have been a "tent-maker" and that he was engaged in *citicism*, but he appears to

have arisen more from tent-maker. The citizen body, presumably organized in the tribe or *phyle* involved, been offensive to Jews, its as of Tarsus were enrolled ceremonies of the Jewish although we have no extant cities Jewish settlers such as Alexandria, Cyrene, they enjoyed citizen rights, inc group in Tarsus. 105

CHAPTER 4

"This Man is a Roman Citizen"

1. Citizen rights

In Tarsus, then, probably in the first decade of the Christian era, Paul was born. The privilege of Tarsian birth and civic status was, however, outweighed by the fact that he was born a Roman citizen.

The same military tribune in Jerusalem to whom Paul introduced himself as a Jew of Tarsus was surprised to be informed later that Paul was also a Roman citizen. "Tell me", he said to Paul, "are you a Roman citizen?" When Paul said "yes", the tribune answered, "I bought this citizenship for a large sum". 1 "But I", said Paul, "was born a citizen" (Acts 22: 27 f.).

If he was born a Roman citizen, his father must have been a Roman citizen before him. Roman citizenship was originally confined to freeborn natives of the city of Rome, but as Roman control of Italy and the Mediterranean lands extended, the citizenship was conferred on a number of other people who were not Roman by birth, including certain select provincials. 2

But how did a Jewish family of Tarsus acquire this exceptional distinction? The members of this family, by all accounts, were not assimilationist Jews who compromised with Gentile ways: this much is implied by Paul's claim to be "a Hebrew born of Hebrews" (Philippians 3: 5). We just do not know how it obtained Roman citizenship. Cilicia fell within the sphere of command of more than one Roman general in the first century B.C. - Pompey and Antony, for example - and the grant of citizenship to approved individuals was included in the overall authority (imperium) conferred on those generals by law. Presumably Paul's father, grandfather or even great-grandfather had rendered some outstanding service to the Roman cause. It has been suggested, for example, that a firm of tent-makers could have been very useful to a fighting procurator. 3

1. The tribune, Claudius Lysias, probably acquired his citizenship during the principate of Claudius (A.D. 41-54) when, according to Dio Cassius (History 17. 5 f.), citizenship was open to purchase. Technically the citizenship itself was not for sale; the money went to the various intermediaries who could arrange for a man's name to be put on the list of candidates for enfranchisement. See p. 351.


3. E.g. by Sir William Calder in a letter to the author (February 18, 1953).
But no certain evidence is available. One thing is certain, however: among the citizens and other residents of Tarsus the few Roman citizens, whether Greeks or Jews by birth, would constitute a social élite.

As a Roman citizen, Paul had three names – forename (praenomen), family name (nomen gentile) and additional name (cognomen). Of these we know only his cognomen, Paulus. If we knew his nomen gentile, we might have some clue to the circumstances of the family’s acquisition of the citizenship, since new citizens commonly assumed their patrons’ family name – but we are given no hint of it. His cognomen Paulus may have been chosen because of its consonance with his Jewish name Saul (Heb. Ša’ul), which in the Greek New Testament is sometimes spelt Ὁσαύλ but more frequently Ὁσαύλος, the latter form rhyming with Greek Ὁσαύλος.

If the circumstances in which Paul’s family acquired Roman citizenship are obscure, many other questions relating to his citizenship are hardly less so. On more than one occasion, for example – at Philippi and, some years later, at Jerusalem – he appealed to his rights as a Roman citizen. The former occasion was when he protested at having been summarily beaten with rods by the licitors who attended the chief magistrates of Philippi (a Roman colony), without being given a proper trial (Acts 16: 37). On the latter occasion he invoked his rights in order to be spared a scourging (much more murderous than a beating with rods) to which the military tribunal already referred to was about to have him subjected in an effort to discover why his presence and movements in the temple precincts had provoked a riotous outburst among the Jerusalem populace. Paul voiced his protest to the centurion in charge of the men detailed to carry out the scourging, and the centurion in alarm went to the military tribunal: “What are you about to do?” he said. “This man is a Roman citizen” (Acts 22: 26). Hence the interchange between the tribune and Paul quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

Wherever he went throughout the Roman Empire, a Roman citizen was entitled to all the rights and privileges which Roman law provided, in addition to being liable to all the civic duties which Roman law imposed. A citizen’s rights and privileges were laid down in a long succession of enactments – most recently the Julian Law on the public use of force (lex Iulia de ui publica) – going back traditionally to the Valerian Law (lex Valerius) passed at the incep-

4. See p. 221.
5. See p. 351.

2. Citizen registration

But when a man claimed Romanus sum (“I am a Roman”) he was entitled to the protection of the Republic (509 B.C.), and may have gone through a fair public trial for certain ignominy against summary execution for non-citizen subject of Rome.

A new citizen might have some doubts about citizenship; auxiliary they were enfranchised. something of the same sort might, however, produce a new citizen made to register. The newly naturalized citizen might himself be registered by the provincial governor at I record-office (tabularium) or his agent, the professor of inscription (professionatus), and the fact certified by witnesses. The third person, in indirect cases, would rely on the certificate of inscription to be customary for a Roman citizen. He would carry this certificate around as producing it when he needed to prove it. If Paul carried his certificate, he may have been more usual.
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tion of the Republic (509 B.C.). These rights and privileges includ-
ed a fair public trial for a citizen accused of any crime, exemption
from certain ignominious forms of punishment, and protection
against summary execution. To none of these privileges could a
non-citizen subject of Rome lay legal claim.

2. Citizen registration

But when a man claimed his citizen rights—when he said cius
Romanius sum (“I am a Roman citizen”), or its equivalent in Greek—
how did he prove his claim? In the absence of any provision for
verification on the spot, it must have been tempting for a man in a
tight corner to make the claim even when he had no title to it, and
hope to get away with it. Certainly it was a capital offence to claim
falsely to be a Roman citizen, but how was the official before whom
the claim was made to know whether the claim was true or not?

A new citizen might have a duly witnessed copy of his certificate
of citizenship; auxiliary soldiers received such a document when
they were enfranchised, and civilians may have been given
something of the same sort. But Paul was not a new citizen. He
might, however, produce a diplomatic pair of folding tablets, con-
taining a certified copy of his birth registration. Each legitimately
born child of a Roman citizen had to be registered within (it
appears) thirty days of his birth. If he lived in the provinces, his
father, or some duly appointed agent, made a declaration (professio)
before the provincial governor (praeses provinciae) at the public
record-office (tabulario publicum). In the course of his professio the
father or his agent declared that the child was a Roman citizen; the
professio was entered in the register of declarations (album
profissionum), and the father or agent would receive a copy, properly
certified by witnesses. This certificate recorded the professio in the
third person, in indirect speech, and it would include the words:
ciue Romane esse professus est (“he [the father or agent] declared
him [the child] to be a Roman citizen”). It may have been
 customary for a Roman citizen who was constantly on the move to
carry this certificate around with him. If so, we can envisage Paul
as producing it when he had to claim his citizen rights. But could
another copy have been readily procured if the original one was
lost? If Paul carried his around, the chances of his losing it were
considerable—for instance, on the occasion when he spent a night
and a day adrift at sea (2 Corinthians 11: 25). On the other hand it
may have been more usual to keep these certificates in the family

8. Cf. F. Schulz, “Roman Registers of Births and Birth-Certificates”, JRS 32
archives; we cannot be sure. There is a further point to consider: this registration of Roman citizens at birth was apparently enacted by two fairly recent laws – the *lex Aelia Sentia* of A.D. 4 and the *lex Papia Poppaea* of A.D. 9. If Paul was born even a year or two before the earlier of these enactments, would he necessarily have been registered in this way? The fact that such questions can be asked but not answered emphasizes how limited our knowledge is.

Paul’s most momentous invoking of his privileges as a Roman citizen came at a late stage of his career, when he found himself on trial before the procurator of Judaea and “appealed to Caesar” – i.e. appealed to have his case transferred from the provincial court to the supreme tribunal in Rome (Acts 25: 10 f.). The details and implications of this appeal will engage our attention in due course.  

“A Hebrew

1. Paul’s Jewish heritage

More important by Tarsian birthplace important by far is Jewish heritage. When, from on the natural advantages it he begins: “circumcised the the tribe of Benjamin, a He Pharisee …” (Philippians

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His parents’ choice of Saul with their tribal connexion. Hebrew history was Saul, titon weighed with Paul’s p “undesigned coincidence” we know that his Jewish na letters that we know that he ly Christian writers loved to

10. See pp. 363f.
CHAPTER 5

“"A Hebrew Born of Hebrews”"

1. Paul’s Jewish heritage

More important by far in Paul’s own eyes than his Tarsian birthplace and his Roman citizenship, and more important by far for our understanding of him, was his Jewish heritage. When, from a Christian perspective, he looks back on the natural advantages in which at one time he had taken pride, he begins: “circumcised the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law a Pharisee ...” (Philippians 3: 6).

Here, to the statement that he came “of the people of Israel” – i.e. that he was a Jew by birth – he adds further details indicating more particularly what kind of Jew he was.

First, he belonged to the tribe of Benjamin (a claim repeated in Romans 11: 1). The tribal territory of Benjamin originally lay immediately to the north of the much larger area of Judah: Jerusalem, although formally allocated to Benjamin, actually formed an enclave between the two. When the united monarchy was disrupted after Solomon’s death, Benjamin was drawn by the gravitational pull of Judah and Jerusalem into the southern kingdom. The people of Benjamin naturally tended to lose their tribal identity, but some at least did not allow it to be obliterated, and even after the return from exile there were re-settlements both in Jerusalem and in the adjacent Judaean territory of people who continued to be known distinctively as “the children of Benjamin” (Nehemiah 11: 7–9, 31–36). It was probably from some of these that Paul’s family traced its descent.

His parents’ choice of Saul as his Jewish name may be associated with their tribal connexion. The most outstanding Benjaminite in Hebrew history was Saul, the first king of Israel. If this consideration weighed with Paul’s parents, it is possible to recognize an “undesigned coincidence” in the fact that it is only from Acts that we know that his Jewish name was Saul, while it is only from his letters that we know that he belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. Early Christian writers loved to trace in Paul’s activity as a persecutor

1. The expression is derived from J. J. Blunt’s Undesigned Coincidences in the Writings of the Old and New Testaments (London, 1847).
of the infant church the fulfilment of words in the patriarch Jacob’s blessing of his sons: “Benjamin is a ravenous wolf . . .” (Genesis 49: 27)² — but this ingenious fancy has nothing to do with sober exegesis.

In the second place, he describes himself as “a Hebrew born of Hebrews”. In Paul’s writings, as certainly in Luke’s, “Hebrew” is probably a more specialized term than “Israelite” or “Jew”. On another occasion, in a reference to visitors to Corinth who tried to undermine his position in the eyes of his converts there, he says, “Are they Hebrews? So am I” — and the context suggests that “Hebrews” has a more restricted sense than “Israelites” or “descendants of Abraham” (2 Corinthians 11: 25). In Acts 6: 1 “Hebrews” is used in contradistinction to “Hellenists”, although both Hebrews and Hellenists were Jews (in this instance, Jewish disciples of Jesus, members of the primitive Jerusalem church). The distinction was probably linguistic and cultural: the Hebrews, in that case, attended synagogues where the service was conducted in Hebrew and used Aramaic as their normal mode of speech, while the Hellenists spoke Greek and attended synagogues where the scriptures were read and the prayers recited in that language. Many of the Hellenists in Jerusalem would have roots in the lands of the dispersion, like the Cyrenaics, Alexandrians, and people from Cilicia and Asia who attended the synagogue mentioned in Acts 6: 9.³ In the dispersion throughout the Graeco-Roman world, on the other hand, the Hellenists would be the majority of resident Jews while the Hebrews would be recent immigrants from Palestine or members of families which made a special point of preserving their Palestinian ways. We know from inscriptions in Rome and Corinth that each of these cities contained a “synagogue of (the) Hebrews”:⁴ such a designation may point to a meeting-place for Palestinian (and probably Aramaic-speaking) Jews, over against others used by Greek-speaking Jews. Paul’s contemporary, Philo of Alexandria, himself a Hellenistic Jew, employs the word “Hebrews” to denote those who speak Hebrew (and in Jewish Greek literature of the first century A.D., including the New Testament writings, “Hebrew” in a linguistic sense is broad enough to embrace Aramaic).

A Jew born in a Greek-speaking city like Tarsus would naturally be expected to be a Hellenist. Paul might be called a Hellenist in that Greek was manifestly no foreign language to him, but the

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². E.g. Hippolytus, On the Blessing of Jacob, at Genesis 49: 27.
³. It is not certain whether the reference here is to one or more synagogues, but more probably it is to one, attended by Jewish “freemen” from the places mentioned. See p. 67.
⁴. CIG iv. 9909 (Rome); B. Powell, “Greek Inscriptions from Corinth”, AJA series 2, 7 (1903), pp. 60 f., no. 40 (Corinth).

5. Philo, On Dreams, ii.
6. Jerome, De urbe illust
7. This is implied by the Testamentum Graecum (Stuttgart Testament published by ti
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is to one or more synagogues, but “freemen” from the places men-

Inscriptions from Corinth”, AJA

designation on which he insists is not Hellenist but Hebrew. Moreover, this insistence is not based on his upbringing and education in Jerusalem: the phrase “a Hebrew born of Hebrews” indicates that his parents were Hebrews before him. It is difficult to know how much credence to give to Jerome’s statement that Paul’s family came originally from Gischala in Galilee. According to the record of Acts, he could address a Jerusalem audience in Aramaic (Acts 21: 40; 22: 2) and from the fact that the heavenly voice on the Damascus road addressed him in Aramaic – “in the Hebrew language” (Acts 26: 14) – it is a fair inference that this was his mother tongue.

It appears, then, that while Paul was born into a Jewish family which enjoyed citizen rights in a Greek-speaking city, Aramaic and not Greek was the language spoken in the home and perhaps also in the synagogue which they attended. Unlike many Jews resident in Anatolia, this family was strictly observant of the Jewish way of life and maintained its links with the home country. Paul would have been given little opportunity of imbibing the culture of Tarsus during his boyhood; indeed, his parents made sure of an orthodox upbringing for him by arranging for him to spend his formative years in Jerusalem.

According to the most probable punctuation of Acts 22: 3, the exordium of his Aramaic address to a crowd of hostile Jews in the outer court of the Jerusalem temple, he was (a) “a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cilicia”, but (b) “brought up in this city” (Jerusalem) and (c) “educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God...”. The last part of this account is in essential agreement with his more general statement in Galatians 1: 14: “I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of our fathers”. He would have entered the school of Gamaliel at some point in his teens, but his parents saw to it that even his earlier boyhood was spent under wholesome influences in Jerusalem.

Thirdly, by his own account, Paul was “as to the law a Pharisee”. This account is consistent with his statement reported in Acts 22: 3 that he was “educated at the feet of Gamaliel”, who was the leading Pharisee of his day, and with his declaration before the younger Agrippa: “according to the strictest party of our religion I

5. Philo, On Dreams, ii. 250; Abraham, 28.
have lived as a Pharisee" (Acts 26: 5). Even more emphatic is his claim before the Sanhedrin to be "a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees" (Acts 23: 6). The natural sense of this is that his father or remoter ancestors were associated with the Pharisees; it is just possible, thought less probable, that "a son of Pharisees" means "a pupil of Pharisees".

2. The Pharisees

Who, then, were the Pharisees? They first appear by name about the middle of the second century B.C. In his account of the governorship of Jonathan (160–143 B.C.), brother and successor to Judas Maccabaeus, Josephus says that about this time there were three schools of thought among the Jews, the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes, and that while the Essenes were strict asceticists and the Sadducees insisted that all things happened in accordance with men's free will, the Pharisees occupied a middle position in which room was afforded both for divine predestination and human choice. These in fact were probably not the most important points in which the three groups differed one from another, but Josephus was prone to speak of Jewish religious parties as if they were Greek philosophical schools, and drew attention to those features in which he thought Greek and Roman readers would be interested.

Later on he says that Jonathan's nephew, John Hyrcanus, who ruled Judaea for about thirty years (134–104 B.C.), was at first a disciple of the Pharisees, but that he took offence at the blunt outspokenness of one of their number and broke with them, allying himself instead with their rivals, the Sadducees. The Pharisees thus formed a kind of opposition party for several decades, and suffered harsh repression, especially at the hands of Alexander Janneus (103–76 B.C.).

Josephus does not trace the spiritual ancestry of the Pharisees, but it is very probable that they arose within the ranks of the 'strādin or "godly people", who are referred to in the books of Maccabees as "Hasidaeans" (1 Maccabees 2: 42; 7: 14; 2 Maccabees 14: 6). The origin of these Hasidaeans is probably to be sought among the godly people in Judaea who, some decades after the return from exile, banded themselves together in order to encourage one another in the study and practice of the sacred law in the midst of what they saw as moral and religious declension. In the book of Malachi we are told that "those who feared Yahweh spoke to one another; Yahweh heeded and heard them, and a book of remembrance was

written before him of their name. They shall be possession on the day which spares his son who is only spared on that day. The righteous shall rise up when the wicked are laid low, on the day when"

These people's passing illustrated in Psalm 1, hardship and persue "testimonies", but could be sweeter than honey (Hellenistic ways into J.) and were despised a younger generation, everyone welcomed the new face, in the fair to extinguish Jewi Hasidaeans who showed them offered passive a crown of martyrdom made common cause. Cabaeus and his broth standard of revolt a Seleucids.

The guerrilla warfare expected. The king's policy had been ill-advised it, permitting the religion and restoring God of Israel. Many covenants with this, since the freethinkers. They with the Hasmonaeans enthusiastically in this fight increasing Hasmonaean power. In 152 B.C. by the king of Hasidaeans - Qumran - was so of dignity of the house acknowledge him as l
PAUL:
Apostle of the Heart Set Free

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there the heart is free"
(2 Corinthians 3: 17, Basic English Version)

F. F. BRUCE