



The Solomons Family

The Solomons family is one of the oldest and most distinguished families established in Ireland (1824) and has roots in England back to the mid 1700's.

MAURICE AND ROSA SOLOMONS



Portrait of Maurice Solomons by Estella Solomons ©The I. J. M. and gift of the Friends of the National Collection.



Portrait of Rosa Solomons by Estella Solomons ©The I. J. M. and gift of the Friends of the National Collection.

Maurice Solomons (1832-1922)'s father, Elias (1799-1876) had two optician shops in London where he sold optical, mathematical instruments, and aids for sight, hearing and voice. In 1824 Elias opened an optician's shop in Nassau St. Dublin which continued until 1904 when Maurice retired. In later years Maurice became a director of Boland's Bakery and a Justice of the Peace. In 1902 he became honorary Vice-Consul to the Austro-Hungarian Empire and in 1912 he

became Honorary Consul. One of his last activities in this role concerned the publication of the Austro- Hungarian General Mobilisation Order in the Irish Times at the outbreak of the First World War.

Rosa (Jacobs)'s family was from Hull in north England. She was the sixth child of 14 children born to Esther Lyon and Bethel Jacobs. Bethel's father Israel Jacobs (1773-1853) had lived in Hull since at least 1801 where they were silver/goldsmiths and watch makers with shops in Hull and Scarborough. Rosa had spent 4 years studying in France and Germany. She was a pianist and published poet. Rosa and Maurice married in 1878. They were both instrumental in the development of the Adelaide Road Synagogue in 1892. This synagogue replaced Mary's Abbey synagogue where Rosa had established the Sabbath School in 1882. Rosa was involved in the Irish Women's Suffrage and Local Government Association in 1913.

Maurice and Rosa were dedicated to Jewish education and Adelaide Rd. synagogue contained an annex for schoolrooms. Rosa founded the Adelaide Girls' Friendly Society, and for 28 years Maurice was the Honorary Manager of the Jewish secular schools.



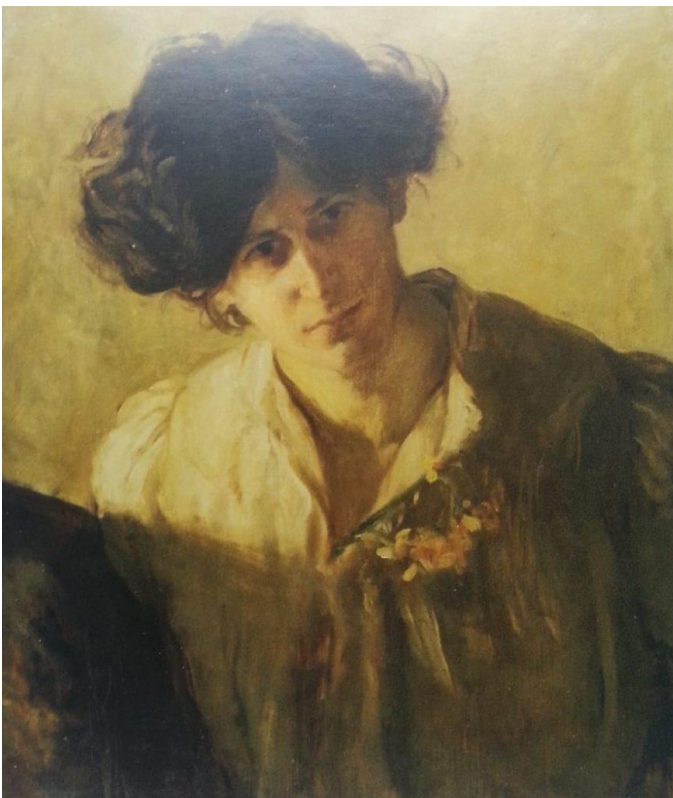
Edwin Solomons



Portrait of Edwin Solomons by Leo Whelan ©Dublin Hebrew Congregation

Edwin Maurice Solomons, was a prominent figure in the Irish Jewish community and international business. He was the first member of the Irish Stock Exchange and travelled extensively in Latin America, promoting oil and commodities trade, along with Jewish cultural exchange. He was closely associated with Adelaide Road synagogue and was President of the Dublin Hebrew Congregation from 1924-1964. His service to the community is commemorated in a grove of trees planted on his eightieth birthday in Israel.

Estella Solomons



Self portrait of Estella Solomons Estella Solomons
©The Trustees of the Estate of Estella Solomons

Estella Solomons (RHA) was born in Dublin in 1882, the second child of Maurice and Rosa Solomons. Among her achievements she was to become an artist, a republican and a significant contributor to *The Dublin Magazine*. Estella Solomons was educated in Dublin and Hanover before she enrolled in the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art (DMSA). Estella Solomons went on to study at Académie Colarossi in Paris and London's Chelsea School of Art before returning to Dublin where she continued at the DMSA. She developed an extensive portfolio of oil landscapes and portraits as well as etchings. Throughout her life Estella Solomons exhibited over 200 paintings at the Royal Hibernia Academy of Arts.

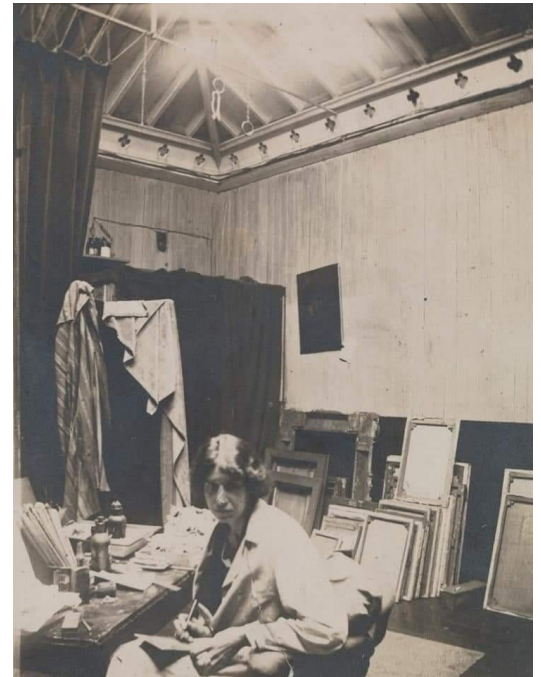
In 1910 Estella Solomons rented her first studio on Great Brunswick Street (now Pearse Street). Her studios became safe-houses for those on the run in the War for Independence and Civil War. Estella painted portraits of many of the leading revolutionary and cultural figures of the time. In 1917 Estella Solomons joined Cumann na mBan and it is reported she hid arms and ammunition in the garden of her parent's home.

She supported prisoners and their families throughout the War for Independence and Civil War, sending them food, cigarettes and books. Estella Solomons' anti-Treaty position was evidenced in 1925 when she refused to be re-appointed to the teaching staff of the DMSA as she would not take part in the required oath of allegiance to the British crown which was only removed in 1932.

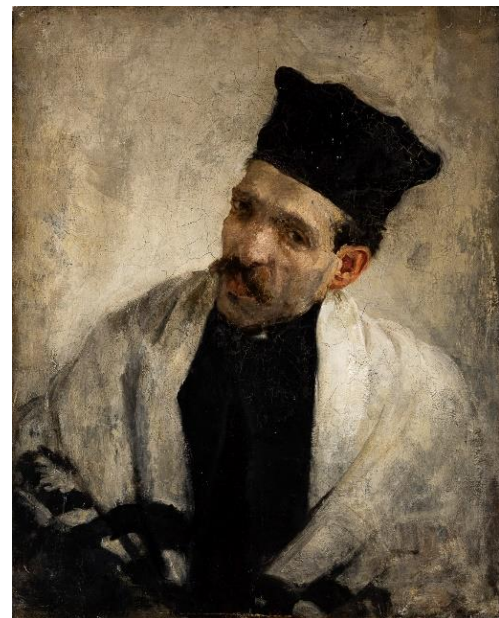


The Solomons Family home at 26 Waterloo Road where Estella hid arms and ammunition in the vegetable garden.

It was around 1910 when Estella Solomons met her future husband Seumas O'Sullivan (born James Starkey). Seumas O'Sullivan was a poet, actor, essayist, bibliophile, and editor, and worked in his father's apothecary shop in Rathmines until 1923. Out of respect to her parents, Estella Solomons waited until her parents' death before marrying Seumas O'Sullivan who was a Methodist. She and Seumas worked closely together on the Dublin Magazine which he edited from 1923 to 1958. The O'Sullivan's regular 'at homes' provided the opportunity for artists and literary figures to come together.



Estella in her studio in Brunswick St.



A portrait of Rev. Gudansky by Estella Solomons

BETHEL SOLOMONS



Portrait of Dr Bethel Solomons by Estella Solomons
©The Trustees of the Estate of Estella Solomons

Bethel Solomons was a distinguished gynaecologist and obstetrician who became a Master of the Rotunda and President of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. After graduating from Trinity College, he continued to develop his medical knowledge and studied in clinics in Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden and Munich. He supported the suffrage movement, and believed in women's equality. In 1913 the Jewish Medical Dispensary was opened in Stamer Street and this was operated by Solomons and Ada Shillman, a midwife who attended most of the Jewish women in the city. As the second world war approached, he worked to raise funds for the Jewish Refugee Aid Committee of Eire, and later became chairman of the Jewish Children's Refugee fund. Dr. Solomons became President of the newly formed Progressive Congregation (DJPC), 1946 to 1965.



Portrait bust of Bethel Solomons by Jacob Epstein.
Photograph: Courtesy of the National Gallery of Ireland



Bethel Solomons' rugby cap 1908. He won ten international caps for Ireland 1908 -1910.

In addition to the many professional honours Dr. Solomons was awarded in his lifetime, Bethel Solomons played rugby for Ireland. He acted at the Abbey in 1913. Together with his sister Estella Solomons, he was part of the literary/artistic circles of Dublin in the early 20th century, and became friends with many of the leading artists and writers, including James Stephens who dedicated *The Charwoman's Daughter* to him. Bethel married Gertrude Levy, a friend of his sister Sophie and the Solomons had three children, Bethel, Michael and Margaret.

Sophie Solomons



Portrait of Sophie by her sister Estella Solomons

The youngest member of the family, Sophie received numerous awards for her singing voice as a young girl in Dublin and went on to train as an opera singer at the Royal Academy of Music in London. She married her cousin Bethel Lyon Jacobs and had two sons, Brendon Bethel and David Maurice.



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