Rabbi Shemtob Gaguin (1884-1953)

Rabbi Shemtob Gaguin(e) was born in Jerusalem in 1884. Rabbi Gaguin was a British Sephardic Rabbi and a descendent of a famous Moroccan Rabbinical dynasty which emigrated to Israel from Spain at the time of the Inquisition. He was the great-grandson of R. Hayim Gaguin, the first Chief rabbi (Chakham Bashi) of the Israel during the Ottoman Empire.
He studied at the "Doresh Zion" school in Jerusalem and was a pupil of the celebrated Rabbi Jacob Alfiye. At an early age, he contributed articles to the Palestinian Hebrew Press ("HaChabbazelet") on aspects of Jewish traditional observances, as well as on biblical and philological matters. He was awarded rabbinical diplomas by numerous authorities, including Rabbi Chayim Berlin (the son of the Natzi"b) and Chief Rabbis of Israel Ya'aqob Meir and Abraham Kook
In 1920 he accepted a position of Rabbi of the Sephardic community of Manchester and at the same time he was a Dayan (Rabbinical Judge) in the Manchester Rabbinical court (Bet Din).
From 1921 he was the head of the Sephardic communities of London. Rabbi Gaguin died in Manchester, 1953.
Rabbi Shemtob Gaguin

Among his works we find:
√ A study on origin and history of the *Jews of Cochin (India)*
√ *Shulchan Arukh*, a critical study of the Jewish Codex based on several old editions and unpublished manuscripts.
√ Commentaries on Midrash Rabba and Midrash Tanchuma
His most famous book is **Keter Shem Tob**, an encyclopedic treatise which examines and compares the Tefilot and traditions of the Eastern (Turkey, Israel, Egypt Syria) and the Western (Amsterdam, London, NY) Sephardim, paying particular attention to the customs of Spanish and Portuguese Jews. The first two volumes were published in 1934. The final work comprised a total of 7 volumes, the last 3 of which were published posthumously with the help of his son, Rabbi Dr. Maurice Gaguine.

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