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LETTERS OF THE FRANKS FAMILY
(1733-1748)

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LETTERS OF THE FRANKS FAMILY (1733-1748)

I

I

[Abigail Franks to Naphtali Franks, May 7, 1733]

DEAR HERTSEY¹

My last by this Vessle was friday² Just Sabath Since wich by the Post³
I have received two of yours by Via boston bearing Date yc 26th Jan[uar]y,

¹ Hertsey or Heartsey, the opening salutation to most of the letters written by Abigail Bilhah Franks [=A.F.] to her son Naphtali [=N.F.], which A.F. and others frequently wrote as Naphtali, was of course a term of endearment. Naphtali, one of the twelve tribes of Israel, had as a symbol a stag or hart, hence Heartsey. Among Ashkenazim, the name customarily occurs in its dual form — Naphtali Hirz or Naphtali Herz. "Hirz" or "Herz" is an older Judeo-German form for "Hirsch" [=hart or deer]. It is also possible A.F. meant "Dear Heart" in Judeo-German Herz. That she sometimes writes "Heartsey" would seem to convey the latter possibility, with none of the biblical reference. In any case, N.F. was named after his grandfather, Abraham Franks, "A Jew late of London Broaker." Con. Lib. 26, cp. 411. Abraham's Hebrew name not used for business and social purposes was Naphtali. Jacob Franks [=J.F.], Abraham's son and N.F.'s father is listed in the Minute Book of the Congregation Shearith Israel as Jahocob ben Naphtaly Franks, Jacob son of Naphtaly, *Minute Book*, pp. 12 and 13. See also Samuel Oppenheim, "Genealogical Notes on Jacob Franks," *PAJHS*, vol. XXV (1917), pp. 75-80. N.F., born in New York on or about July 1, 1715, was two months short of being eighteen years old at the time of this letter. He probably left the family for England no more than one year before. It appears that N.F. did not return to New York and probably never saw his parents again. See the deposition made on August 5, 1735 by Mary Clarke, wife of John Clarke, mariner, Miriam Hart, wife of Moses Hart, and Elizabeth Holland as to the birth of N.F., as well as his brothers Moses, David and Aaron in Con. Lib. 32, cp. 41. This affidavit was given in support of the citizenship of the Franks' male children.

The status of Jews in England and in her colonies was never clearly stated. Under the Act of 1740 [13 George II], aimed at encouraging the settlement of colonists in British America, it was stated:

That from and after the First Day of June, in the Year of our Lord One Thousand seven hundred and forty, all Persons born out of the Ligeance of His Majesty, His Heirs, or Successors, who have resided, or shall inhabit and reside for the Space of Seven Years, or more, in any of His Majesty's Colonies in America, and shall not have been absent out of some of the said Colonies for a longer Space than Two Months at any one Time, during the said Seven Years, and shall take and subscribe the Oaths, etc.

The Act set down certain conditions as to the period of residence in British America required of those seeking naturalization. This was intended to encourage a certain measure of permanence to the settlement of Jews, Quakers, and others, favored by this Act, in British America. The Jews in taking the Oath of Abjuration were exempted from declaring that it was being done on "the true faith of a Christian." Jews, like the Franks, to reaffirm more cogently the civil status of their children who were born in British territory carefully registered their births and necessary supporting statements, including those of the midwives who had tended them at their birth.

² Undoubtedly A.F. referred to the ninety-ton ship *Albany* which sailed from London with William Bryant, master, and registered at the Customs House on May 4, 1733. It was the only ship arriving from England in the latter part of April or first week of May. Bryant sailed from New York on a return trip to London on May 25th, probably carrying this letter to N.F. Robert Livingston, Jr. and Henry Cuyler of New York, and Samuel Storke of London were the owners of the vessel which was often used by the Franks to carry mail and cargo. Entries of May 4 and of May 25, 1733 *NOL*, CO 5/1225. For material relating to litigation involving the *Albany*, see *Ship Albany Misc. Mss.*, NYHS.

³ Perhaps the letters came via the Boston Post Road, between New York and Boston, which was

& ye 20th Feb[ruar]y and AllSoc Some from your father of Severall date's they All Comfirm the then Injoying A happy State of Health In Company of all friends my Wishes Will be Compleat If this finds you Still in the Same Agreeable Situation

You will find Some Postage to pay by this Every one being willing to Assure you themselves of their good Will Could I have my Other two Letters back Again I Would put all the Contents in this One Not that I think you will be Uneassy at the Charge but Still its to Noc purpose to have Soc many Letters About Nothing⁴

established in 1672 and was used as the principal overland route for travel between the two points.

⁴ Mail delivery in the eighteenth century was a fairly haphazard affair but with all its faults worked quite well. A.F.'s letters could have been sent and delivered in a number of ways, but she and her son primarily used the services of ship captains or of friends travelling abroad. This was a commonly used procedure, not so much because there were no postage fees, but because this method was more convenient and more efficient than regular post. Mail pouches were frequently found in Coffee Houses and Taverns which places not only served necessary beverages, but also were the official or unofficial offices of many merchants. (See Letter II, note 7 for further discussion of Coffee Houses), *infra*, p. 9. Tom's Coffee House, Cornhill, London, served N.F. in this way for many years. It was much simpler to use these locations or to go aboard a ship to deliver or pick up mail along with the latest gossip and trade news rather than to use the official delivery described below. Since this first letter is the only one of A.F.'s letters where postage is mentioned, it is probable that the majority of the correspondence was carried in this way. No postage stamps, except in one instance, appear on the covers, although these were in use in England. As early as 1680, the British Government attempted to provide a regular mailing system for the colonies and British Isles. In 1711, an Act provided that all mail be sent through post offices administered centrally by the Postmaster of London who was named the Postmaster General of the Empire. Ship masters were instructed to deliver letters to the nearest Post Office upon their arrival, although they often did not. Rates of postage were established: New York to London mail was one shilling, as were letters between New York and Boston; New York to Philadelphia was nine pence, and to Charleston, one shilling six pence. These rates applied to single sheet letters, that is, a sheet of paper folded so that the unwritten part of the paper formed the address side. Postmasters were to receive payment from the addressee when the mail was delivered, hence A.F.'s apology to her son. The Act of 1711 also provided that the letters of merchants or owners of any ships, barques or vessels and "merchandize or any [of] the cargo, or loading therein sent on board such ship . . ." be exempted from postage. Wesley E. Rich, *History of the United Post Office to the year 1829* (Cambridge, 1924), p. 26; Howard Robinson, *The British Post Office: A History* (Princeton, 1948), p. 97. Since N.F. almost always received or sent some goods, the mail would usually be free, but in this letter A.F. excuses herself for the charge and she makes no reference to shipping material.

In London, mail was delivered by the post. In the colonies, mail had to be picked up at the post office. In 1731, the New York post office was at the "uppermost of the two New Houses in the Broad-way opposite Bever Street." *New-York Gazette* [= *Gazette*], April 26, 1731. In August, 1753, the office was moved

next to the house of Mr. Alexander Colding opposite the Bowling Green, in the Broad-Way, where letters will be receiv'd and deliver'd our every Day (Saturday afternoon till the Arrival of the Posts, and Sundays excepted) from Eight in the Morning till Twelve at Noon, and from Two in the afternoon till Four. [*New-York Gazette or Weekly Post-Boy*, July 30, 1753].

Overseas mail depended upon sailing schedules that were far from prompt. Letters were usually written as well in advance of mailing as feasible, and delivered to the ship, although it

I observe ye Uncomon Article you mention Concerning the mans Teaching to Write in a fortnight⁵ And the Progress Miss franks⁶ has made in it pray my Love to her the Pritty Charecter you [give] her in favour of her good Sence & aptness to Learn has made me have a great Vallue for her (As indeed I must have for Every thing belonging to Mr. Is[aac] Franks) and tell Miss I Shall be Very glad to have her keep a Corispondence with her name Sake Whoe will be Very Proud of the Favour I Shall take Care by the Next Oppertunity to Let Phila⁷ write her a Letter. You would be Amazed to See how She is Grown She is much Taller then david⁸ I shall put her her Next Week Att Mr. Brownalls.⁹

was not uncommon for letters to be written at the last moment with the ship captain standing close at hand waiting to sail. Missing a vessel could mean months of delay. Sometimes alternate routes were selected, i.e. via Boston or Philadelphia from New York or Dover and Bristol in England. Important letters were often sent in duplicate by different ships and routes. For a general reference to the mail see Wesley E. Rich, *op. cit.*, *passim*; Howard Robinson, *op. cit.*, *passim*; John G. Hendy, *The History of the Early Postmarks of the British Isles* (London, 1905); Bryant Lillywhite, *London Coffee Houses* (London, 1963), especially pp. 21-22; Kenneth Ellis, *The Post Office in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1958), p. 38.

⁵ A.F., an avid reader of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, first published in London in 1731, was probably referring to an article which read in part:

I can almost excuse the hyperbolical Style of a Grammarian who had just published a proposal of a new Scheme of Grammar, and Method of Instruction, by which the Grounds of Language may be learned in a few Hours, so as to read an Author and write intelligibly, because his pretences are supported by Probabilities. [*Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. II (1732), p. 742.]

The advertisement alluded to was "*The Whetstone*," a "proposal of a new Scheme of Grammar . . . by which the Grounds of Language may be learned in a few Hours . . . price 6d. per 5 pages." *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁶ Phila Franks [of England], born in 1715, was the daughter of Isaac and Simha (Hart) Franks. Isaac Franks was a wealthy English merchant and brother of J.F. Phila later married N.F. (See Letter XXVIII, *infra*, p. 108). She is probably named after her father's mother Abigail, who is also known as Sarah Phila [Samuel Oppenheim, "Supplemental Notes on Franks' Genealogy," *PAJHS*, vol. XXVI (1918), p. 265]. Phila died some time before June 8, 1769, the date when letters of administration were granted to N.F. P.C.C. Samuel Oppenheim gives her year of death as 1765. "Genealogical Notes on Jacob Franks," *op. cit.*, p. 77.

⁷ Phila Franks, the daughter of J.F. and A.F., born in New York on June 19, 1722 and died in England March 8, 1811 was at the time of this letter almost eleven years old. Simon W. Rosendale, "A Document Concerning the Franks Family," *PAJHS*, vol. I (1893), pp. 103-104; *Jewish Obituaries*, p. 40. Phila was a popular name in the Franks family and was also the name of her cousins Phila Franks (of England) and Phila Salomons, a daughter of Abigail Salomons, J.F.'s sister. Will of Moses Franks, Fox 162, P.C.C.

⁸ David Franks, son of J.F. and A.F., was born in New York on or about September 23, 1720, and probably died in England in 1794, and not, as many believe, in Philadelphia in 1793 as a result of yellow fever. Con. Lib. 32, ep. 41; Rosendale, *op. cit.*; Hilda F. Finberg, "Jewish Residents in Eighteenth Century Twickenham," *Transactions*, vol. XVI (1952), p. 130; Will of David Franks, Holman 366, P.C.C. He was probably named after David, brother of J.F. who died before his nephew's birth. Since his uncle is mentioned in the will of Moses Franks (also a brother of J.F. and a resident of the "Parish of St. Buttoloph, Aldgate, London,") which was drawn on

Your fathers not bringing any goods makes most People Imagin he intends for London¹⁰ & I cant Convince e'm to the Contrary Every body seems Very Much Concerned at it Mrs. Moore¹¹ Sent for your Sister As Soon as Ever She heard it And Where Soe Concerned that She was Glad to get from e'm I Confess (tho' their is nothing in it) Still it Gives me a Seceret pleasure to Observe the faire Charecter Our Familys has in the place by Jews & Christians¹² whoc Express a regreet & I bleive Some are

July 26, 1716 and proved August 21, 1716, he probably died some time between 1716 and 1720. Fox 162, PCC. (Oppenheim incorrectly gives the date of death of Moses Franks as 1710 in "Genealogical Notes on Jacob Franks," *op. cit.*, p. 265. David, the brother of J.F., was in or visited Surinam in 1715, and in July of that year imported drygoods into New York. Samuel Oppenheim, "Supplemental Notes on the Franks Genealogy," *op. cit.*, p. 77. Notes in the Oppenheim Collection, *AJHS*, were made from New York Col. Mss. vol. 65, p. 49 before the Albany fire of 1911 which destroyed a great part of these manuscripts.

⁹ George Brownell resided in 1731 near the Customs House where he

Taught Reading Writing Cypberhing, Merchant Accompts, Larin, Greek etc. also Dancing, Plain-Work Flourishing Embroidery [probably with the help of Mrs. Brownell, see Letter III, note 8, *infra*, p. 13] and various Sorts of Works. Any Person may be taught as private as they please [*Gazette*, June 14, 1731].

In 1733 he resided in the East Ward, NYAL, Feb. 24, 1733. Brownell removed to the South Ward in 1734, probably to Broad Street in the house of Mary Campbell. He continued his school from this location. NYAL, Feb. 18, 1734; *New-York Weekly Journal*, Feb. 18, 1734. For a criticism of Brownell by his rival, the "Fencing Master," see *Gazette*, July 5, 1731. Brownell had taught school in Boston as early as 1713 where he gave instruction in "Dancing Treble Violin Flute . . . also English Quilting and French Quilting, Imbroidery . . ." He was remembered by Benjamin Franklin, one of his pupils, as a "Skilfull master," who was successful by employing "gentle means only." Between 1736 and 1738, he was in Philadelphia, which may indicate his New York stay was not profitable. Carl Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness* (New York, 1938), pp. 277, 282-283, 438, 447 and 449.

¹⁰ J.F. probably had been or was in Philadelphia at this time. A.F.'s reference to his "not bringing any goods" and "intends for London" indicates he might have just returned to New York. J.F., as with many merchants, made frequent business trips. See Letters VI and VIII for reference to such occasions, *infra*, pp. 28 and 38.

¹¹ Mrs. Frances Lambert Moore (1692-1782) was the wife of Col. John Moore (1686-1749), one of the more prominent merchants and politicians of the city. For material on Mrs. Moore, see *MCC*, vol. VI (1917), pp. 426-427; Will of John Moore, *NYHSC*, vol. IV (1896), pp. 248-251; Will Liber 17, p. 44, HDC; Tombstone Inscriptions, p. 16, unpublished manuscript, TVR. In 1750, she conveyed her interest to certain property in Philadelphia to David Franks. Con. Lib. D. 32, p. 419, Department of Records, City Hall, Philadelphia. At David Frank's marriage in 1743 to Margaret Evans, Mrs. Moore's niece by marriage, she became David's aunt. Will of John Moore, Peter Evans Papers, HSP; Septimus E. Nivin, *Genealogy of the Evans-Nivin and Allied Families* (Philadelphia, 1930), p. 16; Francis T. Miller, ed., "Memoirs of an American Official in the Service of the King," *The Journal of American History*, vol. IV (1910), pp. 29-47.

¹² Jewish-Christian relations in New York were a source of pride to A.F. On the whole these relationships were good, with few instances of overt anti-Semitism. One of these occurred in 1737 when the Assembly voted to disenfranchise Jews after a particularly bitter and violent anti-Semitic tirade of William Smith, a member of the Assembly. This Act of 1737 did not bind further Assemblies, since Jews did vote in subsequent elections. An Act of Parliament (13 Geo. II,

Really Sincire I think its the greatest happyness a Person Can Injoy Next to the haveing a good Conscience for As Addison Says A good Conscience is to the Soul wath health is to the body¹³

I have Just Now Sent for the box from burling¹⁴ pray make my thanks

Chap. 7) in 1740 allowed for procedures in naturalizing Jews. *Iconography of Manhattan Island* (New York, 1895-1928), vol. IV, p. 553; an unpublished manuscript entitled "The True Story of the Relation of the Jews to the Contested Election for Representatives in New York in 1737," Oppenheim Collection, *AJHS*. For a contemporary view of the political status of Jews, see letter of Rodrigo Pacheco to James Alexander, Jan. 14, 1737/8, James Alexander Papers Box 6, NYHSL. The Dutch seemed as a group most openly hostile to Jews. A.F.'s later remarks about the "ignorant Dutch" (Letter VI, *infra*, p. 25) gives some clue as to these relationships. See also the letter of Henry Beekman to Henry Livingston, March 3, 1744 for reference to "Jew Doctor one Mr. Mark," Beekman Miscellaneous Mss., NYHSL and reference to Phila, as the "Jew Vaylo." See Letter XXXI, *infra*, p. 117n. Peter Kalm writing in 1748 found that Jews "enjoy all the privileges common to the other inhabitants of this town and province." Peter Kalm, *Travels into North America* (London, 1772), vol. I, p. 191. In 1747, on the other hand, Jacob Franks advertised for the culprits who defaced the Jewish cemetery [*Post-Boy*, July 2, 1747]. Acts of this kind, however, were rare.

In the liberalizing and more tolerant *Gentleman's Magazine*, which Abigail Franks read (see *supra*, p. xxi), the problem of the rights of non-Conformists, Dissenters, Quakers, foreigners and others were discussed, particularly their legal status. In *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. VI, no. 4 (April, 1736), pp. 218-219, Solomon Abrabanel's letter requests that Jews be granted the same rights as Dissenters. He asks:

If the Rights of Nature are a claim, Have the Dissenters a better Title to such Indulgence than the Jews?

See also *ibid.*, vol. VI, no. 5 (May, 1736), pp. 237-240; and Hermann Gollancz, "Anglo-Judaica: Description of a Collection of Pamphlets and Books Illustrative of the Interest in Hebrew Studies and of the Progress of the Jewish Cause in Christian England," *TJHSE*, vol. VI (London, 1912), pp. 56-87. On pages 70-71, Gollancz quotes in *extenso* the aforementioned Solomon Abrabanel's *Complaint of the Children of Israel, Representing Their Grievances under the Penal Laws, and Praying That If the Testis Are Repealed the Jews May Have the Benefit of This Indulgence in Common with All Other Subjects of England. In a Letter to a Reverend High Priest of the Church by Law Established* (London, 1736). Concerning the extension of toleration to Dissenters, and to Jewish subjects in British colonies with regard to naturalization, see H. S. Q. Henriques, *The Jews and the English Law* (London, 1908), pp. 159-162, which deals with the Act of Toleration, under William and Mary, the relief from Test and Corporation Acts under George II and the colonial Naturalization Act of 1740. For more information on eighteenth century Jewish life in England in which members of the Franks family are mentioned, see Elkan Adler, *London*, pp. 116-149; Rachel Daiches-Rubin, "Eighteenth Century Anglo-Jewry in and around Richmond, Surrey," *TJHSE*, vol. XVIII (London, 1958), pp. 143-169; Hilda F. Finberg, "Jewish Residents in Eighteenth Century Twickenham," *TJHSE*, vol. XVI [Sessions 1945-1951] (London, 1952), pp. 129-135; Albert M. Hyams, *The Sephardim of England: A History of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Community 1492-1951* (London, 1952), pp. 96-122, and his *A History of the Jews of England* (London, 1928), pp. 190-234; Cecil Roth, *The Great Synagogue in London, 1690-1940* (London [1950]), pp. 66-78, and his "The Membership of the Great Synagogue to 1791," *Miscellanies*, Part VI (1926), pp. 175-185.

¹³ For maxim, see Joseph Addison, *Maxims, Observations, and Reflections, Moral, Political, and Divine* (London, 1719), p. 1.

¹⁴ A.F. probably refers to Samuel Burling who witnessed the will of Simja De Torres. *Wills*, p. 81. There was a Burling Slip, fronting on the East River.

due for the first Vol[ume] of Addison¹⁵ & Lett me know Wath books you have made Choice of for your Uncle's Libr[ary]. My Respects to all friends Coz[i]n Colly¹⁶ is in Raptures to think of goeing home I wish him Very Well & hope it will be to his advantage I Salute You with my blessing and Am

Dear Hertsey your Afectionate Mother

ABIGAIL FRANKS

New York [Monday] May ye 7th 1733
to Nap[htali] Franks

¹⁵ There were a number of multi-volume works of Joseph Addison published prior to this date, including the *Miscellaneous Works of Joseph Addison* (London, 1726), 3 vols. and a second edition in 1730. For her interest in Addison, see *supra*, p. 5.

¹⁶ Colly was the pet name for Coleman Salomons [Solomons] (d. 1767), the son of Abigail Salomons, sister of J.F. He was in New York in 1729 and had been living with J.F. and A.F. since 1732 and possibly earlier. He returned to England in 1734, but in December of that year was in Philadelphia where he appears to have spent some time in jail, probably for debt. (See Letter VII, *infra*, p. 34). Minute Book, p. 21; NYAL, Dock Ward, Feb. 18, 1731/2; Feb. 24, 1732/3; Feb. 23, 1733/4. In the last citation, Coleman Salomons' property is valued at 0, a good indication of his poor financial standing. Coleman Salomons again returned to England, early in 1735, but then traveled to South Carolina, arriving there on October 24, 1736. Malcolm E. Stern, "The Sheftall Diaries, 1733-1808," *AJHQ*, vol. LIV (1965), p. 248. He returned to New York in 1738 and remained in the colonies at least until 1741 (see Letters VII, XVI, XVII and XIX, *infra* pp. 34, 73, 77 and 81. He died in London early in 1767. Letters of administration were granted to his widow Elizabeth Salomons in June of that year. Letters of Administration, Solomons, PCC. Colly was one of the more troublesome of A.F.'s relations.

II

[Abigail Franks to Naphtali Franks, July 9, 1733]*

DEAR HERTSEY

The Arrivall of the Acceptable bearer of your Letter gave Me Inexpressable Joy your Presence would have bin a Vast addition but As the pres[en]t must give way to the futer and that the hopes of your Stay will in All appearance be Soc much to your advantage I cant Say but that It in a great Measure Mitigates the Uncassyness I might Else have bin Under but As I Allways taught my Self that Vallucable Lesson of Rissignation I have the Consolation to attend this in the hopes of Your Carefull Observence of a due Gratitude and respect to the Admonitions of Your kind Uncles¹ they have all favoured me with th[ei]r Letters wherein they Speak Soc Favourable of you and with Soc much Tenderness that tho' I've all the Gratitude Possiible my words fall short of wath I think

Your Uncles Messrs: Isaac & Aaron have Assured me of there Endeavours to put you forward but that they Had not Come to a Determination yet in wath Method, but wathever they Intend I imagine will be Soc well Considered that the Consequence gives me noe Uncassy thought

I have Soc Offten recommended You to be Wary in y[ou]r conduct that I will not Again make a Repetion but this I must recom[m]end to you not to be Soc free in y[ou]r Discourse on religeon and be more Circumspect in the Observence of some things Especialy y[ou]r morning Dev[otio]ns for tho' a Person may think freely and Judge for themselves they Ought not to be to free of Speech nor to make a Jest of wath ye multitude in A Society think is of the Last Consequence and As You Observed to me some time agoe you wondered Any one Could Take amiss if his Neighbour did not goe the Same Road. pray why are You Soc Intent by your Disputes to think Anyone will follow you It Shows in one of your Age a Self-Opinion wich Quality I would have you Carfully avoid for it will grow opon you with time if not Nipt in the bud. You wrote me Some time agoe you was asked

* Courtesy of Mr. Bryant Lillywhite (London, England).

¹ N.F.'s uncles in England at the time were on his father's side, Isaac, Aaron and Abraham Franks, and on his mother's side, Asher and Nathan Levy. Isaac Franks, a wealthy merchant, was reputed at his death in 1736, to have been worth £300,000. *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. VI (1736), p. 685. Aaron Franks, brother of J.F. and almost as affluent as his brother Isaac, died September 21, 1777 at Isleworth, England at the age of ninety-two. *Jewish Obituaries*, p. 42; Hilda F. Finberg, "Jewish Residents in Eighteenth Century Twickenham," *Transactions*, vol. XVI (1952), p. 129.

at my brother Ashers² to a fish Dinner but you did not Goe I Desire you will Never Eat Anything with him Unless it be bread & butter nor noe where Else where there is the Least doubt of things not done after our Strict Judiacall method for wathever my thoughts may be Concerning Some Fables this and Some other foundementalls I Look Opon the Observence Conscientiously and therefore with my blessing I Strictly injoynt it to your care

I rec[eiv]ed a Letter by the boston Post Last night dated ye 19th Apr[il] I observe your Complaint on Acc[oun]t of my not writting but for this time I hope you will be Satisfyed that It did not Proceed from Negligence but because there Was Vessles at the Same time goeing from hence for Since I was ascertained of your Stay I have wrote you many Letters. I have Justly the Same Complaint for you have neglected writting by Some boston Ships however Wee will pass this and take more Care for the futer. Mr. Cope³ Sailed Last fryday for Antig[u]a with Col[one]l Gilbert⁴ with whome he is to Live It was with Some pains before he Could Gitt Leave of Mr. Hossmendon⁵ he gave his kind Love and Service to you and Desire you would by All Oppertunitys Let him hear from you your Sisters thank you for your Pres[en]t and Richa in Peticuler who Intends you a Letter by Downing⁶ your brothers Joyn with e'm in their Love & Service to you in mine to Mr. Isaac Franks. I forgot to thank him for his Picture pray Soe you doe it for me I think it a Very handsome Picture tho' every one that knows him Tells me it falls Short of the Originall. I have nothing

² Asher Levy, A.F.'s brother, returned to the colonies after this letter was written (see Letter XVI, *infra*, p. 72), and died in Philadelphia in 1742 (see Letter XXVII, *infra*, p. 107). He appears to have been in New York in 1718. Power of Attorney made by Moses Levy to Asher Levy and Jacob Franks, dated Aug. 8, 1718. Con. Lib. 28, cp. 513-514.

³ Probably Frederick Cope (1710-1739) who held several administrative jobs in Antigua including Clerk of the Assembly and Justice of the Peace. Vere L. Oliver, *History of the Island of Antigua* (London, 1896), vol. I, p. ci and vol. III, pp. 98 and 458. The only vessel for Antigua at this time was the eighteen-ton sloop *Revenge*, Gilbert Bosch, master. Its owners were William Smith of New York City and Henry Bonin of Antigua. It sailed about June 2, 1733. NOL, CO 5/1225.

⁴ Col. Nathaniel Gilbert (d. 1761) was a veteran of the Flanders war and colonel of the militia and member of the Antiguan Assembly in 1734 and from 1750 to his death. Oliver, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. xcix and cxix; vol. II, pp. 12 and 14; vol. III, p. 157. In March, 1732, he and Daniel Horsmanden were sworn in as attorneys to the New York Supreme Court and

to distinguish themselves at their first Entrance Did on Fryday Last move for and had a mandamus to the Corporation to restore Mr. Kelly to practice in the Mayors Court... [James Alexander to Cadwallader Colden, March 23, 1732, *Colden Papers*, vol. II (New York, 1919), p. 59].

⁵ Daniel Horsmanden (1694-1778) was a lawyer, merchant, politician and Judge who was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in March, 1763. *Calendar*, pp. 21, 41, 57 and 59.

⁶ Capt. Dennis Downing arrived from London early in June, 1733 on the ship *Alexander* and returned there later that month. *Gazette*, June 18 and 25, 1733.

more to add Soe Shall Conclude this with my Prayers to the Allmighty to have you in his Portection I am My Dear Child

your Lovcing mother

ABIGAIL FRANKS

New York [Monday] July ye 9th 1733

Mr. Nap[hta]ly Franks

[Address]

To

Mr. Naphthli Franks

To be left att Tom's Coffec House⁷ & behinde
the Royall Exchange

In

London

Via Dover

QDG⁸

⁷ Tom's Coffee House was one of many congregated on Cornhill near the Royal Exchange. It was located at 31 Cornhill. In this area, also, were a number of bookshops, such as Ashley, Walthoe, Strahan, Brotherton, Meadows, and Willock's, where N.F. could have purchased the literature his mother so often requested. There was another contemporary Tom's Coffee House on Birch Lane, near Lombard Street, which was nearby and which led into Cornhill. The entire area, including the Royal Exchange and both Coffee Houses were destroyed by the great fire of 1748 [see illustration]. Coffee Houses were at their height of popularity during the eighteenth century, as centers of trade and lodging. Seventeen of the letters included in this volume were sent to Tom's. It is possible that N.F. lived there at times, prior to his marriage, but more likely he used it as did many other merchants as a business and mailing address. Private mail was deposited in the pouches located there, much to the chagrin of the post office. Tom's was the "usual rendezvous of young merchants at Change time..." Lillywhite, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-22 and 581-585. The Royal Exchange, dating from 1566, was a world famous emporium of trade. The Exchange was noted for its "Walks" which displayed goods from such distant places as New England and Carolina, as well as goods of Scotch, Irish, Jewish and Spanish traders. For an interesting floor plan, see plate 4, *ibid.*

For a description of London and the Royal Exchange, and Cornhill Street during the early part of the eighteenth century, see *The Voyage of Don Manoel Gonzales (Late Merchant) of the City of Lisbon in Portugal to Great Britain... Translated from the Portuguese Manuscript*, pp. 2-208, in *A Collection of Voyages and Travels, Volume VII* (London: Thomas Osborne, 1752). Don Manoel Gonzales is the author's pseudonym and his work has been attributed to Daniel Defoe. On pages 118-119 appear a ground plan and a statement on the importance of Cornhill Street. We have reproduced the ground plan showing the location of the ambulatories [see illustration]. As for Cornhill Street we read:

Cornhill Street may, in many respects, be looked upon as the principal street of the City of London, for here almost all the affairs relating to navigation and commerce are contracted, and here all the business relating to the great companies and the Bank are negotiated.

The short title of the book is *The Voyage of Don Gonzales to England and Scotland*. It wasrepub-

IX

[Abigail Franks to Naphthali Franks, June 15, 1735]

DEAR HEARTSEY

You have bin Very Carefull of Late to Remove all my Complaints of Omission and it gives me a Vast Deall of Pleassure to Assure you of the receipt of Severall of yours & two in Peticuler of the Largest Size I note All the Contents And your Intelligence has bin as agreeable As it [is] Various I dont Suppose You Expect I Shall Answer Every Peticuler Paragraph further then wath Justly relates to your Self in the first place then I thank god to hear You was Well And in the favour of your Friends wich blessings I hope may Long attend you & tho' the first is not In y[ou]r Power to Preserve the Latter is wich I am Perswaded you will not Neglect in gratitude to theire Goodness & your Own Intrest I dont Expect this will find You at London¹ and therefore as You Arc Now Launcht out Amongst Strangers You must be Exceeding Circumspect In Your Conduct be Affable to All men but not Credlous Nor to Soon be Led Away by fair Speeches of friendship be Likewise a Very Just Observer of Your word, in all Respects Even in ye most triviall matters, for Ill Habits to too Soon is grown into Customs I am not at All Uncassy on the Score of your Conduct and I allsoe bleive you have hade Caution and advice Enough but Still I Look Opon it As a discharge of my duty to put in My Mite for I Shall Say noe more at Preas[en]t on that Subject but pray ye good God to take you Under his Peculiar Gaurd.

I expect to have your Lett[e]r by Mr. houseman this week a Slop being Expected² Col[one]l morris writes but Very Seldom to his Family wich makes it bleived here things dont goe much to his Likeing for t[ha]t Party have Exulted in Every Small matter they could Lay hold on to Excess And their Silence now makes it thought they have noe great Success party rage has bin Carryed on with Such Violence that for my part I hate to hear it mentioned³ if the Governor has had his fault the other Side have

¹ In the previous letter of April 11, 1735, A. F. mentions that N. F. is "goeing aboard." It is not clear where he went.

² There were several sloops arriving in New York at this time. They came from North Carolina, Antigua, Barbadoes, and Boston. A. F. most probably referred to the sloop *Barbara*, William Griffith, master, carrying goods imported at Boston from London which arrived on June 26, 1735. NOL, CO 5/1222.

³ Members of the Morris' family were quite concerned over the lack of news from Lewis Morris. The effect of this on the political scene is best expressed in a letter of Richard Ashfield to Robert

not bin without theire failings. Capt[ain] Norris I fancy by y[ou]r discourse Could wish he had not medled Soe far and heartly wishes a reconciliation and I dont think the Governor would not be backward If a medium Could be fixt Apon to make it bear without theire Seeming to Seek for it Soe you find its not Soe Eassy to Git friends as to fall Out.

Your Sister Richa has begun to Learn on the harpsicord and plays three Very good tunes in a months Teaching her Master is one Mr. Pachiball⁴ went Over With the Late duke of Portland⁵ to Jamiaca he is allowed to Understand Mussick Mr. Malcolm Says he is Excellent in his kind, Moses has a great Mind to Learn but the Charge Is to much — he Proffits Very much in his drawing and has begun to Learn to paint upon Glass⁶ wich he does Very well he has don half doz[e]n Pictures for Miss Fanny Moore her friendship with Richa Subsist with a Vast deall of Sincerity & Indeed Richa is Like'd by all her Acquaints that know her. And I hope She will Allways have that happyness. Your brother Moses begins to Make a figure he is a Lad of Very good Sence and Very Ingageing & allways merry.

Your friend Mr. Livingston⁷ was Soc Civill to bring me the Letter

H. Morris, June 2, 1735, Morris Papers. See also in the same collection letters written to Robert H. Morris by James Graham on Feb. 4, 1735, by Sarah Kearney on Jan. 5, 1735, and by Isabella Morris on April 8, 1735.

⁴ Charles Theodore Pachelbel (1690-1750) a noted harpsichordist and musician, was very much a part of New York's musical scene. For an example of a public performance, see the advertisement in the *Gazette*, Jan. 6, 1736, advising that on

Wednesday the 21 of January instant there will be a Consert of Musick vocal and Instrumental, for the Benefit of Mr. Pachelbell, the Harpsicord Part performed by himself . . . Consert will begin precisely at 6 o' clock. In the House of Robert Todd Vintner. Tickets 4s.

Todd's Tavern was at Broad Street between Pearl and Water Streets. *Iconography*, vol. IV, p. 544. See also *Weekly Journal*, Jan. 12, 1736. Another concert advertisement for March 9th of that year appeared in the *Weekly Journal* on March 8, 1736.

In addition to concerts, Pachelbel obviously taught to supplement his income. This reference is one of the few to music instruction in the colony. Malcolm's opinion was respected since he also taught music to Moses, as well as to others. He and Pachelbel were one of the few and among the earliest of music teachers in New York. See Richard Ashfield to Robert H. Morris, June 2, 1735, Morris Papers. See also Letter III, *supra*, p. 13, note 8.

Pachelbel had been in Boston and Newport during the early 1730's. He later settled and died in Charleston, South Carolina. Oscar Thompson, ed., *The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians* (New York, 1964), p. 1560; Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness*, pp. 455 and 462.

⁵ Henry Bentinck (1682-1726), first Duke of Portland and Governor of Jamaica from 1721 to 1726, died in office on July 4, 1726. Cundall, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

⁶ Perhaps Moses took lessons from Gerardus Duyckinck, a noted New York limner active in this period. See Letter VI, *supra*, p. 25, note 17.

⁷ A. F. refers to Peter Van Brugh Livingston (1710-1792), who arrived early in May, 1735, after a "Tedious Passage" from London. Peter V. B. Livingston to Henry Van Rensselaer,

You Sent by him the Very Evening he came I have not Seen him Since being he went to Albany almost as Soon as he came and Is but Just returned I shall tomorrow pay his brothers⁸ wife a Visit with whome he Lodges they being Our Neighbours for they dwell in the house next to t[ha]t wich was young Tellers,

I bleive you think wee have abounded in wonderfull Marriages but Especialy david Hays⁹ and Mrs. Grace Levy Must be Something Surprising for my part I Shall hereafter think nothing Imposiabile

If Anny thing Occurs in the part of the World You Arc an Inhabitant in At pres[en]t I hope you will Communicate it I forgot to Tell you Mr. Livingston Gave me an acc[oun]t of the Masqu[era]d[e] before I Opened my Letter, Mr. Polack, And his Wife¹⁰ Goe home by this Oppertunity I dont know how Collys being Sent to holland will be Approved of but in short he Would have bin a Continucall plague to Us. It was my Perswasions to his Uncle and himself that got him off I bleive he will allways be Misserable and I am Sorry for it, bryant¹¹ Talks of Sailing tomorrow If he Tarrys any Longer & I receive y[ou]rs by Via bost[o]n¹² I Shall write

May, 1735, Van Rensselaer-Fort Papers, NYPL. This letter was sent from Albany, for, as A. F. indicated, Livingston went directly to that city.

⁸ Maria Thong (1711-1765) married Robert Livingston, brother of Peter Van Brugh Livingston in 1731. The couple lived in the East Ward in a house owned by Peter. NYAL, East Ward, Feb. 24, 1733. Robert was the only brother married at the time. See George Dangerfield, *Chancellor Robert R. Livingston of New York, 1746-1813* (New York, 1960), p. 517 [genealogical chart].

⁹ David Hays (d. 1778), a merchant made freeman of New York City on September 16, 1735, married Grace Mears Levy, A. F.'s stepmother, later in that month. It was a second marriage for both. Oppenheim Collection, Case D, Box 5, Row 4, AJHSL; *Hays vs. Cazelet* (1735) MCP, file 1730-1740, July, 12, 1735; *Portraits*, pp. 225-226. He was elected Constable of the Dock Ward the following year. *MCC*, vol. IV, pp. 346 and 353.

¹⁰ Probably A. F. refers to Zachariah Polock and his wife, who in 1734 lived in the South Ward. He was referred to by James Alexander in a letter to Cadwallader Colden, dated Feb. 4, 1730, as a Jew who had only a wife and one servant and who "came last Summer and took Capt. Pierces house." NYAL, South Ward, Feb. 18, 1734; *Colden Papers*, vol. II (1919), pp. 6-7. See also note made by Moses Lopez de Fonseca and witnessed by Zachariah Polock on July 10, 1734. *Con. Lib.* 32, cp. 42. Zachariah, whose name often appears in the Minutes of Shearith Israel, is not referred to during 1734-1739, indicating perhaps that Polock was not here and had returned to England as A. F. indicates. *Minute Book*, pp. 21-25, 31 and 41-42. Evidence of his going to London is also found in his advertisement in the *Gazette*, June 3, 1734, that he "being bound for London . . . has sundry dry goods to sell . . ."

There is also an Isaac Polock, a merchant, who was in New York as of 1737 and 1739, *Minute Book*, p. 38; *Jay Day Book*, p. 205.

¹¹ The ship *Albany*, William Bryant master, had arrived from London on May 5, 1735, and cleared for departure on June 19, 1735. *NOL*, CO5/1225; *Weekly Journal*, June 16, 1735.

¹² See *supra*, note 2, p. 40.

You Another Mr. Clark & Family is come to live in Town¹³ Mrs. Beckford bears a Terriable Charector I hope You will take Care and Lett Uss hear from you as Oft as Possiabile you Charge y[ou]r Fathers Acc[oun]t with Rapine's History & write you Send it but it has bin forgot to be put Up I have wrote to y[ou]r Coz[i]n david Salomons about it pray Lett him know Where he may Git it in order to Send it this being wath offers I take my Leave with a Tender parents blessing I am my dear Child

Your Affectionate Mother

ABIGAIL FRANKS

Ive made soc Manny blots that you will be pussled to read this

New York [Sunday] June ye 15th 1735

To HeartSey Franks

¹³ Probably A. F. refers to George Clarke, whose daughter was Mrs. Molly Beckford. See Letter VI, *supra*, pp. 28-29, note 29. Clarke seemingly upset over the "war" between Cosby and his adversaries left New York City for his Long Island home early in 1735, implying that he would return to England. It had been rumored that William Smith and James Alexander, pro-Morris adherents, were to be jailed and he might have felt himself threatened. His return at this time may have been an indication that his political situation was improved. James Graham to Robert H. Morris, Feb. 4, 1735, Morris Papers; *DNB* vol. IV, pp. 151-152.

XXXI

[Abigail Franks to Naphtali Franks, June 7, 1743]

Flatt bush¹ [Tuesday] June 7th 1743

DEAR HEARTSEY

My Wishes for your Felicity Arc As great as the Joy I have to hear You Arc happily Married² May the Smiles of Providence Waite allways on y[ou]r Inclinations And your Dear Phila's whome I Salute with Tender affections pray[in]g kind Heaven to be propitious to Your wishes in making her a happy mother I Shall think the time Tcadious Untill I Shall have that happy Information for I dont Expect to hear it by the return of these Ships³ and therefore must Injoyn Your care in Writting by the first Oppertunity (after the birth of wathever it shall please god to bless you with) Either by Via Carrolina barbadoz or any other. I am now retired from Town and would from my Self (if it Where Possiable to have Some peace of mind) from the Severe Affliction I am Under on the Conduct of that Unhappy Girle Good God Wath a Shock it was when they Acquainted me She had Left the House and Had bin Married Six months I can hardly hold my Pen whilst I am a writting it Itts wath I Never could have Imagined Especialy Affer wath I heard her Soe often Say that noe Consideration in Life should Ever Induce her to Disoblige Such good parents. I had heard the report of her goeing to be married to Oliver delancey⁴ but As Such

¹ Flatbush, Brooklyn, was the site of a country residence of the Franks, although there is no record of their owning property there. They may have rented or been summer guests. A. F. may have been living away from town and not using her Harlem residence in order to obtain privacy as a result of Phila's marriage (see *infra*, pp. 117-118, note 4.) The city was also the scene of a yellow fever "epidemic," which spread along the docks facing the East River. See Cadwallader Colden's account in Letter XXXIV, *infra*, p. 134, note 5.

Flatbush at this time was used as a resort area. Gov. George Clinton wrote in 1751:

I am at Flatbush with family . . . we ride, & shoot & dance & sing & live as Merry as possible. [George Clinton to Robert Hunter Morris, Aug. 18, 1751, Morris Papers].

Years later in 1781, Rebecca Franks, daughter of David and granddaughter of A. F., resided in Flatbush where her neighbors were the Van Hornes, her close friend being Cornelia Van Horne. Rebecca Franks' letter, dated Aug. 10, 1781, HSP.

² See Letter XXVIII, *supra*, p. 108.

³ A. F. was probably referring to Capt. John Griffith on the *Britannia* or John Bryant on the *London*, both of whom were reported cleared for departure on June 27, 1743, in the *Weekly Journal* of that date.

⁴ The marriage on September 8, 1742 of Phila with Oliver Delancey (1718-1785), son of Stephen Delancey and youngest brother of Susanna Warren, is something of a mystery. Seemingly the

Reports had often bin of Either off your Sisters I gave noe heed to it further than a Generall Caution of her Conduct wich has allways bin Unblemish[c]d And is Soe Still in the Eye of the Christians whoe allow She has DisObliged Us but has in noe way bin Dishonorable being married to a man of worth and Charector My Spirits Was for Some time Soe Depresst that it was a pain to me to Speak or See Any one I have Over come it Soe far as not to make My Concern Soe Conspicuous but I Shall Never have that Serenity nor Peace within I have Soe happily had hitherto My house has bin my

event should have been the talk of the town, yet contemporary journals, diaries, newspapers, and letters are strangely silent. A rare notation of the marriage is found in a letter of Henry Beekman to Gilbert [Livingston], dated March 20, 1743:

It is reported that Oliver D.Lancey is mary'd to Mr. Franks daugh[ter] Vaylo a Jew.
[Beekman Papers, NYHSL].

The marriage was a shock to A. F. It was the one event she dreaded most. Inter-marriage was to Abigail, as sophisticated and as worldly as she seemed, a calamity. This seemed to be her greatest fear in the colonial wilderness. Although not specifically referred to in the extant letters, her son David also intermarried. He was betrothed to Margaret Evans only six months after this letter was written. See Letter XXXIII, *infra*, p. 129, note 3.

Oliver may possibly have married Phila for the legacy left by her uncle Isaac, but more likely it was for affection since he must have realized that the family could have refused to give her the dowry. Also Oliver coming from one of the most noted New York families must have met opposition within his own family for marrying a Jew. On Phila's part, the number of eligible Jewish young men in New York was small. Even A. F. had little regard for them. See Letter XXVIII, *supra*, p. 110. Moreover, many, if not most of A. F.'s friends, were non-Jews. Phila may have met Oliver at the home of his eldest brother Peter Delancey who owned a house in the Dock Ward directly adjoining the Franks (see *infra*, p. 118, note 5). Phila who was born June 19, 1722, was about twenty at the time of her marriage, and Oliver, born on September 16, 1718, was about twenty-four. *PAJHS*, vol. 1 (1893), pp. 103-104.

Some time after their marriage, Oliver and Phila lived in Delancey's country seat, near present day 12th Street, west of Ninth Avenue in Greenwich Village. An interesting account is given of the area by Alexander Hamilton, an itinerant traveller, who on June 22, 1744, wrote:

Att twelve o'clock we passed a little town, starboard, called Greenwich, consisting of Eight or ten neat houses, and two or three miles above that on the same shoar, a pretty box of a house with an avenue fronting the river belonging to Oliver Dulancie [Carl Bridenbaugh, ed., *Gentleman's Progress* (Chapel Hill, 1948), p. 52].

Just prior to the Revolution, the couple lived in Bloomingdale, another suburb of Manhattan. In November, 1777, their house was burned by American rebels. D. A. Story, *The Delanceys* (Canada, 1931), p. 75. The assumption that the couple lived in Fraunces Tavern is not correct and arises from the fact that a Frances Delancey resided there. Bayard Genalogy and Family Notes, p. 5, a typescript in NYHSL.

If contemporary reports are to be believed, Oliver was something of a "tough." He was indicted shortly after his marriage on November 3, 1742, for assaulting Judah Mears, the brother of A. F.'s stepmother. Minutes of General Sessions, vol. 1722-1743, p. 320, NYCCO. In 1749, Gov. George Clinton wrote that Oliver and his friends had attacked a poor Dutch Jew and his wife, broke their windows, and swore that they would lie with the woman. Using indecent language, they warned the couple not to bring charges since they were members of prominent families. George Clinton to John Catherwood, Feb. 17, 1749, *Doc. Rel.*, vol. VI, p. 471. Later in the same year, Clinton reported that Oliver had stabbed and killed a Dr. Colchoun in a drunken brawl. *Ibid.*, p. 513. In an election held the following year, the Governor wrote that Chief Justice James Delancey had his

prisson⁵ Ever Since I had not heart Enough to Goe Near the Street door. its a pain to me to think off goeing again to Town And If your Fathers buissness would Permit him to Live out of it I never would Goe Near it Again I wish it was in my Power to Leave this part of the world I would come away in the first man of war that went to London. Oliver has Sent Many times to beg Leave to See me but I never would tho' now he Sent

two Bullies, Peter and Oliver, to frighten those, that his artfull Condesention & Dissimulation could not persuade to vote their conscience [George Clinton to Robert Hunter Morris, Aug. 29, 1750, Morris Papers].

Of course, it must be remembered in evaluating these reports that Clinton was a bitter enemy of the Delanceys and these letters may have been written to embarrass them. Peter Warren, writing in 1750 to Oliver, informed him

you must give me leave in confidence to tell you that the name of Delancey has been so Injuriouse and Scandalously represented that at present there is no possibility of doing you any service in a Public Way [Warren to Delancey, Aug. 11, 1750, Peter Warren Papers, NYHSL].

The note obviously refers to the Delancey-Clinton controversy.

Oliver also appeared to be something of a "dandy" spending considerable time and money on the wigmaker and barber. See William De Witt Day Book, 1739-1752, NYHSL. On April 2, 1743, "Mrs. Dlence" (probably Phila) paid 10 shillings for a "rowr" and £1 for a "wigg for her selfe." *Ibid.*

For genealogical material, see John Watts notes, Delancey Papers, MCNY. The marriage produced seven children, two sons and five daughters — Ann [Mrs. Henry Cruger], Susanna [Lady Draper], Stephen, Oliver, Phila [Mrs. Payne Galway], Charlotte [Lady Dundas of New Brunswick] and Maria [Mrs. Robert Dixon]. Phila was the godparent of the daughter of Pierre de Joncourt and Jeanne Couillette, born May 26, 1749, who incidentally, was called Phila. *Collection of the Huguenot Society*, vol. I (1886), p. 224.

Oliver not only was a merchant with a store in the house of Myndert Schuyler but also was a land speculator. G/AM, no. 37, 75 and 138, Peter Warren Papers, Sussex Archaeological Society, Lewes, England; *Gazette*, May 16, 1748; Jay Day Book, p. 312; Stephen and Oliver Delancey Papers, Bound Volume 1647-1804, items 20, 24, 28 and 39, NYHSL; Index, Grants of Land under Water Bureau of Topography, Room 2040, Municipal Building, New York City; Request of Richard Lush for location of Oliver Delancey land in Otsego County, Jan. 20, 1792, Commission of Forfeiture Papers, Clerk's Office of the Court of Appeals, Albany, N. Y. He served in the British Army during the Revolution as an officer, and had a distinguished military career. Prior to the War, Delancey served as a member of the Provincial Assembly. *Valentine's Manual* (New York, 1864), p. 575.

⁵ Samuel Myers Cohen and Rachel, his wife, deeded two adjoining houses to J. F. and his wife. The property located on the north side of Duke Street had been deeded on Aug. 4, 1727, to Rachel who was then the widow of Samuel Levy [A. F.'s uncle] by Jacob Bratt and Nicholas Ayres. The property was bounded on the east and west by Lawrence Wessels and Abraham Splinter and on the north by Slyck [Mill] Street. Con. Lib. 12, pp. 356-358, Office of the Secretary of State, Albany, New York; Con. Lib. 31, pp. 185-191. This property located in the Dock Ward was close to the Synagogue on Slyck or Mill Street. Leo Hershkowitz, "The Mill Street Synagogue Reconsidered," *AJHQ*, vol. LIII (1964), pp. 404-410. Franks' residence in the Dock Ward in 1733-1734 was close to that of Robert Livingston, Abraham Depceyter, Adolph Philipse, Frederick and Jacobus Van Cortlandt and Stephen Bayard, all wealthy and influential men in the community. NYAL, Feb. 24, 1733 and Feb. 18, 1734. This was probably his residence and his place of business which was at Queen Street for an advertisement in the *Weekly Journal* of March 17, 1735 mentions that the house of the goldsmith, James Heister, is opposite to Mr. Franks merchant in Queen Street.

word that he will come here I dread Seeing him and how to Avoid I know noe way. Neither if he comes can I Use him rudly I May Make him Some reproaches but I know My Self soc well that I Shall at Last be Civill tho' I never will give him Leave to Come to my house in Town And as for his wife I am Determined I never will See nor Lett none of ye Family Goe near her he intends to write to You and My brother Isaac to Endeavour a reconciliation I would have You Answer his Letter. if you dont hers for I must be Soc Ingenious [as] to confess nature is Very Strong and It would give me a Great Concern if She Should Live Un happy tho' its a Concern she does not Meritt. As to the Other Affair you wrote me About You may be Very Eassy on that head the Person Concern'd will give You All the Satisfaction you desire Wath you say about y[ou]r Sisters coming to England I shall Very readily agree to it and the Sooner the better if it was only a Means of her not Seeing the Other wich She will hardly be able to avoid Unless She intirely Excludes her Self from all Company wich She has don for this three months past tho' Phila has not bin in Town⁶ Since she Left Us but has (wathever I have forbid) found means to Send Messages for as they Lived Very Affectionately it Subsists Still And I am Sure She will find all the means She Can to See Richa. I thank you and your Dear Phila in the behalf of your Sisters & My Self for the Profussion of Preas[en]ts Sent Uss I Shall make mine Up but cant Tell when I Shall Wear it for in the mind I am in now I have noe Inclination for dress or Visiting ye Girles will Make theres Up as Soon as they goe to Town wich will be ye Latter end of the Summer they was Just in mourning for my aunt Isaacs⁷ whoe had bin Just Dead when they receiv[e]d them the reasson why I did not Write to Mr. Aaron Franks was not from [lack of] a Duc Sence of Obligations and Gratitude but from an Apprehensiveness of being Trouble Some You may Assure him I am Sensiable of the many kindnesses and

In 1740, J. F.'s property is described in the Will of Jacobus Van Cortlandt as occupying the westernmost position of a double house (probably the two adjoining houses referred to in the Cohen deed) in the Dock Ward bounded by the house of Samuel Bayard and Peter Delancey. The rear lots were divided by a partition wall which went down to the wharf, probably Coenries Slip. The double house is now 80-82 Pearl Street. Will Liber no. 13, pp. 552-561, New York Surrogate's Office, 31 Chambers Street, New York City; *NYHSC*, vol. III (1895), p. 310.

From 1744-1770 Franks residence and/or business address is placed in Dock Street by newspaper advertisements. *Revised Weekly Post Boy*, May 7, 1744; *Gazette*, Dec. 24, 1750, March 31, 1760, Aug. 15, and Oct. 3, 1763, Feb. 20, 27, April 9, and May 14, 1764; *Mercury*, May 9, 1757 and May 12, 1766; *New York Journal*, May 10, 1770. No other deeds have been found either into or out of J. F. to indicate more specifically his residence.

⁶ Phila, as this letter and David's of April indicate, lived at home for six months after secretly marrying. She left home in the latter part of March, 1743, and probably went to Delancey's home in Bloomingdale. Henry Beckman to Gilbert [Livingston], March 20, 1743. Beckman Papers, NYHS.

⁷ Aunt Isaacs, see Letter XV, *supra*, pp. 67-68, note 7.

Favours rec[eiv]ed from him And it gives me pain to Express my Gratitude because wathever I Can Say falls Short of wath is his due from my Family and my Self, tho' If I can bring my mind into any State of Ease I Shall write him by this I wish I could find Any thing Agreable to send to my Dear Phila Moses Sends her a pott of Sweet meets and mordechay Gomez's wife⁸ has Given me a Small pot for You wich I dare Say is Exceeding Good. And I hope You may Use it with pleassure All Friends Say many kind things to You And wish you a great deall of Joy, I shall take Care and Send Some quaiills next faull and secure them better than ye Last. Make my Compliments to Uncle Abraham Franks with thanks for his kind Letters wich I Shall not Answer by this And therefore Desire you would make an Excuse for me Your brother david I hope will doe Very well the Ship is not yet Arrived at Phil[ade]l[phia] as to w[a]th you Say Concerning My brother Nathans Marrying⁹ your reassons are perfectly Just but then on the Other hand it is a great Disadvantage for a man to keep house without a good Mistress Soc that a Wife to him is a Nesscessary Evill my brother mich[a]ell keeps his health And Good Charector wich is to me a great Satisfaction Sol[omon] Hart is absconded in Very Unhappy Circumstance his wife and child is with [about two words made illegible by the fold] wich is all they've got for the honor of being Allied to M H[ar]t Its Commonly Said the rich man is gods Steward. M H[ar]t is a Very Saveing one whoc will Lett a brother Perish when Such a Triffle as £200 might make him happy¹⁰ the married Sister wrote him She had some Tickets in the Lottery¹¹ and if

⁸ Rebecca DeLucena married Mordecai Gomez on May 4, 1741, after his first wife Hester Campos had died. Mordecai held considerable property in the city and had an extensive mercantile business. For Mordecai and Rebecca's marriage contract dated April 30, 1741, see Con. Lib. 32, cp. 205. For Will of Mordecai and further biographical information, see *Wills*, pp. 84-91.

⁹ Nathan Levy's first wife may have been Bila who died in September, 1741. See Letter XXII, *supra*, pp. 91-92, note 6. This is a reference to Nathan's second marriage to someone whose first name was Michal.

¹⁰ Solomon Hart, a merchant and *shohet* [ritual slaughterer] of Congregation Shearith Israel, married Rachel Isaacs sometime late in 1740. As A. F. indicates he ran away in 1743, and, by the following year, he still had not returned. Peter Jay sued Solomon in Mayor's Court in 1744 and the records indicate that the defendant was not found. See, Letter XV, *supra*, p. 67, note 6, and Letter XVI, *supra*, p. 72; *Jay v. Hart* (1744), MCM, vol. 1742-1748, p. 85. The M. Hart, whom A. F. mentions, was undoubtedly Moses Hart, a wealthy London merchant and Solomon's brother. A Solomon who is known to have been the brother of Moses Hart died in England in 1768. Moses Hart was the father of Simha Hart Franks, N. F.'s mother-in-law, and therefore N. F.'s grandfather by marriage. At his death, he did not leave a legacy to N. F.'s wife or any of her brothers or sisters. This led to a complicated legal case that eventually reached the House of Lords. Norman Bentwich "Anglo-Jewish Causes Célèbres," *Transactions*, vol. XV (1946), pp. 112-120. A printed copy of the judgment is in the archives of the American Jewish Historical Society.

¹¹ The government lottery of 1743 had among its prizes, two of £10,000 and four of £5,000. Eighty thousand tickets were sold at £10 each. A total of £304,230 was to be awarded. The

She got a good Prise she would Send him a pr[e]s[en]t if the prayers of the poor Prevaill She may have Success if Sol[omon] Hart puts Up prayers for her being he is Realy Poor & Needy

Now Lett me Say Something for the Distress wee are more nearly Concern'd in and that is poor good moses Solomons is that Unhappy Youth to Spend the best part of his Life as it Where in a Goall for Such may be Termed the Confin[c]d Life he is in att pr[e]s[en]t. wee rec[eiv]ed Letters from him Last week wherin he Complains Pittyously of the Ill Treatm[en]t he meets with from his friends whoc he hardly hears from and when he does never Lett him know wath will be the Consequence of his Detention or wich way he may be cleared Its Very Severe that he Must be the Victim of anothers Villiany the manner in wich he Committed his Error was wath a person of Greater penatration in buissness might have fell into, his Letting Mr. [Sam] Levy come off was noe fault because Mr. Levys pretence was to Come here in order to make Up his Own Affairs that he might the better be inable'd to assist in Dischargeing there Joynt Debts: wich I am affraid he has not much in his power to per form¹² Your Father will Give You a farther Acc[oun]t of this Mellancholy affair. wich I wish may in some

drawing took place on November 21, 1743, but was apparently not of any help to Solomon. *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. XIII (1743), pp. 161 and 611. Moses Hart had previously won a lottery and Solomon's sister may, therefore, have had hopes of winning. See Letter XX, *supra*, p. 84, note 5.

¹² See Letters XXVI, XXVII, XXVIII, *supra*, pp. 102, 106, 109, and Letter XXXII, *infra*, p. 125. J. F. wrote in a letter to Moses Salomons, dated Nov. 25, 1743, that the latter would shortly be on his way to London and from thence to India, "where you soon make up your lost time." Misc. Records, vol. 69A, 1736-1740, p. 4, Probate Court Records, Charleston, South Carolina.

On the commercial activities of Jews with India in the eighteenth century and on, including persons bearing the names of Franks, Hart and Solomons, see Walter J. Fischel, *היהודים הכלליים וטרינייד* [The Jews in India: Their Contributions to the Economic and Political Life] (Jerusalem, 1960), pp. 174-175, lists a number of Ashkenazi and Sephardi merchants maintaining ties between India and England, and dealing with diamonds and coral. These traders had branches in London and in Madras, and Fischel gives data on these activities during the first half of the eighteenth century of individuals bearing such names as Aaron Franks who lived in Madras and who may have been related to the Franks in England. Aaron Franks asked for permission in 1728 to travel to Europe because his affairs required it. Marcus Moses, his partner, petitioned "to return to England by one of the sloops bound thither this season." Persons bearing the family names of Hart, Solomons, Salvador, Franco, de Castro, Espinosa, Nunes, Moses, Pacheco were among the merchants in the Madras, India area. Shortly before coming to these shores, Michael Gratz "probably, early in 1758 or late in 1757, . . . sailed for India, seeking joint account with his London kindred." William Vincent Byars, *B. and M. Gratz: Merchants of Philadelphia, 1754-1798* (Jefferson City, Mo., 1916), p. 12. Schomberg in his diatribe against some London Jews [T]HSE, vol. XX, London, 1964], p. 102 [sheet 6-7] condemns those Jews who on the Sabbar day are overmuch concerned with matters financial, in these words:

In addition, they walk on the day of rest by design in the street of the changer which is called Exchange Alley, to enquire and find out on that day from merchants and brokers if there has been a rise or fall in the price of India (*Hodu*) securities which are called "India Bonds," or if the India (*Hodu*) securities which are called the "southern sea" or South Sea notes of the treasure-house called "*Banco*."

Measure be Happly Terminated: My Compliments to Mrs. Compton & Capt[ain] Riggs I beg they will be Soe good to forgive me that I dont Answer there agreable Favour by this: my Spires is too Depresst to write It is with reluctaney I doe write to Any one at pr[c]s[en]t therefore whoever I Omit You must Excuse me to them I think I've Spun this to a Considerable Lenght and shall Conclude with the Repetition of my prayers for Your Health and Happyness I am

My Dear Son

Your Affectionate Mother

ABIGAIL FRANKS

P. S: Nap[hral]y Hart myers goes on Very well he had noe View but the Discharge of His duty when he Offered his Service to Come over to be with that poor Unhappy Youth whoe I Hartly wish may be Reinstated to his health both of body & mind.¹³

The interest of Jews of London, Amsterdam and New York in India trade continued during the eighteenth century. See, for example, Walter J. Fischel, "From Cochin (India) to New York: Samuel Abraham, the Jewish Merchant of the 18th Century," *Harry Wolfson Jubilee Volume on the Occasion of His Seventy-Fifth Birthday: English Section, Volume I* (Jerusalem, 1965), edited by Saul Lieberman, pp. 255-274, and the "Log Book of the Ship Samson," *PAJHS*, vol. XXVII (1920), p. 239 which is inscribed "Isaac H. Levy's Journal, 1798," and shows conditions, etc. of a voyage between New York, Madras and Calcutta. The sloop started back from Madras to New York on October 17, 1798, but by March 6, 1799, the ship had not yet reached New York. Compare Walter J. Fischel, "The Indian Archives: A Source for the History of the Jews of Asia (from the sixteenth century on)," in *The Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Volume of the Jewish Quarterly Review*, edited by Abraham A. Neuman and Solomon Zeitlin (Philadelphia, 1967), pp. 210-224.

¹³ A. F. here reflects her sentiments with regard to Moses Salomons. Her reference to "Hart" and "Hartly" is another example of her play on names and words.

