Jewish Giants of Music

Also:
George Washington and the Jews
“Haven to Home” at the Library of Congress
Milken Archive of American Jewish Music

350th Anniversary of Jewish Settlement in America
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It is fitting this evening that the American Jewish Historical Society, one of the founding partners of the Center for Jewish History, receives a proclamation from George Pataki, the Governor of the State of New York, honoring the 350th anniversary of permanent Jewish settlement in America. I am honored to accept it.

In 1654, after a perilous journey, 23 Jews fleeing from Recife, Brazil, eventually landed at the Battery, only two miles or so from this spot. The difference between the honor Governor Pataki pays the Jewish community tonight and the reception those 23 Jews received from Pieter Stuyvesant, the Governor-General of the then-Dutch Colony of New Netherlands, could not be more striking. Stuyvesant tried to get the Jews to leave, believing they would not assimilate, would not support themselves financially, and would not adequately participate in the Dutch colony’s Christian lifestyle.

Fortunately, The Dutch West India Company in Amsterdam disagreed and ordered Stuyvesant to permit the Jews to remain. The rest, as we say in this building, is history.

In the 350 years since, we Jews, as New Yorkers and as Americans, have benefited from and contributed to the atmosphere of vitality, diversity, toleration and opportunity that New York and America have offered each arriving immigrant. For example, in the 18th century Jewish leaders contributed funds for building the steeple of Trinity Church, at the foot of Wall Street; helped pioneer the fur trade in the Hudson Valley (near Governor Pataki’s family home); helped establish the New York Stock Exchange; and one of the first Jewish clergyman in America delivered an invocation at George Washington’s first inauguration.

It is also fitting that Gov. Pataki presents this proclamation to us here in the Center for Jewish History. The Governor and State Legislature provided funds that helped build this great repository of learning that documents the history of Jewish life in Europe and America.

Since 1892, it has been the primary role of the AJHS to document and record the Jewish experience in America. Thanks to the facilities provided by the Center for Jewish History, we are now better able to perform that role than ever before.

At the 250th anniversary of Jewish settlement in 1904 and the 300th anniversary in 1954, the AJHS took a leading role in organizing the national celebration of these milestone anniversaries. Now, at the 350th, we join with a myriad of other Jewish and non-Jewish institutions, such as our partners here at the Center, with the Library of Congress and the National Archives, and even the Baseball Hall of Fame, to make all Americans aware of two important things:

• First, the unprecedented opportunity that New York and the United States have given its Jewish citizens to participate fully, without legal impediment, in the greatness of our nation, and in the development of American culture and institutions.

• And second, that we Jews have taken advantage of this opportunity, and contributed so much to the fabric that makes up America.

In 1790, President George Washington wrote to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island informing them that the newly formed government of the United States would give, in those memorable words, “to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance.” For this guarantee, we remain forever grateful. Thank you, Governor Pataki, for honoring us with your presence tonight and for reaffirming the importance of religious liberty as a keystone of American constitutional rights.

Sidney Lapidus
The American Jewish Historical Society is the world’s leading institution for communicating the history of the Jewish people in the United States. This is so important because the Society’s critical mission is not duplicated by any other organization.

For more than a century, this institution has served educators, students, rabbis, researchers, genealogists, filmmakers, curators and audiences – Jewish and non-Jewish alike, bringing forth the richness of the remarkable Jewish experience in this great nation.

Now more than ever, as we celebrate 350 years of Jewish life in America, support from friends and members like you can make a difference.

Without your commitment, the stories we tell and the documents we preserve will be lost to future generations.

What does your personal gift make possible?

Research and Scholarship

- AJHS makes available millions of unique documents from which researchers write the history of the American Jewish experience.
- AJHS sponsors the AJHS Academic Council, the only professional organization in the field. Its scholarly conferences are critical to developing new scholarship and ideas in American Jewish history.
- AJHS provides fellowships to young scholars aspiring to academic careers.
- AJHS publishes *American Jewish History*, the most respected scholarly journal in the field.

Public Knowledge and Understanding

- AJHS produces museum exhibitions, lectures, concerts, film series and popular cultural events that actively reinforce Jewish identity and pride, while conveying the record of American Jewish accomplishment to people of all backgrounds.
- Recent exhibits include our partnership with the Library of Congress on “From Haven to Home: 350 Years of Jewish History in America,” the largest exhibition on this subject ever assembled.
- AJHS has created the Archive of American Jews in Sports, the first full-scale archival effort of its type in the United States. AJHS published a wildly popular set of cards of every Jew who played major league baseball from 1872 to the present.
- AJHS’s Project ADAJE has begun digitization of all American Jewish periodicals from the 1840s to the present, offering free access to a wealth of historical resources. The AJHS journal, *American Jewish History*, and its predecessor titles from 1893 through 1979 are currently available on-line at www.ajhs.org.

Your support keeps our history alive

Tomorrow’s history lessons will be written and understood because, today, you helped advance the mission of the American Jewish Historical Society.

Current initiatives that are enhanced through your generosity include:
We are proud to be your link to the past, for the sake of the future. We simply can’t do it without you.

Federations, the National Jewish Welfare Board, and hundreds of organizations, synagogues, movements and initiatives that have shaped American Jewish life.

Your support directly enables us to continue our important work. Whether in business and finance, politics, education, science, the arts, human rights, sports, entertainment to the everyday activities of family life – AJHS has ensured that the record from 1654 to the present is kept, that the stories are told, and our shared history is not forgotten.

Please join us now or give the gift of membership with a tax-deductible donation and receive the benefits of membership. Call 1-866-740-8013, visit our website www.ajhs.org or use the enclosed membership form to make sure you continue to be a part of the legacy.

To explore other instruments of giving including naming AJHS as a beneficiary in your will and joining our Horizon Society please call, in confidence, Cathy Krugman in our Development Department at (212) 294-6164.

Uriah P. Levy Commodore US Navy 1792-1862

• Collecting the personal papers of leading figures in the Jewish counterculture movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which contributed so much to renewing American Judaism.
• Acquiring and preserving the records of the American Soviet Jewry movement, including the National Conference on Soviet Jewry and the Union of Councils for Soviet Jewry.
• Saving the records of the Ethiopian Jewry movement and those of the American Jewish Congress, the Council of Jewish Federations, the National Jewish Welfare Board, and hundreds of organizations, synagogues, movements and initiatives that have shaped American Jewish life.

Joseph Simon’s Ark Lintel Mid 18th Century, Lancaster PA

Bilhah Abigail Franks 1696-1756

We are the American Jewish Historical Society
The stirring words of “The New Colossus” are almost as familiar to most Americans as the national anthem. These words were penned in November 1883 by American Jewish poet Emma Lazarus, in her ode to the Statue of Liberty. Today her sonnet is considered one of the classic documents of American history. In 1976, the original handwritten version of the sonnet traveled across the nation as part of our Bicentennial celebration. Now, you can own your own copy of Lazarus’s stirring poem in her own hand. After Emma Lazarus died, her family bequeathed to the Society the personal notebook in which Lazarus hand wrote a copy of her favorite work. The American Jewish Historical Society has produced a limited edition of framed facsimiles of Lazarus’s masterpiece. You can purchase one from the Society for your home or office or for a school or library in your community.

16” x 20” framed and matted Emma Lazarus Sonnet • $125. Delivery $5.

To order call 1-866-740-8013 or go to our online bookstore @ www.ajhs.org

“Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”
“Huddled Masses,”
Lost and Found

The stirring words of Emma Lazarus’s “The New Colossus,” now displayed on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty, have defined Lady Liberty’s meaning. Originally meant to memorialize the influence that the American Revolution and American notions of liberty had on the French Republic, Lazarus’s poem transformed Lady Liberty into a beacon of hope for immigrants to America. According to Lazarus, the Statue of Liberty speaks for the United States, announcing to the world:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning
to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of
your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless,
tempest–tost to me.
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

While the poem is well known, its history is not. American Jewish poet Emma Lazarus penned the sonnet in November 1883. Today, it is considered among the most important expressions of American values ever written. In 1976, the only surviving version of the sonnet written in Lazarus’s own hand, which is preserved in the archives of the American Jewish Historical Society, traveled across the nation with originals of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, as part of the nation’s bicentennial celebration.

However cherished today, the poem became an American icon only by happenstance. Lazarus wrote the sonnet at the request of a friend, Constance Cary Harrison, who chaired an art exhibition to raise funds to construct the pedestal on which the Statue of Liberty now stands. While the statue itself was a gift from the people of France to the people of the United States, individual Americans had to voluntarily fund construction of the pedestal. New York City and State, New Jersey and the Federal government all declined to pay the costs, so private donors had to provide funding. American Jewish newspaper publisher Joseph Pulitzer led the effort.

Constance Harrison organized an event to help raise money for the pedestal fund, a charity art exhibition. In addition to paintings and drawings, she gathered a portfolio of original literary works by leading American authors to auction with the artworks. Harrison asked Lazarus, already a poet of growing reputation, to write a sonnet for the occasion. Lazarus replied that she could not “write to order.” Harrison knew that Lazarus, who lived among the social elite of New York, had been volunteering with Jewish immigrants at a Lower East Side settlement house, so she asked the poet to think of the immigrants for inspiration. Several days later, Lazarus sent Harrison “The New Colossus.”

Lazarus’ poem was the only offering read aloud at the opening night gala. The entire literary portfolio, including “The New Colossus,” brought a disappointing $1,500 in the auction, and the present whereabouts of the portfolio are unknown. Lazarus died in 1887 at the age of 38, after which her sonnet—and her poetry in general—fell into obscurity. In 1901, Lazarus’ friend, Georgina Schuyler, decided personally to install a plaque inscribed with “The New Colossus” at the statue. She needed the cooperation of government agencies and popular support to memorialize Lazarus.

Richard Watson Gilder, a friend of Lazarus and editor of the respected Century Magazine, helped Schuyler cut through bureaucratic red tape and the sensitivities of the Lazarus family so that the project received approval from the federal government. Just before the plaque was cast, however, a suggestion by Samuel Ward Gray, head of the American branch of Baring Brothers Bank, almost changed the course of literary history. In a letter to Gilder, Gray objected to the terms “huddled masses” and “wretched refuse.” To Gray, huddled masses suggested that most immigrants were slum dwellers of great European cities, but such people were not “what America has received from Europe, nor, above all, what she invites.” Gray cited America’s Irish, Scandinavian and German immigrants as examples of immigrants who came from predominantly rural backgrounds. Jews were the exception, in Gray’s mind, since they were “town livers” and could thus be called huddled masses, but he saw the Jews who emigrated not as wretched refuse but the “strong and able.” To correct Lazarus’ “error,” Gray offered substitute lines: “Your stirring myriad, that yearn to breathe free / But find no place upon your teeming shore.”

There is no written record of Gilder’s response to Gray, but he obviously held firm against any changes. In 1903, Lazarus’ words were cast in their original form and the plaque installed on a second-story landing inside the pedestal building. The poem remained there, once again relatively unnoticed, until a Yugoslavian-American journalist, Louis Adamic, incorporated verses from “The New Colossus” into virtually everything he wrote in the 1930s and 1940s on the plight of Eastern European Jewry. Adamic’s writings elevated the poem back into national consciousness and, in 1945, the tablet was moved to the main entrance of the Statue of Liberty, where visitors see it today.

Despite its almost being lost, then changed and then forgotten, today we can hardly imagine the statue without the sonnet, or the sonnet without the statue. Aside from the national flag, Lady Liberty has become the most recognizable symbol of America. And Emma Lazarus, Jewish author, has truly become the poet laureate of America’s immigrants.
Chaplain Herbert S. Eskin  
(Orthodox, b. Russia, 1920?) Report date: 10 May 1945

Since the break-through of the Siegfried Line and the crossing of the Rhine, we traveled through Germany at an accelerated rate of speed, and met little opposition until we reached Bad Wimpfen, Germany, where the battle for the crossing of the Neckar and the capture of the city of Heilbron began. It was there where we fought for every inch of ground, resulting in many casualties, and bringing back memories of the battle for France.

Due to the many casualties, I visited the field hospitals daily, and it was in one of those hospitals where a Protestant lad from Iowa, by the name of Carl C. Denhartog, was confined with a very serious chest wound. He was breathing heavily with the aid of an oxygen mask and, as I approached him, he recognized me and smiled. I took hold of his hand and I said, “Carl, my boy, your outfit crossed the bridge and beat the hell out of the Jerries!” He smiled again and said, “I’m sure glad they’re doing all right; it’s too bad I’m not there to help them” Carl kept on holding my hand, and although his forehead was wet with perspiration, he asked me to cover him up and say a prayer with him.

I knelt down on my knee and whispered in his ear the 23rd Psalm. He repeated it after me word for word, and I concluded the Psalm with, “Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.”

Carl could not recover from his injuries, they were too severe. He fought for his life to the very end. He died, still holding on to my hand. I was greatly touched by this incident. Here was a devout Christian who knew me as the Jewish chaplain in the division and asked me to say his last prayer with him, and by the same token, a Jewish Rabbi, said the last rites with a Christian, in accordance with his faith. At that moment neither of us felt of having differences nor barriers. In action and in spirit, I sensed our comradeship and demonstrated it in my capacity of an Army Chaplain.

It was brought to my attention that at Fenetrage, France, the local Nazis used Jewish tombstones for a sidewalk in front of the Catholic Church, and to date they had not been removed to the Jewish cemetery. I drove all the way from Heilbron, Germany to Fenetrage, France, and to my amazement, I found the statements made to me to be correct. When I asked the priest why he permitted such an atrocity to exist in front of his church eight months after the town was liberated, he could not give me a reasonable answer. I took him to the mayor and ordered both of them to have the tombstones removed to the Jewish cemetery within 24 hours. Unless my orders were carried out within the given time, I would come with a truckload of soldiers and we would blast the town with hand grenades. The tombstones, including the fragments, were placed on the Jewish cemetery by the specified time.

I am beginning to come across Jewish deportees and am doing everything within my power to assist them religiously and otherwise. Due to the prohibition of fraternization [editor’s note: At that time, Army policy forbade soldiers from assisting “enemy nationals,” including Jewish survivors], that is all I can say at this time as to the kind of assistance I render to them.

In 2004, the staff of the American Jewish Historical Society completed the initial processing of the archives of the National Jewish Welfare Board (JWB), an organization today known as the Jewish Community Centers Association. For the first time, these records are now open to researchers and contain a trove of invaluable original materials.

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 the JWB, in cooperation with the three major Jewish rabbinical organizations, recruited three hundred and eleven rabbi chaplains who served in the US armed forces between 1941 and 1948. The JWB created a semi-autonomous organization, the Committee on Army and Navy Religious Affairs (CANRA), to plan the effort to recruit, train, equip and support the chaplains. Once in the field, the chaplains were required to file monthly reports with CANRA. One of those reports, submitted by Rabbi Herbert S. Eskin, is excerpted here.

In additional to serving the needs of Jewish GI’s and Jewish Holocaust survivors, Jewish chaplains at times also had to meet the spiritual needs of Christian soldiers. Little in pre-war American Judaism or interfaith relations prepared these rabbis, especially the Orthodox ones, for this level of Jewish-Christian intimacy. Contacts between the chaplains and non-Jews helped make the rabbis more cosmopolitan, much as fighting alongside Christian compatriots made American Jewish soldiers more fully American to their non-Jewish comrades. Both phenomena helped pave the way to the increased social integration of American Jewry in the post-war period.
With unique images drawn from the extensive archives of the American Jewish Historical Society, this beautiful timeline poster (with text by Professor Pamela Nadell) will entertain and educate. From the first settlement in 1654 to the nomination of Joe Lieberman for Vice President of the United States, you will find fascinating incidents and developments that made the American Jewish experience. A must for every home, school and library. 24" x 36".

Available as a museum quality poster, rolled and shipped in a tube at $20 + $5 shipping. Also available for classrooms folded and shipped flat at $14 + $5 shipping.

If you join AJHS as a Friend, you can choose a museum quality poster as a gift.

To order or join please call 1-866-740-8013, visit our web site www.ajhs.org, or use the enclosed envelope.

COLLECTOR’S GOLD EDITION BASEBALL CARD SETS.
The rarest of the rare. Only 500 gold, laminated, numbered boxed sets were ever made. Most are now in collector’s cabinets. We saved a handful for gift giving this holiday at $500 per box. Early ordering is advised owing to extremely low stock. Subject to prior sale.

COLLECTOR’S SILVER EDITION BASEBALL CARD SETS.
Identical to the Gold Illustrated Above, but printed in and embossed in silver. We have 97 available from the original numbered edition of 1,500 at the time of printing for $200 the box.

Become a Patron of AJHS ($1,000 Level) and receive the Gold Cards as a gift. Become a Sponsor of AJHS ($500 Level) and receive two boxes of the Silver Embossed Cards as a gift. To order or to become a member call 1-866-740-8013 or visit our website www.ajhs.org. You can also use the enclosed envelope.
Most collectors never have a chance to acquire the original uncut sheets from which packs and sets of baseball cards are made. The cards come off the press in these poster-sized sheets and are precisely cut and sorted into packs, sets or series; only a few are saved for display by the manufacturer or sold to privileged collectors. The Society has decided to make its remaining uncut sheets available to its members and supporters.

We have framed fewer than fifty original uncut set sheets with press proof color markings in the border. The cards are identical to the boxed sets, including all statistics on the reverse side. The thin black custom frames have thick acrylic protectors front and back so that both sides can be viewed. We have been told that the collector value of these rarities will be very high. The historic and Jewish pride and beauty speak for themselves.

There are 98 cards in one 29" x 38" frame and 49 cards in the second 29" x 20" frame.

The set of two sheets is available, while they last, at $600 for a framed set and $300 for an unframed set. Shipping is $5 per set.

To order please call 1-866-740-8013 or visit our website at www.ajhs.org or join as a Patron Member and get a framed set as our gift for joining. You can also use the enclosed envelope.

These limited edition card proofs are framed so you can see both the front and back.
Whether we sing the Sh’mah at Friday night services or chant Kol Nidre on eve Yom Kippur, or find ourselves humming phrases from Oklahoma or White Christmas (yes, White Christmas) in the shower, music by and for American Jews is integral to our lives. We can hear Leonard Bernstein’s Kaddish symphony in the concert hall or sweat and sway through a rock concert by the Ramones or Ya Lo Tengo. Whatever the venue and whoever the audience, music resounds through American Jewish daily life. In fact, Jewish contributions reside at the core of American music.

American Synagogue Music

For the past 350 years, American Jews have blended traditional sacred music with newly created melodies and newly adapted forms to create an original American Jewish music. The first Jewish melodies were the Hebrew prayers sung according to Sephardic custom at Congregation Shearith Israel in New York and the other Sephardi synagogues in Philadelphia, Newport, Charleston and Savannah. The Sephardic liturgy and music was little changed from its medieval roots. However, music was at the heart of American religious innovation. In the 1830s and 1840s, the first efforts at Reform focused on the controversial introduction of organ music and mixed male and female choirs into services, changes that opponents considered Protestant practices. In Charleston, Congregation K. K. Beth Elohim, considered America’s first Reform congregation, introduced not only an organ and mixed choir, but English language hymns written by congregant Penina Moise, who thus became the first American Jewish woman to have her music integrated into congregational practice.

Jewish music in the second half of the
American Jewish Music

Renewal to traditional Orthodoxy. Of course, klezmer music has made a significant comeback and may even be more widely known today than in its “heyday” in the first half of the twentieth century. Surprisingly to most, the fastest growing area in the field of original recorded American Jewish music is Chassidic and ultra-Orthodox popular songs, many of which are based on contemporary rock, folk and other forms of hit music. Musical innovation, including the post-1967 introduction of Israeli melodies for singing traditional songs, is now a hallmark of American Judaism.

The Jewish Flavor of Popular Music

It is easy to identify a work such as L’Cha Dodi or Fiddler on the Roof as Jewish. But what makes popular songs such as Up on the Roof or Puff the Magic Dragon Jewish? Once we stray beyond the synagogue or concert hall to other corners of the musical universe like Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, Hollywood movies, rock’n roll or folk music, we enter definitional problem areas. We can recognize that some popular songs such as Harold Arlen’s Paper Moon, the Andrews Sisters’ Bay Mir Bistu Sheyn and Alan Sherman’s Harvey and Sheila draw melodically from traditional cantorial, Yiddish and Israeli melodies, respectively. But how should we think about Russian-Jewish immigrant Irving Berlin’s White Christmas and Easter Parade? Novelist Philip Roth has written that Berlin took “the two holidays that celebrate the divinity of Christ, and what does Irving Berlin do? Easter he turns into a fashion show and Christmas into a holiday about snow.”

The songs of Jewish composers such as Berlin, Jerome Kern, Oscar Hammerstein, George Gershwain, Richard Rogers or Stephen Sondheim contain little explicitly Jewish content. Yet, one can argue that their musical creations are driven by the composers’ preoccupation with their own identities as Jews and Americans. Berlin’s patriotism led him to write what many consider the popular national anthem of the United States, God Bless America, the song into which members of Congress spontaneously broke on September 12, 2001, when wanting to express their emotions about the World Trade Center attack. George and Ira Gershwain’s Porgy and Bess and Jerome Kern’s Show Boat express the liberal Jewish preoccupation with ethnic and racial identity and social justice, a theme continued in Tony Kushner’s recent operetta, Caroline, or Change. Mitch Leigh’s Man of La Mancha celebrates idealism and the honor. Rogers and Hammerstein’s Oklahoma celebrates traditional American values such as frontier individualism, free enterprise and agrarian virtue. The composers and lyricists, living simultaneously as Jewish outsiders and American celebrities, used music to explore the multilayered meaning of American identity.
Paul Simon to Barry Manilow record music that has arguably Jewish influences in lyrics, melody or sensibility. Important Jewish composers such as Bruce Adolphe and Samuel Adler and non-Jews such as Dave Brubeck and Thomas Beveridge continue to compose serious works for chamber ensembles, orchestras and electronic instruments inspired by Jewish texts or themes.

Seeking to capture the most significant denotatively Jewish works of music performed or created in America since 1654, the Milken Family Foundation has committed more than $17 million and thirteen years of work to create the Milken Archive of American Jewish Music. This effort, modestly planned at first, has evolved under the leadership of Lowell Milken into the most ambitious undertaking in the history of Jewish musical recording. Gathering together masterpieces of cantorial art, Yiddish theater songs, sacred, concert and Jewishly-themed classical compositions, the Milken Archive has revived and made new, definitive recordings of more than 600 individual works by 200 composers, performed by leading artists and ensembles. The vast repertoire has been selected under the direction of Professor Neil Levin of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. When the first phase of the project is completed next year, the Milken Archive will have issued, in cooperation with Naxos American Classics, a series of 50 CD’s containing American Jewish musical works from the 17th century to the present. As the Milken Archive notes:

The years 2004 and 2005 mark the 350th anniversary of the arrival of the first Jews in America. The Milken Archive series celebrates on disc these three-and-a-half centuries of uninterrupted Jewish life in what is now the United States. American Jews have been free to exercise fully their creative spirit and to contribute to the fabric of national society, absorbing and enriching American culture and, at the same time, renewing their ancient heritage. It is in this fertile environment that the music of the American Jewish experience has flourished, forming a significant chapter in the development of American music as a whole.

Readers of Heritage have a unique opportunity to obtain either the first 25 CDs or the complete 50 CD set of the Milken Archive through the American Jewish Historical Society. Please see pages 16-17 for additional details.

IT’S NOT JUST BENNY GOODMAN
In 1933, American Jews were 4% of the American population and 36% of the musicians in popular orchestras.

IS CHRISTMAS A JEWISH HOLIDAY?
The following Christmas standards were composed by Jews:
“White Christmas” by Irving Berlin
“Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer” by Johnny Marks
“Let it Snow” by Sammy Kahn and Julie Styne
“Silver Bells” by Livingston and Evans
“Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire” by Mel Torme

THE AMERICAN SONGBOOK, 1823-1967:
(Compiled by Joshua Jacobson)

American Jews wrote the following standards:
1823 “Home Sweet Home” by John Payne
1892 “After the Ball is Over” by Charles K. Harris
1908 “Take Me Out to the Ballgame” by Harry von Tilzer
1908 “Shine On Harvest Moon” by Nora Bayes and Jack Norworth
1909 “By the Light of the Silvery Moon” by Gus Edwards
1911 “Alexander’s Ragtime Band” by Irving Berlin
1919 “Swanee” by George Gershwin
1922 “Yes, Sir, That’s My Baby” by Gus Kahn
1924 “The Man I Love” by George Gershwin
1927 “Strike Up the Band” by George Gershwin
1927 “Old Man River” by Jerome Kern
1935 “Summertime” by George Gershwin
1938 “Over the Rainbow” by Harold Arlen and Yip Harburg
1938 “Easter Parade” and “God Bless America” by Irving Berlin
1942 “White Christmas” by Irving Berlin
1942 “Oh What a Beautiful Morning” by Rogers and Hammerstein
1950 “Luck be a Lady” by Frank Loesser
1951 “Getting to Know You” by Rogers and Hammerstein
1953 “Hound Dog” by Jerry Lieber and Mike Stoller
1954 “Three Coins in the Fountain” by Sammy Kahn
1956 “I Could Have Danced All Night” by Frederick Loewa
1959 “Teenager in Love” by Doc Pomus and Mort Shuman
1959 “The Sound of Music” by Rogers and Hammerstein
1960 “Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow” by Carole King
1961 “Spanish Harlem” by Lieber and Stoller
1962 “Stand By Me” by Lieber and Stoller
1963 “Puff the Magic Dragon” by Peter Yarrow
1963 “Blowin’ in the Wind” by Bob Dylan
1965 “Sounds of Silence” by Simon and Garfunkel
1967 “You Make Me Feel Like a Natural Woman” by Carole King
Leonard Bernstein was a classical music’s most recognizable twentieth-century figure, America’s musical ambassador to the world. Millions felt as if they knew him personally; he was simply “Lenny.” He was present on television, the radio, the phonograph and the concert hall, not simply performing music but living it. He taught untrained listeners, even children, to enjoy operas, symphonies, piano concertos. He inspired orchestras to master difficult Mahler symphonies and enliven staid Beethoven sonatas. His face adorned hundreds of magazine covers and record albums. He became an American household name.

Although we hardly remember today, Bernstein was the first native-born American to conduct a major symphony orchestra in the United States, the first to hold the post of permanent conductor with a major American orchestra, the first to conduct the London and Berlin Symphonies and the first to conduct at La Scala, in 1953, when Maria Callas sang Medea. He brought classical music to television through Omnibus and his Young People’s Concerts, which were frequently watched by adults. He conducted the Israel Philharmonic during the Jewish state’s War of Independence in 1948 and called it one of the most important experiences of his life.

Bernstein not only conducted, he composed—Jewish works such as the Kaddish Symphony and a putatively Catholic work, Mass, commissioned for the opening of the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. This latter work scandalized some traditional Catholics but reflected Bernstein’s musical attempt to bridge the religious chasms dividing peoples. Bernstein distressed mentors such as Serge Koussevitsky and Aaron Copland by composing for Broadway, but he gave the world the incomparable West Side Story by ignoring their criticisms. He composed works as far ranging as the ballets Fancy Free and Dybbuk, adapted jazz such as Prelude, Fugue and Riffs, wrote choral works such as Chichester Psalms, the operas Trouble in Tahiti and A Quiet Place, Broadway’s On the Town, and the score for the film On the Waterfront.

And, he was a world-class pianist. When he played, he transmitted his personal energy so openly that he raised the playing level of his orchestra and shared his enthusiasm and love for the music with his audience. On occasion, he even sat in at jazz nightclubs.

Born Louis Bernstein in Lawrence, MA in 1918, the youngster began playing piano at age nine, despite his father Sam’s wish that he learn more practical pursuits. The self-named Leonard Bernstein graduated from Harvard University in 1939 and attended the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. In 1940, he joined the first class taught by Serge Koussevitsky at his summer music institute at Tanglewood in Lenox, MA and so impressed the maestro that Koussevitsky helped Bernstein become assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic. He got a wonderful opportunity in November 1943 when guest conductor Bruno Walter fell ill and was unable to conduct the Philharmonic in a national radio broadcast. On literally three hours’ notice, with no rehearsal, Bernstein—who had been out partying all night—filled brilliantly. He so elevated the orchestra’s performance that virtually all in attendance, including the musicians, stood and gave him rounds of thunderous applause. Millions heard the debut on the radio. Bernstein’s tour de force made front-page news at the New York Times. A star was born.

Based on that night replacing Walter, Bernstein was offered his own orchestra, the New York Symphony, which later merged with the New York Philharmonic. Starting in 1958, Bernstein led the Philharmonic for eleven years and made more than 200 recordings with the orchestra, more than any other conductor/performer has done with any orchestra. In all, he left behind more than 500 recorded performances.

After Bernstein attained worldwide celebrity, a reporter asked his father why in his childhood he had opposed his son’s career choice. Sam Bernstein replied simply, “I didn’t know he would grow up to be Leonard Bernstein.”

While not an observant Jew, Bernstein was fiercely proud of his Judaism. Despite Koussevitsky’s urging, he never changed his name or converted to Christianity, as his mentor had done. His first trip to Israel was in 1947, and for the remainder of his life he visited Israel to make music and help build the stature of the Israel Philharmonic. His trip right after the Six Day War reflected his deep solidarity with the Jewish state.

In his later years, Bernstein attracted notoriety for his flamboyant lifestyle and support of the Black Panther and other radical movements. It was in reference to Bernstein that author Tom Wolfe coined the term “radical chic.” Shrugging off the attacks on his political views, Bernstein continued to write, conduct and play music despite being gravely ill with emphysema. In 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell, Bernstein—long an advocate for world peace—gathered a group of West and East German, Russian and American musicians and performed a Beethoven concert in the newly united city.

Classical music historian Peter Gutmann has called October 14, 1990 “the day the music died.” While conducting the New York Philharmonic, Bernstein collapsed in a fit of coughing and was carried from the podium. He passed away three days later. Violinist Midori called Bernstein’s legacy the many “seeds” planted for future generations of musicians, composers and conductors. For almost seven decades, millions of individuals worldwide have harvested the fruits of his creativity.
Let your life resound with music of the American Jewish experience. Thrill to world-premiere recordings of great Jewish works by Leonard Bernstein (“the most illuminating Bernstein recording in years”—Newark Star Ledger) and Kurt Weill’s stupendous Jewish epic The Eternal Road (“the performance is fervent and touching”—New York Times). Relive the excitement of the American Yiddish musical theater with all-new recordings of immortal Second Avenue songs by Rumshinsky and Olshanetsky (“utterly delightful”—Pittsburgh Post-Gazette; “every track is delicious”—The Jewish News Weekly). Experience the spiritual transport of timeless cantorial and choral music for prayer and meditation. Celebrate the Jewish festivals with music for Hanukka, Passover and the High Holy Days. Let your heart dance to klezmer concertos (“Jewish elements emerge proudly”—The New Yorker). Explore symphonies and chamber music, operas and Yiddish art songs. Discover the vibrant and engaging music of today’s leading Jewish composers.
All recordings are new, and performed by internationally famous artists including Cantors Alberto Mizrahi and Benzion Miller; conductors Gerard Schwarz, Yoel Levi and Sir Neville Marriner; the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the Czech Philharmonic and the Seattle Symphony orchestras; Yiddish star Bruce Adler, clarinetist David Krakauer, the London Chorus, the Vienna Choir Boys, the Juilliard Quartet, Dave Brubeck and many others. More than 250 artists and ensembles are featured in over 500 new recordings of American Jewish music, including hundreds of world premiers.

Every Jewish home can be enriched by the Milken Archive of American Jewish Music, an unparalleled collection—in 50 superbly recorded CDs on the world-renowned Naxos American Classics label—of the rich body of music created in America over the past 350 years. This abundant repertoire, in its remarkable breadth and diversity, not only reflects the history, evolution, and variety of the Jewish experience in America, but, by extension, attests to Jewish continuity and renewal through more than five millennia—revealing universal qualities that can speak to people of all faiths and cultures. Comprehensive liner notes and essays by artistic director Dr. Neil W. Levin reveal the greatness and significance of Jewish music in America (“The liner notes alone—which serve as a miniature history of American Jewry—are worth the purchase price”—Austin American Statesman).

To receive these sought-after CDs, become an American Jewish Historical Society Member. There are three membership options:

1) **Sustaining Member.** For a $100 contribution you can get one sampler CD with selections from the Milken Archive of American Jewish Music;

2) **350th Anniversary Member.** For a $350 contribution, you can select to receive the first 25 Milken Archive of American Jewish Music CDs;

3) **Sponsor Member.** For a $500 contribution, you can select to receive the complete set of 50 Milken Archive of American Jewish Music CDs including the 25 new releases coming in 2005. Both 350th Anniversary Members and Sponsors will promptly receive the first 25 highly acclaimed Milken Archive of American Jewish Music CDs thus far released. “Sponsors” will in addition receive the next 25 CDs—to be issued in 2005—at regular intervals, to complete their collection. The Milken Archive of American Jewish Music recordings will always be delivered free to your home. Members joining at the $350 and $500 levels will also receive public acknowledgment of your generosity in our publications, in addition to VIP invitations to special events and a free subscription to *Heritage* magazine.

This special offer is made proudly and exclusively by the American Jewish Historical Society, in honor of 350 years of Jewish musical life in America.

To receive the first 25 Milken Archive of American Jewish Music CDs for this year, or to proudly own the complete collection of all 50 CDs for 2004 and 2005—and contribute to the preservation and celebration of Jewish culture in America—join at the Sponsor or 350th Anniversary Member level for yourself, or give it as an unusual and useful gift: an American Jewish Historical Society Membership and hours of delightful listening and learning about our heritage.

To become a member of AJHS and get your Milken Archive of American Jewish Music recordings, you have three easy choices:

- Fill out and mail the membership form in this issue of *Heritage*, enclosing a check or supplying your credit-card information.
- Call, toll-free, 1-866-740-8013, Monday through Friday from 8:30a.m.–5:00p.m.
- Visit our Web site at www.ajhs.org
When Allan Sherman recorded his first album of folk parodies in 1962, he could only dream that it would hit the top of the charts, win a gold record, land him concerts at Carnegie Hall and make him a national celebrity. Sherman was an overweight, failed television producer collecting unemployment and misfortune. He had been fired from the Steve Allen show, his friends stopped calling and his Hollywood home was surrounded by the ruins of a wildfire. Sherman had an unmelodic voice and his parodies – Jewish send-ups of folk songs – seemed to have little chance of attracting a broad American audience. As one of his song's narrators might have asked, “From this you can make a living?”

Between Sarah Jackman, a take-off on Frere Jacques in October 1962, and his Hello Muddah, Hello Fadduh mega-hit of August 1963, Sherman released three comedy albums that sold millions and made him a national sensation. My Son, The Folk Singer and My Son, The Celebrity both went gold, and My Son, The Nut won Sherman a Grammy. In a style of Jewish comedy one critic labeled “ghetto cosmopolitanism,” Sherman hijacked somber folk odes and brought them to Brooklyn and Miami Beach. He packed the concerns of everyday life into tunes that had become sacred, stale and pretentious. He exposed earnestness to ridicule, cut icons down to size and made a fortune. For a brief time in 1962 and 1963, he was a superstar.

Sherman died in 1973, but in recent years Hello Muddah, Hello Fadduh, a musical revue of his songs, has attracted crowds across the country. Dedicated fans tend web sites that chart his career and this year Warner Brothers’ Rhino Records division will introduce a four-CD set of his work, including never released parodies of tunes from My Fair Lady.

Why does Sherman’s memory endure? In the early 1960s, the transition of the Jews from immigrant group to a new type of American was just beginning to attract attention. In 1963, Nathan Glazer and Patrick Moynihan’s Beyond the Melting Pot noted the vibrancy of post-immigrant Jewish ethnicity, and in 1964 Saul Bellow’s Herzog portrayed a befuddled intellectual who discovers that despite his sophisticated university training his outlook remained Jewish. America’s Jews were suddenly interesting to others, and Sherman was one of the first entertainers to seize this historical moment. His parodies pried open classical folksongs and gave Jews the delicious treat of seeing themselves inserted in the starring roles.

Sarah Jackman signaled Sherman’s style, which both parodied and revitalized quaint folk ditties by transforming them back into songs about real folks, Jewish folks.

With Sir Greenbaum’s Madrigal, Sherman dished out the same treatment to the plaintive Greensleeves, which features a lovesick knight serenading a maiden. Greenbaum’s heart is also breaking, but not for love. His lousy job is killing him. “All day with the mighty sword/And the mighty steed/And the mighty lance./All day with that heavy shield/And a pair of aluminum pants.” Not exactly the kind of talk heard at the Round Table. Did King Arthur kvetch? However, Sherman’s comedy was as double-sided as Greenbaum’s sword. While poking fun at Jewish crankiness, fastidiousness, and aversion to combat, Sherman also hacked away at accomplishments that were nonsensical in Jewish eyes. Greenbaum’s attitude toward fighting in aluminum pants matched what Philip Roth later had his character Alexander Portnoy say of baton twirling: “This was precisely the kind of talent that only a goy would think to develop in the first place.”

Billboard magazine, which predicted that Sherman’s Folk Singer would succeed only among big-city Jews, had to eat its words. Folks in the Bible Belt also seemed to prefer the Streets of Miami to the Streets of Laredo and the Ballad of Harry Lewis to the Battle Hymn of the Republic. Apparently, non-Jews were also eager to feel fresh air whistle (continued on page 30)
Today, actors, athletes, musical performers and even politicians are “celebrities,” not just public figures. Madonna, Donald Trump and Bill Clinton are as well known for the notoriety of their personal lives as for their professional accomplishments. Adah Isaacs Menken, the first American Jewish “superstar,” pioneered the art of cultivating an outsized—even outrageous—personality as a path to fame and fortune. Even success, however, could not guarantee her happiness.

In the 1860’s, Menken became world famous for her lead role in an equestrian melodrama, Mazeppa, in which she daringly appeared on stage playing the role of a man, strapped to the back of a horse, wearing nothing but a flesh-colored body stocking, riding the horse at a gallop on a ramp that extended across the stage and into the audience. Today, a woman at an exercise gym in a flesh tone body stocking would hardly attract attention; in Menken’s time, the costume scandalized “respectable” critics—even as it attracted huge and enthusiastic audiences, including Walt Whitman and the great Shakespearean actor Edwin Booth.

Menken mastered the art of self-promotion. According to historian Alan Ackerman, when performing in a city Menken was one of the first celebrities to make certain that a photograph of her striking face appeared in every shop window. Even in the context of the 1860’s, when most Americans looked upon actors as “loose” and disreputable, Menken was particularly notorious for violating respectable norms. She cropped her dark hair close to her head (she may have been the first important American woman to do so) and smoked cigarettes in public.

Even more unladylike, Menken openly defied conventional married life. Not that she refused to marry; in fact, she married four times in seven years. She married a Jew named Alexander Isaacs Menken in 1856. Her second marriage, in 1859 to world heavyweight boxing champion John C. Heenan, led to the birth of a son, who died in infancy. Eight years later, a son by her fourth husband suffered the same fate. One senses that the childless Menken suffered deeply from these losses.

Adah Menken’s true religious origins are controversial. Born in Louisiana in 1835 to Auguste and Marie Theodore, some historians believe that she was raised a Catholic, an assertion that Menken herself denied. In response to a journalist who called her a convert, Menken replied, “I was born in [Judaism], and have adhered to it through all my erratic career. Through that pure and simple religion I have found greatest comfort and blessing.”

Before they divorced, Adah and Alexander Menken moved from New Orleans to Cincinnati, then the center of Reform Judaism in America. There, Adah learned to read Hebrew fluently and studied classical Jewish texts. It was at this time that Adah’s other, more serious talents emerged. An aspiring writer, she contributed poems and essays on Judaism to Isaac Mayer Wise’s weekly newspaper, The Israelite. Her writings urged the Jews of Turkey to rebel against oppression and place their faith in the coming of a messiah who would lead them to restore Jerusalem. She publicly protested the Mortara Affair, the kidnapping by Italian Catholic officials of a six year old Jewish boy whom the officials claimed had been stolen by the Jewish community. She also spoke out forcefully when Lionel Nathan was denied his seat in the English Parliament. And long before Hank Greenberg or Sandy Koufax, Menken refused to appear on stage during the High Holy Days even at the very height of her public success.

(continued on page 30)
For the first time in American history, an array of national institutions has joined with the American Jewish community to mark the anniversary of Jewish settlement in the United States. On September 7, 2004, the Library of Congress opened a major exhibition, “From Haven to Home: 350 Years of Jewish History in America.” In doing so, the Library kicked off the national celebration of the 1654 landing of the first permanent Jewish settlement in New Amsterdam being organized by the Congressionally-established Commission to Commemorate 350 Years of American Jewish History.

The exhibition draws from the vast collections of the Library of Congress, supplemented by compelling items from the collections of the Library’s three partners on the Commission— the American Jewish Historical Society, the National Archives and the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives. Some of the most significant include George Washington’s letter to the Jewish congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, pledging the nation to religious liberty; Emma Lazarus’s sonnet, “The New Colossus,” written in her own hand; General Ulysses S. Grant’s infamous Civil War-era General Order #11, expelling Jews from Tennessee and Kentucky; and Harry Truman’s telegram recognizing the founding of the State of Israel. On the lighter side, the exhibition also includes icons of popular culture such as Irving Berlin’s handwritten lyrics for “God Bless America” and the famous advertisement of an American Indian enjoying a slice of Levy’s Jewish rye bread.

Dr. Michael Grunberger, Head of the Hebraic Section of the Library of Congress and Commission member, curated “From Haven to Home” and edited its beautiful catalog. Dr. Gary P. Zola, chair of the commission to Commemorate 350 Years of American Jewish History, noted, “This historic partnership marks the first time in the nation’s history that a collaboration of this kind has taken place in a common effort to advance our understanding of American Jewish history, and … serves as a powerful demonstration of how American culture has dramatically affected the character of Jewish life on these shores.”

Some of the Library of Congress’s treasures included in “From Haven to Home” will provide the “core” of a Commission-endorsed 350th Anniversary exhibition that will adorn the Center for Jewish History in New York under the auspices of the AJHS from May 15 to September 15, 2005. In February of 2005, it will be on display at the Museum Center in Cincinnati under the auspices of the Marcus Center. In Fall 2005, it will open at the Skirball Museum in Los Angeles. Additional venues are currently under consideration. At each site, the receiving institution will add its own and borrowed holdings to the exhibit.

During the American Jewish Tercentenary in 1954, historian Salo W. Baron observed, “The history of the Jews of the United States is part of the history of the United States as well as part of the history of the Jews… The experience of life in the United States… affected the traditional patterns of Jewish living…[and], in every respect, the Jews of the United States have been a part of the making of that history.” In June of 2004, to mark the 350th anniversary of American Jewry, scholars attending the American Jewish Historical Society’s Fifth Biennial Scholars Conference confirmed the many and complex levels of truth underlying Baron’s observations.

To mark the opening of the 350th anniversary celebration, the Academic Council of the American Jewish Historical Society invited the Society’s partners on the Commission to Commemorate 350 Years of American Jewish History— the Library of Congress, the National Archives and Records Administration and the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives— to cosponsor the conference. The Library of Congress and American University generously hosted the three days of meetings and lectures in Washington, DC. Professor Pamela Nadell, immediate past chair of the AJHS Academic Council and chair of the Jewish Studies Program at American University, chaired the conference. More than 100 scholars attended, signaling the widening range of scholarly research and the proliferation of courses in the field.
Appropriately, funding for the conference came from the Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Foundation, as well as from the B. and R. Knapp Fund, George Blumenthal, the Office of the Provost and Jewish Studies Program of American University, from the AJHS and the Library of Congress.

In 1954, to mark the 300th anniversary, the AJHS organized one of the first-ever conferences for professional scholars in the field of American Jewish history, chaired by Professor Baron. According to professor Nadell, just before the conference Baron commented that he had seen “few new insights into the processes of American Jewish historical evolution,” although he was hopeful that the tercentenary celebration would stimulate new interpretations and evaluations of Jewish history in the United States. Both the Peekskill gathering and this year’s conference justified Baron’s faith. Presenters in Washington addressed such topics as “Patriotism and Parochialism in the Teaching of American Jewish History,” “Preserving the Record of American Jewish History,” “The Sociological Love Affair with Intermarriage, 1920-1960,” “War and Identity: Jewish GI’s Under Fire,” and “Consuming Is Believing: Jewish Women Making Community in Suburbia: 1940-1960.” Many of these papers will be published in future issues of the Society’s scholarly journal, *American Jewish History*, which is available as a benefit of membership in AJHS.

Modern technology has transformed the study of our past. Today, anyone with a computer and a high-speed Internet connection can visit museum exhibitions, view photographs and watch old movies, hear old radio programs and even read historic documents without leaving home. Major public institutions such as the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library provide access to portions of their vast store of holdings and back issues of the *New York Times* and the *Brooklyn Eagle* can be read on-line. Now, the American Jewish Historical Society has begun a long-term project to make complete runs of as many as 1,000 American Jewish periodicals available in fully searchable digital form through the power of the Internet.

The project is called ADAJE, an acronym for “American Digital Archive of Jewish Experience.” The goal of ADAJE is to make available a record of daily life of the nation’s many Jewish communities in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Whether the publication is an early one such as Isaac Leeser’s monthly *Occident*, published from 1843 to 1850, a weekly Jewish community newspaper from newer Jewish communities in Dallas or San Diego, trade magazines such as *The Kosher Butcher’s Journal* or a newsletter from the New York Synagogue Council, ADAJE will provide digital access to each local Jewish community’s unique history. David Solomon, acting executive director of AJHS and creator of ADAJE, has observed:

The uniting of original historical sources with 21st century technology will unleash the full potential of American Jewish history. Through the access that ADAJE will allow to the record of each community’s own documents, the project will raise contemporary American Jews’ consciousness of the richness and relevance of their personal past. ADAJE will also educate Jewish and non-Jewish users alike about the dynamic interaction between America and its Jewish citizens in their local settings. Once ADAJE’s resources are fully on-line, historians will have to consult these easily accessed Jewish sources to fill out the picture of the American past.

AJHS has begun ADAJE by placing a fully searchable digital run of its own journal, *American Jewish History* from 1893 to 1992 on the ADAJE section of the Society’s website, www.ajhs.org. The American Jewish Committee has granted AJHS permission to mount a complete run of its *American Jewish Yearbook*, and by the end of 2004 that resource should be available on the site as well. We urge you to set your browser to www.ajhs.org and open the ADAJE feature to experience the power of this technological access to the past.

While a generous member of the AJHS board of trustees underwrote the initial phases of ADAJE, the Society now seeks additional funding to expand the project. If you would like to see back copies of your community’s Jewish newspaper or your synagogue’s newsletter available on ADAJE and are willing to contribute toward the cost of completing this work, please contact Cathy Krugman, AJHS director of development, at 212-294-6163 or e-mail her at ckrugman@ajhs.cjh.org. We are grateful for your support.

Cathy Krugman
Thanksgiving

T
he first American Thanksgiving was held in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1621, attended by 90 Native Americans and 50 English Pilgrim settlers. That first dinner mirrored ancient harvest feasts such as Succoth, the ancient Greek Thesmophorian celebration and the ancient Roman Cerealian rites. Today, Thanksgiving has evolved into a national holiday, the busiest travel day of the year and a near-universally observed family rite of overeating. In 1868, however, Thanksgiving became contested territory for Pennsylvania’s Jews.

The anniversary of the Pilgrim and Indian feast day did not become an official national holiday for more than 200 years. To mark the adoption of the new Constitution and establishment of a new government of which he was the head, president George Washington declared November 26, 1789 a day of thanksgiving and prayer. However, Washington did not renew his declaration. It was not until 1863, in the midst of a terrible Civil War, that President Abraham Lincoln fixed the last Thursday of each November as a “day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father.” When the Union was triumphant in the war, Thanksgiving Day became an even more significant observance in the northern states.

It was in this context in 1868 that Governor John W. Geary of Pennsylvania issued a proclamation to the citizens of his state calling on them to celebrate Thanksgiving. The terms which Geary employed roused a unified protest from Philadelphia’s rabbis because, in the words of America’s first English-language Jewish newspaper, The Occident, Geary “apparently intended to exclude Israelites” from the celebration. Geary’s proclamation began:

Unto God our Creator we are indebted for life and all its blessings. It therefore becomes us at all times to render unto Him the homage of grateful hearts...and I recommend that the people of this Commonwealth on [November 26th] refrain from their usual avocations and pursuits, and assemble at their chosen place of worship, to ‘praise the name of God and magnify Him with thanksgiving.

While such sentiments were not offensive, Geary then added, “Let us thank Him with Christian humility for health and prosperity” and pray that “our paths through life may be directed by the example and instructions of the Redeemer, who died that we might enjoy the blessings which temporarily flow therefrom, and eternal life in the world to come.”

By 1868, Philadelphia Jewish population was one of the nation’s largest, numbering as many as 4,000 souls. According to The Occident, a week after Geary’s proclamation the “Hebrew Ministers” of Philadelphia “deemed it their duty” to draft a powerful petition against Geary’s proclamation. Their “solemn protest” was signed by all seven of the city’s rabbis, including Sabato Morais, who later played a central role in establishing the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York, and Morris Jastrow, the leader of a Philadelphia Reform congregation. The seven rabbis affirmed that:

An [elected] official, chosen by a large constituency, as the guardian of inalienable rights, ought not to have evinced a spirit of exclusiveness. He should have remembered that the people he governs are not of one mind touching religious dogmas, and that by asking all to pray that ‘their paths through life may be directed by the example and instruction of the Redeemer’ he casts reflections upon thousands, who hold a different creed from that which he avows.

The rabbis speculated that, in his private capacity, Governor Geary would resent being told by a Catholic priest that, on a national holiday, he should make confession or that any other public officer might try to tell him what religious observance he must perform. The rabbis observed, “The freedom-loving authors of the American Constitution opened indiscriminately to all the avenues of greatness, so that the position now filled by a follower of... [Protestant theologians] Calvin or Wesley may tomorrow be occupied by the descendant of Abraham, or, perchance, by a free-thinker.”

The rabbis concluded by condemning Geary’s proclamation as “an encroachment upon the immunities we are entitled to share with all the inhabitants thereof; and we appeal to the sense of justice which animates our fellow-citizens, that a conduct so unwarrantable may receive the rebuke it deserves, being universally stigmatized as an offence against liberty of conscience, unbecoming a public functionary, and derogatory to the honor of the noble state he represents.”

Despite this outspoken rabbinical indictment, Geary stood by his proclamation and Pennsylvania officially celebrated a Christianized Thanksgiving that year. As decades have passed, however, Thanksgiving has lost most of its original Pilgrim origins – other than the traditional turkey and cranberry dressing. Today, signs in the windows of food markets advertise kosher turkeys for Thanksgiving. Most of American Jewry has absorbed the holiday, shorn of its Christian trappings, and made it a long weekend focused on family togetherness. Philadelphia’s rabbis expressed what would become the majority American view that government-declared holidays should be devoid of specific religious content, and that each individual may bring to it whatever spirituality, if any, he or she desires.
W hile President George Washington’s exchange of letters with the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island, is among the best-known correspondence in American Jewish history, the first Jewish community to address the newly elected head of state was the Hebrew Congregation of Savannah, Georgia. On May 6, 1789, congregational leader Levi Sheftall wrote to Washington that its members were grateful for his “unexampled liberality and extensive philanthropy [which] have expelled that cloud of bigotry and superstition which has long, as a veil, shaded religion.” Under Washington’s leadership, Sheftall wrote, the nation’s new constitution “enfranchised [American Jewry] with all the privileges and immunities of free citizens, and initiated us into the grand mass of legislative mechanism.”

Washington replied with generosity (see letter beside).

The original letter from the Savannah Congregation and the president’s response reside in the George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress. However, just before press time, Sidney Lapidus of Harrison, NY, president of the American Jewish Historical Society, acquired a copy of the Gazette of the United States, a New York City newspaper published on June 19, 1790, which contains a rare account of the exchange between Savannah Jewry and George Washington. As part of the Society’s 350th anniversary celebration, plans are now underway to display the newspaper at the Society’s headquarters at the Center for Jewish History in New York. ■

GEORGE WASHINGTON WRITES TO THE SAVANNAH JEWISH CONGREGATION

Gentlemen:

I thank you with great sincerity for your congratulations on my appointment to the office which I have the honor to hold by the unanimous choice of my fellow citizens, and especially the expressions you are pleased to use in testifying the confidence that is reposed in me by your congregation…”

I rejoice that a spirit of liberality and philanthropy is much more prevalent than it formerly was among the enlightened nations of the earth, and that your brethren will benefit thereby in proportion as it shall become still more extensive; happily the people of the United States have in many instances exhibited examples worthy of imitation, the salutary influence of which will doubtless extend much farther if gratefully enjoying those blessings of peace which (under the favor of heaven) have been attained by fortitude in war, they shall conduct themselves with reverence to the Deity and charity toward their fellow creatures.

May the same wonder-working Deity, who long since delivered the Hebrews from their Egyptian oppressors, planted them in a promised land, whose providential agency has lately been conspicuous in establishing these United States as an independent nation, still continue to water them with the dews of heaven and make the inhabitants of every denomination participate in the temporal and spiritual blessings of that people whose God is Jehovah.
The story of rebelling communal and individual life after World War II through first-hand interpretation of personal records of survivors. The exhibit does not dwell on the hardships of camp life clearly visible in the photographs nor does it highlight the valor and dedication of outstanding leaders. Rather, it stresses the effort and tenacity of the multitude of individuals, the “tiles” in the mosaic of the Jewish people. Lillian Gewirtzman, curator

Sponsor: YIVO

Intriguing Women
Current through November 14, 2004
The pioneering achievements of Jewish women in modern times, ranging from social welfare to the arts, medicine and physics. Letters, books, memoirs and other written materials in the archives of the Leo Baeck Institute document their experiences. The exhibit salutes the ingenuity, creativity and perseverance of Jewish women shaping their own destinies.

Sponsor: Leo Baeck Institute

Becoming an American Writer: The Life of Isaac Bashevis Singer
November 16, 2004 through January 16, 2005
CALENDAR OF EXHIBITIONS & PUBLIC PROGRAMS.
Isaac Bashevis Singer (1904-1991) is the most famous Yiddish writer of the twentieth century. As he vividly conjured the annihilated Jewish world of Eastern Europe, he spoke to the fears, longings and ambivalence of America’s Jewish immigrants. Singer drew from folk memories and mystical traditions to create works that moved between the realistic and the fantastic in ways that startled readers and inspired other artists. Singer characters dramatized the conflicts of post-war American Jews and a broader society committed to cultural pluralism and to assimilation. The exhibition utilizes a collection of rare photos, manuscripts, correspondence and books. The exhibition is organized by the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center of the University of Texas at Austin.

Sponsor: Yeshiva University Museum

Lectures & Seminars
Thursday, November 18, 2004 6PM
If I am Only for Myself... Caring Beyond Borders Speakers: Leonard Fein, Ruth Messinger, Dara Silverman, and Alan B. Silfka discuss philanthropic caused the Jewish response in global conflicts.

Sponsor: American Jewish Historical Society & American Jewish World Service

Jews & Justice series
Thursday, December 9, 2004 7PM
THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE AND ISRAEL’S FENCE: JUST POLITICS OR JUSTICE? Moderated by leading international law expert Ruti Teitel. Ernst C. Stiefel, Professor of Comparative Law at New York Law School, will focus on the International Court of Justice’s recent decision finding Israel’s anti-terror fence in violation of international law. Is this decision, as some claim, an unpunished result of anti-Israel sentiment, or does it represent a reasonable application of international law? Panelists: Richard J. Goldstone, Retired Justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa and former Chief Prosecutor of the UN War Crimes Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda; Dinah PoKempner, General Counsel, Human Rights Watch; Roy Schondorf, Senior Legal Adviser, Israeli Defense Force; and Jonathan Tepperman, Senior Editor, Foreign Affairs Magazine. Made possible through the generous support of The David Berg Foundation. Prof. Russell G. Pearce, curator.

Sponsor: American Jewish Historical Society

Annual special Chanukah concert & storytelling
Sunday, December 12, 2004 3PM
JEWISH HUMOR FROM OY TO VEY; A CHANUKAH CONCERT Comic opera by American composer Seymour Barab, with a Chanukah story reading by Isaiah Sheffer. A delightful pastiche of heartwarming vignettes depicting humor in Jewish life. Singers Robert Abelson, Dan Roux, Martha Novick, and Adrienne Cooper join music director Barry Levitt. Program will conclude with candle lighting and Chanukah songs.


The Book of Customs
Sunday, November 7, 2004 6PM
PRESENTATION AND BOOK SIGNING BY SCOTT KOSOFSKY.
Based on a 1645 Yiddish edition of the Minhagim bukh, or “customs book,” this beautifully designed and illustrated guide to the Jewish year revives a tradition of Jewish almanacs popular in Europe between 1590 and 1890.

Sponsor: American Jewish Historical Society

Journey through the Minefields; from Vietnam to Washington, an Orthodox Surgeon’s Odyssey
Tuesday, November 30, 2004 6PM
PRESENTATION AND BOOK SIGNING BY DR. MENDY GANCHROW.
Personal reflections by former chairman of the Orthodox Union and leading advocate for Israel.

Sponsor: American Jewish Historical Society. Co-sponsor: YUM

Please call for general information: 212-294-8301
Please call the box office for reservations: 917-606-8200
Jews may not have played a highly visible role in the history of baseball, but they are certainly getting their moment in the sun. The publication of the American Jewish Historical Society’s set of cards of 142 Jews who played major league baseball between 1871 and 2003 has focused attention to the role Jews have played on and off the field. Dozens of stories about the card set and activities related to the set appeared in the national press. Mainstream papers like the New York Times, USA Today and the Baltimore Sun gave it prominence. Recently, two other events propelled the history of Jews in baseball into major venues. The National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY held a two-day conference on Jews in Baseball, and Shea Stadium, home of the New York Mets, was the site of “Jewish Heritage Day” featuring sales of the Society’s card set.

Hall of Fame hosts kosher dinner

On a sunny and warm final Sunday and Monday in August, the Baseball Hall of Fame hosted its first-ever program devoted to documenting Jewish contributions to professional baseball. Eight former major leaguers, including standouts such as Ken Holtzman, Richie Scheinblum and Mike “Super Jew” Epstein attended along with an enthusiastic audience of more than 300 men, women and children. On Sunday evening, August 29, the attendees shared the first-ever kosher dinner served at the Hall of Fame.

Speakers at the conference included Hall of Fame president Dale Petroskey, sportscaster Jeremy Schaap; filmmaker Aviva Kempner (“The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg”); and Martin Abramowitz, president of Jewish Major Leaguers, Inc. whose organization planned and convened the conference with Hall of Fame and AJHS support. Additional presenters included historians Roger Abrams, Meir Ribalow (curator of the AJHS website www.jewsinsports.org) Nicholas Dawidoff, biographer of the enigmatic Jewish ballplayer and spy Moe Berg; AJHS director of research Michael Feldberg; and a panel of retired players. George Blumenthal, AJHS trustee and co-chair of its Sports Archive Committee and Bernard Wax, director emeritus of AJHS, were also in attendance.

As Dale Petroskey noted in his remarks, “The Hall of Fame is honored to host this tribute to the Jewish players who have risen to great individual heights while contributing to their teams and their communities.”

Mets and Jewish Pride

On August 29, 2004, as the Hall of Fame conference began, the New York Mets held their annual “Jewish Heritage Day” when the Mets played the Los Angeles Dodgers, whose roster includes current Jewish star Shawn Green. One of the featured events of the day was the promotion and sale of the Society’s baseball card sets and uncut sheets of the complete card sets. A limited number of sets and uncut sheets remain for sale through the Society. Please see the order form on the return envelope or visit our website www.ajhs.org or call 1-866-740-8013 to obtain your set while they last.

Jews in Baseball Exhibition

Until December 18, the American Jewish Historical Society is featuring an exhibition, “Pioneers, Superstars and Journeymen: American Jews in Baseball, 1871-2004” at the Center for Jewish History in New York City. Based on the Society’s set of cards of every Jewish major league player from 1871 through 2003, the exhibit includes numerous artifacts owned by or loaned to the Society, such as game-worn jerseys belonging to Sandy Koufax and Hank Greenberg, Moe Berg’s commission into the Office of Special Services and a telegram from Ted Williams to Hank Greenberg in which Williams asks to borrow Greenberg’s bat to use in the 1947 World Series. The exhibition was made possible by a generous grant from Jewish Major Leaguers, Inc. with support from George Blumenthal and Leslie Pollack, co-chairs of the AJHS Archive of American Jewish in Sports. AJHS trustee Skip Karetsky has made it possible for the exhibition to travel to the Slifka Center at Yale University (contact Yale University Hillel for details).
Beautiful, historic and charming Yiddish Theater Posters reproduced from the originals in our archives. None of these posters are known to be commercially available. Museum quality printing on acid-free paper using ultraviolet resistant inks. Posters are available in 16" x 20" or 24" x 36" sizes.

1 MOLLY PICON – AYE QUE MUCHACHA, 1932, Author: Harry Kalmanowich, Music: Joseph Rumshinsky, Place: Teatro Excelsior, Buenos Aires, Argentina Cast: Jacob Kalich, Molly Picon, Printed by: Sisto y Lemme, Buenos Aires; stone lithography in blue, red, yellow, and black.

2 EAST SIDE SADIE Circa 1929. “A $100,000 production. Thrilling from beginning to end. The greatest and most interesting that you have ever seen. It took a year to produce. You will weep and laugh until you cry when you see ‘East Side Sadie.’” Producer: Worldart Film Company. Director: Sidney Goldin. Printed by Universal Theatrical Corporation, New York, N.Y.; silkscreen in orange, aqua, black and pink.


4 THE LUNATIC January 18th, 1922. Author: Harry Kalmanowitch. Place: People’s Theatre,
These historic patriotic posters have been faithfully reproduced from the originals in our archives. None of these posters are known to be commercially available. Museum quality printing on acid-free paper using ultraviolet resistant inks. Posters are available in 16” x 20” or 24” x 36” sizes. They are rolled and sent in heavy cardboard tubes.

To order please call 1-866-740-8013 or visit our website at www.ajhs.org or join as a “Friend” and get a 16” x 20” poster as our gift for joining. You can also use the enclosed envelope.

THE JEWISH JUSTICES OF THE SUPREME COURT REVISITED: BRANDEIS TO FORTAS

Of the thirty-nine Justices who sat on the United States Supreme Court between 1916 and 1969, five were Jewish: Louis D. Brandeis, Benjamin N. Cardozo, Felix Frankfurter, Arthur J. Goldberg, and Abe Fortas. With a Preface by Justice Stephen G. Breyer and Introduction by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. The Jewish Justices of the Supreme Court devotes a chapter to each of these Jewish Justices. Jennifer M. Lowe, ed. Published by the Supreme Court Historical Society and the American Jewish Historical Society, 1994.

Paperback • $20

THE LEHMANS

The Lehmans are one of America’s most prominent German-Jewish dynasties. Their ancestor, Abraham Lehmann (1785-1865), lived in the Bavarian village of Rimpar. After their emigration to Montgomery, Alabama, in the middle of the nineteenth century, his sons founded the banking firm of Lehman Brothers, today one of the most prestigious on Wall Street.


In June 1996, members of the Lehman family from the United States and England congregated in Rimpar to pay tribute to their forebears and the village’s Holocaust victims. In a personal message, President Bill Clinton wrote: “Germans and Americans alike are proud to claim this family as their own, and their ongoing success is a testament to the spirit and values of both our nations.”

This second edition of The Lehmans includes an additional chapter that tells the story behind the highly emotional gathering in Rimpar.

Hardcover • $20

HOOPSKIRTS AND HUPPAPHS

A Chronicle of the Early Years of the Garfunkel-Trager Family in America, 1856-1920. Written by Milton M. Gottesman. Published by American Jewish Historical Society, New York. 96 pages, 6” x 9”, cloth bound, with 37 period photographs, 91 endnotes, appendix, glossary and an introduction by Professor Jeffrey S. Gurock.

Subjects include:
- Two mid-19th century rabbis who make their livings as hoop skirt manufacturers and minister to their congregations in South Carolina and New York on a pro bono basis.
- A hoop skirt salesman who briefs Union Army officers on Confederate military preparations and becomes a freelance intelligence operative with a personal introduction from General Grant to the commanding general of the Union Army in Washington.
- A home in Columbia, South Carolina, that is specially protected by Union army officers from the conflagration that consumes the rest of the city during Sherman’s March to the Sea.
- Vignettes of the 19th century Jewish communities in Charleston, Columbia, Savannah, Cincinnati, and New York City.

Hardcover • $20

GREAT BAT MITZVAH AND GRADUATION GIFT

JEWS WOMEN IN AMERICA:

An Historical Encyclopedia 2 volumes. Edited by Paula E. Hyman and Deborah Dash Moore. Sponsored by the American Jewish Historical Society. Winner of the American Library Association’s prestigious Dartmouth Medal Award “for the creation of reference works of outstanding quality and significance.” Winner of the Jewish Book Council’s National Jewish Book Award for Women’s Studies and the Barbara Dobkin Honorary Award.

Hardcover • $200

BLESSINGS OF FREEDOM

Blessings of Freedom is a collection of vignettes and episodes that, taken together, outline the overriding directions and tendencies of the much larger tapestry that comprises the American Jewish experience. Starting in 1997, the American Jewish Historical Society published a weekly feature entitled “Chapters in American Jewish History” in the English-language Forward and other newspapers. This volume comprises 120 of the best columns, organized according to subject and period. Each chapter is a window through which the reader gets an interesting and illuminating glimpse at an important and often colorful aspect of the American Jewish story. Bibliographical information is given for those interested in learning more about the field.

Paperback • $35

THE LEVY FAMILY AND MONTICELLO

Each year more than a half-million people from around the world visit Monticello, but few people realize that Jefferson’s house was also home to the family of Uriah P. Levy and his nephew Jefferson Monroe Levy. Even fewer realize that without the Levy family’s stewardship, there might not be a Monticello to visit. In a story filled with drama, irony, political wrangling and legal battles, Professor Melvin I. Urofsky corrects the misconception that a “century of ruin and neglect” marked Monticello between Jefferson’s death and the creation of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, the private, nonprofit organization that today owns and operates Monticello. The story of the Levys and Monticello is a story of the blending of cultures and personalities, of Yankees and Virginians, of Jews and Christians, of city folk and rural people. It is the story of the power of a symbol, and how in America such symbols cut across lines of religion and class and ethnicity. And behind all of this is the presence of Thomas Jefferson.

Hardcover • $20

To order please call 1-866-740-8013 or visit our website at www.ajhs.org or get Jewish Women in America as our gift for joining as a “Preservation” member at $200. You can also use the enclosed envelope.

Book Shipping $5 per order
THE BROWNSVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL BOYCOTT:

Christmas, 1906

Just before the 1905 Christmas recess at Public School 144 in Brownsville, Brooklyn, principal Fred. F. Harding told an assembly of children in words very much like the following: “Now, boys and girls, at this time of the year especially, I want you all to have the feeling of Christ in you. Have more pleasure in giving than in taking; be like Christ.” Augusta Herman, a 13-year-old student otherwise lost to history, boldly requested permission to speak. She asked Harding whether he “did not think such teaching more appropriate in a Sunday school or a church?” Harding replied, “Christ loves all but the hypocrites and the hypocrites are those who do not believe in him.” There is no record of the young Ms. Herman’s response, but there is one of the Jewish community protests that Harding’s remarks precipitated.

Historian Leonard Bloom notes that, “by the turn of the twentieth century, the separation of church and state in the [public] school setting was well established in law.” This did not stop Harding and other evangelical Christians from testing the limits that the doctrine imposes. By 1905, Brownsville was a densely populated neighborhood of small shops and factories whose population was at least 80% Jewish. Its mix of impoverished Orthodox and militantly socialist Jews made it in many ways indistinguishable from its more fabled neighbor, Manhattan’s Lower East Side.

When news of principal Harding’s exhortation and Augusta Herman’s firm response reached the Brownsville’s Jewish leadership, it touched a sensitive nerve. Almost 95% of the Jewish children of Brownsville attended public school. While the community supported a handful of cheders, the overwhelming majority of Jewish parents wanted their children to be Americanized through the public schools. Historian Arthur Goren argues that, for Jewish immigrants of this era, the public schools were “the great democratic institution, the bridge to the new society and the key to self-improvement.” Brownsville’s Jewish parents entrusted the public schools to make their children bicultural Americans – Jewish Americans – not American Christians.

A broad based alliance of Jewish activists insisted that Brownsville’s – and New York’s – Jewish public school children not be proselytized during any season. Although not all spoke or read English, the Jewish parents of P.S. 144 took the lead. More than 100 of them petitioned the local board of education to protest Harding’s lecture. To their disappointment, the local board upheld Harding. The American Hebrew, a voice for Reform Judaism, called the local board’s action at the least “a technical violation of the school law” and a far more serious offense than the original one committed by Harding.

The Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations appealed the local ruling to the New York City Board of Education. The Board referred the petition to its Committee on Elementary Education, which took almost 6 months to complete its review. Principal Harding decline to appear personally, sending the committee his home telephone number should they wish to reach him. To what must have been Harding’s surprise, the Committee overturned the local board’s decision and described Harding’s behavior as, “to say the least, indiscreet.” The Committee noted, “We cannot impress too strongly upon principals and teachers the fact that unusual care and discretion be used on all occasions in their school work not to do aught that may be liable to the construction of teaching sectarian doctrines.”

Put simply, the Committee told the principals to make sure that they were not teaching their students Christianity.

As Leonard Bloom notes, “Though the highest school authorities sustained the complaint against Harding, the case was still not over.” In the fall of 1906, the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations called upon the Board of Education to ban all future Christmas observance of any kind in the New York public schools. Once again, they referred this request to the Committee on Elementary Education. Its chair, Mr. A. Stern, wrote in response that modified Christmas observances would be allowed – Santa Clauses and Christmas trees would still be permitted – so long as “sectarian views” were not introduced. Mr. Stern expressed the opinion that “the more intelligent Jews of this city” shared his position.

Displeased by Stern’s response, on the weekend of December 22-23, 1906 the Yiddishes Tageblatt newspaper called for a Jewish student boycott of Brownsville’s public schools on Monday, December 24th, a day devoted strictly to closing exercises before the Christmas vacation. The Tageblatt called the proposed boycott a “battle for civil rights.” The New York Times reported that between 20,000 and 25,000 children, one third of the school population of Brownsville, missed school that Monday. The Tageblatt’s headline triumphantly proclaimed, “Empty Schools: Tens of Thousands of Jewish Children Shun the Christmas Tree.” The boycott succeeded.

Two weeks later, the citywide Elementary School Committee issued a report recommending that the schools ban the singing of hymns and the assignment of essays on sectarian themes during Christmas. They did not, however, exclude Christmas trees or Santa images from the schools. Today, many schools balance the Santa images with menorahs and Kwanzaa festivals. In some communities, the debate over whether to permit crèches and Chanukah lights on the village green continues to vex local officials. In 1906, the Jewish children of Brownsville were able to establish that, whatever symbols are permitted, no proselytizing would be allowed in the New York public schools.
Continued articles...

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Adah Menken (from page 19)

Although she became world-renowned by playing Mazeppa throughout America and Europe, Menken’s deepest desire was to be known as a serious poet. She built friendships among an international literary elite that included Charles Dickens, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Alexandre Dumas the Younger, Algernon Swinburne and George Sand, who served as godmother to Menken’s second child while it lived. Menken was suspected of having affairs with Dumas and Swinburne, neither of which can be confirmed, but the constant hint of scandal wherever she performed did little to discourage her box office appeal.

Adah Isaacs Menken’s life, like her celebrity, was like a comet. She died in Paris in 1868 at the age of 33, apparently from a combination of peritonitis and tuberculosis. When treatment by the personal doctor of Napoleon III of France provided no relief, a rabbi kept vigil at her bedside until her passing. She was buried in the Jewish section of Montparnasse Cemetery. A collection of her poems, Infelicia, appeared a week after her death. Charles Dickens quipped about her, “She is a sensitive poet who, unfortunately, cannot write.”

Despite cultivating her “bad girl” persona so assiduously, Menken retained a sincere devotion to her fellow Jews around the world. Today’s Hollywood celebrities have nothing on the glamorous, scandalous, tragic and paradoxical Adah Isaacs Menken.

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Alan Sherman (from page 18)

through these musty classics. For over a century the Battle Hymn had thundered, “Mine eyes hath seen the glory/Of the coming of the Lord./He is trampling out the vintage/Where the grapes of wrath are stored.” Sherman kept the melodramatic melody, but in place of the Lord he sang of the pointlessly heroic Harry Lewis, who died in a fire while working for garment manufacturer Irving Roth. Harry “stood by his machine.” His reward was that “He had the finest funeral/The union could afford.” But Sherman wrote him a heck of an epitaph. “Oh, Harry Lewis perished/In the service of his lord./He was trampling through the warehouse/Where the drapes of Roth are stored.” The pun, usually a déclassé form of humor, found a home in Sherman’s send-ups of cultural standards.

In early 1963, Sherman released his album My Son, The Celebrity, which rose quickly to number one on the strength of Harvey and Sheila, a send-up in which Sherman Americanized Hava Negila.

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YIDDISH NOTE CARDS

In the early part of the 20th century, American Jewish immigrants from Yiddish-speaking lands in Eastern and Central Europe sent Rosh Hashanah and other holiday greetings via Yiddish postcards. Quite possibly, your own grandparents or parents received an original of one of the cards shown here. The American Jewish Historical Society has assiduously collected and preserved hundreds of these cards in its archives as a way to mark the immigrant experience in America. The Society has now selected twenty-seven of these cards and made them available as note cards to its members and supporters. Each box contains 18 note cards reproduced from New Year postcards converted into folded notes usable for any occasion but most suitable for New Year's cards. Envelopes are included. These are very high quality and charming reproductions not available in stores.

Holiday Sale Price on a set of box II and III with a total of 36 Cards box #I is unavailable
$20 for the two boxes + $5 shipping.

THE JEWISH PEOPLE IN AMERICA

Feingold, Henry, ed. The Jewish People in America. 5 volumes. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, for the American Jewish Historical Society, 1992. $20 each

Volume I – A Time for Planting
In the Autumn of 1654, twenty-three Jews aboard the bark Sainte Catherine landed at the town of New Amsterdam to establish the first permanent Jewish settlement in North America. In A Time for Planting, Eli Faber recounts these earliest days of Jewish life in America, as Jews from Lisbon to Amsterdam to London extended the wanderings of their centuries-old diaspora.

Volume II – A Time for Gathering
Between 1820 and 1880, European Jews arrived in the United States in ever greater numbers. While later Jewish immigrants would criticize their “rush” to assimilation, the Jews of this period created the institutions that continue to shape Jewish life in America. In A Time for Gathering, Hasia Diner describes this “second wave” of Jewish migration.

Volume III – A Time for Building
The years between 1880 and 1920 marked the third great migration of Jews to the U.S. – including more than two million from the Russian empire, Austria-Hungary, and Romania. In A Time for Building, Gerald Sorin describes the experiences of Jews who stayed in the large cities of the Northeast and Midwest as well as those who moved to smaller towns in the deep South and the West.

Volume IV – A Time for Searching
Henry Feingold chronicles the turbulent period between 1920 and 1945 – when Jews were poised to enter the mainstream of America's life- and explores the issues that would preoccupy America’s Jewish community for the rest of the century. Despite the specter of anti-semitism, signs of success and acceptance were everywhere. Sold Out.

Volume V – A Time for Healing
A Time for Healing chronicles a time of rapid economic and social progress. Yet this phenomenal success, explains Edward S. Shapiro, came at a cost. Shapiro takes seriously the potential threat to Jewish culture posed by assimilation and intermarriage- asking if the Jewish people, having already endured so much, will survive America's freedom and affluence well.
The first set of cards for EVERY Jewish Major League Baseball player, from Lipman Pike (1884) to Matt Ford!

In conjunction with Jewish Major Leaguers, Inc., the American Jewish Historical Society has created this limited edition Historic card set for all 142 players. For more than forty of these men, this will be their first and only card. Complete with photos and statistics, including Hall of Fame players Sandy Koufax and Hank Greenberg, future Hall of Famer Shawn Green, All-Stars Al Rosen and Ken Holtzman and old-timers like Andy Cohen, Moe Berg and Harry “The Horse” Danning, this set is truly one of a kind. Jewish Major Leaguers is a limited edition, boxed set. Developed with the encouragement and cooperation of Major League Baseball, the Players Association, Fleer and the Alumni Players Association, the Society has produced only a small, one-time printing. None will be sold commercially. We printed the cards as a one-time event last year and are almost out of stock on some items. Please try to order as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. All orders are subject to stock on hand. The sheets and the Gold Cards are illustrated inside Heritage.

1 Box of collectible cards .......................................................... $100
1 Box of Silver Embossed cards from edition of 1,500 ............................................. $200
2 Boxes of Silver Embossed cards from numbered edition of 1,500 ............................................. $300
1 Box of Gold Embossed cards from numbered edition of 500 ............................................. $500
1 Set of two proof quality Uncut Sheets printed on both sides ............................................. $300
1 Double Sided Custom Framed set of two uncut proof quality sheets ............................................. $600

Delivery on any item is $5. Some items are available as membership gifts.

To order please call 1-866-740-8013 or go to our web site at www.ajhs.org