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Philip Williamson^{*,*}

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^{*}Correspondence: p.a.williamson@durham.ac.uk
^{*}Durham University, UK

Special acts of worship in Anglo-Jewry 1700–1970: an addendum

PHILIP WILLIAMSON

Since the publication of the article on special acts of worship in Anglo-Jewry in the previous issue of this journal,¹ details of additional forms of prayer published for use on these occasions have been brought to my notice. I am especially grateful to Professor David Latchman for providing details from his important collection of documents on Anglo-Jewish history.² I also thank Jonathan Fishburn and Vanessa Freeman for further assistance.

The article was concerned with special acts of worship that were ordered or recommended at times of trouble or celebration for observance throughout the main Jewish communities, not just in the main synagogues at Bevis Marks (Sephardi or Spanish and Portuguese Jews) and the Great Synagogue at Duke's Place (Ashkenazi or German Jews). The first of these special services or prayers for general use were published by the chief rabbi of the Ashkenazi Jews, beginning in the 1740s.³ From the additional information, it is now clear that the Sephardi religious leaders began to publish general forms in 1854 (not 1859 as stated in the original article), for use not just at Bevis Marks but also at its "branch synagogue", located in Wigmore Street.⁴

The additional special forms of prayer for general use are given in the

1 Philip Williamson, "Special acts of worship in Anglo-Jewry 1700–1970", *Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* 53 (2022), 1–33.

2 Professor Latchman has published a valuable selection of images from his collection of Anglo-Jewish documents. These include illustrations taken from 150 orders of service for the period 1870 to 2020, both those issued for particular synagogues and those distributed for general use throughout the main communities, together with copies of instructions for special worship issued by the chief rabbi; David Latchman, *The US [United Synagogue]: 150 Years of Service* (London: United Synagogue, 2020).

3 For the early spread of synagogues, see Cecil Roth, *The Rise of Provincial Jewry: The Early History of the Jewish Community in the English Countryside 1740–1840* (London: Jewish Monthly, 1950).

4 The establishment of this branch synagogue (superseded from 1861 by a new branch in Bryanston Road) is described in Albert Hyamson, *The Sephardim of England* (London: Methuen, 1951), 307–8, 312–14.

following list. Unless otherwise indicated, their publication followed the common practice of Jewish religious leaders responding to orders issued by the British crown or recommendations by the archbishops of Canterbury and York for special services or prayers in the Church of England. The other types of occasion are indicated by these symbols:

a British royal event not observed by crown order or other instruction in the Church of England

* occasions specific to the Jewish community

The forms that were issued for the Spanish and Portuguese (Sephardi) synagogues are evident from their titles. All other forms were issued by the chief rabbi, for general use in Ashkenazi synagogues.

1786 Form of prayer and thanksgiving to the king of kings who in his abundant mercy most happily preserved our just, pious, and gracious sovereign lord his most sacred majesty George the third, king of Great Britain from the hand of the assassin on the second of August, 8 pp.⁵

1818 # Prayer and psalms for the day of grief consecrated by the congregation of German Jews in London and throughout England on the day of burial of her late most gracious majesty Queen Charlotte 4th day of Kislev AM 5579, [3] pp.

1854 Form of prayer for our repentance and the success of our arms to be used at the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue Bevis Marks and at the branch synagogue on Wednesday April 26th 1854–5614. The day appointed as a day of general humiliation, 11 pp.

1855 Form of prayer for our repentance and the success of our arms to be used at the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue Bevis Marks and at the branch synagogue on Wednesday March 21st 1855–5615. The day appointed as a day of general humiliation, 11 pp.

1914–18 The Great War. Prayer of intercession to be read every Sabbath after the prayer for the king and royal family, 7 pp.

1916 Intercession service. Order of service by the Rev the haham Dr M Gaster to be used in the Spanish and Portuguese synagogues on Sunday the 2nd January 1916. The day appointed as the day of general intercession, 2 pp.

1929 * Memorial prayer for the victims of the massacres in the holy land, 3 pp.⁶ (after the attacks by Arabs on Jews in Palestine during late August)

5 *Morning Post*, 9 Aug. 1786, reported a thanksgiving service for the king's escape on Sabbath, 5 August, at the Great Synagogue in Duke's Place. This form was presumably published for subsequent services in all the Ashkenazi synagogues, probably on Sabbath, 17 August, the day before thanksgiving prayers were ordered in the Church of England.

6 The text of this prayer was included in the *Memorial service* issued for use on 8 September 1929: see the list in "Special acts of worship", 26.

1933 * Prayer for our brethren in Germany to be read after the prayer for the king and the royal family, 1 p.⁷

1935 Prayer and thanksgiving for the semi-jubilee of his majesty's accession to the throne Sunday 5th May, 5695–1935, 12 pp.⁸

1937 Prayer and thanksgiving for the coronation of their majesties King George and Queen Elizabeth, Sunday, 9 May, 5697–1937, 12 pp.⁹

1938 Spanish and Portuguese Jews congregations. A prayer for the preservation of peace. Shabbat 17th September 1938, 1 p. (during the Czechoslovakian crisis)

1945 The world war. Service of praise and thanksgiving for the victories of the allied nations, 16 pp.¹⁰ (national thanksgiving day for the end of the war, Sunday 19 August), University College London Library, Special Collections, Mocatta boxed pamphlets RP 78

1966 * Special prayer to be recited at the Seder Pesach 5726 Passover 1966. "Remember our brethren everywhere who are in distress", 1 p.

7 See Latchman, *The US*, 111. This is evidently a re-issue of the prayer originally distributed for the festival of Pentecost in the same year: "Special acts of worship", 26.

8 As reported in the *Jewish Chronicle* (hereafter, JC), 15 March 1935, the chief rabbi initially issued two forms of prayer, for Sabbath 11 May and Sunday 12 May. These are recorded in "Special acts of worship", 26. It appears that this further form for 5 May was published for synagogues that wanted a special service on the day before the official national celebrations of the jubilee.

9 JC, 7 May 1937, reported the chief rabbi issuing the forms for Sabbath 8 May and for coronation day, Wednesday 12 May: see "Special acts of worship", 26–7. This form for Sunday 9 May, also included in the list, was a version of the form for 8 May which was produced for use in particular synagogues that wanted a service distinct from the Sabbath service: copies within covers for the Great Synagogue and the Cardiff synagogue are known to exist. Another surviving copy of this form for 8 May bears a sticker for Sunday 16 May, presumably for a synagogue that wanted an additional service on the weekend after the coronation.

10 The reference to multiple "victories" indicates that this was the text issued for the thanksgiving day after the defeat of Japan, based largely on the form of prayer published in May for the thanksgiving for victory in Europe.