

There were 25 records that could not be identified as being potential members of the branch. It is likely that many of these were natives, but some may well have been immigrants, as indicated by names like Schusler and Kolb.

Therefore, 13.68% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 56.25% (7.69% of the whole) were born in London, whilst 37.5% (5.13% of the whole) were born outside of London, but in England. 6.25% (0.85%) were confirmed as being born in Ireland. 0.85% of members were confirmed as immigrants. 3.42% were probably immigrants. Added together this gives 4.27% of the sampled branch membership as immigrant or probable immigrant. 60.68% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 87% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 21.37% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, many of these men were

native-born, but as the previous paragraph indicates, it is also more than likely that some of them were either immigrants or children of immigrants.

### **West End Branch No.2**

518 - 536 members recorded in the Annual Report.

240 records researched. (44.78% of branch membership).

43 Natives recorded. Of these, 15 were born in London, 21 were born elsewhere in England (many in the South West), 4 in Scotland, and 3 in Wales.

2 immigrants recorded.

There were 84 records that were probably natives, but could not be confidently matched to an individual.

There were 34 records that were probably immigrants, but could not be absolutely matched.

In addition there were 4 records where it was unclear whether the individual was born in Britain or elsewhere. The record for J. Cimelli is more likely to be Joseph Cimili, a native living in Islington, than Giuseppe Cimelli, an Italian living in St. Pancras, due to the age of his wife at the time of her death, but the record does not have enough information to make a definitive choice. Similarly, the G. Miller recorded may be George Miller who was born in Germany, but could be one of three other candidates. The information makes a George Miller born in St. Pancras the more likely. The W. Solomon born in Russia has already been recorded as a member of the Central Branch, and so it is more likely to be the William Solomon who was born in Gloucestershire. However, the W. Wagner recorded is more likely to be the 53-year-old German, than his 17-year-old son who was born in Holloway. Nevertheless, there is enough confusion in these records to make definitive decision making unreliable in these cases.

There were 71 records that could not be matched to any relevant individual. Although a majority of these may have been natives, it is clear that a significant number must have been immigrants, due to the nature of many of the surnames. There were also two records of members recorded in both 1881 and 1891 who could be identified in the former year but not in the latter. Although treated as Unknown, it is presumed that they are natives.

Therefore, 17.92% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 34.88 % (6.25% of the whole) were born in London, whilst 48.84% (8.75% of the whole) were born outside of London, but in England. 9.3% (1.66%) were confirmed as being born in Scotland, whilst 6.98% (1.25%) were born in Wales. 0.83% of members were confirmed as immigrants. 14.12% were probably immigrants. Added together this gives 15% of the sampled branch membership as immigrant or probable immigrant. 35% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 53.75% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 31.25% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, many of these men were native-born, but as the previous paragraph indicates, it is also more than likely that some of them were either immigrants or children of immigrants.

### **Fancy Cabinet Branch.**

0 -40 members recorded in the Annual Report.

5 records researched. (12.5% of branch membership).

The records for the Fancy Cabinet Branch produced results that were too vague to interpret. No-one identifying themselves as a Fancy Cabinet Maker could be found. Therefore, reluctantly, all the records from this branch must be classified as unknown.

### **Carvers' Branch**

135 -89 members recorded in the Annual Report

30 records researched. (22.22% of the branch membership).

17 Natives recorded. Of these, 15 were born in London, 1 was born elsewhere in England, and 1 was born in Ireland.

No immigrants were recorded.

There were 9 records that were probably those of natives, but no direct match could be made.

There were 4 records that could not be matched to any potential member of the branch.

Therefore, 56.6% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 88.24 % (50% of the whole) were born in London, whilst 5.88% (3.33% of the whole) were born outside of London, but in England. 5.88% (3.33%) were confirmed as being born in Ireland. No members were confirmed as immigrants. 30% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 86.67% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 13.33% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, many of these men were native-born.

### **South Branch**

56 members recorded in the Annual Report.

38 records researched. (67.86% of branch membership).

11 natives recorded. Of these, 5 were born in London, 3 were born elsewhere in England, 2 were born in Scotland, and 1 was born in Wales.

One member, Henry Urie, was born in Bagdad, but was born as a British subject. Therefore, he should qualify as a native.

There were 13 records who were probably those of natives, but no direct match could be made.

There were 13 records that could not be matched to any potential member of the branch.

P. W. Pellen, who was recorded (as Petrus W. Pellen in 1881) was recorded in 1881, but could not be found on the 1891 census.

Therefore, 31.57% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 41.67 % (13.16% of the whole) were born in London, whilst 25% (7.89% of the whole) were born outside of London, but in England. 16.67% (5.26%) were confirmed as being born in Scotland, 8.33% (2.63%) were born in Wales, and 8.33% (2.63%) were born outside the British Isles but as British subjects. No members were confirmed as immigrants. 34.21% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 65.79% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 34.21% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, many of these men were native-born.

### **North West London**

36 - 62 members recorded in the Annual Report.

23 records researched. (37.1% of the branch membership).

11 Natives recorded. Of these, 8 were born in London, and 3 were born elsewhere in England.

There were no immigrants recorded.

There were 12 records that were probably natives, but could not be directly matched.

Therefore, 47.82% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 72.73 % (34.78% of the whole) were born in London, whilst 25% (13.04% of the whole) were born outside of London, but in England. No members were confirmed as immigrants. 52.17% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 100% of the branch membership sampled were native-born, or probably so.

### **East London**

177 - 180 members recorded in the Annual Report.

46 records researched. (25.56% of branch members).

9 Natives recorded. Of these, 7 were born in London, whilst 2 were born elsewhere in England.

There were no immigrants recorded.

There were 29 records that were probably natives, but could not be directly matched.

There were 8 records that could not be matched to any possible member of the branch.

Therefore, 19.56% of union members sampled were Natives. Of these 77.7 % (15.22% of the whole) were born in London, whilst 22.22% (4.35% of the whole) were born outside of London, but in England. No members were confirmed as immigrants. 63.04% were probably native-born. In addition to those who were confirmed as natives, this means that 82.06% of the branch membership sampled were

native-born, or probably so. 17.39% of the records could not be determined. More than likely, many of these men were native-born.

### **West End Carvers' Branch**

150 - 148 members recorded in the Annual Report.

89 records recorded. (59.33% of branch members)

6 Natives recorded. Of these, 2 were born in London, whilst 4 were born elsewhere in England.

1 immigrant was recorded - H. M. Bedners, who was born somewhere in Transylvania.

There were 41 records who were probably natives, but could not be directly matched.

There were 8 records who were probably immigrants, but could not be directly matched.

There were 33 records that could not be reliably matched to any single individual.

Therefore, 6.74% of branch members sampled were natives. Of these, 33.3% (2.25% of the whole) were born in London, whilst 66.6% (4.49% of the whole) were born outside of London, but in England. 1.12% were confirmed as immigrants. 46.07% were probably native-born. In addition to those confirmed as natives, this means that 52.81% of the membership sampled were native-born, or probably so. 8.99% were probably immigrants. In addition to the individual confirmed as an immigrant, this means that 10.11% of the membership sampled were immigrants, or probably so. 37.08% of the records could not be determined. It is probable that many, although not all of these men were native -born.

### **Finsbury Branch**

67 -78 members recorded in 1891.

19 records researched. (24.36% of the membership).

4 Natives recorded. All four were born in London.

1 Immigrant recorded. This was Albert Merle, a Dutchman.

There were 10 records who were probably Natives, but could not be definitively matched.

There was 1 record that was probably an Immigrant, but could not be definitively matched. This was Peter Gandula, an Italian.

There were 3 records that could not be reliably matched to any individual.

Therefore, 21.05% of branch members sampled were recorded as natives, and all of these were born in London. 5.26% were confirmed as immigrants, and a further 5.26% were probably immigrants. 52.63% were probably natives. In addition to those confirmed as natives, this means that 73.68% of the sampled membership were native-born, or probably so. 10.53% were recorded as immigrants, or were probably

so. 15.79% of the records could not be determined. Given the names recorded, it is probable that some of these at least were immigrants.

## **Appendix II - The Volatility of membership in the Hebrew branches compared to the rest of the society.**

### **1893**

Hebrew: 306 in, 149 out, gain of 157.

London Branches: 771 in, 782 out, loss of 11.

London Branches (minus Hebrew): 465 in, 633 out, loss of 168.

Society: 1950 in, 2499 out (plus 327 moving branches), loss of 549.

Society (minus Hebrew): 1645 in, 2350 out, loss of 705.

### **1894**

Hebrew: 179 in, 103 out, gain of 76.

London Branches: 461 in, 698 out, loss of 237.

London Branches (minus Hebrew): 282 in, 595 out, loss of 313.

Society: 1298 in, 1973 out, loss of 675.

Society (minus Hebrew): 1120 in, 1870 out, loss of 750.

### **1895**

Hebrew: 201 in, 216 out, loss of 15.

London Branches: 455 in, 691 out, loss of 236

London Branches (minus Hebrew): 254 in, 475 out, loss of 221

Society: 1348 in, 1549\* out (\*probably more, but due to changes in calculation, clear cards not accurately definable), loss of 201

Society (minus Hebrew): 1147 in, 1339\* out, loss of 192

### **1896**

Hebrew, No. 94: 214 in, 139 out, gain of 75.

London Branches: 812 in, 354 out, gain of 458.

London Branches (minus Hebrew): 598 in, 215 out, gain of 383.

Society: 2542 in, 1052 out\*, gain of 1490.

Society (minus Hebrew, Nos. 86, 91 and 94): 2051 in, 886 out\*, gain of 1165.

### **1897**

Hebrew: 106 in, 170 out, loss of 64.

London Branches: 862 in, 449 out, gain of 413.

London Branches (minus Hebrew No. 94): 756 in, 279 out, gain of 477.

Society: 1879 in, 1645 out\*, gain of 234.

Society (minus Hebrew Nos. 86, 91 and 94): 1712 in, 1411 out\*, gain of 301.

### **1898**

Hebrew: 42 in, 147 out, loss of 105.

London Branches: 407 in, 853 out, loss of 446.

London Branches (minus Hebrew No.94): 365 in, 706 out, loss of 341.

Society: 998 in, 2119 out\*, loss of 1121.

Society (minus Hebrew Nos. 86, 91 and 94): 904 in†, 1798 out\*, loss of 894.

† No accurate figures for the Liverpool Hebrew branch. Extrapolated from previous year's figures.

### **1899**

Hebrew: 69 in, 51 out, gain of 18.

London Branches: 491 in, 370 out, gain of 121.

London Branches (minus Hebrew No.94): 422 in, 319 out, gain of 103.

Society: 1894 in, 1151 out\*, gain of 743.

Society (minus Hebrew Nos. 69, 76, 86, 91 and 94): 1574 in, 1098 out\*†, gain of 476.

### **1900**

Hebrew: 27 in, 37 out, loss of 10.

London Branches: 310 in, 399 out, loss of 89.

London Branches (minus Hebrew No. 94): 283 in, 362 out, loss of 79.

Society: 1004 in, 1103 out, loss of 99.



Society (minus Hebrew Nos. 69, 76, 86 and 94): 950 in, 1046 out, loss of 96.

**1901**

Hebrew: 33 in, 59 out, loss of 26

London Branches: 292 in, 353 out, loss of 61

London Branches (minus Hebrew No. 94): 259 in, 294 out, loss of 35

Society: 1230 in, 1175 out\*, gain of 55

Society (minus Hebrew Nos. 69, 76, 86 and 94): 1046 in, 973 out\*, gain of 73

## Appendix III - Immigrants in the union.

Below is a list of the details of all those who were recorded as immigrants, or believed to be immigrants in the ACMA research.

1. Adolfe William Wise, 43 in 1881, born in Baden, S. Germany, living at 123 Wilmot Street, Bethnal Green, London, Cabinet Maker, married, 5 in the household. Recorded as a British Subject. Wife born in Bavaria, all three children born in London. A member of Central Branch No. 1, recorded between 1873 (2nd half) and 1888, when he died with 10 + years of membership. He also served as a member of the Executive Committee, and both a Society and Branch Auditor.
2. Charles Franke, 39 in 1881, born in Germany, living at 11 Bookham Street, Hoxton Old Town, Shoreditch, London, Cabinet Maker, married, 10 in the household. His wife was born in Essex, and all eight of their children were born in London. A member of Central Branch No.1, recorded between 1878 and 1881.
3. Andreus Kordell, 40 in 1881, born in Prusse [Prussia?], Germany, living at 1 St. Thomas Place, South Hackney, London, Cabinet Maker, married, 7 in the household. His wife was also born in Germany, but all five children were born in London. Their lodger, a Walking Stick Maker, was a German, but the rest of his family were English. Another lodging family in that building were all English. A member of Central Branch No.1, recorded between 1878 and 1881, when he emigrated to America with 5 years of membership.
4. Henry Roxin, 75 in 1881, born in Germany, living at 24 Grange Street, Hoxton Old Town, Shoreditch, London, an unemployed Cabinet Maker, a widower living with his 2 year old daughter, who was born in Shoreditch. A member of Central Branch No.1, recorded between 1881 and 1901, although if his age is accurate, it is highly doubtful that they were the same individual.
5. Henry Charles Schumann, 31 in 1881, born in Germany, living at 2 Kingsford Street, Kentish Town, St. Pancras, London, a Journeyman Cabinet Maker, married with four in the household. Recorded as a naturalised British subject, with his wife and daughters being born in England. A member of the West End Branch No.2, recorded between 1875 and 1901.
6. Pietro Verga, 46 in 1881, born in Italy, living as a lodger at 103 Great Titchfield Street, Marylebone, London, a Cabinet Maker, married (possibly to a 26 year old Englishwoman), 2 in the household. A member of West End Branch No.2, recorded between 1879 and 1883.
7. Eugene Hidrio, 33 in 1881, born in Dunkirk, France, living at 10 Newman Street, Marylebone, London, an *ebeniste* (a French cabinet maker), married with four in the household. His wife was a German, born in Berlin, but their 10 month old daughter was born in London. An eight year old visitor was born in Berlin as well. A member of the West End Branch No.2, he was recorded between 1880 and 1881.
8. Christofor Setacci, 53 in 1881, born in Italy, living at 35 Harrington Street, Regents Park, St. Pancras, London, a Cabinet Maker, married with five in the household. His wife was English, with all three children born in London. The two eldest worked in the civil service. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded in several variations between 1880 and 1884.

9. Gerard Marx, 40 in 1881, born in Germany, although the exact location was not decipherable on the census form. He was living at 103 Euston Street, Somers Town, St. Pancras, London, a Cabinet Maker, married with three in the household. His wife was born in England, although his stepson (presumably her son) was born in Paris. Another German Cabinet Maker, Paul Ottoman, possibly from the same place as Marx, was also recorded as living at the same address. A member of the Continental Branch No. 4, Marx was recorded between 1873 (2nd Half) and 1881, when he was a branch auditor.
10. Ferdinand Reeder, 54 in 1881, born in Germany, living at 32 Regents Park, Regent's Park, St. Pancras, London, a Cabinet Maker, married with five in the household. His wife was also a German, but all three of their children were born in London. A member of the Continental Branch No. 4, he was recorded between 1875 and 1881, and was a branch auditor in 1876.
11. Heinrich Wittenburg, 30 in 1881, born in Germany, living at 50 Grovedale Road, Islington, London, a Cabinet Maker, married with five living in the household. His wife was English, and there were three visitors in the household: Joseph Kallenborn, a German born Cabinet Maker, and his wife and daughter. Kallenborn was also a member of the ACMA. Both belonged to the Continental Branch No.4. Wittenburg was recorded between 1878 and 1881, and he had served as both a branch and society auditor.
12. Gerard Hamerslag, 50 in 1881, born in Leiden, Holland, living at 30 Grafton Road, Kentish Town, St. Pancras, London, an Artisan Cabinet Maker, married with two living in the household. He was recorded as a British Subject and his wife was born in England. He was a member of the Continental Branch No.4, and was recorded between 1879 and 1881.
13. Jacob Bernhardt, 27 in 1881, born in Germany, living as a lodger at 119 Charlotte Street, Tottenham Court, St. Pancras, London, Cabinet Maker. There were three living in the household, all three of whom were immigrant Cabinet Makers. There was also another German Cabinet Maker living in the building. None of these could be found in the union. Bernhardt belonged to the Continental Branch No.4, and was recorded in 1881.
14. George Wazkar, 32 in 1881, born in Austria, was a patient at Gower Street, London University College Hospital, Tottenham Court, St. Pancras, London. He was recorded as a Cabinet Maker. A member of Continental Branch No.4, he was only recorded in 1881.
15. Retrus W. Pellen, 31 in 1881, born in Amsterdam, Holland, living at 107 Waterloo Road, Lambeth, London, a Wood Carver, married, with four in the household. His wife and first child, aged three, were both born in Holland, in Leiden and Rotterdam respectively, but his youngest child, aged one, was born in London. A member of the South London branch, he was recorded between 1881 and 1901.
16. Emile Bergs, 40 in 1891, born in Germany, living at 28 Pownell Road, Haggerston, Shoreditch, London, an employed Cabinet Maker, married with five in the household. His wife was German, but all three of their children were born in England. A member of the Central Branch No. 1, he was recorded between 1878 and 1901.
17. Andrew Kleins, 52 in 1891, born in Germany, living at 64 Marlborough Road, Haggerston, Shoreditch, London, an employed Cabinet Maker, married with four in the household. His wife was born in Germany, but their son Henry, also an ACMA member, was born in England. There was also a lodger, William Parker, also a Cabinet Maker, although he could not be found in the

ACMA records. A member of Central Branch No. 1 (as was his son), he was recorded between 1879 and 1901.

18. A. Rimola, 48 in 1891, born in Italy, living at 30 Dummont Street, Bethnal Green, London, an employed Cabinet Maker, married with five in the household. His wife and three daughters were also born in Italy, the youngest born in 1880. A member of the Central Branch No.1, he was recorded between 1890 and 1895.
19. Reinhard Wolpers, 35 in 1891, born in Germany, living at 2 Ivy Lane, Hoxton Old Town, Shoreditch, London, an employed General Cabinet Maker, married with five in the household. His wife and three children were all born in England, the eldest six years earlier. A member of the Central Branch No. 1, he was recorded between 1890 and 1901, and served as a branch auditor on several occasions.
20. William Solomon, 30 in 1891, born in Russia, living at 60 Brady Street Dwellings, Whitechapel St. Mary, London, an employed Cabinet Maker, married with five in the household living in 2 rooms. His wife and two of his children were also born in Russia, with a third, aged 1 born in London. A member of Central Branch No. 1, he was only recorded in 1891.
21. Louis Wippling, 55 in 1891, born in Prussia, living at 42 Wingate Road, Hammersmith, London, an employed Cabinet Maker, married with three in the household living in three rooms. His wife and daughter were both born in England. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1873 (First Half) and 1893, and served as an auditor in 1891.
22. Christian Hansen, 27 in 1891, born in Denmark, living at 27 Cumberland Mount, Regent, St. Pancras, London, an employed Cabinet Maker, married with two in the household living in two rooms. His wife was also a Dane. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1890 and 1901 (first recorded in 1874 but this cannot have been him).
23. Henry Schumann (see record 5.)
24. John Hartmann, 35 in 1891, born in Switzerland (probably St. Gallen), living as a lodger at 53 Princess Road, Regent, St. Pancras, London, an employed Cabinet Maker, living in one room. A member of the West End Branch No.2, he was recorded between 1872 and 1892, when he emigrated to New Zealand with more than seven years of membership.
25. Carl Stolzenberg, 60 in 1891, born in Bargischoen, Germany, living at 59 Kenton Street, Bloomsbury, London, an employed Cabinet Maker, married with nine in the household living in two rooms. His wife, and all seven children, aged between 19 and 3, were all born in England. A member of the West End Branch No.2, he was recorded between 1879 and 1891.
26. Frederick W. Voss. Two were recorded, and both were probably members of the society at some point, as one was recorded as F.W. Voss Snr. The elder was 59 in 1891, born in Germany, and living at 11 Regent Street, Grey, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker and married, there were two living in the household in three rooms. His wife was also a German, and they also had a French lodger, recorded in a separate household. The younger, quite probably his son, was 32 in 1891, born in Berlin, Germany, and living at 34 and 35 Seaton Street, Regent Street, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker and married, there were six in the household living in two rooms. His wife and children were all born in London. There was also a Frenchwoman in the building. An individual with this name was recorded between 1881 and

1892, when he died with over ten years of membership. The elder was therefore most likely the more constant member.

27. William van Santen, 59 in 1891, was born in Den Haag, Holland, living at 49 Ashmore Road, Paddington, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married with six living in the household in four rooms. His wife and children were all born in England. A member of the West End Branch No.2, he had previously been a member of the Continental Branch No. 4, and served on the society's Executive Committee. He was recorded as a society member between 1875 and 1901.
28. Peter Liebert, 58 in 1891, was born in Germany, living at 60 Mansfield Road, Kentish Town, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married with four in the household. His wife and two children were all born in London. A member of the West End Branch No.2, he had previously been recorded as a member of the Central Branch No.1, and was recorded as a society member between 1873 (1st Half) and 1901.
29. Emile Brunet, 27 in 1891, was born in France, living in 167 Great Titchfield Street, All Souls, Marylebone, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married, with two living in the household, in two rooms. His wife was born in London, and another society member (Arthur Coleman) was living in the same building. A member of the West End Branch No.2, he was recorded between 1886 and 1901.
30. Rudolf Rasmussen, 31 in 1891, born in Denmark, lived at 10 Handel Street, Bloomsbury St. George, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married, with three living in the household in two rooms. His wife was also Danish, but their infant son was born in London. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1886 and 1901.
31. Gustav Mentzell, 45 in 1891, born in Danzig, Prussia, lived at 101 Cleveland Street, All Souls, Marylebone, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married with nine living in the household. His wife was also Prussian, and all but their second child was born in London (the other being born in New York, U.S.A.). There were several immigrants living as lodgers in the household, including a Danish Cabinet Maker. Mentzell was a member of the West End Branch No.2, and was recorded between 1887 and 1898.
32. Christian Bangert, 28 in 1891, born in Germany, and living at 101 Great Titchfield Street, All Souls, Marylebone, London. A self-employed Cabinet Maker, there were fourteen people in the household. He was the nephew of the head, who was the only other German in the household. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1889 and 1895, when he emigrated to South Africa, with six years of society membership. Someone with the same name was recorded in 1901, indicating he may have returned.
33. Charles Drechsler, 45 in 1891, born in Germany, lived at 67 George Street, Somers Town, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married, with three in the household living in four rooms. His wife was born in London, and they employed a domestic servant. There was also another Cabinet Maker living at the same address. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1889 and 1893, when he died with five years of society membership.
34. Angelo Cervo, 40 in 1891, born in Italy, lived at 3 Arlington Terrace, Regent, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married with two in the household, living in two rooms. His

wife was born in France. He was a member of the West End Branch No.2, and was recorded between 1890 and 1893.

35. Edward Hansen, 27 in 1891, born in Denmark, lived as a boarder at 253 Hampstead Road, Regent, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, there were ten living in the household in three rooms. Amongst his cohabitants was Alfred Petersen (see record 41) as well as another Danish Cabinet Maker, and an Italian. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1890 and 1891.
36. Niels P. Yagd, 30 in 1891, born in Denmark, lived as a lodger at 137 Stanhope Street, Regent, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, there were twelve living in the household. Many of them were journeymen Cabinet Makers, most from Denmark. All in the household were Scandinavian in origin. Amongst the borders was Anton Moler (see record 39). Yagd (who appears as Jagd in the society records) was a member of the West End Branch No.2, and was recorded between 1890 and 1891.
37. Martin Kindinger, 28 in 1891, was born in Germany, and lived as a lodger at 41 Cumberland Street, Regent, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, there were two in the household, living in one room. His cohabitant was another German Cabinet Maker, Andreus Hrachler, though he could not be found in the society's records. A member of the West End Branch No.2, he was recorded between 1890 and 1896, when he emigrated to South Africa with five years of society membership.
38. August Kulp, 47 in 1891, was born in Hanover, Germany, and lived at 68 Rosher Road, Stratford, West Ham, Essex. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married with seven in the household living in three rooms. His wife and all but one of their children were born in Germany, the youngest born in Stratford. A member of the West End Branch No.2, he was recorded between 1890 and 1891. Living in West Ham would put him outside the traditional catchment area for No.2, which may explain why he was never recorded after 1891.
39. Anton Moler, 25 in 1891, was born in Denmark, and lived as a lodger at 137 Stanhope Street, Regent, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, there were twelve living in the household. He lived in the same household as Niels P. Yagd (see record 36). A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1890 and 1891.
40. Ulrich Morf, 27 in 1891, was born in Switzerland, and lived at 4 Canal Terrace, Islington, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he lived alone in one room. There were two other immigrant Cabinet Makers at that address, neither of whom could be found in the society. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1890 and 1891.
41. Alfred Petersen, 31 in 1891, was born in Denmark, and lived as a boarder at 253 Hampstead Road, Regent, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, there were twelve in the household, including Edward Hansen (see record 35). A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1890 and 1901.
42. John A. Petersen, 25 in 1891, was born in Denmark, and lived as a boarder at 119 Stanhope Street, Regent, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, there were five in the household living in four rooms. Another Danish-born Cabinet Maker, the son of the head, also lived in the household, and another, native-born, Cabinet Maker lived at the same address.

Neither could be found in the society's records. Petersen was a member of the West End Branch No. 2, and was recorded between 1890 and 1898.

43. Robert Rost, 33 in 1891, was born in Germany, and lived at 8 Munster Square, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married and lived with his wife in two rooms. His wife was also born in Germany. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1890 and 1899, when he emigrated to America with over seven years of society membership.
44. Joseph Vaschetto, 40 in 1891, was born in Piedmont, Italy, and lived at 67 Cleveland Street, All Souls, Marylebone, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married and there were three in the household, living in one room. His wife was born in Paris, as was their son. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1890 and 1893.
45. Bernard Vos, 52 in 1891, was born in Belgium, and lived at 17 Rathbone Place, All Souls, Marylebone, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married with five in the household living in two rooms. His wife was also born in Belgium, but their three children, aged between eleven and five, were all born in London. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1890 and 1895.
46. Joseph Zimmer, 35 in 1891, was born in Germany, and was recorded as a visitor at 27 London Street, Tottenham Court, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, there were six in the household living in two rooms. The head of the household was a tailoress born in Newcastle. Zimmer was a member of the West End Branch No. 2, and was recorded between 1890 and 1894.
47. Karel Bouchier, 40 in 1891, was born in Holland, and lived at 1 Kirkman Place, Tottenham Court, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married with three in the household living in two rooms. His wife and twelve year old son were also born in Holland. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1891 and 1897.
48. Raymond Gottwald, 26 in 1881, was born in Hungary, and lived as a lodger at 31 Langham Street, Marylebone, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, there were five in the household, living in two rooms. The head of the household, a Belgian Cabinet Maker, may have been his employer. Gottwald was a member of the West End Branch No.2, and was only recorded in 1891.
49. Ancker Hansen, 48 in 1891, was born in Denmark, lived at 209 Shakespeare Road, Brixton, Lambeth, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married and there were eight in the household living in at least five rooms. His wife and mother in law were also born in Denmark, as was a boarder. His children, aged between 30 and 8, were all born in London. He was a member of the West End Branch No. 2, served as a branch auditor, and was recorded between 1891 and 1901.
50. Frederick Marquandt, 60 in 1891, was born in Germany, and lived at 56 Walmer Road, Kensington, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married with four in the household living in two rooms. His wife and children were born in England. A member of the West End Branch No. 2, he was recorded between 1891 and 1898.
51. Augustus Rasmussen, 27 in 1891, was born in Denmark, and lived as a lodger at 12 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, there were eight in

the household living in at least five rooms. The head of the household was a German-born wood turner, and there was also a German-born Cabinet Maker, the nephew of the head on the household, as well as another Dane. Rasmussen was a member of the West End Branch No. 2 and was only recorded in 1891.

52. Joseph Reichel, 43 in 1891, was born in Germany, although the place is indecipherable. He was living as a lodger at 39 Longford Street, Regent, St. Pancras, London. A self-employed Cabinet Maker, there were seven in the household living in four rooms. The head of the household was another self-employed German Cabinet Maker, although he could not be found in the society records. Reichel was a member of the West End Branch No. 2 and recorded between 1890 and 1891 (although as Reichell in the latter).
53. Niels Sorensen, 43 in 1891, was born in Denmark and lived as a lodger at 11 Munster Square, Regent, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he lived alone. There was another Danish Cabinet Maker living at the same address, although he could not be found in the society. Sorensen was a member of the West End Branch No. 2, and was recorded between 1891 and 1901, although this may not have been the same man.
54. William Wagner, 53 in 1891, was born in Germany, and lived at 21 Roden Street, Highbury, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married and there were five in the household living in three rooms. His wife and children were also born in London; his son, also William, was also a Cabinet Maker, but being aged 17 in 1891 was unlikely to belong to the union. The elder William was a member of the West End Branch No. 2, and was recorded between 1891 and 1893.
55. James Weiss, 38 in 1891, was born in Switzerland, and lived at 43 Islip Street, Kentish Town, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he lived alone in one room. He was a member of the West End Branch No. 2, and was only recorded in 1891.
56. Herman Wiese, 44 in 1891, was born in Germany, although the exact place is unclear. He lived at 34 Windmill Street, Tottenham Court, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married, and he and his wife lived in two rooms. His wife was also a German, and several other immigrants lived at the same address, including a Danish Cabinet Maker, who could not be found in the society records. Wiese was a member of the West End Branch No. 2, and was recorded between 1891 and 1895, when he emigrated to South Africa with five years of society membership.
57. Victor G. Boittier, 34 in 1891, was born in Paris, France, and lived at 99 Regents Park Road, St. Pancras, London. An employed Cabinet Maker, he was married, with four in the household living in two rooms. His wife and children were all born in London. He was a member of the West End Branch No. 2, and was only recorded in 1891.
58. Johan Schnetler, 38 in 1891, was born in the Netherlands, and lived at 102 Great College Street, Camden Town, St. Pancras, London. A wood carver, he was married, with five living in the household in at least five rooms. His wife was also Dutch, although both their children were born in London, and there was also an English lodger. A member of the West End Carvers Branch No. 37, he was recorded between 1884 and 1892, and also served as a branch auditor.
59. Henry Luhmann, 33 in 1891, was born in Hamburg, Germany, and lived at 41 Hazel Road, Willesden, Middlesex. An employed artistic wood carver, he was married with five in the



household living in three rooms. His wife was also German, but their three children were born in Britain. A member of the West End Carvers' Branch No. 37, he was recorded between 1886 and 1893. He was probably related to the W. Luhmann also recorded in 1891.

60. Gustave Gabler, 26 in 1891, was born in Leipzig, Germany, and lived at 21 Wellesley Terrace, Willesden, Middlesex. An employed wood carver, he was married with four in the household living in at least five rooms. His wife was also German, but their two infant children were born in London. A member of the West End Carvers' Branch No. 37, and was recorded between 1890 and 1898.
61. Edward Siegrist, 26 in 1891, was born in Switzerland, and lived at 50 Delany Street, Regent, St. Pancras, London. An employed wood carver, there were three in the household living in two rooms. His wife was born in Germany, but their infant son was born in London. A member of the West End Carvers' Branch No.37, he was recorded between 1890 and 1895.
62. Francis E. Bishop, 35 in 1891, was born in France, and lived at 64 Newman Street, Marylebone, London. An employed artistic wood carver, he lived on his own in one room. There were many other immigrants in the building, although no other furniture workers. A member of the West End Carvers' Branch No. 37, served as a branch auditor, and was recorded between 1891 and 1900, when he emigrated to America, with more than seven years of membership.
63. Henry M. Bedners, 23 in 1891, was born in Transylvania, although the exact location is indecipherable. He was living as a lodger at 26 Rutland Street, Regent, St. Pancras, London. An employed wood carver, there were three in the household living in one room. A member of the West End Carvers' Branch No.37, and was recorded between 1891 and 1894, serving as a branch auditor in the last year.
64. Henri D'Autrichi, 28 in 1891, was born in France, lived at 83 Newman Street, Marylebone, London. An employed wood carver, he was married, living with his wife in one room. His wife was also born in France, as was the other occupant of the building. A member of the West End Carvers' Branch No. 37, he was recorded between 1891 and 1895.
65. Benjamin Gyselman, 49 in 1891, born in Amsterdam, Holland, lived at 39 Werrington Street, Somers Town, St. Pancras, London. An employed wood carver, he was married with three in the household, living in four rooms. His wife and son were both born in England. A member of the West End Carvers' Branch No. 37, he was recorded between 1889 and 1892.
66. Joseph Loos, 28 in 1891, was born in Germany, living at 35 Munster Square, Regent, St. Pancras, London. An employed wood carver, he was married with he and his wife living in one room. His wife was born in Britain. A member of the West End Carvers' Branch No.37, he was recorded between 1891 and 1897.
67. Peter Gandula, 36 in 1891, was born in Italy, living at 51 Brick Lane, Spitalfields, Christchurch, London. An employed cabinet maker, he was married with four in the household living in two rooms. His wife and two children were born in London. A member of the Finsbury Branch No. 54, he was recorded between 1890 and 1891.
68. Albert F. Merle, 26 in 1891, was born in Holland, living as a lodger at 21 Finsbury Market, Shoreditch, London. An employed cabinet maker, there were four in the household living in two rooms. The head, Theodore Mesker, was also a Dutch cabinet maker, although there were no

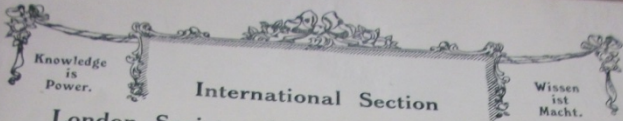
records that he was a society member. His wife and child were both born in Belgium. Merle was a member of the Finsbury Branch No.54, and was recorded between 1890 and 1891.

## Appendix IV - Imagery



A trilingual poster for the International Branch of the A.S.T from May 1909.

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**International Section**  
**London Society of Tailors and Tailoresses,**  
 16, HEDDON STREET, REGENT STREET, W.

**NOTICE !**  
**A SKETCHING CLASS**

will be arranged under the auspices of above Section for members or intending members of the *London Society of Tailors*. All intending students are invited to a special meeting on Friday, December 19th, 1913, at 8.30 p.m., at the "*Communist Club*," 107, Charlotte Street, to choose the evenings on which the class is to be held and also to elect the Teacher. A list of all the applying teachers and their qualifications will be given to each student. It is imperative that all those who intend to take part in this class in should be present at that meeting, as the number of pupils will be limited.

**ACHTUNG !**

Die Internationale Section der *London Society of Tailors* veranstaltet einen

**Abendkursus für Modell- und Freihandzeichnen.**

Alle Schüler werden ersucht der speziell für diesen Zweck stattfindenden Versammlung am Freitag, den 19. Dezember 1913, um 8½ Uhr abends, beizuwohnen. Die Schüler werden in dieser Versammlung den Lehrer wählen sowie die Unterrichtsabende bestimmen. Eine Liste aller bewerbenden Lehrer und deren Qualifikationen wird einem jeden Schüler in der Versammlung überreicht werden. Es ist unbedingt notwendig, dass alle Teilnehmer in dieser Versammlung anwesend sind, da jedenfalls die Schüler auf eine gewisse Zahl beschränkt werden wird.



**ATTENTION !**

La Section Internationale du *Syndicat des Tailleurs* donne pour les membres du syndicat

**UN COURS DE DESSIN**

Tous ceux qui voudront en faire partie sont invités pour une réunion spéciale qui aura lieu le Vendredi 19 Décembre, à 8 h. ½, au Club Communist, 107, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Sq., W., afin de choisir le Professeur. Une liste avec les noms de tous les candidats professeurs et leur qualification sera donnée à tous les élèves présents. Il est très important que tous les élèves assistent à cette réunion.

O. GEBHARDT, *Secretary*.

An advert for a sketching class organised by the L.S.T. in 1913, demonstrating the union's commitment to the self improvement of its members.

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ALLIANCE CABINET MAKERS And FURNISHING TRADES' ASSOCIATION.				BEITH Branch No. 60			
No. 29 <i>Thos Ferguson</i> [1897]				Scale 12 Contribution 10 per Week			
Date	Tid	Sch	Ins	Date	Tid	Sch	Ins
Jan 10	10	10	10	Jan 10	10	10	10
Jan 11	10	10	10	Jan 11	10	10	10
Jan 12	10	10	10	Jan 12	10	10	10
Jan 13	10	10	10	Jan 13	10	10	10
Jan 14	10	10	10	Jan 14	10	10	10
Jan 15	10	10	10	Jan 15	10	10	10
Jan 16	10	10	10	Jan 16	10	10	10
Jan 17	10	10	10	Jan 17	10	10	10
Jan 18	10	10	10	Jan 18	10	10	10
Jan 19	10	10	10	Jan 19	10	10	10
Jan 20	10	10	10	Jan 20	10	10	10
Jan 21	10	10	10	Jan 21	10	10	10
Jan 22	10	10	10	Jan 22	10	10	10
Jan 23	10	10	10	Jan 23	10	10	10
Jan 24	10	10	10	Jan 24	10	10	10
Jan 25	10	10	10	Jan 25	10	10	10
Jan 26	10	10	10	Jan 26	10	10	10
Jan 27	10	10	10	Jan 27	10	10	10
Jan 28	10	10	10	Jan 28	10	10	10
Jan 29	10	10	10	Jan 29	10	10	10
Jan 30	10	10	10	Jan 30	10	10	10
Jan 31	10	10	10	Jan 31	10	10	10

ALLIANCE CABINET MAKERS And FURNISHING TRADES' ASSOCIATION.				BEITH Branch No. 32			
No. 122 <i>Thos Ferguson</i> [1897]				Scale 12 Contribution 10 per Week			
Date	Tid	Sch	Ins	Date	Tid	Sch	Ins
Jan 10	10	10	10	Jan 10	10	10	10
Jan 11	10	10	10	Jan 11	10	10	10
Jan 12	10	10	10	Jan 12	10	10	10
Jan 13	10	10	10	Jan 13	10	10	10
Jan 14	10	10	10	Jan 14	10	10	10
Jan 15	10	10	10	Jan 15	10	10	10
Jan 16	10	10	10	Jan 16	10	10	10
Jan 17	10	10	10	Jan 17	10	10	10
Jan 18	10	10	10	Jan 18	10	10	10
Jan 19	10	10	10	Jan 19	10	10	10
Jan 20	10	10	10	Jan 20	10	10	10
Jan 21	10	10	10	Jan 21	10	10	10
Jan 22	10	10	10	Jan 22	10	10	10
Jan 23	10	10	10	Jan 23	10	10	10
Jan 24	10	10	10	Jan 24	10	10	10
Jan 25	10	10	10	Jan 25	10	10	10
Jan 26	10	10	10	Jan 26	10	10	10
Jan 27	10	10	10	Jan 27	10	10	10
Jan 28	10	10	10	Jan 28	10	10	10
Jan 29	10	10	10	Jan 29	10	10	10
Jan 30	10	10	10	Jan 30	10	10	10
Jan 31	10	10	10	Jan 31	10	10	10

ALLIANCE CABINET MAKERS And FURNISHING TRADES' ASSOCIATION.				BEITH Branch No. 32			
No. 29 <i>Thos Ferguson</i> [1898]				Scale 12 Contribution 10 per Week			
Date	Tid	Sch	Ins	Date	Tid	Sch	Ins
Jan 10	10	10	10	Jan 10	10	10	10
Jan 11	10	10	10	Jan 11	10	10	10
Jan 12	10	10	10	Jan 12	10	10	10
Jan 13	10	10	10	Jan 13	10	10	10
Jan 14	10	10	10	Jan 14	10	10	10
Jan 15	10	10	10	Jan 15	10	10	10
Jan 16	10	10	10	Jan 16	10	10	10
Jan 17	10	10	10	Jan 17	10	10	10
Jan 18	10	10	10	Jan 18	10	10	10
Jan 19	10	10	10	Jan 19	10	10	10
Jan 20	10	10	10	Jan 20	10	10	10
Jan 21	10	10	10	Jan 21	10	10	10
Jan 22	10	10	10	Jan 22	10	10	10
Jan 23	10	10	10	Jan 23	10	10	10
Jan 24	10	10	10	Jan 24	10	10	10
Jan 25	10	10	10	Jan 25	10	10	10
Jan 26	10	10	10	Jan 26	10	10	10
Jan 27	10	10	10	Jan 27	10	10	10
Jan 28	10	10	10	Jan 28	10	10	10
Jan 29	10	10	10	Jan 29	10	10	10
Jan 30	10	10	10	Jan 30	10	10	10
Jan 31	10	10	10	Jan 31	10	10	10

ALLIANCE CABINET MAKERS And FURNISHING TRADES' ASSOCIATION.				BEITH Branch No. 32			
No. 29 <i>Thos Ferguson</i> [1899]				Scale 12 Contribution 10 per Week			
Date	Tid	Sch	Ins	Date	Tid	Sch	Ins
Jan 10	10	10	10	Jan 10	10	10	10
Jan 11	10	10	10	Jan 11	10	10	10
Jan 12	10	10	10	Jan 12	10	10	10
Jan 13	10	10	10	Jan 13	10	10	10
Jan 14	10	10	10	Jan 14	10	10	10
Jan 15	10	10	10	Jan 15	10	10	10
Jan 16	10	10	10	Jan 16	10	10	10
Jan 17	10	10	10	Jan 17	10	10	10
Jan 18	10	10	10	Jan 18	10	10	10
Jan 19	10	10	10	Jan 19	10	10	10
Jan 20	10	10	10	Jan 20	10	10	10
Jan 21	10	10	10	Jan 21	10	10	10
Jan 22	10	10	10	Jan 22	10	10	10
Jan 23	10	10	10	Jan 23	10	10	10
Jan 24	10	10	10	Jan 24	10	10	10
Jan 25	10	10	10	Jan 25	10	10	10
Jan 26	10	10	10	Jan 26	10	10	10
Jan 27	10	10	10	Jan 27	10	10	10
Jan 28	10	10	10	Jan 28	10	10	10
Jan 29	10	10	10	Jan 29	10	10	10
Jan 30	10	10	10	Jan 30	10	10	10
Jan 31	10	10	10	Jan 31	10	10	10

A selection of contribution cards belonging to Thomas Ferguson, a member of the ACMA at the end of the nineteenth century. These demonstrate the labour mobility of native-born members of the branch as well.

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# UNITY, FRATERNITY & STRENGTH!

Under the auspices of the  
HEBREW CABINET MAKERS' SOCIETY, STICK AND CANE DRESSERS' UNION,  
INTERNATIONAL FURRIERS' SOCIETY,  
TAILOR-MACHINISTS' UNION, TAILORS' AND PRESSES' UNION,  
AMALGAMATED LASTERS' SOCIETY, UNITED CAPMAKERS' SOCIETY, AND  
INTERNATIONAL JOURNEYMAN BOOT-FINISHERS' SOCIETY,

## A Mass Meeting

will take place on  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28th, 1889,

at the

**GREAT ASSEMBLY HALL**  
MILE END ROAD, E.

To inaugurate the Federation of East-London  
Labour Unions.

The Chair will be taken at 3 p.m. prompt by

*Mr. CHARLES V. ADAMS,*

Who will be supported by the following speakers: Messrs.

**J. MACDONALD, TOM WALKER, J. TURNER,  
TOM MANN, BEN TILLET,**

**H. SPARLING, H. DAVIS, C. MOWBRAY,  
Mrs. SCHACK, WESS, WEINBERG, FEIGENBAUM,  
ROCHMAN, M. FRENCHMAN, L. COHEN, LIGHTMAN,  
SKITTEN, ROSENBERG, GOLDSTEIN, SEBERSKY,  
LEEK, and GOLDSTONE.**

All members of the above unions are earnestly requested to attend this  
most important meeting.

**WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!**

Communications in connection with the above to be addressed to the Hon. Sec.  
W. WESS, 12, Clerk St. Bedford Sq. E.

## א גרויסע מאסעז פערזאמלונג

פערזאמלונג פון אלע אידישע ארבייטער פערזאנען,  
וועלע שטעלן זיך צוזאמען

שבת. דען ארבעטן דענעמבער, אום 3 אודר נאכמיטאג, אין דאס  
גרויסע אסעמבלי האלל, מייל ענד ראד,

אום צו פירען דאס גרויסע פון דאס פונדערישאן פון אלע אידישע פערזאנען.

*Tom Mann and Ben Tillett speak at the meeting to inaugurate the Federation of  
East London Labour Unions—Jews can be supported as trades unionists, but not  
as "aliens"!*

Rally for the foundation of the Federation of East London Labour Unions, in support of Jewish workers. Chaired by Charles V. Adams, a leading member of the ACMA, Tom Walker was also amongst the speakers, alongside more famous trade unionists such as James McDonald, Tom Mann, and Ben Tillett.

Image taken from <http://www.engageonline.org.uk/ressources/funny/chap2.html>

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