

Architecture and Monuments

Once the German Merchants had settled in the city, a need arose for impressive business premises, which would give them a competitive edge, standing out from their competitors. This expression of pride and vanity led to a building boom, which thrust up some monumentally fantastic architecture.

But these weren't all just built for business; some were for civic purposes and others for the leisure and enjoyment of the townspeople.

The building of the Eye, Nose and Throat hospital was funded by donations from Jacob Unna, who helped fund the establishment of the Bradford Chamber of Commerce.

Jacob Moser funded the Bradford Royal Infirmary and the Children's Hospital. Additionally Moser gave £10,000, a vast sum of money in 1898 as a gift of benevolence towards the aged and infirm his beloved Bradford.

St Georges Hall was built with funds, which came from the Jewish Community.

The Wool Exchange was funded by large donations from key investors whose business interest was the export of wool, and it is often pondered whether the Stars of David in the top windows are deliberate nod to its Jewish financiers.

There are still a several surviving colossus's to Jewish commercial endeavour in Little Germany. This includes the magnificent head quarters now known as Merchants House built for Moser, Edelstein & Co. which is on Peckover Street. Behrens Warehouse, built for S.L. Behrens & Co. was around the corner, on East Parade. All that is visible to the visitor now is the wrought iron gate, which overlooks the street, with the company name moulded into the Romanesque design, painted in black with its roses and grids pattern.

Charles Semon had his base only down the way a little at 25 Bolton Road. Semon also established a convalescent home in Ilkley, which he gave to the then equivalent of the town council, the Bradford Corporation. Generously he also granted a hefty bequest for its upkeep.

Jacob Moser among many other German Bradford Jews promoted the building of St Georges Hall (a concert hall) in 1853, which to this day retains its position as Bradford's premier concert venue. It is even said that the great author and playwright J.B Presitely was astutely aware of the how strong musical tradition in Bradford owed much to Jewish support.

There are three streets named after Charles Semon and Jacob Moser which are on the Swain House Estate in North Bradford, built between the wars, Moser Crescent and Avenue and Semon Avenue.

Trail Map & Key



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| 1 Bradford Reform Synagogue, Bowland Street | 9 Site of the Sun Inn, Jacob Behrens 'Took No Ale' |
| 2 Bradford Hebrew Congregation, Spring Gardens | 10 City Hall, Home of the Moser Collection |
| 3 House of Jacob Unna between 1858-1881 | 11 Site of Ignatz Rosenthal & Co Cigar Merchants |
| 4 Julius Schonermann's Home, 1st Orthodox Synagogue | 12 Wool Exchange - Stars of David in Windows |
| 5 Site of Nathanson's Kosher Butchers Shop | 13 Charles Semon Warehouse, 25 Bolton Road |
| 6 Site of Fineberg's Tailoring Shop | 14 Moser and Edelstein HQ, Merchant House |
| 7 The Schiller-Verein (Institute) | 15 S.L. Behrens & Company, "Behrens Gate". |
| 8 Site of Arensberg's Jewellery Shop, now Herbert Brown | |

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Making
Their
Mark

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Their
Mark

The Bradford Jewish Heritage Trail



The Forging of a Dynasty



Rabbi Dr Joseph Strauss arrived in Bradford in 1873, from Berlin (check) via London. He rounded up the existing streams of Jewish German Merchants, who religiously were neither here nor there, and moulded them into form. Strauss could be compared to Moses leading the Lost Israelites at Sinai into a worthy and productive community.

A leading light and truly remarkable figure, Rabbi Strauss founded a dynasty which would deal in textiles, lead by his son Ossie, another one off who

characterised the leadership, ambition and determination that so many men of his class found during the struggle of the 1930's and the Great Depression.

A Civic Contribution

Not content with buying and selling textiles, some of the major Jewish Bradford Wool Men would make their contribution to society a useful civic and often philanthropic one. Bradford can proudly

boast four figures who made their mark as either Mayor or Lord Mayor. First off the mark was Danzig born Charles Semon who led the council chamber 1864-65 during the mid Victorian period. A couple of generations later, and Danish born Jacob Moser donned the robes and chain, becoming Bradford's first Jewish Lord Mayor, 1910-1911 in the late Edwardian Era.



Another two generations on was elected Dr David Black, no relation to the Shopping Bag Magnate Peter Black of Keighley. He was also president of the Bradford Hebrew Congregation at one time, while he served as Lord

Mayor from 1961 to 1962. Over twenty years later, the last of the four Jewish Lord Mayors was Doctors wife Councillor Olive Messer, whose time in office coincided with the Bradford City Football Club fire disaster at Valley Parade.

Arts & Culture

Since the days of dealing in Wool, the sons and daughters of the middle class merchants have found their feet in the pursuits of art and entertainment.

An early success was the poet Humbert Wolfe, best known for his work *The Uncelestial City* and his collaborations with composers such as 'Planets Suite' writer Gustav Holst, who composed 12 Humbert Wolfe Settings, Op. 48 in the year 1929.

A Verse from 'The Celestial City'...

*You cannot hope
to bribe or twist,
thank God! the
British journalist.
But, seeing what
the man will do
unbribed, there's
no occasion to.*



Other successes have been artists and actors which include William Rothenstein and Albert Rutherston, so similarly named as they were both brothers, one opting for an anglicized name change. Ernest Leopold Sichel was another Jewish Bradford artist and contemporary of the Rothenstein brothers.



Self portraits of William Rothenstein and his brother Albert Rutherston, left to right.

Rutherston also wrote a biography of the writer and poet Italian born Humbert Wolfe who was the son a German Merchant and an Italian mother, both Jewish. The actor George Layton hails from a family whose original name was Lowy. Also a director, and he is best known for his roles in *Doctor In The House* and *It Ain't Half Hot Mum*.

While not strictly born in Bradford, but descended from the Great Jacob Unna are the acclaimed academy awarding winning actress Dame Peggy Ashcroft born 1907 who was a major screen star during the Golden Age of cinema, and her granddaughter the contemporary French singer Emily Loizeau.

There is an unusually high number of cinematic productions filmed in Bradford, with Jewish connections. Gritty Northern Classic *Billy Liar* (1963) and *Yanks* (1979) (Filmed in Haworth) were both directed by John Schlesinger, born 1926. This includes a scene filmed in the "Boy and Barrel" public house, located along Westgate at the top end of the town. Other Northern Realism films *Room At The Top* (1959) and its sequel *Life At The Top* (1965) starred actor Lawrence Harvey who was born Zvi Mosheh Skikne in 1928, in Joniskis Lithuania.

Sports Personalities

The Bantams

Other contributions have been from the field of sport, particularly football, with there been three Jewish footballers, all of whom have played for Bradford City Football Club, Bookman, Rosenthal and Furman.

Louis Bookman

The first was as far back as 1911, when Louis Bookman (born Louis James Arthur Oscar Buckhalter, 1890 Žagarė, Lithuania). When his career in sports had eventually come to an end, he found work on Ireland's railways, having previously played cricket for the Railway Union Cricket Club early in his crickering career. In addition to the railway jobs, he found himself working in the very Jewish jewellery trade.

His father had been a Rabbi in his native Lithuania, but the pogroms of 1895 would have forced the family to flee, from there they came to the port of Belfast when Louis was just a child. It is likely would have picked up a Belfast accent within a few years, especially if he was at school in the city. This would later be apparent when Anthony Clavane author 'Promised Land' and now 'Jews and football biography' 'Does Your Rabbi Know You're Here' describes Bookman quite succinctly as 'the Lithuanian Jewish Irishman'. Bookman hung up his 'footie boots' at some point in the early 1920's, but turned his sporting attentions to his crickering career which had begun in 1919 at the Railway Union, based in Dublin. His last match was in July 1930. A trail blazer for Jewish sports players in the U.K., Louis Bookman died in Dublin at the unquestionably young age of 52 in 10th June 1943.

Abe Rosenthal

The second player for our records, Abe Rosenthal entered the world around the time that Bookman was hanging up his football boots. Born on in Liverpool on October 12th 1921, Striker Rosenthal played professionally for local side Tranmere Rovers in 1938. Prior to playing at paid level, he was on the pitch for Liverpool as an amateur. He joined the Bantams (Bradford City's nickname) in 1946 and 'yo-yo-ed' between them and Tranmere three times over the next decade until 1956, finishing his career at City. He made 225 appearances and hit the back of the net 78 times.

Once he had taken retirement from the game, he launched a successful ice-cream business in Bradford. Whether this was the local firm Rossi's ice is as yet unsubstantiated, nor is whether or not it was the ice-cream factory which stands adjacent to the football ground at Valley Parade on Midland Road. Abe Rosenthal died at the age of 64 in October 1986. It is yet to be determined where he died or where he is buried.

Dean Furman

A far more recent wearer of the Claret and Amber strip is South African born Dean 'Deano' Furman. He arrived from Cape Town in spring 2006 to play for Chelsea under the ownership of Roman Abramovich. He then played Glasgow Rangers before switching to Bradford in August 2008 and staying for just under one season, before transferring in July 2009. Born in 1988 and raised in Cape Town, Furman currently captains Oldham Athletic.