The Edinburgh Star

Journal of the Edinburgh Jewish Community

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Editorial

The Edinburgh Star

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Front cover: Joseph Daniel Huber, Bird's eye view of part of the old town and Jewish quarter. Detail from an orthographical sketch of Prague, 1769. China ink drawing from the National Library of Vienna.

The March editorial concluded: "We hope that support at every level will continue to keep the Star twinkling". This issue has attempted to reflect the fact that the *Edinburgh Star* is first and foremost a *community* magazine. Of course this raises the question of the meaning of the word 'community'.

The simplest definition of a community is a group of people in which everyone contributes according to their ability and everyone receives according to their need. On this definition, Kibbutzim and different religious groups are communities par excellence. It is adherence to this view of community that has led to criticisms in some quarters about its application in expressions such as Community Charge and Community Care. The first has very little to do with the ability to pay, whilst the second bears only a small relation to people's needs. Be that as it may, it is hoped that the next few issues of the Star will be a community venture in every sense of the word, producing articles primarily, though by no means exclusively, by and for the community and put together by a production team rather than by a single person.

This small shift in emphasis is in no way to denigrate the achievement of the permanent Editor. Without Eitan Abraham's initiative, drive and enthusiasm, the whole project would never have got off the ground. However it has to date been very much the work of one man and he himself would be the first to recognise that the time has come to make it more of a community effort. It is with this in mind that in addition to setting up a production team some of the more active members of the community have been appointed 'roving reporters'. There is also the promise of a Children's Page for the September issue. None of this should discourage individuals from coming forward with their own stories, observations and ideas. Letters to the editor would be especially welcome as would names of both possible future subjects for articles and potential authors.

This issue contains articles on a wide variety of subjects and also includes the first in a planned series entitled 'Maverick Shuls', that is congregations which remain unaffiliated to any of the main groupings of British Jewry. Ideas for future 'Mavericks' would be greatly appreciated. In the meantime it is to be hoped that the present edition will be a source of enjoyment and inspiration to all readers and hence to all potential contributors!

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Two Double Acts

Cassie Mendelssohn and Esther Sofaer each write about their Batmitzvah

while Philip Goldberg reveals the complications in organising a Barmitzvah for twins

I had been looking forward to my Batmitzvah for well over a year, but it wasn't until Mum and Dad discussed the ceremony with Rabbi Shapira and started making arrangements for a party at home that I realised what a lot of work I would have to do. Ian Leifer very kindly helped me with learning the Ten Commandments and the Rabbi taught Cassie and me the other things we had to do. The day before, visiting relatives came to our house and said they were looking forward to the Service. I hope they weren't disappointed! During the ceremony I read a poem that my Grandpa, Ellis Sofaer, wrote specially for the occasion. Here it is.

For Esther

Farewell to Childhood's cloudless days And Hail to Youth! whose rising dawn Unveils the world as if new-born And rich with wonders to appraise.

Hail to the years that lie ahead That like a river flowing free To adult life will carry me, To choose the path I wish to tread.

Whate'er it be, my chosen way I shall with diligence pursue May Providence, in all I do, Protect my course from disarray.

And let these tenets be my guide: To be of trust in word and deed, Compassion show to those in need, And friendliness on every side.

This great big globe that we possess, Its beauty flaunts before our eyes: The earth, the air, the seas, the skies, Entrance us with their loveliness.

And as great trees from saplings rise And mark the seasons in their flight, Their flowers bloom to give delight, Their fruit they offer as a prize,

So let my efforts thrive and be As fruitful in maturity.



Cassie Mendelssohn read the following poem by her grandfather, Moshe Davis

In the Beginning

Once, just once
Out of chaos and out nothing,
Came forth light and form.
And every human being thereafter
Has been created a blend of both.

The more light,
The greater the beauty of the being
And of the world it contains
And the universe within which it is
contained.

Ultimate Beauty, absolute Beauty, Comprises solely of light Which will last and shine forever.

And as it shines, so it creates love, And every soul rejoices in that light of love.

Yours is the light and the love For eternity And for all the worlds. Amen At first I was a little bit nervous at the thought of standing up in front of so many people, but after a while the thought went out of my mind. The Rabbi taught us both well so it all went smoothly. After the service a kiddush was held.

Later on we had a family lunch in the hall and we were joined by the Rabbi and his wife. That night I had a disco with cheder and school friends. I really enjoyed my day but I guess I am glad that I do not have to do it again.



It wasn't the Barmitzvah of the Year—it was the Barmitzvah of 132 Years!

by Philip Goldberg

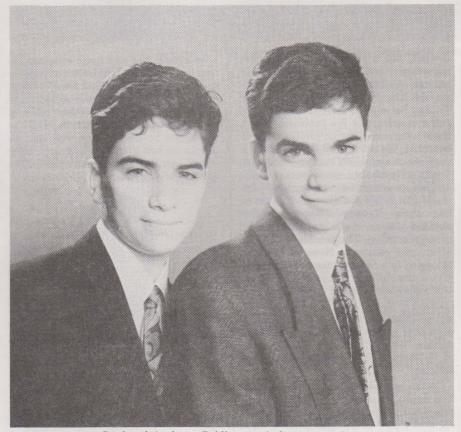
When you have twin boys, you worry twice as much and twice as soon about their Barmitzvah. True, you only need one 'affair' and you save on the speeches, but there's a need for a lot of meticulous planning and preparation. The first problem was that of the religious format.

In the absence of a precedent in Edinburgh for 132 years, I asked Ministers and Rabbis and lay people. To my surprise, I discovered that nobody knew. I then solved the problem at the library by establishing that there are no specific rules in Jewish Law or Tradition as to how a Barmitzvah is to be celebrated-let alone one for twins! Armed with this freedom of action, we blended our own version for the sharing of the honours in keeping with the sole need for each one to be called up to recite the brochas on the appointed day. Difficult as the Shabbat preceding Pesach may appear for visitors, it was the correct date according to their Jewish Birthdays and we stuck to it. I need not describe the details which are familiar to everyone who has made a *simcha* from organising caterers to *kiddush* to seating plans to printers and speeches and flowers. Even clothes and rehearsals and out of town *mishpocha* all call for worry and 'aggro'.

To all this was added the extra dimension of the twins' personalities and sense of humour, consistently driving their parents *meshuga* as the day drew closer.

Suddenly the day arrives and it is too late—no longer can you alter the menu, or Mrs. X's seat next to some relative to whom she is not talking at present; you simply put on the new outfit (hoping it won't rain) and go to shul. All the blackmail and threats melt away as the two proudly perform and hopefully the entire congregation *kleibs nachas* from a lovely day in the annals of the community.

Let's hope there's another one before a further 132 years pass by.



Paul and Anthony Goldberg, twin barmitzvah boys.

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A Memorial to Rabbi Dr. J. Weinberg



The Memorial Stone in memory of Rabbi Dr. Jacob Weinberg was consecrated at Piershill Cemetery on Sunday 25th March. Rabbi Shapira officiated and delivered the hesped. A plaque was later unveiled in the synagogue vestibule by Mrs. Weinberg. In paying tribute to Rabbi Weinberg, John Cosgrove, President of the Synagogue, made mention of his many qualities as a scholar, preacher and ambassador for his people. Rabbi Weinberg had also taught in the Extra Mural Department of Edinburgh University and the many non-Jews present at the Consecration who had been his pupils showed the high esteem in which he was held. Rabbi Weinberg was Minister of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation from 1961 until his retirement in 1980 after which he was appointed Rabbi Emeritus.

Letter

7 Arden Street Edinburgh EH9 1BR

On page 8 of Issue No. 4 of the Star, it is stated that Dr R. Hoffenberg was the first Jewish President of the Edinburgh University Students Union. May I now inform you that whereas Ronnie Hoffenberg was President of the Union in 1963/64, Ivan Joffe, a native of Port Elizabeth, South Africa, had the honour of being President of the Union in 1934/35

Yours faithfully, John M. Rosenbloom

VIEWS

The editor wants to hear your views and opinions on all matters of local and general Jewish interest. Write to the Star and tell us what you think. Letters should be sent to: The Editor, Edinburgh Star, 4 Salisbury Road, Edinburgh EH 16.

A CONVERSATION WITH A STRANGER ON HOLIDAY

A cautionary tale by Andre Curzon

In the early 1980s my wife and I used to go regularly to Mallorca on holiday. One day, as we managed to squeeze on to the beach, I started a conversation with a man sitting next to me. Being of German stock, he spoke very good English. He turned out to be Jewish. After preliminary remarks about the condition of the beach and the service in the hotel, etc., he told me that he managed to establish a very successful business in Palma and how lovely it was to live in such a beautiful holiday resort. Said I: 'Surely there must be a problem somewhere?'

'Well', he said, 'actually there is. I've got a family of three, a girl and two boys. The girl is nine and the boys are twins of seven. They all speak Spanish well. They seem to enjoy their school and their friends. The trouble is that all the children get their religious education and my children want to know why they are excluded. The fact is that since Mallorca has become such a prosperous and very popular tourist centre, I have discovered about a dozen Jewish families, all facing the same problems. Our children seem to live in limbo and they are not very happy about it. They know they are

Jewish, but they would like to know something about it. They are beginning to ask awkward questions as they should like to belong to something. Things became so serious I decided to call a meeting of a few families. In fact there were more Jewish families than I expected. We all agreed that we had a very serious problem calling for a solution and probably common to many Jewish communities throughout the world. We would not like our children to lose their identity altogether. The obvious answer was to give them a religious education. The trouble was none of us was religious. None of us ever belonged to a Shul. Someone suggested giving the children a Zionist education. Unfortunately, none of us was Zionist.'

Said I: 'You are not Zionists, you are not religious, what was it actually that prompted you to want your children to remain Jewish?'. He said: 'There seems to be more to it than just religion or Zionism'.

A few years later I happened to meet him again. I asked him what had happened to his education problem. He told me that they had brought down a very good young teacher. He was both a staunch Zionist and quite religious, so much so that the children had become quite frum (orthodox) and were 'making our life hell.' He continued: 'Actually we are now looking for another teacher. Shmuel went into business and he seems to be doing very well and of course he has given up teaching. How would you like a nice cushy job in this lovely holiday resort?'



Andre Curzon came to Britain in 1940 with the Polish Army. He married the late Freda Lichtenstein, the daughter of a well-known Edinburgh family. He settled in linburgh in 1947 and has been a member of the Community ever since. He has two sons, one in Israel and one in London.

'The Seder' by Rose Orgel

Once the turn of the year arrives, the thoughts of the Communal Hall Ladies' Committee turns to 'The Seder'. 'The Seder' being the one the Committee organises every year for the Committee organises every year for the Community and any strangers who may be in town. The same questions always arise: on which night will it be held, what sort of meal shall we serve, who will do what. Members of the ladies' Guild see to the washing of all the dishes and to the kashering of the glasses. Joe Lurie kindly ensures that the necessary saucepans are kashered and the indispensable and indefatigable Christine Burns is

always there on hand. Once the Pesach order is received, the preparations commence. The cooking has to be done, tables have to be set and people placed, as families and friends naturally want to sit together. There are Seder Plates to prepare. All in all it is a truly mammoth task. However, the ladies take it in their stride and on the evening 85 people sat down to share, once more, the particular magic of a Seder. Rabbi Shapira conducted the proceedings in his own inimitable way. The warm enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment emanating from both him and his wife Rachel, soon

had everyone joining in. Selected portions of the Haggadah were read by different people either in English or in Hebrew and the Rabbi explained various parts of the service particularly for the benefit of a number of non-Jews present. The success of the evening made all the foregoing hard work worthwhile. The Committee would welcome new members to help in this and all functions we hold throughout the year. We work hard to enable everyone to have the benefit of a Communal Hall. We look forward to the continuing support of the Community.

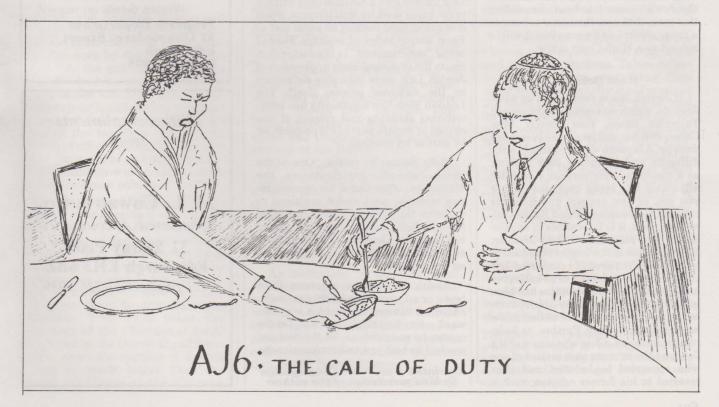
AJ6 by Jonathan Raab

The Association of Jewish Sixthformers is now in its fourteenth year as a national movement. It has been operating in Edinburgh for two years. Benji Fidler ran things at first but has now gone to University. I became involved at the National Conference last December. I joined the National Executive as Northern Region Chairperson. Northern Region covers Scotland and the North of England.

The aims of the Association are firstly to bring together young Jewish people in their final years of secondary school and secondly to help members to cope with any anti-semitism and anti-Zionism which they may face in the course of their Higher Education. In many University Student Unions there are frequent proposals to ban all Jewish societies. Most of the time these proposals do not carry but only after much debate and accusations that Zionism is racist.

Nicky Cosgrove is also on the National Executive as the Israel Officer and he and David Donne are very helpful in arranging meetings. Unfortunately there have not been as many meetings as had been intended but we hope to rectify this is the next few months.

The most recent national AJ6 event was the Spring National Weekend which took place in Swanage, Dorset. My sister Anna and I made the very lengthy journey to the South Coast. The theme of the weekend was 'Superheroes', which involved looking at our personal and our Jewish heroes and heroines throughout history. We discovered that we all had different people whom we regarded as being heroic and that there are many different qualities which characterise the hero. All 60 of us who went to the weekend showed great heroism in battling with the food-the worst yet on any AJ6 event.



The Cohen Case: The Need for a Timely Response by Rabbi Rodney Mariner

When Talmud argues a matter, to a point that no conclusion is reached, it sometimes used to term teyku—let the matter stand, stalemate. On other occasions, when the limits of human reasoning have been reached and no solution to a problem has been found, the sages will agree to let the matter rest $ad\ yavo\ eliyahu$ —until the Prophet Elijah will come, the harbinger of the Messiah and the provider of answers to all unsolved problems.

Sometimes, when the consequences touch human lives and are not simply academic discussions on the philosophy of law, an agreement to differ is no solution and waiting for Elijah is not a realistic option. Such is true in the case of Paula Cohen and her two children. In 1981, Paula Cohen was converted to Judaism in Israel, under the authority of the then Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren, who included in her conversion certificate a limitation which indicated that it would be invalid outside of Israel. After the conversion, she married a Cohen, a union which, though forbidden by Halachah (Jewish Law), is not invalid. The Cohens left Israel and settled in the Newcastle area, where her two children (aged 5 and 7) attend King David Jewish Day School. The school, having been told by person or persons unknown that Mrs. Cohen's conversion was invalid, excluded the children from prayers and religious studies. Over the past months, the Jewish press has been chronicling this case, that now threatens to become a cause célèbre, as it seems that it will be subject to a High Court action.

Hard Done By

If Jewish law is determined by what Jews do, which was certainly the case in Talmudic times, then clearly Mrs. Cohen and her children have been hard done by. A layman would certainly have difficulty understanding such a thing as a conditional conversion; it is, after all, surely like being pregnant-either you are, or you are not and however rational the reasons behind Rabbi Goren's decision, it is impossible to be Jewish in one place and not in another. Even to argue that a higher standard of behaviour is required of a converted Jew than a born Jew, ceases to be subject to any control once Jewish status has been given. It is the right of any Jew, converted or not, to be as good or as bad a Jew as seems appropriate. Further, as halachah informs us, a Jew who sins is still a Jew and the extreme case is cited of one who converted to Judaism and then reverted to his former religion; such a

one, we are taught, is still a Jew, albeit a Jewish apostate.

Controversial

Rabbi Goren's strange position on the Cohen conversion certificate is just another example of this highly controversial Rabbi's way of solving problems on his "patch"; the Langer case, which threatened to topple the Meir government, is perhaps the most celebrated example. The London Beth Din's failure lies not in the stringency (if the newspaper reports are to be believed) with which it has treated the Cohen case, but its failure to do as Goren did, namely, find a solution that confronted the circumstances, in this case Mrs. Cohen and more importantly her children.

Lay Jewish opinion will find in this saga another confirmation of the irrational rigidity of halachah, yet nothing could be further from the truth. Jewish Law fails to find a solution only when it is not being used for that purpose, when it is being used instead as some sort of Egon Ronay index of zealotry. Fear of being "out-frummed" is the factor that limits the compassionate application of Jewish Law more than any deficiency in the halachic process itself. The London Beth Din's authority has international standing and respect; it can choose to remain part of the problem, or be part of its solution.

Adin Steinsaltz writes: "One of the great Talmudic commentators, the Maharsha, often ended his commentaries with the work *vedok* (continue to examine the matter). This exhortation is an explicit admission that the subject has not been exhausted and that there is still room for additions and arguments on the question".

Vedok is a better response than teyku or ad yavo eliyahu because halacha must always represent a way forward, a way beyond the impasse. Let the matter be re-examined, let the decision reached by both just and compassionate.

Reprinted from 'Our Congregation' by kind permission of the author.

MARINER, Rabbi Rodney John, B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.; b. Melbourne, Australia, May 29, 1941; M., Belsize Square Synagogue, Assoc. M., Edgware & District Ref. Syn. (1979-82); Asst. M. North Western Ref. Syn. (1976-79). Ad.: 52 Stanhope Ave., N.2 3NA. Convener of the Beth Din of the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain.

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BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE -NEW GROWTH ON OLD ROOTS

by Rabbi Rodney J. Mariner

Belsize Square Synagogue, London, has always been a puzzlement, the oddone-out among those congregations that define themselves as Reform, Liberal or Progressive. The distinctiveness comes not simply from its being founded by German and central-European refugees but from the style of Judaism they have preserved, a style which is without exact parallel anywhere else in the British Isles. It is true that both the Reform and Liberal movement trace their origins to the same forces that shaped German Jewish Liberalism but as scholars have noted, where the British movements had sought to establish a Judaism independent of traditional Judaism, German Liberale Judaism was an attempt to "reform from within". Nineteenth century German Liberale Jews had no intention of breaking with traditional Judaism, rather they sought to adapt it to their own experience of emancipation.

In form, German Liberal Judaism differed markedly from other reform manifestations, indeed the term "reform" was restricted in Germany to the most radical congregations and was to a large extent anathema to traditionalist Liberalism. In content however, German Jewish Liberalism shared that which was to be the essence of all other forms of progressive Judaism. It declared that Judaism is a dynamic process which draws its inspiration from the creative tension that links the wisdom of the past with the learning and experience of the present. It evinced a love of form as well as content which expressed itself through the application of aesthetic principles to public worship. It accepted the fruits of modern biblical scholarship as enhancing but not endangering the authentic voice of scripture in contemporary life. Finally, it endorsed Geiger's principle of "progressive revelation" because it represented the most significant contribution to Jewish thought in the modern age. In so doing, it affirmed the ever-present nature of the encounter between humankind and God, refusing to accept revelation as the "once and for all" event of Sinai, forever beyond the reach of subsequent generations.

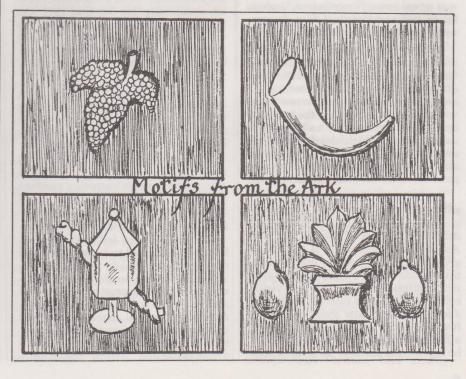
When the community of refugees that became Belsize Square Synagogue was established fifty years ago, it was apparent that they were not prepared to jettison their form of service for membership of the British Reform movement

with which on ideological grounds there was kinship. Instead, they chose to place themselves for a time under the Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues with whom, despite their name, they had little in common beyond a profound and abiding affection for the Hon. Lily Montague who had done so much for this group as they struggled to rebuild broken lives and families. Being under the aegis of the U.L.P.S. the new community, clinging to its heritage in a strange land by its finger tips, was able to use its own prayer book; many had been brought among the few treasured possessions when they fled their homes. However, there were never enough books, so Belsize Square became known as "the German Liberal synagogue that uses the Singer's prayerbook"

Belsize Square Synagogue is not a museum piece, a nineteenth century cultural artifact. It is true that its music dates from that period and it is quite magnificent and that its Chazan led services can still be followed in any traditional prayerbook but it is not frozen in time. Belsize Square is an independent synagogue that defines itself as "radical traditionalist", that oxymoronic label is given credence by its new prayerbook which is able to combine a traditional Hebrew text on one page with a "gender inclusive" translation

on the other. This radical traditionalism is a Judaism that responds to both past and present Jewish needs as surely as it seeks to provide for the future. It does so by maintaining that same openness to the millenial Jewish experience that is reflected in Franz Rosenzweig's "nothing Jewish is alien to me". Nor, it must be said, is it prepared to accept at face value the view that any aspect of Jewish tradition is rendered obsolete by time. That which is Jewishly obsolete is only that which fails to serve as a bridge between the past and the present.

In 1990, as part of its Golden Jubilee celebrations, Belsize Square Synagogue chose as its Hebrew name Etz Chavvim-Tree of Life. The image embroidered on the mantle of its new Sefer Torah was that of a tree that had been cut down to its roots which, by virtue of their vigour, had again burgeoned into life on its ancient stock. As surely as this congregation draws it sustenance from the past, it looks with hope to its continued growth and influence. Kehilla Kedoshah Etz Chayyim-the Holy Congregation of the Tree of Life is no longer a community of German and central-European refugees who are survivors but of a group of Jews who have survived and through whose efforts a significant form of Judaism will continue to flourish for their descendants and all who care to share in it.



A Jewish agenda for the 1990s: Judge Israel Feinstein

A Lit Report

Judge Feinstein began with a number of general observations which would set the framework for his 'Jewish Agenda'. He pointed out that the late 20th century is an age of exceptionally rapid change. It is a 'turbulent era' in which it is impossible to predict the future. He views it with a mixture of concern and hope.



He began by providing a statistical framework. Anglo-Jewry, by which he meant the Jewish community in the United Kingdom, is an ageing community which is declining and is also divided, nevertheless, there appears to be a growing confidence. He viewed prospects for the future as 'chequered'. The death rate among the community exceeds the birth rate. In some areas of the United Kingdom every third marriage involving a Jew is to a non-Jew. The number of synagogue marriages are in decline. Twenty years ago there were almost 2,000 per annum. At present there are a mere 1,000. Approximately one-third of Jewish children get no Jewish education. Similar factors seem to be present in British society as a whole. The speaker felt that 'Jewish viability' was a real issue. Nevertheless, 'assimilation and acculturation' do not necessarily mean disappearance.

Judge Feinstein pointed out that in the past, the Jewish problem has never been seen as focussing around the issue of *survival*. The matter of protecting the community from erosion is a new issue with new urgency. He saw the late 20th century characterised by an 'upsurge of independence' which clearly led to an overturning of all the old assumptions and standards. There is a need to respond to the decline in traditional values.

On the positive side, Judge Feinstein saw that there has been a gradual increase in the numbers of Jewish students at British Universities. The Anglo-Jewish community is still one of great importance both to itself and to the outside world. Anglo-Jewry has a rich institutional history and an overall cohesion despite its internal divisions. Judge Feinstein saw these as strong foundations on which to build. There is a common ground of 'mutuality' which he regarded as part and parcel of British

pragmatism. In some ways, the community is a very cohesive one and there is a need for further development of public mutual respect.

Judge Feinstein pointed out firstly that Jewish students have never been as active nor as vocal as at present. Hillel House is a huge plus in Jewish communal life. Students have the advantage of youth, energy and idealism.

Secondly, he saw an increasing esprit de corps in the Rabbinate. The 'class structure of the community has disappeared'. He was of the opinion that Rabbis should be given more influence and should be employed in the community as a whole, e.g. in research and welfare posts.

Thirdly, Judge Feinstein welcomed the increasing role of women in the Jewish community. He felt that 1971 was crucial in this new development. He viewed the organisation of the 35's as an important landmark and female membership of the Board of Deputies as a 'vardstick'.

Fourthly, there are exciting new developments in day school education which was considered undesirable until the late 1940s. Jewish day school education is now regarded as a worthy aim.

Fifthly, fund-raising for Israel is now a common aim among British Jewry. The Israel fund-raising machine now pervades the community. Israel requires a strong diaspora and the diaspora required a strong State of Israel.

Judge Feinstein felt that all these five factors needed to be furthered and developed by Jewish leaders in the 1990s. He stated that the elected leadership and funders must work together and be seen to work together in the key areas of communal activity. He viewed their roles as 'separate and complimentary'. He welcomed the increasing democratisation within the Anglo-

Jewish community. He pointed out that in the past the community had been dominated by a few families. He stressed the need for setting priorities. There are some welcome developments in the field of welfare and there is a need for parallel development in the area of education. He also felt that it was absolutely essential to turn attention to the smaller and dwindling communities. The plight of provincial Anglo-Jewry ought to be a key factor in planning for the '90s.

A prescription for a small community

Judge Feinstein recommended the setting up of a 'Civil Service' as the needs of the lay leadership become more complex. He offered the following prescription for the small communities. First regular visits of Rabbis and teachers to come to talk to people of all ages. Second, the setting up of communal facilities which he recognised would require funding whether by grants or loans. Third, there should be much larger regional efforts so that communities like Manchester, for example, could invite the smaller communities round about to come together in some kind of regional centre. Fourth, he saw the need for a concerted national drive to achieve these aims.

Question time

Question time was extremely lively. Questions were raised about ways of solving the problem of the smaller communities by setting up communal centres on the model of the Oxford Shul. There was also a question about the apparent paradox in strengthening Jewish communities within the diaspora. It was pointed out that Melbourne had achieved many of the recommendations set out for Britain by the speaker, with the result that there was an almost

complete failure of Aliyah from the city. Judge Feinstein welcomed this question and pointed out that Aliyah from Britain was still the highest proportion in the world. He was of the opinion that 'the more viable a Jewish community, the more likely the emergence of Aliyah'. However, he recognised that there was an opposite view that it was the declining communities which led to Aliyah. He was of the opinion that Jew-

ish survival was good in itself and good for Israel and that 'there will always be Jews living in Leeds and they must be catered for 'Jewishly"'.

There was a further question about racism and Judge Feinstein stressed that it was necessary to recognise both common ground and differences. His short answer was that 'We are all brothers'. There was a question about Jewish day schools and the advantages and

disadvantages of separating young Jews from their contemporaries in Britain. There did not seem to be an easy answer to this problem. It was clear that day school education was a very successful way of furthering Jewish education.

All in all, it was a most successful evening—a polished speaker with a thought-provoking topic and that of course is what the Lit strives to achieve!

R.M.A.

Where Salis Daiches got it Right and Moses Mendelssohn got it Wrong: Rabbi W. Wolff

A Lit Report

Rabbi Wolff began by claiming that he had no literary credentials whatsoever and stated that he had 'never graduated beyond tabloid journalism'. He proceeded to falsify his own introduction by giving us a well-informed and beautifully presented talk.

He began by pointing out that the British Jewish community 'lacks heroes' and suggested that communities needed heroes. The exception to this rule was Edinburgh, which had a great hero in Rabbi Salis Daiches. The speaker was of the view that Daiches had received immortality both through his own achievements and through his son David, in his book Two Worlds which he admired for its honesty, its skilful use of language and the love that had been poured into it by the author. The speaker stated that Salis Daiches 'grappled with the same daunting challenges that face us today', that is, the challenge of living in two worlds and drawing our sustenance from two cultures. He saw this challenge as one facing every Jew from the time of the emancipation. He stated that refusal to face the challenge was in itself a type of response. There were two quite different categories of refusal:

First, there was the refusal to leave the ghetto. This is the response of the communities in Gateshead, Stamford Hill and Mea Shearim 'the Yeshiva world', whose attitude could be summed up by saying 'I want nothing to do with your world and you keep out of mine'. The speaker quipped that it was a misnomer to call it a world—it was only 'a very small cul de sac in the world'.

The second category of refusal was those who quietly faded out of the Jewish way of life for ever.

These responses stood in marked contrast to that exemplified by Salis Daiches.

Rabbi Daiches had a long and distinguished line before him and a dwindling line after him, all of whom 'sought to make two cultures their own'. Rabbi Daiches made a major contribution to the civic life of Edinburgh and to the national life of Scotland as well as to Jewish life. His philosophy was well summed up by his son David as follows:

'... a philosophy of orthodox Judaism which combined a Kantian ethic with a profound respect for the rabbinical tradition and achievement'.

The speaker pointed out that from time immemorial Judaism had changed in response to the wider community. He cited as an example the edict of Rabbi Gershon who lived in the 10th century. The edict forbade polygamy to Ashkenazi Jews. There was no justification for such a prohibition in either the Torah or the Talmud. The speaker saw it as a major failure of Moses Mendelssohn that he did not recognise that the partly secular and partly Christian culture into which he plunged would inevitably reflect back

into the way in which Judaism was practiced and taught.

Civil rights

Mendelssohn stuck rigidly to his ethnic identity and to his religious observance and, at the same time, entered all the echelons of high society in Berlin and was welcomed in Berlin salons. He translated the Tanach into German, thereby making it available for the first time to many German Jews. Mendelssohn fought ceaselessly and without compromise for full recognition of civil rights for Jews. He led a Jewish vanguard into German culture. He saw reason as the source of the solution to all problems.

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The speaker said that we should give 'all honour to his memory' but felt that neither the modern orthodox nor the reform movements owed any debts at all to Moses Mendelssohn. He observed that it was a 'sad fact that he never addressed himself to the consequences that civil rights would have for Jews and Judaism'. Mendels-sohn's saddest failure was that he passed on neither his intellectual defence of, nor his emotional commitment to Judaism, to any of his children all of whom were baptised. At the end of the day, the speaker felt that this was the only test that finally mattered. Mendelssohn had left no teaching, no doctrine 'no Jewish posterity'.

Secular and religious equilibrium

The speaker was of the view that both Judaism and Christianity had survived over the centuries because their greatest leaders have always recognised the need to digest the major changes of their time and to absorb them within their teaching. Salis Daiches had studied the two worlds 'with verve'. David Daiches saw his father as having achieved an 'unstable equilibrium' but the speaker felt that it should rather be seen as 'a shifting equilibrium' on which one could rest and advance. There was a need for every age to achieve such an equilibrium, e.g. to observe Shabbat and to make a living, to observe Kashrut and yet to eat with one's non-Jewish fellows. A blindness to development in the secular world could only lead to a cutting off from the vast bulk of the Jewish community and to a religion 'heading for the rocks'.

The speaker had been involved with an interfaith group which

refused to call for a ban on Rushdie's book. This refusal had been in the name of freedom of speech. He observed that such freedom was upheld neither in the Articles of Faith of Christianity nor in the Jewish Shulchan Aruch. It was a secular value which needed to be assimilated into any religious values. A defence might be made on the basis of the commandment 'to love your neighbour as yourself' but this had not in fact been attempted on this occasion.

A challenge to the Chief Rabbi

The main point the speaker wished to make was that the values by which our society lives cannot be defended without the creation of a synthesis of religious values imbibed through our heritage and secular values absorbed from our surroundings. This is precisely what had been achieved by Salis Daiches. He could see no such equilibrium today. In his opinion the major governing body of orthodox British Jewry, the London Beth Din, was responsible for the dismal blind alley in which the British Jewish community had been 'parked' for four decades. They had been busy constructing 'ghetto walls' throughout the period. The Chief Rabbi had managed to distance himself from the Beth Din and had won laurels in other spheres. While his achievements should not be denied, it must be pointed out that he had failed to provide any new guide to the religious complexities facing modern Jewry in Britain today. The new Chief Rabbi would have a momentary opportunity to impose 'modern orthodoxy' on 'his Beth Din' only if he was a man who had come out of the mould of Salis Daiches and was prepared to offer a new synthesis of the two cultures within which we live. In the absence of a leader with sufficient foresight to do this, the prospects for orthodoxy in the 20th century were bleak indeed.

Question time revealed a certain scepticism among the audience, some of whom clearly felt that Mendelssohn was being 'short-changed' and Daiches perhaps placed on too high a pedestal. However there was general agreement that Rabbi Wolff had been an excellent choice for the Lit!

R.M.A.

A Postscript to the Lit Report

The Lit AGM took place in the Communal Hall on the 18th March. The President generously provided the now almost traditional alcoholic refreshments and reported on yet another successful session. Most meetings have been the subject of articles in the Star throughout the year. However it should be recorded here that although the Lit team did not manage to retain the Leslie Blass trophy this year, John Cosgrove, Ian Leifer, Bill Simpson and Jonny Sperber once again gave an impressive performance at the annual Glasgow Quiz. They beat the shul team in the semifinal and then went on to be beaten by a narrow margin in an exciting final by this year's first time winners: the team from Queen's Park Synagogue.

Better luck next year!

Office bearers for the 1989-90 session were elected as follows:

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My Three Hours Spent in Saughton Jail

by Rose Orgel

Some months ago I was asked if I would talk to a group of prisoners in Saughton Prison on 'Judaism and the Jewish Way of Life' as part of the prison's Educational Programme. At that time, the 13 March seemed far away, but as the time grew near, I became a little apprehensive about my impending visit. However, having promised, I was duly picked up by the Social Worker at 1.30 p.m. on 'the day' and we presented ourselves at the reception area. We were then ushered into a waiting room which was immediately locked behind us and awaited the arrival of the other teachers of various subjects. In due course, the Head of the Social Work Department came for us and we were all shepherded through a number of corridors and rooms, each room being unlocked and locked on entering and leaving; rather an un-nerving experience and certainly not suitable for anyone with claustrophobic tendencies. Eventually we came to the room in which I was to speak. The group, consisting of nine men, was already seated and on being introduced I was immediately 'Rose' to all of them.

As I started my talk I was immediately attacked—verbally, I hasten to add—with very relevant questions. To

name but a few: why did we not believe that Jesus was G-d's son? What was a Zionist? Do we perform blood rituals in the Synagogue? Who were the Chassidim? And, from the sublime to the ridiculous: what was the relevance of Gefilte Fish? I was also asked if I believed in capital punishment and knowing that a couple of the prisoners were in for murder, I had to be very careful and diplomatic with my answer. The men wanted to know why the Jewish people have always been discriminated against. One proudly told me that he was a member of the National Front and was very anti-Nazi. Mrs. Hughes, the Social Worker, brought up the question of the Holocaust and the men wanted to know what my feelings were regarding the punishment of war criminals after such a long time. Again, I had to be most diplomatic with my answer.

Tea and chocolate biscuits were served by one of the men. At the end I was thanked by each of them in turn and I must admit to a feeling of compassion for them when I left. I was glad to get out into the fresh air again, but I certainly found it an interesting and unusual experience. I was asked if I would repeat my visit next year.

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THE JEWISH QUARTER OF PRAGUE

from a town planner's notebook

Location

The river Vltava (Moldau) enters the wide Prague basin from the narrow valley it has carved out of the Central Bohemian plateau, and takes its winding course north over what in the distant past may have been rapids-in Czech, praha, believed to have given the city its name. There were three fords in the early 9th century of which that in the river's northern stretch, between the castles Praha on the left and the then much larger Vysehrad 3kms upstream on the right bank, became strategically more important and was probably improved by a wooden bridge in the latter 9th century.1 Its significance grew in the 10th century, as Magyar invasions disrupted the trade routes south of the Carpathian range and across the Great Moravian Empire, which had collapsed under the onslaught of the steppe warriors. To avoid Panonia—the Magyar heartland—the ancient Amber Road between the Adriatic and the Baltic coasts shifted westwards to the line Brenner-Passau-Prague. There, on the left bank, later to be known as the Lesser Town or Civitas Minor, it met the east-west overland transport of goods between London and Persia¹ which used the same river crossing to reach the right bank and the Ungelt.2 There emerged a three-pronged junction on the right bank, in the later Civitas Major, near the western end of today's Kaprova Street, where one of Prague's earliest trading posts or marketplaces became established.

According to written evidence of the 10th century there existed substantial Jewish settlements in the area of both the left and right ford (or bridge)-heads. But while all traces of the Jewish settlement on the left bank vanished³, the Jewish Town on the right bank and its *kehilah* grew and flourished as a place of uninterrupted Jewish life for about 1000 years. It developed into one of the diaspora's most illustrious centres of Judaism, and presented, at any rate until its partial physical destruction around

1900, one of the oldest and best preserved examples of early mediaeval urban development in central Europe. The area of the former Jewish Town is still the core of the modern capital city, though business activities moved to other areas.

Sources

Descriptions of Bohemia from the 10th to the 12th century derive from a number of Hebrew texts.4 Pragensia often quotes Ibrahîm ibn Yaqûb, "al-Israili", of Tortosa, who came to "F'raga" or "B'raga" in 965-966. He was, like his contemporary Hasdai ibn Shaprut, a high ranking court official of al-Hakam II, the Khaliph of Cordoba, who sent him as envoy to the Emperor Otto I. Having accomplished the diplomatic mission in Merseburg, ibn Yaqûb travelled east to explore Bohemia, Poland and possibly Russia, the latter of which then centred upon the region of Kiev. The account of his journeys goes into considerable detail. He speaks of stone built houses in Prague, lists the kind of merchandise on the market and the countries it came from, praises the accommodation for travellers and beasts of burden, and describes the customs, currencies, prices and languages. One is tempted to speculate whether ibn Yaqûb himself encountered any language barrier there. Did the sophisticated Jew from Spain speak the same language as the Jewish merchants he met in a place which was just about to emerge from the dark ages? (It was only in 1782 that it became illegal to use Hebrew in commercial transactions in the Hapsburg Empire, of which Bohemia was part from 1618 to 1918.)

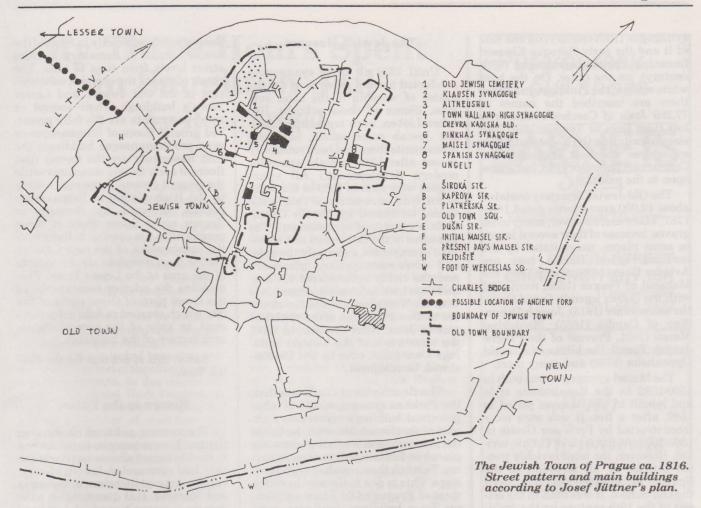
Urban Form

The Old Jewish cemetery, which today borders on the rear elevation of the Museum of Applied Art and Industrial Design, survived in entirety as one of the best known historic monuments of that early Jewish presence on the right bank. According to Vojtech Volavka⁵, the original settlement developed into the romanesque town along Siroká Street (named

variously Dlouhá and for a time also Josefská Street), which was and has remained its principal thoroughfare for ten centuries. In the middle ages it became the ghetto, which extended from the original Rejdiste or Tummelplatz (today in the area of Jan Palach Square) near the river to the Old Town Square (Staroměstské námestí). The longer and the shorter axes of the irregular oval shaped built-up area measured some 900 and 500 metres respectively. The ghetto was surrounded by a wall with seven gates of known and precisely recorded location.5 Boundaries were extended in the Baroque period in the direction of the Old Town Square as well as towards the river. There was a separate enclave of Jewish houses beyond the gates around the Old School (not to be confused with the famous Altneushul) in Dusní Street which merged with the ghetto only in the 19th century; further expansions incorporated the area up to Platnéřská Street and Dlouhá Street.

Street Pattern

The earliest graphical representations of Prague provide some indication of how the contemporary artists or lay land surveyors perceived the importance of the Jewish Town in relation to the rest of the city. These impressions -rather than plansrequire careful interpretation. For example, the 15th century "plan' drawn up by a dilettante, the miller Vesely, depicts Siroká Street as being much wider than the Old Town Square; this is a physical impossibility but may well have been a true reflection of the comparative social and commercial standing of these spaces. More reliable are the vedutas and plans generated in the 17th and 18th century. A particularly valuable source is Joseph Daniel Huber's bird's eye view of the Old Town and Jewish Quarter of 1769, (see front cover) which gives us a three dimensional idea of what it looked like.6 But it was only in 1811-1816 that the first trigonometric plan was made for the Imperial Ordnance Survey.7



Jüttner's Plan

Drawn to the unusual scale of 1:5760, this plan provides accurate details of the street pattern, records the number of houses and the public buildings. A relatively recent document, it illustrates Volavka's observation, that "the organic nature of the growth of the early mediaeval town with recesses, corners, narrow tortuous lanes, blind alleys and pends was preserved in this small area . . . ". Its expressive built form has been created and completed during "the long centuries in which the population of the ghetto increased though the extent of its area remained unchanged. This colourful mixture of annexes, passages, vaults, arcaded frontages, delapidation, dirt and confusion mirrored, of course, the chaotic and immensely complex ownership rights in force in the ghetto. The houses became subdivided on so called real estate lines, so that one family owned a mezzanine floor, another perhaps a part of the stairs, a pillar of one house, a dormer window or cellar.'

Redevelopment

The maintenance of these houses as a whole appeared to have been so difficult, and the sanitary conditions so adverse, that the municipality of Prague decided in 1893 to demolish and redevelop most of the Jewish quarter within the following two decades. This decision, carried out and completed shortly after 1900⁸ has been regretted ever since by various public and professional bodies and by individual authorities in the fields of history, architecture and town planning. Had the issue arisen in the present conservation conscious climate of opinion, the result might have been perhaps similar to, yet infinitely more convincing than, the Marais quarter (4th arrondissement) in Paris.⁹

Population

In the middle of the 19th century the ghetto contained 288 houses in all.5 The Toleranzpatent of 1782 made it possible for some Jews to settle outside the ghetto but in the aftermath of the 1848 revolution, when Jews were given full civil rights, population within its boundaries still reached the sizeable figure of 10,000.10 Taking into account the extent of the cemetery and the plots of public buildings, gross residential density must have reached an unimaginable figure of some 3,500-4,000 persons per hectare. In 1852 ghettos were formally abolished but in 1876, according to that year's population census, about half the Prague Jews were still living in it. Before 1900, the majority took up residence in the new suburbs.11

Prominent Buildings

There remained after redevelopment only a handful of the most important monuments, and these are lost among new tenements. (Ironically, those "new" tenements, belonging to the era of Art Nouveau and Cubistic architecture—an idiom not too far removed from Charles Rennie MacIntosh and the Glasgow style have meanwhile become conservation objects in their own right.) There exists the Altneushul, today the oldest synagogue in Europe; its early Cistercian-Gothic twin-nave interior space stems from the second half of the 13th century, though the vestibule was erected as early as the 12th century. (A model of it is to be found in Beth Hatefutsoth, the Nahum Goldman Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, Tel Aviv.) In the synagogue is the flag of Prague Jews from the beginning of the 18th century.

In its vicinity is another curiosity, the Renaissance Jewish town hall dating from 1568 (Architect Pancras Roder), with the Rococo style clocktower added to it later; the clockhands move anti-clockwise and the golden numerals are shown in the letters of the Hebrew script. Adjacent to it is the High Synagogue (it is on second floor level). There is of course the old cemetery with the late Gothic Pinkhas

synagogue (15th century) on one side of it and the early Baroque Klausen (meaning "close") synagogue (17th century), on the other. On the bare white walls of the Pinkhas synagogue there are inscribed the names of 77,289 Jews of Czechoslovakia who lost their lives in Teresienstadt and elsewhere during the Holocaust. (This synagogue was kept shut after the Communist putsch of 1948, but is now open to the public.)

The Old Jewish cemetery contains about 12,000 gravestones dated 1425-1787. There are, however, many more graves, because of their several layers in some places, necessitated by the confined space. Buried here are Avigdor Caro (1439); Rabbi Luvi, the Maharal of Prague (1609, connected with the Golem legend); David Gans, the astronomer (1613); Joseph Delmedigo of Candia (1655); Mordekhai Maisel (1601, Provost of the Prague Jewish Town); the bibliophile David Oppenheim (1736) and many more.

The Maisel synagogue was built in 1590-1592 in the Renaissance style and rebuilt in the Baroque period in 1689, after a fire. It was once more reconstructed by Professor Grotte in 1893-1905, in the style of Gothic revival. However, the most lavishly treated interior of all is found in the Spanish synagogue¹² which replaced the Old School. It was built in the sixties of the 19th century by the architect V.I. Ullman in the Moorish style, imitating the Spanish Alhambra, as did, at that time, several synagogues in Prague's inner and outer suburbs (notably the Jerusalem Street synagogue in the New Town).

The Jewish Museum

Until 1939 all these synagogues conducted normal services as did the places of worship in the outer suburbs. (Some of these suburbs, like Liben-Lieben, once represented ancient Jewish communities, but most monuments there had been ruthlessly erased after 1948 to make space for modern development.) All synagogues were shut in 1939 in the wake. of the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia, facilitated by Neville Chamberlain's policy of appeasement. The treasures of the Bohemian and Moravian synagogues, especially the goldand silver-ware, pottery, glassware and the richly embroidered textiles, had then been collected in accordance with the Nazi plan to create for whatever motive a museum of the vanished race of Jews. After the war, in 1950, the treasures and the historic buildings were taken over by the Czechoslovak Government.

The floor levels of the Altneushul. the Pinkhas synagogue and of other preserved buildings which now form part of the Jewish Museum, lie below the present street levels and some are placed in landscaped, sunken parterres. To reach them, one has to go down steps. This is due to the way in which most of Prague's Old Town and Lesser Town buildings developed: until the construction in the 19th and 20th centuries of the massive masonry embankments, the Prague basin was exposed to periodical floods. The sediments they left behind (combined, possibly, with the habit of depositing

domestic refuse directly in front of the houses), made it necessary to raise street levels from time to time. The result of this is the complex substructure of the Old Town's and Lesser Town's buildings. Their second or third basements are the fully preserved ground floors of Romanesque or even pre-Romanesque buildings; the first basements are the former first floors of early Gothic structures while the present ground floors may belong to the High Gothic or Renaissance periods, crowned by Baroque or Rococo upper floors. More of these peculiarities are coming to light with the construction of the metro, but so far the most complete are the records of the area of the Lesser Town. This explains the relative permanence of the street plan of those parts of the city which escaped radical urban renewal, in spite of the ever changing architecture of the buildings.

Sadly, this is not true for the Jewish Town.

Return to the Future

The current political changes in Central Europe promise to put an end to the 50 years of silence and darkness that had surrounded Jewish history, culture, art and literature in Bohemia and Moravia. It is questionable whether the communities which had been reduced to near extinction can be brought back to life, let alone to their former significance. But perhaps the revival of interest in any aspect of their 1,000 years existence may given them—us!—some encouragement. 13



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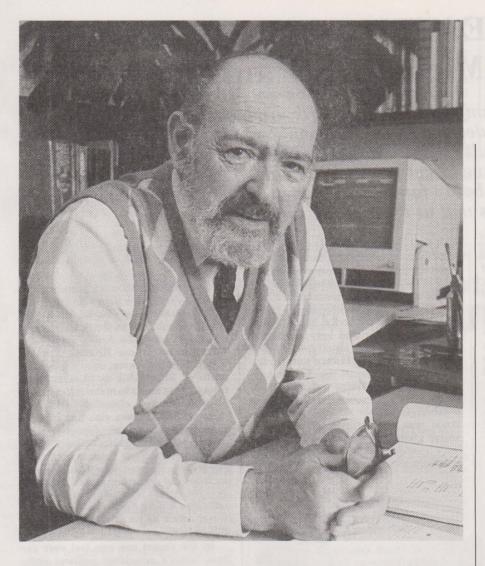
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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Hlavsa, Vančura: Malá Strana/Mensí Mesto Prazké; Prague, 1983. 2. Ungelt, the initial caravan resting

place, is not far from Kafka's birthplace; it still stands in the form in which it was redeveloped in the

Renaissance.

3. The settlement on the left bank changed its character as the Presmysl dynasty came to power in Bohemia at the end of the 10th century. It became an artisans' quarter for five or six centuries, having displaced the Jewish merchants. Any traces of the pre-Romanesque road pattern that may have survived into the 16th century had been obliterated by the large scale redevelopment which started in the Renaissance, with Prague once more the capital of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation, and culminated in the Baroque period, as the Lesser Town turned into the nobility's preferred place of residence. The original road system can no longer be identified on that side of the river, though archeological surveys (associated with metro constructions) may lead to new hypotheses about its location.

4. Oskar Schürer: Prag-Kultur/Kunst/ Geschichte; Vienna and Leipzig, 1930.

more detailed bibliography on Hebrew texts is in: Rudolf Turek,

Cečhy na Usvite Dějin; Prague 1963.

5. Vojtěch Volavka: Pout 'Prahou—
Dějiny a Umenìy; Prague, 1967.

6. Zdeněk Wirth: Prague in Pictures of

Five Centuries; Prague, 1938.

Plan der königlichen Haupstadt Prag trigonometrisch und topographisch aufgenommen von dem Oberleutnant

Joseph Jüttner etc. etc. . . 1811-1816. Vlček: Praha 1900—Studie k Dějinám Kultury a Umění Prahy v Letech 1894-1914; Prague 1986. The layout and style of the redevelopment of the Jewish Town was inspired by the example of Paris, in particular that of prefect Haussmann's period of office. Significantly, the tortuous mediaeval Maisel Street, which once linked Siroká Street with the Old Town Square, became today's Parizšká (Paris) Avenue, a wide, decidedly French style thoroughfare.

9. Anthony Sutcliffe: The Autumn of Central Paris—The Defeat of Town Planning 1850-1970; Edward Arnold, London 1970. Les Marais, the Jewish Quarter of Paris, was the only one to escape the city's large scale redevelopment based on the principles of Grand

Bertold Hornung is a holocaust survivor who worked in Prague as a structural engineer, architect and town planner until the 1968 invasion. In 1969, he came to Edinburgh with his wife Hana and their two daughters. He has a practice as consulting city and regional planner and adviser to the Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland. Scotland

Design, which culminated in the period of Napolean III and Haussmann. It is now a conservation area.

10. Ronald Hayman: Kafka; Weidenfeld

and Nicolson, 1981.

11. From 1918 to 1939 the Jewish Town retained its name and continued to house the *kehilah's* principal institutions—the Town Hall, synagogues and schools. It experienced a short period of growth during the first two years of the Nazi occupation. Jewish families, compelled to share flats, moved into the Jewish Town. New Jewish institutions established there as well as in its close vicinity: the short lived Youth Alliyah School, various children's and old people's homes, offices of the Merkaz Hechalutz and youth movement premises (e.g. of the T'chelet Lavan, El. Al., Makkabi), a Jewish hospital in compliance with the segre-

gation laws, and other institutions. During World War II the Nazi *treu-handstelle* was established to take possession of the properties of the families deported to Theresienstadt and extermination camps. It used the Spanish synagogue as a furniture store.

13. Positive appraisals of the Jewish communities were heard long before any political changes had been expected. In 1982 a symposium was held in the city of Pilsen of over hundred prominent economic, social and art historians, musicologists, artists and art critics. The topic: the culture of the 19th century towns and cities in Bohemia and Moravia. Among the 41 papers, published the following year, there appears one (!) reference to the Jewish community's place in that phase of Central European cultural development. This was historian Josef Kotek's improvised, spontaneous and almost passionate contribution in which he argued that the study of "the general as well as of the cultural history has ignored and continues to ignore to its own detriment the [19th century] society's third component [in addition to the Czech and German ones] which pos-Czech and German ones which possessed a relatively independent identity of its own: the large Jewish population [of Bohemia and Moravia]—a population demographically sharply defined, socially cohesive, economically strong and thus of lasting historic significance... "I am aware," he said "that I am touching on a subject which has become taboo. a subject which has ... become taboo., But it is our duty as historians to appraise objectively, sine ira et studio, this essential element of our Czech national revival." Considering the ideological pressures of the time it required extraordinary courage and integrity to make such a public statement.

Published in: Město v Ceské Kultuře 19.století; Studie a Materiály Národní Galerie, Prague 1983.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK IN ISRAEL by Micheline Brannan

We recently took our family to Jerusalem for six months and having no set programme there we decided to travel around as much of the country as possible. It is difficult to genuinely get off the beaten track in Israel, especially if you have to get around by road, so the places we found interesting are probably familiar to some readers. If so, I hope my descriptions will at least strike an answering chord.

Our first major trip was to Eilat in March. We had expected a paradise of winter sun, but while we were there, Eilat was chilly and on one occasion deluged with rain. I had to buy my four year old, David, a tracksuit to wear over his shorts and teeshirt as he was white and shivering. The beach was out of the question so we set off to explore the desert and discovered what a beautiful place it can be.

To see the desert at its best you have to see it after a shower of rain. The moisture brings to life dormant seeds, and barren places are carpeted for a few days with pink, red, blue, yellow and white flowers. We were lucky to travel in

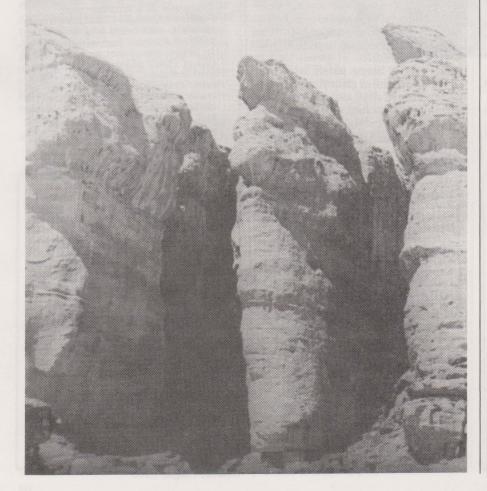
the Negev at a time like this. But more spectacular than the flowers is the geology of the desert. We visited Timna, the site of ancient copper mines, now a National Park, where we were struck by the rich colours of the rocks, black, ochre, pink, red, purple and grey, and their massive surprising structures. At one point the rocks had formed natural flying buttresses against the cliff. At another there was a huge red mushroom shape, with a narrow stem and bulbous overhanging crown. The pièce de resistance was the "pillars of Solomon" where great columns of red sandstone have been detached by the erosion of the rain from the cliffs behind, to stand free

and massive, like a temple built by giants.

I admire those Israeli pioneers who fell in love with the Negev and dreamed of making the desert bloom like a rose. As a Habonimnik in the 60s, I heard a great deal about the Arava project and was excited to see Kibbutz Yotvata which is in the Arava, only a few miles north of Eilat. Milk is brought there from further north to make into wonderful yoghurt and chocolate drinks in cartons. The kibbutz also has its own crops, making a splash of green against the dry dun-coloured background of the Jordan valley. Near Yotvata is the Hai Bar Nature Reserve, where the Israelis are breeding desert animals for release in to the wild. The children loved to see ostriches coming right up to the window of our coach as we drove through on a guided tour.

In the desert one can feel very far from Israel's agonising political problems but unfortunately, during our stay, there were a number of incursions over the border from Jordan; soldiers were killed, and a girl from one of the kibbutzim held hostage. The most comforting aspect of the desert is that it is the one part of Israel the Jews can entirely call their own. Every development has been due to their courage and imagination. They have displaced no-one, not even the Bedouin, who continue to live happily in their tents south of Beersheba.

An example of imaginative development is Mitzpeh Ramon, on the road from Eilat to Beersheba. It is the furthest place to the south to have water piped from Kinneret. It is surrounded by huge craters, miles in diameter, which may have been left by meteorites aeons ago, and it commands tremendous barren vistas. But the town itself has a thriving conference centre and youth hostel, a visitors centre, a promenade with tourist shops, and even a swimming pool. Arriving on Friday night, we found two minyanim at prayer in adjacent parts of the shul. It was an extraordinary experience to find a Jewish community perched high in that almost lunar landscape. It had even attracted



new olim, a French couple who were so taken with the place that they had decided to retire there.

Another major trip took us to the Galil. Here we encountered a radically different type of scenery and lifestyle. Unlike the Negev, where no-one lived except the Bedouin, the north already had a settled population which has continued to exist within the State of Israel. That population is still there within distinct Arab villages, and some mixed communities. Relations between the Arabs and the Jews are better than in the central belt, but of course these Arabs are Israeli citizens and enjoy perceptibly greater prosperity that their West Bank and Gaza Strip cousins.

We made a point of visiting one Arab village, Ibilin, in the hills south east of Haifa. The priest of the local church, Elias Chacour, had written a book about the Arab-Israeli conflict called *Blood Brothers* and signed a copy for us when he was visiting Edinburgh. We wanted to see him again.

Ibilin had hit the news two weeks before our visit because walls in the village had been daubed with graffiti equating stars of David and swastikas. That incident, in a village of citizen Arabs, was considered significant enough for the national press to report. We saw the graffiti, but by that time of our visit, the swastikas had been blocked in to look like black squares.

After driving up steep and winding streets, and asking directions of local people in Hebrew, our only common language, we found the church, but not Father Chacour, who was on a lecture tour of Europe. We were given to understand that he spent considerable amounts of time on such tours. He had left in charge a pair of volunteers, an American Mennonite couple, who gave us a warm welcome and showed us round. They were just opening the library, which explained the crowds of excited, but well dressed and well behaved Arab children queuing up in the church grounds clutching their books. They were very different from West Bank children we had seen, whose schools had at that time been closed for months, and who haunted the streets looking scruffy, bored and hostile.

The Galil is also noted for its Druze population. While we were there we visited the Druze villages on Mt. Carmel. We also found that many of the custodians of National Parks were Druze. One morning we went to a Crusader fortress. The Custodian and I soon got into a long conversation in Hebrew.

I knew that the Druze were loyal members of the State and had decided from the start to serve in the army alongside the Jews. My new acquaintance asked me to guess his age and when I hazarded "50" he laughed and told me that he was only 42 but his hair



Pillars of Solomon in silhouette.

had turned quite white when he was in the army during the Six Day War. He now had 3 sons in the army, and he thought that all non-Jewish citizens should serve. Turning to the current situation, he was far from optimistic. He talked about "an internal war" in which each side was trying to devour the other. He was particularly critical of the West Bank settlements, and thought that if the Israelis had left the Arabs there to run their own affairs, they would soon have been kissing Israeli hands, begging for jobs. Now things had gone too far.

I asked about the relations between the Israeli Druze and the Druze of the Golan Heights. He was far from complimentary about the latter. Although they have nothing to do with the Intifada, these Druze liked an occasion to proclaim their continuing loyalty to Syria. My friend alleged that they were poverty stricken before Israel took them over, and that since they had acquired homes, cars and good incomes. But they were work-shy grumblers. "If they are Syrian," he said, "let them go to Syria."

Finally over a cup of excellent Druze coffee my friend asked me all about my family. He was delighted that, like himself, Mike had 9 children. But he wanted to know how we got on-a Jew married to a Christian. He explained that there is no conversion to the Druze religion so the Druze can never take a partner from outside their community. Nevertheless, some Druze had converted to Judaism in order to marry Jewish girls, and were now to be found in Eilat. Though I was intrigued by the thought of these couples, my Hebrew was unequal to exploring such a sensitive topic, so we exchanged warm good wishes and went on our way.

The north of Israel has some fascinating biblical sites. We looked in on the excavations at Tel Dan, being manned by a team of about 30 South African volunteers, black and white side by side, sporting teeshirts with the slogan "We Dig Dan". We also saw the ruins of Hazor and Megiddo, where we walked through the old underground water system with a coach party of diminutive yeshiva pupils who did their best to pretend we did not exist.

One morning we took a spectacular drive to the top of Mt. Tabor. We had to go at about 3 miles an hour on a circuitous and heavily cambered single track road to reach the top. It was one of those drives which leaves you white knuckled and shaking, but it was worth it. At the top is a church which supposedly marks the site of the Transfiguration. It was completed only 30 years ago by an Italian architect. As you walk down the nave to the chancel, instead of going up, as is usual, you go down a flight of steps, and into an area under a low arched ceiling, decorated with a radiant mosaic. Unwillingly, I was moved. Hilltop churches can have this effect-so much beauty after such hard work. The Jewish driver of a bus party of Germans seemed to be having the same problem. He had his little girl with him, and after seeing how she gazed round at the decoration, I heard him mutter embarrassedly in Hebrew "We don't believe in all this'

Quite apart from the church, the visit is worthwhile for the view. It takes in the Jezreel valley, which lies flat as a bowling green to the south, and the surrounding Galilean hills. There is a hostel for pilgrims at the top and much stress is given to their need for rest and quiet. We joked that they must be the ones who could not face the drive down. We had no such choice, and were relieved to be able to follow the German's minibus round the hairpin bends.

We had so much to see in the north that we needed an extra night's accommodation which we had not booked. On spec, we turned up at the Ma'ayan Harod youth hostel, which is right by the National Park of the same name, scene of Gideon's famous water test. The hostel was under repair and quite deserted, but we were told that we could have accommodation at the "hotel". We could not see any sign of a hotel. The village consisted of modern villas and bungalows, nestling in the shadow of Mt. Gilboa. People were washing cars and digging in their gardens. Then we noticed a dilapidated three storey mansion with several balconies. Could this be it? On the verandah sat an ancient emaciated and toothless crone, and a slightly younger lady. "Zeh malon?" I said doubtfully. The two ladies discussed the matter in a strange patois of Hebrew and Arabic, and finally, motioning to us to wait, the older one shuffled off to fetch "Moshe".

In reply to my questions, Moshe agreed that this was the hotel. He offered us a room for five for 60 shekels (about £20) without food. I asked to see it. When he unlocked the door, my heart sank. There certainly were 5 beds, but they were a ramshackle, ill-assorted lot, with dirty looking mattresses, one only a block of foam rubber, another filled with straw, and pillows like sacks of potatoes. There were some ragged mildewy sheets lying around, and a good deal of dust on the floor and on the scanty furniture. But there was a serviceable toilet and shower, and a working, if somewhat mouldy fridge. By this time it was getting too late to drive back to Jerusalem, so we accepted. Moshe produced some more ragged sheets and left us to settle in.

The children were far from impressed, but to Mike and me, devotees of Russian theatre, the situation had a Chekhovian charm. When we reemerged, the ladies were once again ensconsed on the veranda. We got into the car to go to the tiny village store and to look for dinner. We had been told about a restaurant at a garage 2 km along the road, and went there expecting some sort of transport cafe. Much to our surprise, we found a Moroccan grill-house where we had lamb shashlik grilled to perfection with an abundance of pitta, olives, pickles, hot sauce, and the coldest possible beer. It was the best meal we had in our whole time in Israel.

These are only a few of the interesting places we managed to see in our time in Israel. Although we loved Jerusalem, our happiest times were when we were on the move. Debbie Sinclair told us that we had seen more in our six months that she had in her many years as an Israeli. Well, if we achieved anything in our trip, it was that.

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The way we were

An extract from the Jewish Chronicle of 1911

So much fun has been poked at the Scottish Jew that it is only fair to dispel some of the little illusions entertained regarding him by supercilious Southerners.

Nobody, of course, seriously believes that the Jew who lives in Scotland wears a kilt or plays the bagpipes, but when you are dealing with Scotsmen of any persuasion it is best to taboo jokes and be perfectly clear. If the Jewess of Caledonia dresses in tartan and her husband dubs himself McLevy, if porridge is occasionally preferred to lockschen and a lilt of Harry Lauder's to a dirge of Goldfaden's, these are the only signs we can detect of the Jew having been "scotched". Otherwise, the Highland Hebrew is quite a harmless biped, possessed of hands, organs, dimensions, passions, and all the rest of it.

Although Glasgow can boast the largest Jewish community north of the Tweed, to Edinburgh belongs the distinction of having attracted the first Jewish settlers in Scotland. Today the Edinburgh community is comparatively a small one, but it is, to quote Kipling, a terror for its size. No community in the United Kingdom has been rent by such internecine strife, nor has any city resounded with so brazen a clash of communal

But byegones are byegones, and peace has now been restored. In fact, harmony reigns everywhere—even in the synagogal singing, for the biggest congregation in Edinburgh recently became the proud possessor of a choir. Moreover, a joint Board of Shechita that consummation so devoutly to be wished! - has been on the tapis for several years, although so far the idea has failed to materialise. That peace can be restored in Israel with the aid of a slaughter-knife is one of those little paradoxes which abound in Jewish life.

The early history of the Edinburgh

MARQUES of DISTINCTION



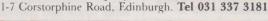
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Jews is enveloped in a regular Scotch mist. Certain salient facts, however, loom boldly out of the haze. Israel seems to have had no footing at all in Scotland in the days when he was being sorely persecuted south of the border, Scotland being thus free from the Jewish bloodshed which stains the history of England and the Continent.

Indeed it would appear that the Scottish capital at one time offered the advantages of a City of Refuge to Jews who found themselves persecuted abroad, for tradition says that in the 17th century Mr. and Mrs. Jacobs, an aged coupe of French exiles, came over and settled in Edinburgh. Tradition goes on to say that Mr. and Mrs. Jacobs, fearing that after death their bones might be disturbed, made provision for their bodies being interred on the Calton Hill, a shady and sequestered part of Edinburgh, where the grave is still to be seen.

The Edinburgh Jews, comprising some two thousand souls, pray in four synagogues. These are situated respectively at Graham Street; at North Richmond Street, where the Rev. J. Teitelmann officiates; at Dalry, where the Rev. P. Chazan is in charge; and at the Livingstone Hall, where the clerical duties are honorary, and he who runs may "read". But synagogual dynasties in Edinburgh have such a knack of being suddenly overthrown, and communal revolutions are so frequent, that by the time these words appear in print there may be no synagogues at all in Edinburgh, or there may be half-a-dozen.

There was founded many years ago in Edinburgh a synagogue which, from the alien character of its clientele, now goes by the name of *Grne Schul*. Oh, the guerilla warfare that has convulsed its sacred walls! Oh, the policemen who have been requisitioned to pour lictorial oil on the troubled waters! Several years before the dawn of the twentieth century, the election of office-bearers for this synagogue gave rise to one of the fiercest conflicts that have ever blackened the annals of *chevra* politics.

But the whole of Edinburgh Jewry is not to be stigmatised by the misdeeds of a few of its fractious spirits. As a matter of fact, the Edinburgh Jews are a very estimable section of Anglo-Jewry. When called upon by conscience or their London coreligionists, they are never slow to contribute their quota to any deserving institution. They have taken due advantage of the educational facilities offered by the University of Edinburgh, where the number of Jewish alumni is much larger than the Hebrew population of the city war-

rants. The Jewish students, indeed, are so numerous that they have their own Literary and Debating Society.

Among the distinguished men who have attended Edinburgh University is Mr. Isaac Fürst, S.S.C., N.P., a son of the Rev. J. Fürst and one of the most successful lawyers in the city. Mr. Fürst, who acts as Secretary to the Graham Street Congregation, has had a brilliant career and was President for some time of the Edinburgh University Scots Law Society. But Edinburgh Jewry has produced more than merely legal luminaries; it has been responsible for a small army of doctors, dentists, chemists, chartered accountants, architects, and journalists.

There are no social obstacles placed in the way of Jewish professional men in Edinburgh. There is nothing to prevent them from climbing to the top of their various ladders, for the relations between the general population of Edinburgh and the Jewish community are quite cordial. Only a few months ago the Lord Provost and a number of Town Councillors attended the Graham Street Synagogue, and listened most appreciatively to a special sermon delivered by the Rev. J. Fürst.

The Jewish quarter of Edinburgh is merely Whitechapel on a small scale. In it are to be found the same elements that go to make the East End of London so picturesque in its squalor. It effervesces with the same bustling hand-to-mouth life, and is populated by the same Rembrandtesque types, so heterogeneous and yet so similar. One meets the same bent and hoary Jew hobbling along with his basket, and the same "young bloods", covered with smiles and cheap jewellry. There are the same old women who babble in Yiddish and, on the other hand, the younger women with their dark complexions, naturetinted cheeks and jet-black hair. Many a Scottish artist has been fascinated and inspired by the haunting sadness of the Hebrew face.

In Edinburgh a great deal of this sadness is caused by poverty, which in some parts of the Ghetto is exceptionally acute. The leading agency for coping with cases of distress is the Jewish Board of Guardians, over which Mr. Harry Michael has presided for many years.

An institution, on the other hand, that encourages charity less than self-help is the Hebrew Benevolent Loan Society, which was founded in 1891 by the late Mr. Philip Eprile. The President of this "Penny Society", as it is called, from the minimum contribution, is Mr. Norris Stungo.

But the most popular Jewish insti-

tution in Edinburgh is undoubtedly the Grand Order of Israel Friendly Society, King Edward VII Lodge. The story goes that when Yankel, who had just landed in Edinburgh, from Russia, wrote home that he had become a member of King Edward's Lodge, the whole hamlet went into rejoicing at the rapidity with which Yankel had joined the British aristocracy. The Lodge is presided over by Mr. H. Levy Lucas.

An institution that scatters blessings in an unostentatious way is the Jewish Ladies' Lying-in Society, which was founded close upon forty years ago. Mrs. Isaacs presides, and Mrs. J. Myers discharges the joint functions of Treasurer and Hon. Secretary.

The remaining Jewish institutions in Edinburgh include a Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter, a Young Men's Zionist Culture Association, an Amateur Dramatic Society, and a Beacon of the Order of Ancient Maccabeans.

Mention must also be made of the Jewish Literary Society, which has done good work in cementing the community together. It is one of the oldest literary societies in the provinces, and its list of lecturers reads like a page from "Who's Who." The President is Mr. Harry Nathan. A distinguished Hon. Vice-President of the Literary Society is Mr. Maurice Isaacs, J.P., President of the Graham Street congregation, and one of the best-known men of affairs in Edinburgh. Another Hon. Vice-President is Rabbi J. Rabbinowitz, on whose lips the orthodox section of the community literally hangs.

In brief, the Edinburgh Jews are blessed with a plethora of charitable and social institutions. Taken collectively, they have everything they could wish for. The city itself is one of the most beautiful in the world, and its pleasure-grounds are enthusiastically patronised by the community. Nothing could be lovelier than Princes Street Gardens on a Saturday afternoon in the summer time, when the band is playing to an audience composed largely of coreligionists. A local wag has described the scene as "The Garden of Yidden."

If the Edinburgh community is not quite a model one, it will not be long before Father Time smoothes away its rough edges with his scythe. And in those days Edinburgh shall become a brilliant pearl in the crown of Anglo-Jewry.

The above is an abridged but otherwise unedited version of the report which appeared on 14 July 1911. We thank **Dr.** Kenneth Collins for bringing our attention to it.

The Scottish Jewish Archives Centre

by Harvey L. Kaplan

Where could you see:

• a ticket to the opening of Garnethill Synagogue in 1879;

• the minutes book of the Glasgow Jewish Volunteers' Association, 1898-99;

• the Rule Book of the Dundee Hebrew Congregation, 1903;

• the ceremonial key from the opening of the Gertrude Jacobson Orphanage in 1919;

 an Edinburgh Jewish Students' Magazine of 1923;

 the Men's Doubles Cup of the Glasgow Jewish Athletic Club, Tennis Section, from the 1930s;

• and some 8,000 other items? And whatever happened to:

• the Memorial Boards from Crosshill Synagogue;

• the manuscripts of the playwright Avrom Greenbaum;

the marble pulpit from Pollockshields Synagogue?

The Scottish Jewish Archives Centre is rapidly out-growing its accommodation in Garnethill Synagogue, Glasgow—the oldest surviving Jewish building in Scotland. Arising out of the Jewish Archives Project established in 1985, the Centre is the Scottish counterpart of the Jewish museums in London, Manchester and Dublin, and the historical research groups in communities such as Bristol and Birmingham.

Administered by the Scottish Jewish Archives Committee (which includes representatives from Edinburgh), under the sponsorship of the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council and the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, the Director of the Centre is history graduate, Harvey Kaplan, and the Archives Officer is Dutch historian, Ben Braber.

The remit of the Archives Centre is to locate, collect, catalogue, preserve, research, and display, material relating to the history of Jewish settlement in Scotland. This includes the major Jewish communities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen, as well as the small communities which once existed in Ayr, Dunfermline, Falkirk, Greenock, and Inverness.

A wide variety of material is being collected, helping to illustrate the reli-

gious, organisational, social, economic, political, cultural and family life of Scottish Jewry since the Eighteenth Century. The range of material includes: photographs, magazines, brochures, annual reports, letters, documents, minute books, membership lists and cards, certificates, plaques, memorial boards, ritual artefacts, newspapers and press cuttings, plans of communal buildings, and books. These are being collected from members of the community and communal organisations as well as public archives and libraries.

Some organisations have lodged their records with the Archives Centre, such as Garnethill Hebrew Congregation (from 1852), Lodge Montefiore (from 1888), and Glasgow Jewish Students' Society (from 1911).

The Archives collection includes some items of artistic interest, such as a bronze relief sculpture of veteran Zionist, Abraham Links, by Benno Schotz, prints by Hannah Frank, and a painting of Ben Strump by Joseph Ancill.

Displays have been mounted on a number of aspects of communal history, including:

 The Origins of Glasgow Jewry, 1812-1879

• The Jewish Gorbals

 Avrom Greenbaum and the Jewish Institute Players

• Lodge Montefiore, 1888-1988

• Crosshill Synagogue, 1933-1986

• Glasgow Jewish Institute.

The Edinburgh community is well represented in the Archives Centre. Although many communal records remain in Salisbury Road, there is a permanent display in Glasgow on the history of the Edinburgh Jewish Community. Additional items include:

• a framed sketch of the interior of Park Place Synagogue (1967-1898)

• a copy of the Register of Circumcisions performed by Rev. Fürst (1879-1907)



Garnethill Synagogue and Scottish Jewish Archives Centre.



Recently exhibited photograph of the Edinburgh Friendship Club.

- the brochure for the opening of the Synagogue in Salisbury Rd., 1932
- the Laws of the Congregation, 1910
- the Minutes book of the Edinburgh Zionist Association, 1930-1936
- a number of syllabuses of the Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society, from the 1920s until the 1980s.

A number of activities are coordinated by the Archives Centre:

Photography

Not a great deal survives by way of photographs of early communal buildings. The Archives Centre has organised extensive photographic records of Garnethill Synagogue, Langside Synagogue, and Crosshill Synagogue, prior to its closure in 1986. In addition, photographs have been taken of the Jewish cemeteries in the Necropolis and Janefield. Other projects are planned, and photographs of the older Edinburgh Jewish Cemeteries would be welcome.

A collection of some forty photographs, representing a wide range of Glasgow Jewish organisations, and communal leaders, is at present being compiled. This will be presented in the

summer to the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora in Tel Aviv. Perhaps a similar project could be organised in Edinburgh.

Exhibitions

The Archives Centre is occasionally asked to prepare a display to mark a particular communal anniversary. Examples have included the centenary of Lodge Montefiore in 1988, the 75th anniversary of the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council in 1989, and the 40th anniversary of Newark Lodge in 1990.

Research

The Centre is open, by arrangement, to bona fide researchers. Information and photographs have been provided for several publications and articles in the Jewish and general press. Dr. Kenneth Collins, a co-chairman of the Archives Committee, has made wide use of the collection when researching his books, Aspects of Scottish Jewry (1987) and Second City Jewry (1990).

Unfortunately we do not at present have the resources of time or manpower to deal with the many individual family history enquiries which we receive from around the world.

Public meetings are held at the Archives Centre every few months. Past speakers have been Professor David Daiches, Chaim Bermant, Ida Schuster, Samm Hankin, Sir Horace Phillips, Sir Monty Finniston, and the Chief Rabbi. In addition, the public are welcome on one Sunday afternoon each month (advertised in the Jewish Echo).

Anyone interested in the work of the Archives Centre is invited to join the group of Friends. There is a Newsletter, which is also sent to a number of Jewish and non-Jewish museums, archives, and libraries, in this country, and in Israel.

We are constantly on the lookout for more material. Our collection is a little weak on the communities outside Glasgow, such as Edinburgh.

All contributions should be directed to:

- Harvey Kaplan, 1/L, 11 Millwood Street, Glasgow G41 3JY. 041-649-4526
- Ben Braber, 23 Russell Drive, Glasgow G61 3BB. 041-942-0765.

British Association for Jewish Studies meets in Edinburgh

by Peter Hayman

This year the British Association for Jewish Studies (BAJS) will for the first time be holding its annual conference in Scotland. Previously, Manchester has been the furthest north that it has ventured.

BAJS is the professional association which links together scholars working in the field of Jewish Studies in the universities and other institutions of higher education (such as Jews' College and Leo Baeck). It has about 120 members, some of whom are postgraduate students. Three times a year the Association publishes a Bulletin which publicises members' activities, summarises conference papers, exchanges information on curricula, and advertises meetings and conferences. Once a year we produce a complete list of the doctoral theses in Jewish studies being supervised by our members as well as a list of completed theses. We have an annual conference usually in July, and very often meet just before our sister organisation, the Society of Old Testament Study (SOTS). But this year SOTS is meeting in Aberdeen and that was just too far north for the bulk of our members!

Edinburgh at the time of the Festival seemed a far more attractive alternative, with the opportunity for members to stay on after the conference to enjoy the rich cultural fare which those of us who live in Edinburgh can enjoy every year. I hope that they will not be lured away by

these other attractions while the conference is on!

I have made the theme of the conference Jewish Studies in North Britain, and my aim is to give as representative a picture as possible of the fields of research being pursued by scholars of Jewish Studies in the North of England and in Scotland. So far the following speakers have agreed to address the conference:

Professor Angus MacKay (Edinburgh): The Crypto-Judaism of the Conversos.

Dr Peter Hayman (Presidential Address): Monotheism - a Misused Word in Jewish Studies?

Dr Philip Davies (Sheffield): The Origins of Judaism.

Dr Alexander Samely (Manchester): The Gaster Hebrew Codexes in the John Rylands Library - A Progress Report

Dr Paul Morris (Lancaster): Jewish

Attitudes to Islam.

Dr Deborah Middleton (Lancaster): Matriarchy and Oppression in Judaism -attitudes to women in the Midrash Aleph Beth. Dr Isobel Wollaston (Newcastle): Ver-

sions of Survival - Problems in interpreting the Holocaust.

Graham Harvey (Newcastle): The terms "Hebrew" and "Jew" in Anci-

ent Jewish Polemic.

Irene Lancaster (Liverpool): The

Philosophy of Ibn Ezra. Professor David Daiches (Edinburgh): On Translating the Hewbrew

Dr Leon Yudkin (Manchester); title not yet fixed (but will cover some

aspects of Modern Hebrew Literature).

Dr Robert Hayward (Durham): The Date of the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan.

There are a few invitations still awaiting a reply, but what we have so far promises to provide a rich and wide-ranging selection of topics which should prove that, contrary to what is often supposed, interest in Jewish Studies is alive and well in North Britain.

On Tuesday evening, 21st August, the members will be guests at a Reception hosted on behalf of Edinburgh University by the Principal of New College, Professor Duncan Forrester. Thereafter we are hoping that there will be a suitable play of Jewish or Israeli interest on at the Festival, so that we can have a night out together.

The conference will be held in the Pollock Halls, Holyrood Road, and meetings will take place in the Library, Holland House, Members of the Jewish community will be welcome to attend after paying the date rate for the conference (which will probably be £2). Nearer the time a more detailed programme can be obtained from me or the Secretary of the Department of Hebrew and Old Testament Studies at New College, The Mound (tel. 225 8400).

Peter Hayman is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Hebrew and Old Testament studies at the University of Edinburgh.

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Bonny in bonnie Scotland

by Mike Adelman

With tongue in cheek, I can point out a number of differences in styles and standards between Bonny Ginsburg of Rangers and the Edinburgh Maccabi ex-goalkeeper (this reporter). Twenty years ago when I turned out for Edinburgh Maccabi, I played behind a defence whose tactics were mostly unorthodox, and only occasionally effective! There were terms used by defenders which you would not hear in the Scottish Premier division. While under pressure, the Maccabi defence would be simply told to "clear the lines" by Norman Berger, our centre half. If we were fortunate enough to have possession, Lenny Berger would advise our player with the ball to "push, push, push!" The cool influence of Harold Levey steadied us somewhat, but when I did lose a goal, I usually had a long journey to retrieve the ball as there were no nets!

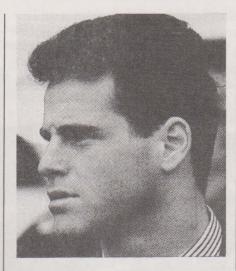
The team had its moments. We travelled to London by plane for a semi-final tie in the British Maccabi tournament only to lose by a narrow margin. Our uncertainty showed on the outward journey, when one of our players asked a stewardess if a window could be opened. He was told that this would be impossible. At the age of 16, I was fortunate enough, thanks to the efforts of Lenny Berger, to travel to Lyon as the goalkeeper of the British Maccabi junior team and we brought back the gold medal. Those were the days!

"Football is my life"

The only priority for goalkeeper Bonny Ginzburg at the moment is winning his place back in the first team.

Israeli born Ginzburg has now fully recovered from a shoulder injury that has plagued him ever since his Premier League debut against Hibernian at Easter Road earlier this season. That tackle from striker Keith Houchen has given Bonny some very painful moments, but he's determined to battle back and give Chris Woods a real run for his money and prove he is a genuine challenger for the top team number one spot.

He has made eight first team appearances so far this season, with just five goals getting past him, including a shut-out against Bayern Munich in Germany. But his immediate target is to get back to full fitness and prove to the Rangers



management that he deserves another chance between the sticks.

Said Bonny: "I feel much better now and all I can do at the moment is keep my general level of fitness up and wait for a chance to play in the first team again. Between the gaffer and doctor, they decided to give me a chance to fully recover from my injury before I could make myself available."

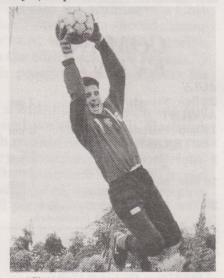
"I was disappointed to miss out in playing for Rangers in the Skol Cup final, but the Israeli FA made a contract with the club that I had to be released for these games, and after all, it was the first time in twenty years that Israel had a chance to qualify. We didn't, of course, and now the team has to re-build for America in 1994, and hopefully I'll be a part of that team."

"Playing here at Ibrox gives me a chance to prove just how far I've come as a goalkeeper. The game is totally different from playing in Israel, but I really enjoy living and working in Glasgow. The supporters have been so good to me, and I'm very happy to give as much time to them as I can, because that's what the game is about."

"Israeli people are patriotic about the game like Scotland, but not quite in the same way as Scottish people who make the game a part of their lives. And that's why I like it so much here. Football is my life and I want to play at Ibrox in front of these supporters. The experience and atmosphere of the Premier League is comparable to any league in the world, with only Italy maybe a bit ahead, but only because of the vast sums of money available there."

Many pundits have compared Ginzburg to Liverpool's Bruce Grobbelar, a comparison that he doesn't disagree with: "I rate him very highly as both a goalkeeper and an entertainer, and to be compared with him is a sort of a compliment, but for me the important people are the fans. They are our twelfth man out there, and we must be thankful for that."

"My style of goalkeeping is different here in Scotland for a number of reasons. I'm an athletic goalkeeper and tend to take more risks than other goalkeepers by wanting to help my defenders anywhere inside the box, but in this league I try to play like the management want me to. They tell me not to come out so much because players like Gary Stevens, Richard Gough and Stuart Munro are so fast, and they want me to let them get back more often, and I can adapt to that style, no problem."



"I've just moved into a new flat in the South side of Glasgow, and although I stayed in a nice hotel, it's great to get into a home and now I can concentrate one hundred per cent on my football. The Jewish community is bigger than most people imagine here in Glasgow, and the Jewish people are very like the Scots, great to talk to and very friendly, and I think I'm a good communicator so I've no problems off the park."

"All I can do now is keep fit and wait for my chance to come along."

And we wish this talented Israeli goalkeeper a successful season with the most popular team of bonnie Scotland.



The Edinburgh Synagogue.

COMING EVENTS

JIII.V

	OULI	
	22 Sun	Friendship Club 3 pm
	AUGUS	ST
	19 Sun	Friendship Club 3 pm
SEPTEMBER		
	2 Sun	Maccabi 1 pm
		Friendship Club 3 pm
	16 Sun	Maccabi 1 pm
		Friendship Club 3 pm
	20 Thu	
		2nd Day Rosh Hashanah
	28 Fri	Kol Nidre
	29 Sat	Yom Kippur
	30 Sun	Maccabi 1 pm
		Friendship Club 3 pm
	In ad	dition the Lunch Club meets on

In addition, the Lunch Club meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12 noon, except for a summer break from the beginning of July until 16th August.

The above events take place in the Community centre, 4 Salisbury Road.

The Jewish Youth Study Group meet on Sunday evenings in members' homes.

The Edinburgh Campaign for Soviet Jewry meet on the first Monday evening of the month in a member's home.

Edinburgh Fringe

The Voice of the Turtle Paths of Exile

A group from Boston present the musical legacy of the Spanish Jews. -18th-30th August

Festival of Jewish Culture

Concerts: 19, 22, 23 and 26 August in the RSAMD.

Benno Schotz studio open days. Details of all events from POB 644, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G77 5DG.

And in our Next Issue:

The Chief Rabbi's visit to Edinburgh A rare event: a wedding at Salisbury Road

and much more to come.

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