

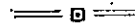
ק"ק כנסת ישראל

United Synagogue

History of the
Hackney Synagogue

Brenthouse Road, E.9

By the REV. DR. BARNETT JOSEPH, B.A., H.C.F.



also

ORDER of SERVICE

to Commemorate

THE JUBILEE

(1897 - 1947)

on

SUNDAY, 30th NOVEMBER, 1947

OFFICERS, 1897.

Minister and Reader .. ..	.. ..	Rev. GATCHELL ISAACS.
First Reader and Secretary ..	.. ..	Rev. M. J. HEILBRON.
Wardens .. .. ..	.. ..	A. B. SALMEN, Esq. L. ZACHARIAH, Esq.
Financial Representative .. ..	.. ..	M. SIEGENBERG, Esq.
Board of Management .. ..	.. ..	JOHN COHEN, Esq. GEORGE DAVIES, Esq. GEORGE DE LANGE, Esq. LEONARD B. FRANKLIN, Esq. ISAAC HOLTZ, Esq. JACOB KREMPNER, Esq. SYLVIAN LION, Esq. S. K. PRAGER, Esq.
Chairman of Building Committee ..	.. ..	HON. WALTER ROTHSCHILD.
Vice-Chairman .. ..	.. ..	HERBERT BENTWICH, Esq., L.L.B.
Treasurer .. ..	.. ..	LEONARD B. FRANKLIN, Esq.
Beadle and Collector .. ..	.. ..	MR. SOLOMON SCHONBERG.

OFFICERS, 1947.

Minister and Reader .. ..	.. ..	Rev. DR. BARNETT JOSEPH, B.A., H.C.F.
First Reader .. ..	.. ..	Rev. C. KOWALSKI.
Wardens .. ..	.. ..	L. ABRAHAMS, Esq. J. SCHAMA, Esq.
Financial Representative .. ..	.. ..	M. GOLDBERG, Esq.
Board of Management .. ..	.. ..	Councillor R. BLACK. M. FRANKS, Esq. M. KING, Esq., F.A.I. A. KRITZ, Esq. J. NISSENBAUM, Esq. S. OFFENHEIM, Esq. H. B. ROLAND, Esq. S. N. RONEN, Esq. L. SONTAG, Esq. F. STONE, Esq. M. E. WALDMAN, Esq., O.B.E., J.P. H. WOOLF, Esq.
Secretary .. ..	.. ..	M. AIZEN, Esq.
Beadle and Collector .. ..	.. ..	Mr. S. CAPLAN.

HISTORY OF THE HACKNEY SYNAGOGUE

1897 - 1947

(Kislev 17 5708—Nov. 30th. 1947).

In November 1935, the South Hackney Synagogue closed its doors. A House of Worship for the Jewish residents of Hackney began as far back as 1881 at 43, Darnley Road, E.g. At the Annual General Meeting of that year, Mr. Simon Lyon was elected President and Mr. Jacob Lyon served as Treasurer. A number of rules were passed, inter alia, that the Synagogue be styled South Hackney Synagogue, and that the strict orthodox ritual be practised. The offices of minister and reader were to be honorary. In 1881, it was resolved that Messrs. E. de Winter and M. Sesenwine be recognised as readers of the Synagogue, but the President allow other gentlemen to read upon notice being given to the regular readers of the congregation. It is interesting to note that the Council of Jews' College granted the request of the Board for the provision of seats in the Synagogue. In August, 1881, the Revs. Herman Bennische and M. Elkin were engaged to officiate on the High Holydays. There is a record in the Synagogue archives of a deputation that waited on the Falmouth Synagogue for the loan of Sepharim. In January, 1882, the Rev. A. L. Green was elected an honorary member of the Congregation in view of his profound interest in the welfare of the Synagogue and in the formation of Sabbath schools. In the following March the Rev. M. Hyamson was elected preacher, secretary and teacher of the Sabbath schools. In July of this year, Mr. de Winter was appointed Hazan of the South Hackney Synagogue while Mr. Berlin acted as preacher and reader during the High Holydays. The numerical strength of the religion classes stood at thirty-five.

In 1884, Mr. A. B. Salmen was elected Warden, a position he occupied uninterruptedly for twenty-two years. In the following year, Mr. M. J. Heilbron was elected reader, teacher and secretary.

The Jewish population of South Hackney had been steadily increasing and the need was keenly felt for larger premises. In May 1885, it was resolved to procure a more suitable place for Divine Worship. An iron building hitherto used by the Dalston Synagogue was bought for the sum of eighty pounds. A site for the erection of this building was obtained in Devonshire Road at a rental of £22 per annum. On September 6th, 1885, the Synagogue was formally consecrated by the Rev. David Wasserzug, B.A., Mr. Samuel Montague, M.P., presiding.

In January 1886, the members of the South Hackney Synagogue were admitted to the benefits of the Burial Society of the

United Synagogue. Names like E. Hirsch, A. B. Salmen, L. Zachariah, and J. Levy figure prominently in the Synagogue records, which note with pride that there were many signs of a positive healthy development of Jewish communal activity in Hackney. In 1889, a letter was received from Mr. Samuel Montague, M.P. President of the Federation of Synagogues, pointing out the advantages of affiliation, but owing to the strong opposition that was evinced, the subject was dropped.

In January, 1890 Mr. M. J. Heilbron was elected first marriage secretary to the Synagogue. In July 1890, Mr. Gatchell Isaacs who for years had officiated at Wetsminster Free School, was appointed temporarily for six months. On the 27th June, 1892 the ground in Devonshire Road was bought for £500 through the untiring services of Mr. J. Rosenberg. In December, 1892, the Brighton Synagogue donated eighteen stained glass windows. On June 15th 1893, the first meeting took place with the honorary officers of the United Synagogue to consider the question of affiliation. It was decided to erect a permanent and larger place of worship on the site in Devonshire Road and Mr. Delissa Joseph was directed to draw up the plans. The cost of the Synagogue was estimated at £2,200. In December 1894, the United Synagogue accepted the constituency of the South Hackney Synagogue, and to further the Building Fund Appeal, Dr. Adler preached at the Synagogue on the 12th January, 1895.

At a statutory meeting of the members of the council of the United Synagogue held on Monday, 20th July 1896, it was resolved "that this meeting do approve of the admission of the South Hackney Synagogue into the United Synagogue as a constituent thereof and that the Union take effect from the date of the consecration of the South Hackney Synagogue now being erected."

On 14th February, 1897, the foundation stone was laid by the Hon. Walter Rothschild (this stone now stands in the vestibule) and on the 17th September, 1897 the Synagogue was consecrated by the Chief Rabbi Dr. Hermann Adler and was opened by Mr. de Rothschild.

On December 2nd, 1897 the Hon. Walter Rothschild wrote: "It has afforded me great pleasure to be of some slight assistance to the South Hackney Congregation. I hope as time goes on always to be of service in some measure of the Congregation."

On December 8th, 1897, Mr. L. B. Franklin also wrote: "My services will always be at your disposal."

The first marriage in the Synagogue was solemnized on December 14th, 1897 and it was resolved that the bridal couple be presented with a Bible or Prayer Book. In June 1898, Mr. L. B. Franklin offered to donate a Prayer Book suitably inscribed to every boy who was Barmitzvah in the Synagogue. This custom was very carefully preserved until the outbreak of the second World War.

On July 21st, 1898, it was resolved that the Rev. S. Blackman, be appointed temporarily and on July 29th, 1899 he was formally inducted into office as Reader of the Congregation. The Revs. G. Isaacs and M. J. Heilbron were still acting jointly as second Readers and in February 1899 after sixteen years faithful service Mr. Heilbron resigned.

Among the outstanding lay leaders of this period record must be made of names like L. B. Franklin, (who in October 1906 was created a Justice of the Peace) A. B. Salmen, S. C. Kaufman, D. Gould, M. Cohen, J. Kempner, and S. K. Prager.

After a long and devoted record of service to the Synagogue, Mr. A. B. Salmon died in October 1907 and Dr. Hermann Adler, Chief Rabbi preached the memorial sermon.

In 1909, Mr. L. B. Franklin was elected a Life Member of the Council of the United Synagogue. In the following year the Synagogue was rededicated and renovated and formally reopened on the 25th September, the Chief Rabbi preaching the sermon. During the 1914-1918 war many sons of members and former pupils of the Hebrew and Religion Classes played a loyal and devoted part. A War Memorial in memory of those who made the supreme sacrifice stands in the vestibule of the Synagogue.

Amid scenes of great communal rejoicing, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Synagogue, was commemorated at a special service on January 21st, 1923. The Synagogue was reopened by Lord Rothschild and was consecrated by the Chief Rabbi, Dr. J. H. Hertz. The scroll-bearers were the Chief Rabbi, Lord Rothschild, Dayanim A. Feldman and S. I. Hillman, Rev. G. Isaacs, the Mayor of Hackney, Messrs. L. B. Franklin, O.B.E., J.P., A. M. Woolf, O.B.E., S. H. Emanuel, K.C., F. D. Benjamin, I. Salmon, C.B.E., L.C.C., J. Prag, J.P., S. J. Kempner, J. L. Lion, A. L. Sions, and S. K. Prager. The Chief Rabbi in the course of his sermon said that "a quarter of a century had passed since that sacred edifice was opened by a scion of an historic house, by the bearer of the name that had been for generations a synonym for loyalty and leadership in Israel. It was because the noble words of his revered predecessor were taken to heart that God established the work consecrated that day. In that Synagogue men and women had heard God's Voice, they had felt the thrill of His bounteous Love, they had been strengthened in their allegiance to their Faith and in their loyal fellowship with every righteous cause. That sacred occasion was not merely a retrospect of the past but a solemn self-consecration for the tasks and problems of the future. The founders of the South Hackney Synagogue had been brave and strong Jews. "A Congregation" said Dr. Hertz, "was judged by the efficiency or otherwise of its classes for religious instruction, by its success or failure in training its children to be God-fearing." At a dinner held at the Caxton Hall on January 24th, 1923 in connection with the Silver Jubilee, Lord Rothschild presided. He

said that it was a very great pleasure to him to see what a very prosperous institution the Synagogue had become and what a very fine edifice both spiritually and materially, had been built upon the foundation he had laid twenty-five years ago. Mr. Franklin had thrown himself heart and soul into the movement which gave birth to the very flourishing Synagogue and had been instrumental in collecting most of the funds with which the original founders were able to carry out their work. He had always taken the deepest interest in that institution. Lord Rothschild hoped that the Synagogue would perpetuate the best traditions of Judaism and keep alive the communal spirit of those it served. Mr. L. B. Franklin said that he had been a member of the Board of Management without a break since it had become a constituent of the United Synagogue. He claimed that the Synagogue had justified the ideals of the founders and that they had succeeded far beyond their hopes and aspirations. South Hackney was found especially suited to their needs, but Jews could not leave the East End unless they could be given the possibilities of religious worship and education for their children. They knew that often when the gates of the ghetto were opened, the colour, charm and beauty of Judaism were sacrificed. "They wanted" he said "to uphold Judaism and they were able to raise a building which had been a comfort and a pride to a vast number of people and had helped them to become good Jews and good citizens. In reconsecrating the Synagogue they had reconsecrated themselves to the better service of their God and their community." Mr. S. H. Emmanuel, K.C. referred to the services rendered by the United Synagogue in maintaining the traditions of Judaism. Mr. Isadore Salmon, C.B.E., L.C.C. also responded and said that South Hackney was symbol of the great work of the United Synagogue in supplying places of worship in all districts of London where they were needed. He referred to the excellent staff of the institution. Miss N. Adler, L.C.C. proposing the toast of past members reminded the audience that she was celebrating her Barmitzvah year of association with Hackney. Mr. S. K. Prager commemorated the occasion by a gift of £100 for the religion classes in memory of his wife, Mr. & Mrs. Harris Koenigsberg having previously denoted £500.

After a long and faithful ministry, the Rev. G. Isaacs was succeeded by the Rev. L. Rabbinowitz, M.A. of Shepherds Bush Congregation. On August 1st, 1929, Mr. M. Aizen began his connections with the Synagogue as Beadle and Assistant Secretary of the Congregation. He has served ever since with a marked loyalty and efficiency, zeal and devotion. In 1932, Rabbi L. Rabbinowitz, was appointed minister of the Cricklewood Synagogue. For two years the ministerial position was vacant, during which time the Rev. Barnett Joseph, B.A., officiated during the High Holydays and on numerous other occasions. He received a call to the South Hackney ministry in August 1934, and on September 2nd, was formally inducted into office. Mr. M. E. Waldman, J.P. was present in his official capacity as Deputy Mayor of the Borough of

Hackney, as well as the professors of Jews' College and civic representatives of the Borough.

Meanwhile negotiations had been proceeding for the amalgamation with the Central Hackney Synagogue, situate in Richmond Road. Sir Robert Waley Cohen, a vice-president of the United Synagogue, attended the annual general meeting in May, 1935 at which he pointed out the great spiritual and social advantages that would ensue. This was the first amalgamation of two synagogues in the history of the United Synagogue and he felt it would justify their hopes and ambitions. The scheme was formally ratified by the Council of the United Synagogue and in November, 1935 the Synagogue was closed in order that the extensions could be carried out. The house at 22, Devonshire Road was bought to enable the necessary alterations to be effected. Mr. C. J. Eprile acted as architect. For ten months, Divine Services and the Hebrew and Religion Classes were carried on at the former Central Hackney Synagogue.

The Rev. S. Blachman after a long devoted and faithful ministry retired and the Council of the United Synagogue conferred on him the title of Emeritus Reader of the South Hackney Synagogue. The Rev. C. Kowalski, Reader of the former Central Hackney Synagogue, was appointed Reader of the new Synagogue. Mr. J. Pearl, who had given many years of devoted service to the Central Hackney Synagogue as Beadle and Collector continued in office for some time until his retirement. Mr. H. Gillis succeeded him as assistant Beadle and collector. Mr. I. Russ continued to act as Choirmaster of the Synagogue and by his musical ability has helped to beautify the traditional renderings of the services.

The new Synagogue was henceforth to be known as the Hackney Synagogue. In the presence of a large and distinguished congregation, the new Synagogue was formally opened on September 13th, 1936 by Mr. Gaskell Jacobs and consecrated by Dayan Dr. A. Feldman. Taking as his text "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God," Dr. Feldman reviewed the history of that Congregation. He referred to its formation on April 10th, 1881 when a meeting of the original founders was held at the residence of the late Mr. S. Hecksher at 43, Darnley Road, E.g., where a room had been rented for the purpose of holding a Minyan. On the 19th July, 1885, the Congregation had purchased an iron building which was consecrated on September 6th, 1885, the ceremony having been presided over by Mr. Samuel Montague (the late Lord Swaythling). "Here" continued Dr. Feldman "they worshipped until the present Building was opened on September 19th. 1897." Dr. Feldman was sure that the destinies of the Congregation would go from strength to strength and be a credit to the whole of the Anglo-Jewish Community.

In January 1937, the first general meeting of members of the Hackney Synagogue since the amalgamation took place. In accord-

ance with a special resolution of the Council of the United Synagogue relating to the union of the two congregations that formed the Hackney Synagogue the first elected Board of Management was to be composed of an equal number of representatives of each of the two former congregations. Mr. I. M. Shocket, Senior Warden, presided over a large attendance. "The report circulated" he said "showed that much useful work had been accomplished in a peaceful and harmonious manner; since the amalgamation. Mr. Shocket paid a tribute, on behalf of his colleagues and himself, to the officials and staff of the Synagogue. He also referred to the excellent work of Mr. M. E. Waldman, J.P. Financial Representative, on whose shoulders the brunt of putting up the new Synagogue had fallen.

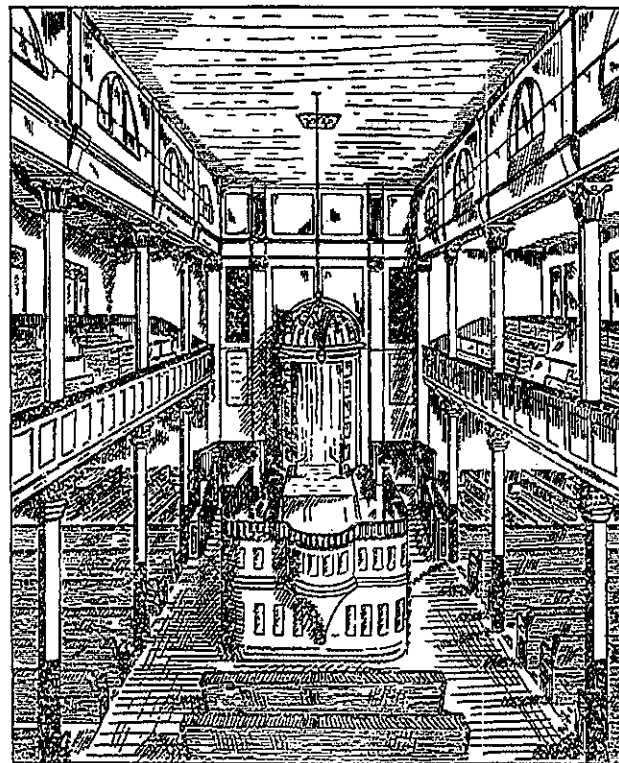
In March 1938, Mr. M. Aizen was appointed full time Secretary of the Synagogue, an office which he has since discharged with conspicuous success and devotion to duty. During the 1939-1945 war, the Synagogue Hall was requisitioned as an air-raid shelter for the use of local residents. There was a real spirit of comradeship evinced by all irrespective of race or creed, who found safety in the Synagogue precincts. On several occasions the Synagogue suffered damage from aerial bombardment. Many members of the Synagogue were dispersed from the neighbourhood and their places have now been taken by a new population. On November 1st, 1939 the Rev. B. Joseph was appointed officiating Chaplain to H.M. Forces and on June 25th, 1941 became a commissioned chaplain. During his absence, the Rev. A. Melenik was appointed temporary minister. Mr. H. Gillis having left for the Army, was replaced by Mr. S. Caplan. Both have a fine record of Synagogue service. It is appropriate to record that in this year of the Jubilee of our Synagogue one of the wardens is Mr. L. Abrahams, whose family have been connected with the Congregation almost from the day of its inception.

For more than fifty years, Divine Worship has taken place on the same site in Hackney. "The glory of the latter house shall be even greater than the former." We pause with gratitude and thanksgiving on this milestone in our Synagogue history. In the momentous and epoch making days that lie ahead we are resolved to continue the zealous and conscientious efforts of the founders of our congregation, to realize their noble and lofty aspirations, to strengthen and deepen our loyalty to our Faith, and to play our full part in the continuance and maintenance of the sacred traditions of our eternal heritage to the glory of our God and of our historic people.

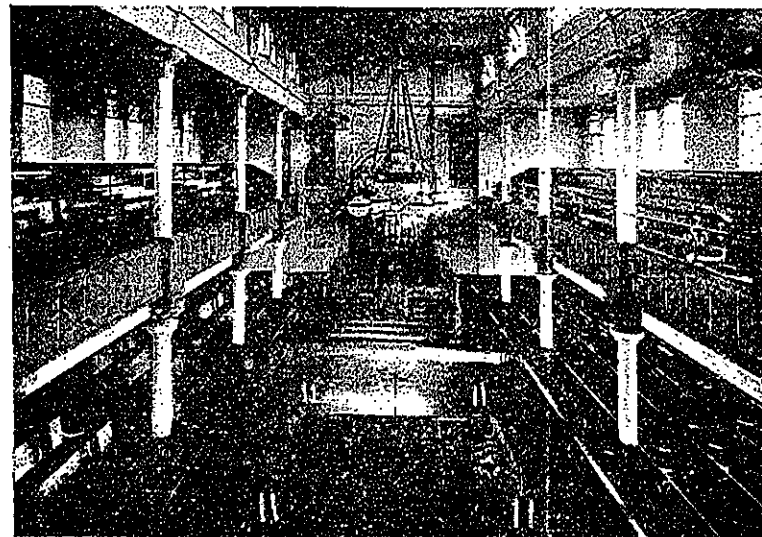
B. JOSEPH.

22nd October, 1947.

THE SYNAGOGUE IN 1897.



THE SYNAGOGUE IN 1947.



ORDER OF SERVICE

	Authorized Prayer Book			Authorized Prayer Book
מזה"טבו	Page	2	Sermon and Prayer by the Deputy for the Chief Rabbi, Dayan H. M. Lazarus, M.A.	
מנחה	"	94	Memorial Prayer for Founders and Departed Members	
שמע ישראל	"	145	מי שברך	
לך ה' הגדלה (First Circuit)	"	145	עלינו Page 76	
Psalm c (Second Circuit)	"	20	קדיש " 77	
Psalm xxiv (Third Circuit)	"	70	Psalm cl " 33	
PRAYER FOR THE ROYAL FAMILY	"	153	אדון עולם " 3	
Bible Reading				

OFFICIATING CLERGY

The Deputy for the Chief Rabbi
Dayan H. M. LAZARUS, M.A.

Rev. Dr. BARNETT JOSEPH, B.A., H.C.F. Rev. C. KOWALSKI.

The Choir under the direction of MR. I. RUSS.

ק"ק כנסת ישראל

United Synagogue

Order of Service

for the

JUBILEE

of the opening of the

HACKNEY SYNAGOGUE

Brenthouse Road, E.9

SUNDAY,

KISLEV 17th, 5708

NOVEMBER 30th, 1947

ALSO

A HISTORY OF THE SYNAGOGUE

BY THE MINISTER.