



KEY DATES AND EVENTS.

1080(?) - Jews first arrive in Oxford, and live in St Aldates. The Domesday book records a 'Manassess' in the nearby village of Bletchingdon, who may be the first identifiable Jew in the county.

1141 - First mention of Oxford Jews, when both King Stephen and Queen Matilda extort money from the community. Aaron ben Isaac's house is burnt down when the Jewry resists paying Queen Matilda.

c. 1190 - The Jewish community open their first cemetery in Oxford, next to the river Cherwell.

1221 - The Dominican Friars establish a priory in the Jewry; one purpose of the friary is to convert the Jews by the monks "exemplary carriage and gift of preaching".

1222 - Robert of Reading (or Robert "Haggai"), a Christian cleric is burnt to death by the Christian authorities for converting to Judaism and taking a Jewish wife. Another Jew is alleged to have been burnt at the Castle.

1222 - The Council of Oxford (following the direction of the Lateran Council of 1215) order the local Jews to wear a badge of shame above their left breast.

1228/1229 - The houses of David of Oxford and Isaac ben Moses are confiscated. They provide a new town hall and court house, as well as a possible 'house of converts' for Jewish converts to Christianity. The modern town hall is still on the site.

1231 - The original Jewish cemetery is taken over by St John's Hospital, and redeveloped as a new hospital, and a Christian cemetery. The Jews are given a smaller and inferior site as a cemetery opposite.

1244 - Student rent rioters attack and sack Jewish homes. They claim that all study in the University has stopped as all their books are pawned to Jewish money lenders!

1268 - A religious riot is started on Ascension Day. It is alleged that a local Jew trampled and broke a cross in a solemn University religious procession. The Jews are temporarily imprisoned, and then the king punishes them by forcing them to pay for a large marble cross eventually put up in Merton College.

1278 - Many leading Jews, including some from Oxford, are accused of coin clipping and executed at the Tower of London.

1290 - All English Jews are expelled from the country, and their goods and property confiscated. The Oxford Jewry goes to William Burnel, Provost of Wells, and then to Balliol College. The synagogue eventually becomes a tavern, and the cemetery is taken over by St John's Hospital, and becomes a Christian burial ground.

1550's - Richard Bruern Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford is deposed for 'Judaising'.

1608 - Jacob Wolfgang renounces Judaism, and has a Christian Baptism, to become a member of Oxford University.

1610 - Jacob Barnet, a Jew and former secretary of Causabon, works in the University. He offers to convert but, but at the last minute flees his baptism in the University Church. He is later arrested by the University, and subsequently expelled from the country.

1655 - Jews officially readmitted to England under Cromwell.

c. 1700 - Jewish stockbrokers from London visit Oxford as tourists, and attend Public ceremonies of the University.

c. 1730 - A small Jewish community, mostly of traders and peddlers, is established in St Clements, Oxford.

1776/7 - Marcus Wolf, a Jewish tradesman, is indicted by the University courts for dishonest trading, and is forbidden to trade in the city liberty.

1842 – The modern Jewish community of Oxford is established.

1856 - Jewish emancipation. Jews are allowed to study in Oxford University for the first time, but are still debarred from holding college fellowships because most are still solely for Christian clergymen.

1871 - Clerical restrictions are lifted on all fellowships.

1881-3 - William "shifter" Goldberg of Lincoln College is amongst the first Jewish undergraduates at Oxford.

1892 – The Oxford Jewish Congregation moves to its Richmond Road site, in the artisan quarter of Jericho.

1896 – There are 35 Jewish residents of the city and 10 undergraduates recorded and the minister is Rev. S. Radnitzki.

1882-93 - Samuel Alexander becomes the second Jew to hold a fellowship in the University.

1901 – The Jewish community has declined and only one Jewish family (the Lipsons) are thought to live in Oxford. There are a number of Jewish undergraduates, and a tiny number of assimilated (so called 'murranos') Jewish fellows.

1905 – The Adler Society is founded in Oxford University.

1930 - Herbert Loewe (The Reader in Rabbinics) is the only professing Jewish fellow in Oxford. Most Jewish undergraduates still hide their Jewish identity.

1932 - Sir Isaiah Berlin is elected to his fellowship at All Souls College. He is only the fourth Jewish fellow in Oxford.

1940-5 - The Jewish population of Oxford is massively increased by refugees (including Albert Einstein) and evacuees to about 3,000. A home is set up in no. 1 Linton Road for 15 'Kinder Transport' children.

1946-50 - Most refugees and evacuees leave Oxford. Rabbi Weinberg leaves Oxford in 1948.

1948 - A president of the Oxford Union society (Clive Wigram) refuses to allow a debate on 'Jewish rights' (*vis à vis* a Jewish home-land), because he is Jewish.

1990 - A Petrol bomb attack takes place on the home of Rabbi Shmuel Boteach - director of Oxford University L'Chaim society, and member of the Lubavitch movement. Arab extremists are blamed in the wake of the Hebron massacre.

1991 - There are seven Jewish heads of college, numerous Jewish fellows, and up to 9% of students are Jewish.