

350 Years of American Jewish History:
A Commemorative Collection



Plate 1: "A Plan of the City and Environs of New York as they were in the Years 1742, 1743 and 1744. Drawn by DG in the 76th year of his age who had at this time a perfect and correct recollection of every part of the same." (1813)

David Grim (1737–1826) immigrated from Bavaria and was the proprietor of the popular Hessians Coffee House during the late eighteenth century, from which he observed the development of Manhattan Island as it evolved from a small town into the more familiar urban center we think of. He drew this map in 1813 when he was 76 years old.

The line of the buildings at the top contains an image titled "synagogue," a reference to the congregation known as Shearith Israel, whose building was then located on Mill Street. The imagery helps illustrate that at a time when the Jewish community of the United States was small, numbering only several hundred in both 1743 and 1813, New York was already known for its religious and cultural diversity.

(Courtesy New York Historical Society)

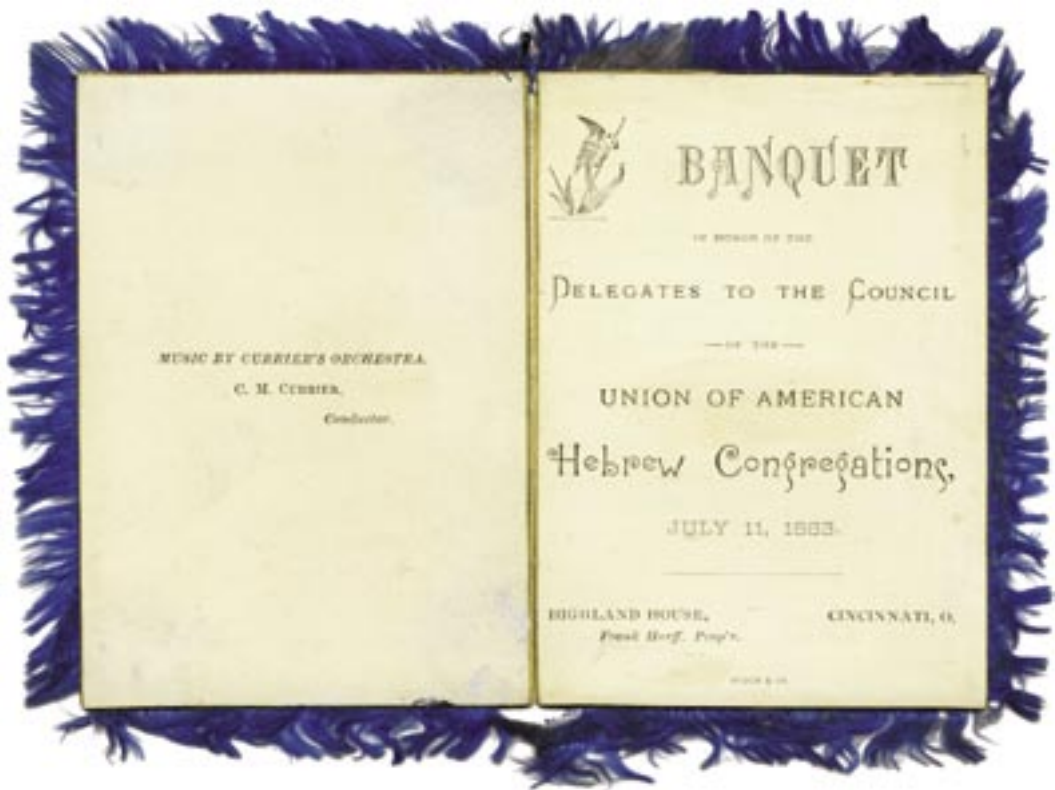


Plate 2: *The Island of Curaçao in the mid-seventeenth century was an important entrepôt for the Dutch Atlantic trading empire. Curaçao's Jewish community was founded during the first part of the seventeenth century, and a formal congregation has existed on the island since 1654.*

(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)



Plate 3: Opening page of the calendar. The inside cover (right) bears a dedication to Rachel, wife of the master Jacob son of Joshua. The first page (left) is the calendar for the Hebrew month of Tishri. The five columns right to left list (1) the weekly Torah portions and Jewish holidays; (2) days of the week (in Yiddish); (3) Hebrew dates; (4) corresponding English dates according to the Gregorian calendar; (5) English months (in Yiddish orthography) and phases of the moon.
 (Courtesy Arnold and Dee Kaplan)



Plates 4 and 5: *Several copies of the original Trefa Banquet menu complete with plumage have survived. The attempt at elegance is somewhat betrayed by spelling errors in the French language listing of several of the dishes on the menu. The menu was also reprinted in the daily newspaper, The Cincinnati Enquirer, along with a detailed and upbeat evaluation of the grand event.*

(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

MENU.

Little Neck Clams (Half Shell).
"Amontillado"
Sherry.

POTAGES.

Consommé Royal.
"Sauternes."

POISSONS.

Filet de Boef, aux Champignons.
Soft Shell Crabs,
à l'Américaine, Pommes Duchesse.
Salade of Shrimp.
"St. Julien."

ENTREE.

Sweet Breads, à la Môngole.
Petits Fois, à la Française.
"Deidesheimer."

RELEVÉE.

Poulets, à la Visconite.
Asperges Sautes, Vinaigrette Finesse
"Punch Romain."
Grenouilles à la Crème and Cauliflower.

ROTI.

Vol au Vents de Pigeons, à la Tyrolenne.
Salade de Saites.
"G. H. Mumm Extra Dry."

HORS-D'ŒUVRES.

Bouchées de Volaille, à la Reçeurs.
Olives Cavi, Sardelles de Hollande.
Brisettes au Supreme Tomates,
Moyonaise.

SUCRES.

Ice Cream.
Assorted and Ornamented Cakes.

ENTREMENTS.

Fromages Variés. Fruits Variés.
"Martell Cognac." Cote Noir.



Plate 6: 1905 medallion (bronze, 76 mm diameter) for the 250th Anniversary of the American Jewish community.

The 1905 commemorative medal, struck in silver and gold as well as bronze, was designed by the noted Jewish-American sculptor Isidore Konti (1862–1938).

(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)



Plate 7: 1954 medallion (bronze, 76 mm diameter) celebrating the Tercentenary (300th) Anniversary of the American Jewish community.

Produced for the Tercentenary of 1954–1955, this medallion was designed by Nancy Proskauer Dryfoos (1918–1991).

(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)



Plate 8: 2004 medallion (bronze, 76 mm diameter) minted for the 350th Anniversary celebration of the establishment of the American Jewish community.

Designed by Dana Krinsky (b. 1969), this medallion, which was struck in silver and gold-plated silver as well as bronze, was issued to commemorate the 350th anniversary celebration held in 2004–2005.

(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

To Our Jewish Brethren in the United States of America

“PEACE BE WITH YOU AND YOUR NEIGHBORS”

BE IT KNOWN UNTO YOU that in Elul 5714 (September 1954) the Jewish community of the United States will commemorate the 300th anniversary of Jewish settlement in this country.

BY THE GRACE OF GOD and under the protection of the Constitution of the United States, we have lived and prospered in this land. We have been an integral part of American life. We have worked with all other Americans in the never-ending search for the democratic way of life and for the light of faith. Our ancient prophetic ideals and the teachings of the sages have been foundation stones of this nation. Our work, our hopes, and above all, our living religion, have been among our proudest offerings to the American community.

IN SOME LANDS ACROSS THE SEAS our brethren have felt the searing flame of prejudice, persecution and death. We in America have had the sad yet inspiring opportunity to save the lives of scores of thousands—to bring comfort to the oppressed, to help in the making of a new and honored nation on the ancient soil of Israel, and to acquire a new recognition of our responsibility for human welfare in keeping with the ancient teachings of our faith. In some lands across the seas our brethren have been pressed to give up their religious beliefs and practices and to disappear in a well of namelessness. BUT WITHIN THE HOME OF AMERICA we have succeeded in preserving the unique identity of the Jewish religion, worshipping in keeping with our historic tradition; and we have preserved our ancient teachings, our ethics, and our religious ideals in the free climate of our nation. Our religion is strong, as our American loyalty is strong.

MINDFUL OF THESE BLESSINGS and with deep gratitude in our hearts to the God of Israel, who, in 1654, led our fathers to the shores of this great new land,

WE HEREBY PROCLAIM the period from Elul 5714 (September 1954) to the end of Sivan 5715 (May 1955) as one of thanksgiving, prayer, study and celebration of the American Jewish Tercentenary.

WE CALL ON ALL OUR BRETHREN throughout the nation to participate in the observance of this anniversary; to offer thanks unto the Lord for the blessings bestowed on us in America; to pray for the continued peace and prosperity of our country and all its inhabitants and to rededicate ourselves to the ideals of our faith within the freedom of American democracy.

Samuel H. Goldhaber
CHAIRMAN, CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

Isaac L. Schacter
AMERICAN JEWISH ORGANIZATION

Shimon L. Shalom
BRITISH COUNCIL OF AMERICA

Henry Salomon
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Alan S. Stein
LEAGUE OF AMERICAN JEWISH STUDENTS AND YOUTH OF AMERICA

Philip Brundage
UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF AMERICA

Maxine D. Lambert
UNION OF AMERICAN JEWISH CONGREGATIONS

Miriam Kahn
SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA

Plate 10: Although still heavily influenced by its east European immigrant origins, the lingua franca of American Jews was English.
 (Courtesy American Jewish Archives)



Plate 11: The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the revival of Hebrew as a modern spoken language both had a significant impact upon American Jewry.

(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)



Celebrate 350 Jewish Life in America 1654 ~ 2004

LET IT BE KNOWN that in Elul 5764 (September 2004) the Jewish community of the United States began a year long commemoration marking the 350th Anniversary of Jewish settlement in this country.

WITH THE HELP OF GOD and under the protection of the Constitution of the United States, we have lived and prospered in this land. We have been an integral part of American life. We have worked with all other Americans in the never-ending effort to keep secure the democratic way of life. Our ancient prophetic ideals and the teachings of our sages serve as cornerstones of this nation's values. Our work, our hopes, and above all, our living religion have been among our proudest offerings to the American community.

IN SOME LANDS ACROSS THE SEAS the Jewish people have felt the searing flame of prejudice, persecution and death. The American Jew has had the sad yet inspiring opportunity to bring comfort to the oppressed, the joyous opportunity to participate in the reconstitution of the Jewish state on the ancient soil of Israel, and the inescapable and ennobling responsibility to mend the broken places in our world.

EVEN AS WE HAVE WORKED FOR THE WELL-BEING OF OUR PEOPLE ABROAD, the Jewish people in America have struggled to preserve our noble heritage, our historic traditions, our ancient teachings, our ethics, and our spiritual ideals in the free climate of our nation.

MINDFUL OF OUR MANIFOLD BLESSINGS and with deep gratitude in our hearts to the God of Israel, Who, in 1654, led our forebears to the shores of this great new land,

WE HAVE PROCLAIMED the period from Elul 5764 (September 2004) through Elul 5765 (September 2005) to be one of special thanksgiving, prayer, study, reflection and celebration to mark the 350TH ANNIVERSARY OF JEWISH COMMUNAL LIFE IN AMERICA.

WE CALL ON ALL AMERICAN JEWRY to participate in the observance of this anniversary to thank God for the bountiful blessings that have been bestowed on us in this remarkable land. Let us express our collective hope that peace, security, and prosperity will reign in our nation for all. May the principles of freedom and liberty that have been the lodestar values of this great Republic continue to radiate their blessings on our nation.


CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS
Rabbi Harry Dreyfuss, President


RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY
Rabbi Perry Raphael Rank, President


RABBINICAL COUNCIL OF AMERICA
Rabbi Dale Polakoff, President


RECONSTRUCTIONIST RABBINICAL ASSOCIATION
Rabbi Brand Rosen, President

Plate 12: *Unlike the Tercentenary, the Celebrate 350 proclamation was printed only in English.*

(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)