

George A. Forsyth, General, U.S.A.
Letter to Rabbi Henry Cohen, of Galveston, Texas
December 27, 1897

Wilkes-Barre, PA December 27th, 1897

MY DEAR RABBI COHEN :

Pardon my delay in answering your inquiry of December 7th regarding Mr. Samuel Schlesinger, who served under my command in the Western frontier in 1868, and who was with me in my fight with the Sioux Indians in the Arickaree Fork. I was very busy when I got your letter, and it was put aside to answer, but in some way I allowed myself to forget it not intentionally, I assure you, for I have a high admiration of the courage and splendid pluck and endurance of young Schlesinger on the occasion above mentioned. Schlesinger was a mere lad at the time, probably nineteen or twenty years of age. He had never been in action prior to our fight with the Indians, and throughout the whole engagement, which was one of the hardest, if not the very hardest ever fought on the Western plains, he behaved with great courage, cool persistence, and a dogged determination that won my unstinted admiration, as well as that of his comrades, many of whom had seen service throughout the War of the Rebellion on one side or the other. I can accord him no higher praise than that he was the equal in manly courage, steady and persistent devotion to duty, and unswerving and tenacious pluck, of any man in my command. It is a real pleasure for me to state this fact. When I wrote the account of my fight on the Arickaree Fork for publication, I took especial pains to commend some of my men, but the article was too long and was cut somewhat by the editor. I especially mentioned the pluck and endurance of this young son of Israel, and spoke of him as a worthy descendant of King David.

In the summer of 1895, a short time after I had written the account of my fight that appeared in Harper's Monthly, I was abroad, and while there I had a letter from Mr. Schlesinger, who is a merchant in Cleveland. I am looking forward to meeting him some day with great satisfaction

I am, sir, with sincere respect,

Very truly yours,
GEO. A. FORSYTH.

Note: Rabbi Cohen had read an earlier article in Harpers, by General James B. Fry, which referred to the exploits of an anonymous "little Jew," described as "among the bravest and most gallant" of the soldiers in the gruesome engagement. Cohen scoured the list of the 50 men, and finding only one Jewish-sounding name, wrote to General Forsyth to confirm the story.