



RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL NOTES

American Jewish Tercentenary Issue

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FRONT COVER — Statue of Roger Williams in Roger Williams Park

Photo courtesy Rhode Island Historical Society

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BACK COVER—Roger Williams Spring on North Main Street, Providence. Presented to the city in 1928 by the late J. Jerome Hahn in memory of his Father, Isaac Hahn, the first person of the Jewish faith to be elected to public office in Rhode Island (1885).

Photo courtesy Rhode Island Historical Society

PUBLISHED BY THE
RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

VOLUME 1

JUNE, 1955

NUMBER 3



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Printed by the Roger Williams Press, Providence, Rhode Island

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ROGER WILLIAMS AND THE JEWS

by DAVID C. ADELMAN

IN JANUARY of this year, the local press published an article¹ under the headline, "WILLIAMS, ROGER, MOVES OVER IN YEAR-BOOK FOR GREEK GODS." The article stated that the literary editor of a high school yearbook decided that "Roger Williams had been overworked in these parts," and that there should be a break with past traditions in favor of Greek mythology as their theme for the 1955 yearbook because "the Greek gods and goddesses symbolized what young people would like to be: Minerva, for wisdom and foresight; Janus, he of the two heads, so past accomplishments could be reviewed and future acts anticipated; Mercury for sports; and Cupid, for love, of course." After considerable argument there was a tie vote of six to six which was broken by a Jewish girl in favor of the Greek gods. This decision on the part of the high school class, while not of earth-shaking importance, raises the question whether our boys and girls really know the importance of Roger Williams in American history and his relationship to the events of our own day and points up the materialistic trend of our times.

Although many biographies of Williams have been written he is still a controversial figure. Professor Perry Miller of Harvard University published the last one in 1953, in which he states that "THE IRREPRESSIBLE DEMOCRAT: ROGER WILLIAMS" by Samuel H. Brockunier, (New York 1940) is the best, although he characterizes it as a "sad example of the misrepresentation that comes when Williams is presented too easily in the language of 20th century thought." Miller's book analyzes Williams' writings and comes to the conclusion that Williams' thought was theologically motivated. Mr. Bradford F. Swan in his commendatory review² of Miller's book thinks that Professor Miller "fails to give sufficient weight to the common sense arguments of Williams who pointed out to Parliament arguments from 'religion, reason, experience.'" The writer as a layman must accept Professor Miller's theological arguments but at the same time agrees with Mr. Swan's criticism.

Although in his Epilogue, Professor Miller writes that "some great experience in the youth of a person is ever afterward a determinant in the development of his personality," he completely disregards the twenty-seven formative and important years of Williams' life during

¹ *Providence Journal*, January 24, 1955.

² *Rhode Island History*, vol. 13, no. 1, p. 23 January, 1954, Rhode Island Historical Society.

which he served as the secretary and law clerk for Sir Edward Coke, a great libertarian of his day, and during which Williams made the acquaintance and lasting friendship of the leading English political figures. While it is true that Williams was a theologian of theologians, he was also a linguist, a keen politician, logician, preacher, diplomat, philosopher, economist and shrewd trader. Professor Miller states that Williams argued that the "King of England had no title to the land of the Indians and so no right to issue a charter," because of his effort to impose separation on Massachusetts, or failing that, to force Salem to separate from the rest of Massachusetts. The writer submits that Williams' question of the title of the King could have sprung from "a universal perception, that justice is the supreme law of the universe" and that the Indian as the equal of the white man had equal right to the land and, by virtue of prior occupancy, had superior title. Similarly he displayed prophetic insight when he contended that the Irish were enraged and desperate and rose to cast off their yokes because of the laws against their consciences and worship.

Williams believed in the equality of all men as God's children and was opposed to the use of force. His weapons were those of persuasion, the mind, the pen and speech. He was a good man in the Biblical sense. The cast of his thought was political, social, legal and economic, as well as theological. If Americans have invested Williams with an "ill-fitting halo," that which Professor Miller would substitute is entirely too small.

Time and time again Williams referred to "Jews, Turks, Papists, Protestants and pagans," which some Jews consider as a dubious compliment. This attitude arises from the common fault of regarding the present in terms of the past. If we reverse the process and look at the past in terms of the present, Williams comes alive as the champion of the social outcast of his day and age. The position he took would be comparable to that of a Governor of one of our United States who would champion the rights of a "fifth amendment communist" today. Williams believed that Mohammedanism, Roman Catholicism, and Judaism were false religions. Nevertheless, he defended their rights to their own belief while hoping for their conversion.

Too late, Williams recognized the Achilles' heel in the government of Providence Plantations which he founded. He lived to see a self-perpetuating corporation monopolize the land and the vote which went with it. After his death the control of the government became ever more highly concentrated in the hands of a few, with the result that the richest Jew in the colony was denied even naturalization in 1761 and no Jew

in the colony was ever admitted as a freeman. Since the question of the naturalization of Aaron Lopez was considered (in the last issue of these Notes) additional research discloses that the Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Judicature of Newport, which handed down the decision against the naturalization, was Samuel Ward of Westerly, the political enemy of Stephen Hopkins of Providence, the close political ally of the Browns of Providence with whom Aaron Lopez was closely associated. Ordinarily a large body of water is a barrier between the opposite shores, but such was not the case in 1761 because shipping was then at its height and Narragansett Bay was a bridge between the Sabbatarians of Westerly and Newport.

The first reason which the Superior Court of Newport gave for denying naturalization in 1762 was that the Act of Parliament was wisely designed for increasing the number of inhabitants in the plantations, "but this Colony being all ready so full of people that many of his majesty's good subjects, born within the same have removed & settled in Nova Scotia & other Places, cannot come within the Intention of the said Act." Samuel Greene Arnold seized upon this argument as "absurd" because the petitioners were already residents and their naturalization would not affect the population one way or the other. Arnold's reasoning is correct, but he should have disclosed (if he knew) that at that time it was official opinion that the Colony was full, if not too full. Historians have blindly followed Arnold to the discredit of the Court.

A recent article by Robert N. Cool in the *Providence Journal*³ discloses that the reason for Rhode Islanders migrating to Nova Scotia were the inducements offered them to fill the vacuum created by the expulsion of the Huguenots.

Nova Scotia sent her agents⁴ into Rhode Island because she knew that officials of the Colony of Rhode Island felt that the Colony had residents to spare. As a result a large number emigrated.

Therefore, the reason given by the Court for denying naturalization to Aaron Lopez, namely, that the colony was already too full, was not a tongue-in-cheek decision nor one of outright political dishonesty.

Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, occupant of the Adolph S. Ochs Chair of History at the Hebrew Union College and Director of American-Jewish Archives in Cincinnati, Ohio, has written "Early American Jewry," and in the first volume (p. 17) writes, "Others, like Roger Williams, looked with tolerance if not with favor on God's Chosen People.

³ *Providence Journal*, Sunday, February 27, 1955.

⁴ Ray Greene Huling, *Rhode Island Emigration to Nova Scotia, Narragansett Historical Register VII*, 2 p. 89, Providence, R. I., April 1889.

"... Cromwell, the Protector, was far more sympathetic. He had dealings with individuals among them and was prejudiced in their favor."

Without disparaging Cromwell, the writer calls attention to the fact that it was Williams who interceded for the readmission of the Jews into England and never lost an opportunity while in England to plead their cause as will appear from a reading of quotations from his writings hereto appended. Dr. Marcus in another place (p. 117) writes "While full political and civil rights universally applicable seem explicit in Roger Williams' teachings, it is questionable if Williams was in reality willing to go that far," and goes on to quote the phrase 'true Christian faith' from the royal charter of 1663 which he denominates the "Rhode Island" charter, and continuing mentions the exclusion of "the most enterprising Newport Jewish merchant from naturalization almost a century later" (p. 117). The writer can not accept this judgment and believes that the weight of the evidence as revealed by Williams' teachings, writing, and life lead to a contrary conclusion.

Aaron Lopez and Isaac Elizer were not the only Jews to feel the whip-lash of scorn, as Rhode Island retrogressed from the principles of Williams. Ninety years later Governor Philip Allen (Nov. 1852) issued a Thanksgiving Proclamation addressed to Christians and believers in the Saviour, excluding Jews from the observance. Lewis Lewisson, a pioneer Jewish merchant in Providence responded with a Thanksgiving Proclamation of his own (See *R. I. J. H. Notes* I, 2, p. 121) in which he invited "all poor people indiscriminately of religion" to share his bounty. Between the hours of 7:30 and 10 in the morning of Thanksgiving Day, Lewisson gave away to widows of Providence, 1200 pounds of meat and 500 loaves of bread.³ Like Lopez, he too was held in the highest esteem by his Christian neighbors. "Eternal vigilance is [still] the price of liberty."

Williams founded Rhode Island in love and upon the basis of liberty and equality, *both* in land and government. He did not believe that "some men are more equal than others." No Jew was ever warned out of Rhode Island.

Quotations from Writings of Roger Williams

a)

"There goes many a ship to sea with many hundred souls in one ship, whose weal and woe is common, and is a true picture of a commonwealth, or a human combination of society. It hath fallen out some times, that both papists and protestants, Jews and Turks, may be embarked in one ship;

³*The Asmonean* VII, 11, p. 125, Dec. 31, 1852.

upon which supposal I affirm, that all the liberty of conscience, that ever I pleaded for, turns upon these two hinges—that none of the papists, protestants, Jews or Turks, be forced to come to the ship's prayers or worship, nor compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practice any."

Letter to The Town of Providence 1655

"The letters of Roger Williams," *Publications of the Narragansett Club VI* 278-9, Providence 1874.

b)

"Whether it be not the duty of the Magistrate to permit the Jews, whose conversion we look for, to live freely and peaceably amongst us?

"I humbly conceive it to be the Duty of the Civil Magistrate to break down that superstitious wall of separation (as to Civil things) between us Gentiles and the Jews, and freely (without this asking) to make way for their free and peaceable Habitation amongst us.

"As other Nations, so this especially, and the Kings thereof have had just cause to fear, that the unchristian oppressions, incivilities and inhumanities of this Nation against the Jews, have cried to Heaven against this Nation and the Kings and Princes of it.

"What horrible oppressions and horrible slaughters have the Jews suffered from the Kings and peoples of this Nation, in the Reigns of Henry 2, K. John, Richard 1, and Edward 1. Concerning which not only we, but the Jews themselves keep Chronicles."

Major Butler's Fourth Paper 3, 18, 19, London 1652

Clarence Saunders Brigham, Providence, R. I. 1903

c)

"By the merciful assistance of the Most High, I have desired to labor in Europe, in America, with English, with Barbarians, yea, and also, I have longed after some trading with Jews themselves (for whose hard measure, I fear the nations and England hath yet a score to pay)."

The Hireling Ministry 13, London 1652

"I desire not that liberty to myself which I would not freely and impartially weigh out to all the consciences of the world besides. (Page 19) All these consciences (yea, the very consciences of the Papists, Jews, &c., as I have proved at large in my answer to Master Cotton's washings ought freely and impartially to be permitted their several respective worships, their ministers of worship, and what way of maintaining them, they freely choose."

Ibid, page 27

d)

"Is there not more danger (in all matters of trust in this world) from an hypocrite, a dissembler, a turncoat in his religion (from the fear or favor

of men), than from a resolved Jew, Turk or Papist, who holds firm unto his principles?"

e)

"The straining of men's consciences by civil power is so far from making men faithful to God or man, that it is the ready way to render a man false to both."

f)

"True civility and christianity may both flourish in a state or kingdom, notwithstanding the permission of divers and contrary consciences, either of Jews or Gentiles."

g)

"I commend that man, whether Jew or Turk, or Papist, or whoever, that steers no otherwise than his conscience dares, 'till his conscience tells him that God gives him a greater latitude."

The Roger Williams Calendar, John O. Austin, Providence 1897

FOOTNOTES

In 1897, the American Jewish Historical Society published a paper by Max J. Kohler, entitled "The Jews in Newport" (Publications A.J.H.S. VI, 68) in which he made the statement that "Abraham Campanall, probably a son of Mordecai Campanall, was licensed as a freeman" and gave as his authority *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island* by John R. Bartlett (III p. 243). Bartlett published a list of "Persons Lycensed", but omitted the purpose for which they were licensed. Kohler was in New York. The original record was in Newport. Excuses may be made for the addition of the words "as a freeman" by Kohler but certainly none for those who perpetuated the error by relying upon him as an authority instead of examining the original document. (See *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* I, 2, p. 107.)

In 1936, Bloch Publishing Co. published "The Story of the Jews of Newport" by Morris A. Gutstein, who wrote (p. 43) "... the verdict of the court in the Dyre suit gave the Jews more privileges. They were permitted to hold property and become freemen. On the first Thursday in September 1688, we find Abraham Campanall among the 'Persons Lycensed' as a freeman." Gutstein cites *Records of the General Court of Trials, 1671-1724*, p. 146, and *Publ. A.J.H.A. VI*, 68 as his authorities.

The court record was in Newport and so was Gutstein but it is obvious that he did not examine it but relied upon Kohler. The word "freeman" does not appear anywhere in the original. Nor did the Dyre case have anything to do with "freemen."

In the same book, upon the authority of Bartlett's records there appears (p. 56) the statement, "Moses Lopez was naturalized in 1750."

Bartlett, in two paragraphs recites the gratuitous services which Lopez rendered as translator of Spanish and the action of the General Assembly in granting him exemption from all personal duties. "Naturalization" is not mentioned.

Further on, we read (p. 159) that "Lopez and Elizer . . . applied for naturalization in 1762. At first the Superior Court referred the matter to the General Assembly. They in turn sent it back to the Court," citing "Itineraries of Ezra Stiles." The application was first made to the Court in 1761. The unfavorable decision of the Court in 1762 was on the third petition. Gutstein suppresses the fact that a second petition was filed in the General Assembly upon which the Lower House acted favorably and the Upper House admitted their right to naturalization but disclaimed jurisdiction (of the Assembly) and referred them to the Court.

The author discusses the Court decision and asks (p. 161) "if the colony was founded for the sole 'enjoyment of the Christian religion,' why was Abraham Campanall made a freeman in 1688?"

That question should have sent the inquirer to the original source where he would have learned that he need not have asked it. Campanall who was granted a license to conduct a tavern was not thereby made a freeman.

On the same page, he continues "Why were Moses Lopez and James Lucena naturalized without question in 1753 and 1761 respectively? They too were Jews and confessed the Jewish faith openly."

Only one, Moses Lopez, was a professing Jew. Lucena appeared before the General Assembly on February 23, 1761, as a Portuguese, applying for the exclusive right to manufacture Castile soap. Three days later, February 26th, he applied for naturalization, presumably upon legal or political advice or both. In any event both petitions were granted on February 27th, and Lucena took the oath, upon the true faith of a Christian, a week later. (See *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* I, 2, p. 109.)

"Without question," Moses Lopez was not naturalized in 1753 but was granted the right to manufacture potash. The author's note refers to Bartlett's *Records of the Colony* (V, 375) which has nothing to do with naturalization.

The reader's attention is directed to the fact that Gutstein claims that Lopez was naturalized in 1750 (p. 56) and in 1753 (p. 161).

The facts are that Lopez was excused from personal duties (1750) and was granted the right to manufacture potash (1753). None of the authorities cited support the statement that he was naturalized. Lucena, who did not represent himself as "a person professing the Jewish religion" but as a Portuguese and took the oath as a Christian, cannot historically be charged to the General Assembly as a Jew.

Samuel H. Brockunier, the author of "The Irrepressible Democrat: Roger Williams," (published by The Ronald Press Company 1940) writes, "And several years later Abraham Campanall was licensed as a freeman," citing Kohler but the reference is to page 38, which should read 68. Nevertheless, we regard this work as the best on Roger Williams, without qualification.

Abram Vossen Goodman in "American Overture, Jewish Rights in Colonial Times" (1947) referring to the Dyre case, writes (p. 43), "A sequel to this incident has no little significance . . . Abraham Campanall . . . was licensed as a freeman by the Court which held its sitting at Rochester. So far as we know, he was the only Jew admitted to this privilege in all the history of colonial Rhode Island." Goodman relies on the authority of Bartlett's *Records of the Colony* (III, 243)

repeating Kohler's error of 1897 without mentioning him, nor the fact that "Rochester" was the name given to the town of Wickford by the usurper Andros.

On page 53, Goodman gives the date of the naturalization of Lucena as "December 1760." His note refers the reader to "Records of the Colony of Rhode Island XV, 262, 267." Since the records consist of only ten volumes recourse must be had to Bartlett's Index which indicates that the correct reference should be to VI, 262, 267. On page 262 Bartlett appends a list of acts passed, the last one the naturalization of Lucena (December). Examination of the Acts and Resolves, as well as the original petition proves Bartlett to be in error. The General Assembly adjourned in October 1760 until the last Wednesday in February 1761, when it was to meet (as it did) in East Greenwich. However, the Governor did call a special session which was held on December 31, 1760, which passed bills dealing with lotteries and soldiers' pay.

Goodman continues "When Aaron Lopez and Isaac Elizer sought to do the same *the following year*, conditions had radically changed." The Lucena naturalization petition to the General Assembly is dated February 26, 1761, the first Lopez petition to the Superior Court of Newport is dated March 1761 and the petition to the General Assembly is dated October 30, 1761. These dates are important because of the juxtaposition of historians of the Lucena petition to that of Lopez and Elizer. The lapse of time was not more than a week between the Lucena petition and the first Lopez petition and eight months between the Lucena petition and the second Lopez petition which went to the General Assembly. The only change in "conditions" was an annual election in May.

Goodman states in a note, "Stiles is our *only* source for these facts (*Itineraries of Ezra Stiles*, 52). The original documents in the Archives of the State of Rhode Island and in the Superior Court in Newport are primary, and therefore, better sources and are conclusive as to the evidence therein contained.

On page 131, Goodman refers to the Jewish colonization of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys as probably more significant and more romantic than the colorful operations of the widely publicized "*Jewish counting houses* by the Newport waterfront."

The use of the phrase "counting house" as descriptive of the introduction and manufacture of potash, spermaceti candles, and Castile soap as well as the development of a large merchant marine is a narrow and prejudiced view which flows naturally from the attempt to offset the predominant role which the Jews of Newport played in the whaling industry which the author discloses.

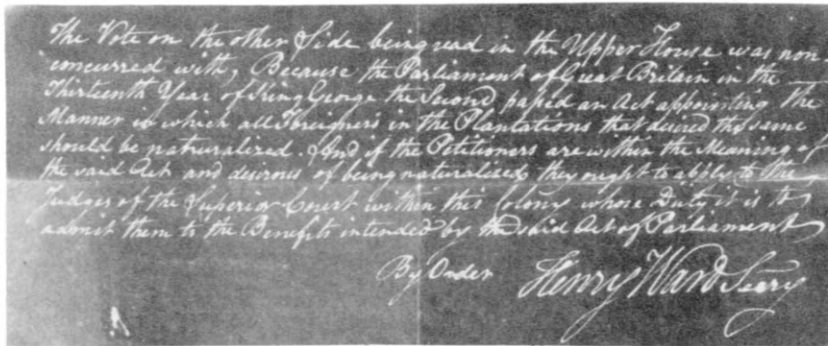
Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus in *Early American Jewry* (1951) page 128; writes:

"Sometime in 1761 Isaac Elizer and Aaron Lopez had applied for naturalization. . . . Although only the year before James Lucena had been granted a similar request, the Rhode Island Lower House, the Assembly, denied their petition on the ground that they were Jews, declaring that no member of that religion had the right to hold any office or to vote in choosing others. The Upper House averred that foreigners in the Plantations were entitled to naturalization but blandly referred them to the judges of the Superior Court."

This paragraph contains a number of errors. The position of the names should be reversed to read Aaron Lopez and Isaac Elizer who described themselves as "persons professing the Jewish Religion," in contrast to James Lucena who de-

scribed himself as a Portuguese and took the oath "upon the true faith of a Christian." Lopez and Elizer filed not one but three petitions, the first in March of 1761 about two weeks after Lucena had presented his petition to the Assembly and about the time it was granted. Their first petition was presented to Superior Court of Newport which referred them to the General Assembly on the ground that the act of Parliament referred to in their petition was not in Court nor did they have an authentic copy and that therefore the General Assembly of the Colony alone "have naturalized all Foreigners." Thereupon, Lopez and Elizer not "sometime in 1761" but on October 30, 1761, filed their second petition with the General Assembly eight months after the Assembly had granted the Lucena petition.

Dr. Marcus states that "Lucena was naturalized by the General Assembly on the last day of December 1760" (II, p. 321) and so he uses the phrase "although only the year before James Lucena . . ." (p. 128.) The facts are that James Lucena also filed two petitions, both with the General Assembly. The first was on February 23, 1761, in which he sought a monopoly for the "making of Castile soap" and the second on February 26, 1761, praying for naturalization, both of which were granted by both Houses on February 27th, and Lucena took the oath as a Christian the first week in March. Dr. Marcus states (II p. 321) that Lucena was a cousin of Aaron Lopez. That being so, and Lucena having been successful in obtaining naturalization from the General Assembly, the question naturally arises why did Lopez avoid the General Assembly and go to the Superior Court in the first instance. (See *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* I, 2, p. 110, Dec. 1954.)



Dr. Marcus has confused the actions of the Lower House and the Upper House. The populous body (72 members) granted the petition, the Upper House (10 members) denied jurisdiction and "blandly referred them to the judges of the Superior Court." Lopez and Elizer reappeared before the Superior Court of Newport at its March term 1762, when the Court under Chief Justice Samuel Ward handed down its decision denying the third petition. Ward was elected Governor of the State at the election which followed in May.

If historical interpretation is to be meaningful, it must be based upon facts, which, with the passage of time, become elusive. Their pursuit is a painstaking, laborious process, for historical research does not lend itself to the assembly line and mass production methods of industry.

D.C.A.

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*Meetings were held in the Conference Room
of the General Jewish Committee*

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* * *

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Providence Jewish Tercentenary Committee

Mrs. Archibald Silverman
Rhode Island Chairman, American Jewish Tercentenary Committee

The American Association for State and Local History
Washington, D. C.

Award of Merit

The American Association for State and Local History is pleased
to recognize and commend the distinctive contribution of

DAVID C. ADELMAN

Voted at the annual meeting of the Association in Madison, Wisconsin on September 10, 1954



Howard H. Peckham

President of the Association

James S. [unclear]

Chairman/Committee on Awards

AWARD

*presented by CLIFFORD P. MONAHON, Director of The
Rhode Island Historical Society*

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE OPENING OF THE JEWISH TRICENTENARY EXHIBIT

AT THE PROVIDENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY

MADAME CHAIRMAN:

It is my pleasure to serve as an agent for the American Association for State and Local History in making an award of merit to Mr. David C. Adelman. In order to make the selections for these awards North America has been divided into ten districts. Last fall The Rhode Island Historical Society, an agency in District 3, submitted to the Association, then meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, evidence of the work of David C. Adelman. After comparing his writings with those of other nominees, the Awards Committee submitted their recommendations to the Council of the Association, which selected him for this important citation.

Lest some of you do not know why Dave was chosen from other nominees, let me tell you. This award is given him for his fine work on the history of the Jewish community in Rhode Island from the seventeenth century to the present time. Furthermore he is the founder of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association, and it was largely through his efforts that the Society's first publication, *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes*, v. 1, no. 1, appeared in June, 1954. And he has also contributed a very important article, "Strangers: Civil Rights of Jews in the Colony of Rhode Island," in the July, 1954, issue of *Rhode Island History*, the quarterly publication of The Rhode Island Historical Society.

Let me read to you what Bradford F. Swan, the eminent critic on the staff of the Providence *Journal* wrote of Dave Adelman in the August 4 issue of that paper, "Mr. Adelman has set an example not only for other writers in this special field but also for all who attempt local history. His writings are calm, unimpassioned, factual. They are not gushy tributes carelessly whipped up; they are careful searches for the truth—real examples of what local history should be."

The Rhode Island State Council of Churches

cordially invites you to attend

A Service

in honor of the

Tercentenary of the Coming of the

First Jews to America

to be held at

First Baptist Meeting House

Providence, Rhode Island

Sunday, February 6, 1955

Four o'clock

Address

by

Dr. James P. Adams

This service sponsored by the Protestant Community of Rhode Island is planned as an expression of appreciation for the contribution of the Jewish people to the life of Rhode Island and America.

A Community Service of Worship

*Honoring The Three Hundredth Anniversary
Of The Coming Of The First Jewish People To America*

SPONSORED BY

The Rhode Island State Council of Churches



SUNDAY AFTERNOON, FEBRUARY SIXTH
NINETEEN HUNDRED FIFTY FIVE

FOUR O'CLOCK

First Baptist Meeting House

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN AMERICA

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

THE SERVICE OF WORSHIP

- PRELUDE—"Archaïque" Hillemacher
- *PROCESSIONAL HYMN 70—"The God of Abraham praise" Tune, Leoni
- *CALL TO WORSHIP
- *INVOCATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER
- *CHORAL AMEN
- THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF OUR HERITAGE
Reverend Lawrence L. Durgin
- THE RESPONSE Rabbi William G. Braude, D.D.
- ANTHEM—"Early Will I Seek Thee"
from the Hebrew of Solomon ibn Gabirol
- UNISON ACT OF THANKSGIVING—(The Congregation seated)
- *HYMN 435—"O God, beneath Thy guiding hand" Tune, Duke Street
- SCRIPTURE LESSONS—Psalm 89:11-18 — I Corinthians 13
The Right Reverend John S. Higgins, D.D.
- SOLO—Prayer For Peace from New Synagogue Music by Freed
Sung by John L. Reynolds
- THE TERCENTENARY ADDRESS Dr. James P. Adams
- *HYMN 1—"O God, our help in ages past" Tune, St. Anne
- PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION—(The Congregation seated)
Reverend Earl Hollier Tomlin, D.D.
- UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION
- CHORAL RESPONSE
- *BENEDICTION Reverend Durgin and Rabbi Braude
- *RECESSIONAL HYMN 437—"God of our fathers" Tune, National Hymn
- POSTLUDE—"Memorial" Weinberg
- *The congregation stood at these points in the service*

OUR COMMON HERITAGE

Address by DR. JAMES P. ADAMS

THIS CAN BE a moment of exaltation for all whose interest has brought them to this place at this hour. It should be a heart-warming experience for all who join in this corporate act of respect and esteem with its overtones of understanding and goodwill. This is so much an expression of the spirit of America in her most sublime mood.

During these recent months, the Jewish people in this country have been commemorating the Tercentenary of the Coming of the First Jews to America in 1654. And their fellow citizens of all races and creeds have been helping them celebrate that important event. It is altogether fitting that we should pay a tribute of respect to that little band of sturdy souls who ventured across the seas to find their homes in a new wilderness. They must have had vividly in their memories the story of another wilderness and the vision of a promised land and the inspiring faith of Moses and Joshua, all of which are indelibly recorded in the ancient annals of their people.

They came in the early years of our American experience. They helped to lay the foundations of our way of life. Their very presence broadened its meaning. And their efforts helped to assure the fulfillment of its promise.

As we look back over this span of years, we can catch only a dim glimpse of that early setting. We know, however, that it was venture-some faith and courage which inspired them as it inspired the Pilgrim non-conformists before them and others who followed after them through the years. In some respects, however, the fortitude of these first Jewish settlers was of a special order. They knew that they would represent an identifiable minority. They were taking with them into a new community a religious heritage and family customs that were strange to the others with whom they would be in civic communication. This made immeasurably larger demands upon their faith and courage but it also enhanced the value of the respect which they would earn.

If they could now look back over all these years, they would marvel at what God has wrought and would say with William Bradford that "Out of small beginnings greater things have been produced by His hand that made all things of nothing and gives being to all things that are."

During this past year our fellow citizens have been commemorating those beginnings and we can join them in spirit and in truth because we realize that the faith and courage, and the industry and achievement which they celebrate are all a part of the patterned fabric which is America and, therefore, a part of our common heritage.

But when we focus our attention upon the Jews among us, we are thinking of them not only as fellow citizens within the body politic, as a part of the social structure, as participants in our economic endeavors, or as creative associates in the arts and sciences. They hold a respected place in all of these provinces of our group life. Nevertheless, we must think of them also with regard for another primary aspect of human experience. When they came they brought something more than their social, economic, intellectual and moral attributes and ambitions. They brought the religious faith of their Fathers with its age old tradition, its Holy Scriptures, its sacred symbolism, its moral sanctions and its spiritual influence upon the lives of their people. They transplanted an ancient religious heritage—from old lands in other parts of the world to a new environment where it could flourish within new horizons of hope.

This was their most distinctive contribution to our national culture. They too wanted to worship God in accordance with the dictates of their consciences. They had done so in other times and in many places down through the centuries but, in some circumstances, at awful cost to themselves and their children and, in some cases, without the benefits of security and without political peace of mind.

What a tribute to the dream that was to become America that they came. What a tribute to all that they found here that they remained and prospered. And what a tribute to the America which has come to be that their descendants in the citizenry of this country now look back with abiding appreciation upon this part of our noble experiment.

Where, may I ask, where on this continent, in what other part of the world, could a community more appropriately join in this celebration than in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, the land of Roger Williams, and in this city which he founded in the faith that men are ennobled by understanding and which he named Providence in gratitude to his Supreme Deliverer? Would that all the divers aspects of our community life were always and ever pursued in harmony with the spirit in which it was so nobly named.

Almost a score of years before these Jewish pioneers set their feet upon American soil, Roger Williams had planted here the seeds of a new civil

society and had nourished it with a new doctrine of religious liberty. This was his purpose from the beginning but it became the corporate purpose of the colony, safeguarded by the sanctions of law, when it was given expression in the petition for the Charter and in the Charter itself. It was written in accents bold to which we turn with pride and satisfaction even now—"To hold forth a lively experiment that a most flourishing civil state can stand and best be maintained with full liberty in religious concerns."

Yes, indeed, a lively experiment. This little commonwealth has not always been first in its adjustments to the evolving patterns of political experience through the years, but the historic pre-eminence of its place in this realm of human thought and feeling will outweigh much of what may have been tardiness in some other things. No one whose roots have found nourishment in the soil of Rhode Island, whether by birthright or by adoption, can fail to appreciate the benign significance of this heritage. But we need not rest our case entirely upon the words and deeds of Roger Williams. A hundred and fifty years later in those vibrant days when the founding fathers were forming a more perfect union within the framework of the Constitution, this colony again spoke out in language which could not be misconstrued. It called attention to the fact that the inalienable rights with which man was endowed by his Creator were not mentioned in the Constitution. The founding fathers had assumed their self-evident existence; but Rhode Island, destined to be the smallest state in the Union, and some of her sister commonwealths were unwilling to rest assured that they would be taken for granted. As a result, the Bill of Rights was written, by amendment, into the fundamental law of the land.

Moreover, when the new government came into being it was from Newport that there came the impulse which inspired one of the most sublime expressions of our faith in religious freedom that has ever been written in the English tongue. Moses Seixas, the Warden of the Synagogue, addressed to George Washington, President of the United States, an inquiry as to the disposition of the government in the matter of religious freedom. The Father of our Country wrote, in his own hand¹ and in the name of his fellow citizens, a memorable reply inspired by the substance of the inquiry itself and the language in which it was phrased. This Letter was truly a great declaration of intent. It is one of the documented definitions of our heritage. It must be made a part of this tribute. I shall read it.

¹In the handwriting of his secretary, Major William Jackson, signed by Washington. Ed.

"To the Hebrew Congregation in Newport
Rhode Island

Gentlemen.

While I receive with much satisfaction, your address replete with expressions of affection and esteem, I rejoice in the opportunity of assuring you, that I shall always retain a grateful remembrance of the cordial welcome I experienced in my visit to Newport, from all classes of Citizens.

The reflection on the days of difficulty and danger which are past is rendered the more sweet, from a consciousness that they are succeeded by days of uncommon prosperity and security. If we have wisdom to make the best use of the advantages with which we are now favored, we cannot fail, under the just administration of a good government, to become a great and happy people.

The Citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy: a policy worthy of imitation. All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.

It would be inconsistent with the frankness of my character not to avow that I am pleased with your favorable opinion of my administration, and fervent wishes for my felicity. May the Children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and figtree, and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations useful here, and in his own due time and way everlastingly happy.

G. Washington"

The ancient temple which has been for so long the religious household of that Congregation, the Touro Synagogue, is now a national shrine under the reverent guardianship of the American people. We are proud that it stands on a site within the confines of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

And is it not especially fitting that an exercise of commemoration in which the community pays its tribute to these three hundred years and all that they have meant to our Jewish friends and to Judaism in America should be conducted within the precincts of this First Baptist Meeting House? Itself an historic edifice, the oldest of its kind in the Nation, it continues to serve the fellowship of faith planted here at the head of Narragansett Bay more than three hundred years ago. On many occasions in the past this old Meeting House has witnessed the poignant expression of united civic thought and feeling toward great events in our history, on receipt of sad tidings and at times of rejoicing. It is serving worthily today in accordance with this honorable tradition.

I have not yet pictured the full significance of this Service. Not until I remind you of the auspices under which we are gathered here can I point the essential meaning of this event. It is inspired by the Rhode Island State Council of Churches and it is for this reason that it is something more than a mere civic function. It is something more than a friendly recognition of a particular group of our fellow citizens and their forebears and the place which they have made for themselves in the life of the community and of the Nation. It represents a soul inspiring participation by an association of Christian churches in the recognition of those who, adhering to another faith, conserved its heritage and maintained its vitality within an environment of freedom in America.

In the first place, it seems to me that this is a manifestation of brotherhood in action in its most meaningful connotation. As such, its social, moral and spiritual benefits are shared by those who pay their respects as well as by those who are respected. It is a part of our search for understanding among the people of many faiths who inhabit this great land of ours. Is it not appropriate here to recall that the great injunction "in all thy getting get understanding" comes down to us through the ancient Hebrew Scriptures? I venture to suggest that it is the moral and spiritual connotation of its Hebrew equivalent "BINAH" in this context which makes "understanding" one of the noblest words in the English language.

In this moral and spiritual setting, understanding is a deep and rewarding aspect of human relationship. It is compounded of sympathetic interest and the wisdom of insight and of respect for human dignity. It does not merely inhabit the surface of men's thoughts and feelings. It is rooted deep down in their inner consciousness. It cannot be confused with what is sometimes its superficial substitute, the manifestation of tolerance. It is something deeper and broader than that. Tolerance is

not enough if we are to reap the rich blessings of brotherhood. Tolerance is limitingly negative; it may be mere indifference. If freedom of worship in America were to become merely the political concept of non-interference by the State, it would be indeed a cold and diffusing influence on the social, moral and spiritual relationships of our people. But freedom of worship in this negative sense is not itself the basic ideal. It is but a derivative of something much more meaningful in our national life. Freedom of worship, if it is to be something more than merely a political definition, must be an expression of certain basic affirmations relating to human existence: that man is a creature of God; that he possesses a dignity of his own; that he is endowed with a mind and a will; that he must exercise his own choice in the way in which he will commune with his God; and that the respect for the integrity of his own religious impulses which he expects for himself, he must accord to others for theirs. But that fundamental requisite of freedom cannot find expression in mere tolerance. It can find expression only in an affirmative interest and in thoughtful understanding. Let us see to it that, in our own thoughts and actions, freedom of worship means all of this in America today and tomorrow and in the long future. We cannot share, nor is it essential that we even comprehend all of the tenets of faith of a religion not our own, or the forms of worship through which they are expressed. It is essential that we respect the sacred symbols of that faith and the significance of its inner meanings to those to whom it ministers. I am sure that the Rhode Island churchmen who have arranged this Service, hope and pray that it will be blessed because it was conceived in this spirit.

In the second place, it seems to me that this gathering commemorates another historic fact which has had a vital significance for almost two thousand years. Those of us who make our spiritual homes around the firesides of the Christian Gospel cannot be unmindful of the important place of the Hebraic tradition in the foundations of our own faith. I speak now not as a theologian nor as one learned in the fields of religious history or literature or in Biblical exegesis. I speak only as an impressionable layman who is deeply moved by the magnitude of the Christian's debt to the Law and the Prophets and the Writings of the Children of Israel.

That one of these great religious traditions should have its roots in the other is a fact of inestimable importance to all men who search for understanding. That the Old Testaments of the Christian Bibles are, in very large measure, coextensive in form and substance with the Holy

Scriptures of Judaism is a cultural identification of absorbing interest to all men who search for the common foundations of faith in God which underlie the distinctive superstructures of their several creeds. That these Scriptures are revered as inspired writings in both of these religious traditions is a basis for community of interest in their spiritual purpose.

What a treasure house are these Sacred Scriptures, a treasure house of truth and goodness and beauty. It is impossible to comprehend the sum total of their sustaining power through the ages for countless millions of the world's people, as supports to their faith and courage, as sources of comfort and solace, and as inspiration for labor and love. And these Scriptures are our common possessions.

Paul the Apostle and his successors turned their feet toward the west and the Christian religion spread over the Western world. This was one of the great watersheds of history. This faith brought with it in due time the sacred literature of the Christian church, including the Old Testament. Thus the ancient Scriptures of the Hebrew people became a part of the cultural heritage of Christendom.

The majestic sweep of their chronicles, the timeless impact of the commandments, the universal appeal of the wisdom literature, the tenderness and poetic beauty of the praise-songs, and the assuring comfort of the prophetic utterances have all become the precious possessions of a world which reaches far beyond the habitations of the Jews and far beyond the boundaries of Judaism.

Hear these words from the Hebrew Scriptures—edifying, exalting and reverent, and familiar to all of us:

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

“Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.”

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork.”

“Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.”

“I will lift up mine eyes into the mountains from whence shall my help come.”

“Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

“A soft answer turneth away wrath.”

“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches.”

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.”

“Whoso loveth knowledge loveth correction.”

“Righteousness exalteth a nation.”

“If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small indeed.”

"It hath been told thee, O man, what is good,
And what the Lord doth require of thee:
Only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with
thy God."

Moses and Joshua; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; Elijah and Elisha; Isaiah, Exekiel, Jeremiah and Job; David and Solomon and all the rest are religious forebears of both Jew and Christian despite the separate paths by which they have walked with God. And we, whose Bible includes also the New Testament, are reminded that the central figure in the Christian faith by which we worship God, Jesus of Nazareth, came to His ministry out of the cultural background of the Hebraic tradition.

We have gathered here, then, Jews and Christians, not as strangers but as friends, conscious of the fact that our American life has been enriched by the cultural streams of different races and creeds from many lands and by a multitude of persons, each with a human dignity of his own. What is it, now, that we see when, all together, we lift up our eyes unto the hills?

In God we trust is the central core of our existence. Loyalty to our country is our entitlement to all that we have inherited as citizens. Respect for our fellow men is a part of the social compact by which we live. Faith in freedom is the generating impulse by which we achieve. Devotion to justice is the guardian of our social conscience. Love of truth is the mainspring of our intellectual life. This is the master pattern of our American heritage. In keeping with its spirit and as an expression of its meaning, we salute, with respect and esteem, the little group of Jews who came to these shores three hundred years ago and all who have followed in their footsteps as their spiritual kindred through the years.

In the name of the Christian fellowship which offers this tribute of understanding, I speak words which have sacred meaning for our Jewish friends:

יְבָרֵךְ יי וְיִשְׁמְרֵךְ
" וְיִלְאוּךְ

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee;

Hebrew script in handwriting of Rabbi Braude.

PARTICIPATING IN THE SERVICE

Dr. James P. Adams, Little Compton, Rhode Island
Rabbi William G. Braude, D.D., Congregation of the Sons of Israel
and David (Temple Beth-El) Providence
Reverend Lawrence L. Durgin, Minister, Central Congregational
Church, Providence
The Right Reverend John S. Higgins, D.D., Bishop of the Episcopal
Diocese of Rhode Island
Reverend Earl Hollier Tomlin, D.D., Executive Secretary, The Rhode
Island State Council of Churches

APPRECIATION

The Committee desires to thank Mrs. Archibald Silverman for her gracious assistance in the arrangements for the service. Mrs. Silverman served her own Jewish Community as Chairman of the Rhode Island Committee for the Tercentenary Observance. Her help and suggestions have been highly appreciated.

THE PROCESSIONAL

Besides those participating in the service as indicated in the Order of Worship a group of Rabbis and Jewish lay leaders of our State of Rhode Island were honored and marched in the Processional. Each Rabbi walked with a Minister and lay leaders with representative Council lay people. They were:

Lay Group: David C. Adelman, Alter Boyman, Arthur Einstein, Maurice Epso, Dr. Samuel Adelson, John J. Dannin, Ben Hazen, Benjamin Brier, Archibald Silverman, James N. Williams, George Katz, George Demopolous, Dr. Samuel Nathan, Walter Adler, William P. H. Freeman, Harold Shippee, Jr., Perry Lusk, William Richardson, Herbert Wells, Jr., Donald Dewing, Thomas B. Buffum, Jr., Reginald Perry, Prof. Emmanuel Ekstrom, Dr. Maurice Cochran, Harold Tanner, Judge Fred Perkins, Elmer C. Wilbur, Sidney Kullberg, Clarence Moyer, Mrs. Samuel Nathan, Edgar Docherty, Joseph Vanable, Anthony Psilopoulos, Donald Prescott.

Clergymen: Rabbi Reuven Siegel, Rabbi Eli Bohnen, Rabbi Aaron Goldin, Rev. Vernon Cooke, Rev. William Herman, Rev. Frederick L. Gardner, Rev. Lawrence Almond, Rev. John G. Koehler, Rev. Robert C. Schacht, Rev. Donald G. Wright, Rev. Harold C. Metzner, Rev. Henry H. Schooley, Rev. Thomas S. Roy, Rev. Chris E. Lawson, Rev. James H. Lightbourne, Rev. Albert D. Tyson, Rev. Jesse L. Connor.

THE MUSIC

Anthems and Responses were sung by the Choir of Mathewson Street Methodist Church, Providence, Miss Beatrice Ward, Director of Music. Mr. William Dineen, Organist of First Baptist Church, was at the organ.

NOTES

The ushering at the service was directed by Mr. Robert M. Thomas, acting Chief Usher of the host Church.

Our gratitude is expressed to Rev. Thomas S. Roy, D.D., Interim Pastor, as well as to the members of First Baptist Church for their gracious hospitality on this occasion.

The Committee expresses its appreciation to WJAR-TV for its cooperation in filming major portions of the Tercentenary Service to be telecast on Sunday, February 13th.

THE COMMITTEE

Miss Alice W. Hunt, *Honorary Chairman*

Reverend Lawrence L. Durgin, *Chairman*

Mrs. Louise C. Boehne

Miss Rosa Minkins

Mrs. Hovey T. Freeman

Miss Helen C. Robertson

Reverend Ernest S. Frerichs

Dr. Carolyn Sherman

Reverend Albert W. Garner

Mrs. Harold B. Tanner

Reverend Arnold D. Johnson

Mrs. William D. Wiley

Edward F. Judge

Reverend Arthur E. Wilson, D.D.

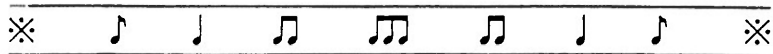
Mrs. Elon A. Kelley

Reverend Donald G. Wright, Ph.D.

AFTERMATH

Rabbi Israel M. Goldman of Baltimore, Maryland (formerly of Temple Emanu-El, Providence) writes in a letter to Rabbi Braude, "I was much impressed with the Community Service held in the First Baptist Church in observance of the American-Jewish Tercentenary. The holding of such a service is distinctly a tribute to the spirit of Roger Williams, which is a living spirit in Rhode Island. To the best of my knowledge, there is not another community in the land where such a service was held and where such a service could be held. I really take pride in Little Rhody."

And Miss Alice W. Hunt writes "I wish I could tell you what joy I have had from the expressions of Jews and Gentiles about *our* meeting. If you hadn't encouraged me I wouldn't have done anything about it. I like what Larry Durgin said about it, it will be 'remembered history.'"



CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

by

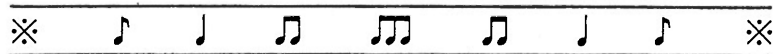
Mathewson Choir

M. BEATRICE WARD, *Director*

Sunday, March 20, 1955

7:30 P. M.

FELLOWSHIP HALL



LUKAS FOSS

Mr. Foss, the official pianist for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, was born in Berlin, August 15, 1922. He came to study at the Curtis Institute in 1937.

Mr. Foss created attention in 1942 with his music written for the production of Shakespeare's "Tempest." Included in his many works are a Symphony, Opera, Cantata, and Biblical Songs.

A PARABLE OF DEATH

Lukas Foss was commissioned by the Louisville Philharmonic Society to write a work involving a speaker as soloist. Since he feared that a kind of concerto for recitant and orchestra would turn into a melodrama he discarded Drama on the theatre level and gave us instead Drama in the realm of pure music.

This narrative is taken from "March vom lieben Gott" by Rainer Maria Rilke, an Austrian poet. The narrator tells what seems to be an old legend about a man, a woman and Death. The Chorus and the Tenor Solo comment on the story. Their lines were taken from poetry by the same author. In order that the work may be sung in English as well as in the original language, a metrical translation was prepared by Anthony Hecht.

The English version and the composition were written at the American Academy in Rome.

(Assisting the Chorus)

MATHEWSON QUARTET

CAROL WILLIAMS, *Soprano*

CAROL BRADSHAW, *Contralto*

JOHN REYNOLDS, *Tenor*

RAY GARDNER, *Bass*

PART I

Honoring the Three Hundredth Anniversary of the coming of the first Jewish People to America.

"Early Will I Seek Thee" *Hugo Adler*

from the Hebrew of Solomon ibn Gabirol

a) "Prayer for Peace" *Isadore Freed*

b) "May the Words of My Mouth"

(From new Synagogue Music)

Mr. Reynolds and Women's Choir

"Psalm 121" *Herbert Fromm*

"All the World" *Herbert Fromm*

(Mr. Fromm is organist and director of Music at
Temple Israel, Boston)

PART II

"A PARABLE OF DEATH" *Lukas Foss*

Based on a story and poems by Rainer Maria Rilke

English version by Anthony Hecht

NARRATOR Ray Gardiner

TENOR John Reynolds

PIANO Shirley Wilkinson

ORGAN Matilda Kenyon

“THE JEWISH HERITAGE”

Presented by the

RHODE ISLAND JEWISH COMMITTEE ON TELEVISION

in cooperation with

WJAR-TV

Produced, Directed and Narrated

by

MRS. HENRY W. MARKOFF

Music

by

Mrs. Louis B. Rubinstein

Sunday, February 13, 1955, 12:00-12:30 P. M.

CAST: — Sidney Long, Peter Bardach, Mrs. Albert Cohen, Alec Gurwitz, Harold Tregar, Louis B. Rubinstein, Bernard Gladstone, David Horvitz, Samuel Herzog, Julius Michaelson.

The Committee gratefully appreciates the cooperation of David C. Adelman, President of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association.

*The Jewish Community of
Bristol, Rhode Island
cordially invites you to attend
An Observance
in honor of the
Tercentenary of the Coming of the
First Jews to America
to be held at
United Brothers Synagogue
Bristol, Rhode Island
Sunday, the twentieth of March
Nineteen hundred and fifty-five
Eight o'clock*

Providence Jewish Tercentenary Pageant

Pageant of the Centuries

“THREE HUNDRED YEARS ARE IN THY SIGHT”

Written by MRS. AARON KLEIN

Directed by MRS. SAMUEL STARR

May 15, 1955, 8:30 P. M.

at the

Rhode Island School of Design Auditorium

Musical Director, MR. ARTHUR EINSTEIN

SONG FOR AMERICANS	<i>Julius Chajes</i>
THE 142nd PSALM	<i>Julius Chajes</i>
SEU SHEORIM (Lift Up the Gates)	<i>Emanuel Kirschner</i>
HALLELUJAH	<i>Emanuel Kirschner</i>
REQUIEM EBRAICO (92nd Psalm)	<i>Eric Zeisl</i>

Soloists

Cantor Jacob Hohenemser

Mrs. Albert A. Coken	Mrs. Nathan Gerstenblatt
Mr. Martin Curran	Mrs. Jacob Hohenemser
Mrs. Sidney Factor	Mr. Fred S. Pinkney
Mrs. Lester Friedman	Mrs. Alexander Tanenbaum

Mrs. Morris Weintraub, *Violinist*

Mrs. Stanford Stevens, *Pianist*

Miss Nancy Schiff
Mrs. A. Louis Rosenstein } *Narrators*

THE HOUSE OF
GOD AN EXHIBITION
IN HONOR OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH
TERCENTENARY

MUSEUM OF ART
RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN

Providence, Rhode Island

17 April - 13 May 1955



ADVISORY COMMITTEE *for the* EXHIBITION
at the RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN

Mrs. Siegfried Arnold
 Mrs. William G. Braude, *Chairman*
 Mrs. Burleigh B. Greenberg
 Mrs. Robert Hochberg
 Professor Israel J. Kapstein
 Mr. Alex Miller
 Mr. Archibald Silverman
Honorary President, General Jewish Committee of Providence
 Mrs. Archibald Silverman
Rhode Island Chairman, American Jewish Tercentenary Committee

☆ ☆ ☆

Mr. Beryl Segal, Vice-President of The Association recently addressed the following groups and organizations on the general theme of the Tercentenary:

PAWTUCKET

Congregation Ohave Shalom
 Hadassah and Sisterhood

PROVIDENCE

The Pioneer Women
 The Workmen Circle
 Rhode Island Jewish Fraternal Association
 Young Adults Division of the Community Center
 Jewish National Alliance-Poale Zion
 United Synagogue Youth of Temples Emanu-El
 and Beth Israel

☆ ☆ ☆

The Association expresses its appreciation to Mr. Samuel E. Kelman, a member of the Executive Committee, for his generosity in underwriting the expense of the printing, postage and clerical service involved in mailing out one thousand letters of solicitation for members.

THE PINKAS

by BERYL SEGAL

THE WORD "PINKAS" is of Greek origin and refers to the writing tablets or ledgers used by trades people to record transactions. In Jewish usage the Pinkas is a minute book of communal affairs. It may contain the minutes of the community proceedings, or it may record the doings of societies, associations, and Chevros (brotherhoods) within the community. Thus we know of Pinkosim kept by Jewish Guilds in Germany in the sixteenth century; Pinkosim kept by burial societies, study circles, and charitable organizations; Pinkosim recording the fortunes of great families.

A community Pinkas contains the records of a Great Fire, a Plague, a Calamity, or a miraculous deliverance from the plottings of evil men who would destroy the community.

An organizational or Chevra Pinkas contains the rules and regulations, the constitution and by-laws, the aims and purposes, as well as the names of the members, their duties and privileges.

Pinkosim have been preserved in the historical archives of the world dating back to the Middle Ages, and they are invaluable sources for the study of Jewish life in Spain, Italy, Germany, and France. Eastern European Jewish communities have kept Pinkosim, and these are the only remains of a Jewish way of living that has been wiped out by revolutions and wars.

Jews who settled in America transplanted this old communal tradition and began, for a while at least, to inscribe their religious affairs in Pinkosim. Two such minute books are known to exist in Providence. The one reproduced here was in the possession of the Congregation Beth David. It was given to the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association through the good offices of Mr. Henry Brill, who was the President of the Shul during the period when the old building on Chalkstone Avenue was demolished and the congregation moved to the new Shul on Oakland Avenue. The other Pinkas of a Providence Chevra for the study of the Talmud and Mishnah, dating back to the 1870's, is in the possession of the Congregation Sons of Zion, on Orms Street.

True to the traditional writing of the Pinkas, the two Pinkosim of Providence are in the lettering used by scribes of the Torah scrolls, and are no doubt the art work of local scribes. The Beth David Pinkas is the more ornamental of the two, while the Sons of Zion Pinkas is richer in content and the larger in number of folios. Both are the legacies of skill-

ful scribes, who must remain anonymous. This, too, is in the true tradition of the art of the scribe among Jews. Nowhere is the name of the artist signed nor is the least hint given. This anonymity prevails in the writing of the Torah scrolls, and in the writing of the Pinkas as well.

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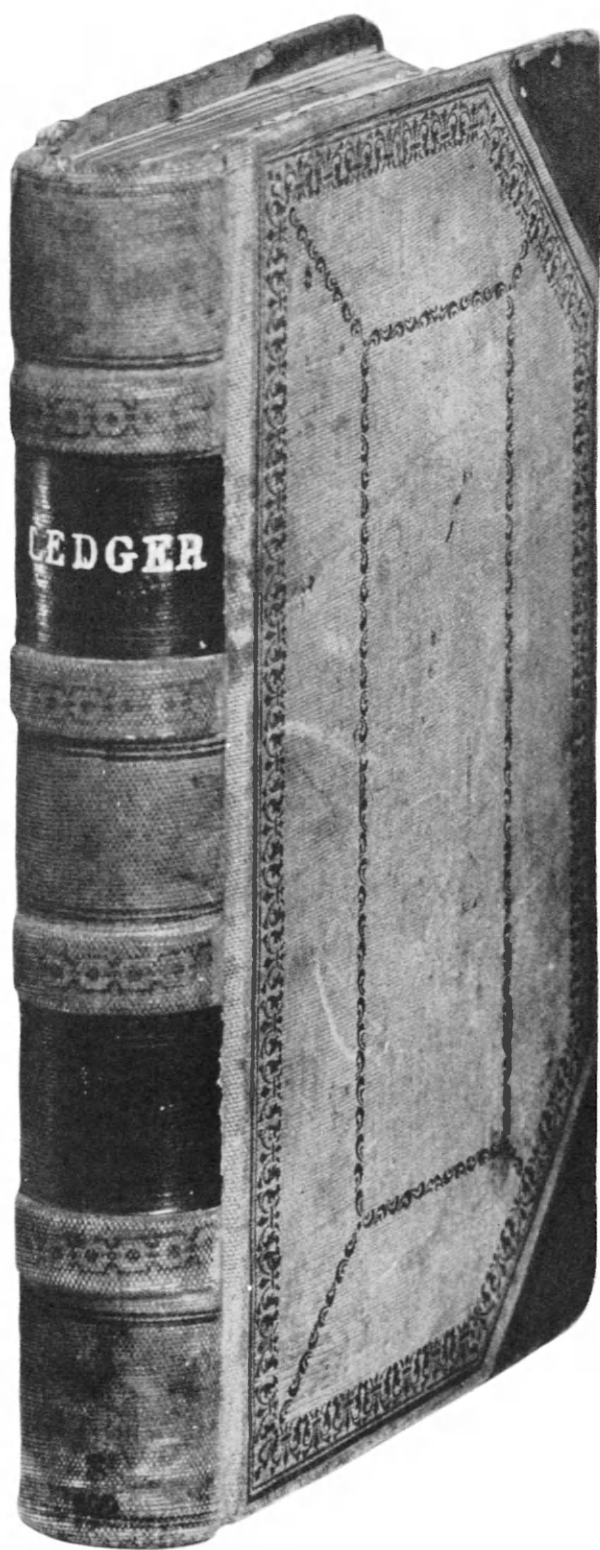
BETH DAVID PINKAS

Although Mr. Beryl Segal describes the Pinkas, reproduced in the following pages as that of the Congregation Beth David, it is in fact the Pinkas of at least four Congregations, namely, Keshet Israel, Anshei Sfard, the Russian Congregation, Ahavath Achim Anshei Slavita and Congregation Beth David. The directories (1907-23) do not list the Congregation Keshet Israel but they do list the Congregations Tiferes Israel, as on Shawmut Street near Chalkstone Avenue, the Russian Congregation Church on Chalkstone Avenue near Shawmut Street and Ahavath Achim on Shawmut Street near Chalkstone Avenue.

Reproductions in black and white can not show the beauty of the colors used on some of the pages although they do show the faithful devotion of the scribe. The Hebrew pages are to be read from right to left, from the highest number of the page to the lowest. The word "chevra" is usually translated as "brotherhood" but because of the inclusion of the names of women, we have translated the word to mean "society." The names of members are listed alphabetically according to the first letter of the first name of the member in Hebrew, which accounts for the names of Abraham and Eliezer appearing under the letter "A." They are both spelled in Hebrew with the first letter "Aleph" (A).

The Association hereby expresses its gratitude to Rabbi George B. Schwartz, of the Congregation Beth David for the translation into English, including notes and glossary.

D. C. A.



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RECORD BOOK

OF THE SOCIETY

Mishnayes and Ain Yaacov

of the Synagogue

Kesher Israel

of Providence

The year

*"And in his Law doth he meditate day and night"*¹

1907 (5667)

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With the help of God

The first day² in the portion

"And my soul shall live because of thee"

We the brotherhood . . . have gathered ourselves here in Providence "In the multitude of people there is the king's glory."³ And all of us as one man took upon ourselves the yoke of the kingdom of heaven to delve in His perfect Torah day and night and we have organized a Chevra Mishnayes and Ain Yaacov amongst us to study every day in the evening and in the morning one chapter of Mishnayes and a few folios of Ain Yaacov and we pray to the God of Blessing and Praise to bless the work of our hands and that we may be worthy of seeing sons and grandsons engaging in Torah and Mitzvos for their own sake through our (efforts). And may our eyes see, when God returns, the captivity of our people and the coming of the Redeemer speedily in our days, Amen.

So shall be His will.

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THESE ARE THE RULES OF THE CHEVRA

A

The Purpose of this Chevra and its goal is to study one chapter Mishnayes every morning and a few folios of Ain Yaacov every evening.

B

The members are obligated to live among themselves also in their private lives in peace, tranquillity, brotherhood and friendliness.

C

If one of the members is visited after the visitation of all men,⁴ then there is an obligation on the members to accompany the body to his resting place and afterwards to come to his house and console his mourners, and the Gaboyim are required to send to his house, all during the Shiva, ten men from the Chevra to worship there in the morning and in the evening and to study Mishnayes and if G-d forbid he has no sons then the Chevra is required

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to appoint one of the Chevra in order to recite Kaddish the entire year, also the Yahrzeit shall be reordered in the record book and every year the Chevra is obligated to study in his honor Michnayes on the day of the Yahrzeit.

D

The Sabbath of the Sidra of Naso⁵ is reserved as the Sabbath of our Chevra, then all the members shall assemble to worship together and each and every one shall be called to the Torah. And after a hundred years when members shall have passed away their souls should be remembered.

E

Every one of the Chevra takes upon himself the obligation to send 10 cents to the treasury of the Chevra each and every month. And as long as one is in arrears for one payment he shall have no right to take part in the elections.

F

The time of elections shall be once a year on the First Day of Shevat, and then they shall install for the entire year, two Gaboyim, a treasurer, and a secretary.

G

New members may be accepted every first day of a month. The new member is required to contribute to the Chevra's treasury on behalf of his appointment to the Chevra.

H

If G-d forbid, one of the members shall become ill, then there is a holy obligation on every one of the Chevra to visit him.

I

At all times of assembly the Chevra may institute new rules by a two-thirds majority of those assembled and according to the judgment of the members.

J

At important assemblies such as the election meeting or at the time of a Siyyium⁶ there is an obligation to read out loud before all of those assembled, all of the above rules.

K

Also all of the men whose hearts inspire them with wisdom to be inscribed on the record book of our Chevra.

(*In Yiddish, Hebrew Script*)

THESE ARE THE RULES OF THE CHEVRA⁷

A

When one of the Chevra, G-d forbid, passes away, every member of the Chevra must go to worship in the house of the deceased the entire week in a minyan of people.

B

If one of the members cannot go to worship for instance due to business, he will be required to pay \$1.50 to hire someone to take his place. If not, the members are not obligated to go and worship in the house of the mourner after a hundred years. He will have to give \$20 to the above Chevra (that is if he wants the service of minyan after his demise).

C

When a woman of the above Chevra passes away, G-d spare us, the heirs must give 10 dollars to Chevra, and if not, the members are not obligated to go there and worship and say Kaddish in the synagogue and on the cemetery.⁸

ETERNAL

MEMORY

1907 (5667)

This is the gate to the Chevra

Mishnayes and Ain Yaacov

Which was founded in the year

*"Learn to do well; Seek justice, Judge the fatherless,
relieve the oppressed, plead for the widow"*⁹

The Names of the Gaboyim will be entered in it.

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THESE ARE THE NAMES OF THE GABOYIM

First Gabbai

Reb Menasheh bereb Ychoshua Rosenfeld

Second Gabbai

Reb Shlomo bereb Moshe Aaron Gertz

Treasurer

Reb Yitzchok bereb Chaim Altman

Secretary

Reb Moshe bereb Aryeh Dohr

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THESE ARE THE NAMES OF THE GABOYIM

From the year 1909 (5669) — 1911 (5671)

Reb Reuven bereb Avigdor Vecker

Reb Eliezer Michal bereb Yaacov Kohn

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In memory of the soul of his father he who was learned in the Torah and G-d fearing Moreinu Reb Bezalel bereb Samuel Pass of blessed memory, his son the generous and intelligent Morein¹⁰ Reb Chaim and his pious wife, Mrs. Ethel, the daughter of Reb Yechezkel, have donated a good Shas lacking certain tractates, and also the six orders of Mishnayes, to the Beis Hamidrash of the Anshei Russia. May his righteousness stand as a remembrance forever and may he be rewarded in full by the Lord of Rewards now and in the world to come, and may he be worthy of seeing sons and grandsons studying the Torah, Amen.

In the year "*My Torah do not forsake, Selah.*"¹¹

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This is the donation of Reb Tsvi bereb Abraham Kilberg

This is the donation of Mrs. Sarah, the daughter of Jacob

Members of the Chevra Mishnayes and Ain Yaacov

of Congregation Kesher Israel Anshei Sfard

Here Providence

1907 (5667)

The Sidra of "*So G-d give you of the dew of heaven.*"¹²

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ALEPH (A)

Reb Eliezer Michal, the son of Jacob Cohen (Katz)
Reb Aaron, son of Isaac, Halevi
Reb Eliezer, son of Judah Leib, Goldstein (Katz)
Reb Abraham Elihu, son of Samuel Jacob, Litchman
Reb Ephraim, son of Chaim, Rosen
Reb Ephraim, son of David Halen, Brodsky
Reb Eliezer, son of Jacob, Potter
Reb Ephraim Zack, son of Aaron Eliezer
Reb Anchel, son of Kalman, Kirschner
Reb Abraham, son of Eliezer, Zilberman
Reb Eliezer Mazin
Reb Abraham, son of Tobiah, Greenblatt
Reb Eliezer, son Yechiel Michal, Brenner
Reb Abraham Yechiel, son of David, Licher
Reb Abraham Mordecai, son of Simchah, Weinstein

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BETH (B)

Reb Benjamin, son of Aaron Mordecai, Goldstein

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ZAIN (Z)

Reb Zev Wolf, son of David, Rabinovitz

Reb Zalman, son of Samuel, Wolf

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CHETH (Ch)

Reb Chasin, son of Shlomo Isaiah, Tissenbaum

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TES (T)

Reb Tobiah, son of Abraham, Greenblatt

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YOD (Y)

Reb Ezekiel, son of Yerachmiel, Green

Reb Jacob, son of Jehoshua, Rosenfeld

Reb Yudah Leib, son of Jeremiah, Kronitzky

Reb Isaac, son of Moses, Blettle

Reb Isaac Leib, son of Lippman, Levin

Reb Isaac Chaim, Altman

Reb Joshua, son of Joseph, Schweiner

Reb Israel Isaac, son of Zev, Gerstenblatt

Reb Joseph, the son of Shlomo, Gertz

Reb Jehusiel, son of Judah, Halpern

Reb Joseph Leib, son of Haphtali, Rice

Reb Isaac, son of Moses, Weiner

Reb Judah Leib, son of Tauchum, Halevi

Reb Yechiel, son of David, Licher

Reb Israel Moses, Kronskey

Reb Jacob Koppel, son of Mayer, Berenoit

Reb Yomtov, son of Elkanah, Stein

Reb Isaac, son of Reuven, Lichtman