



THE ROSENBACH 

# GALLERY GATEWAY

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*IN THE BEGINNING*

*Three Jewish Firsts from The Rosenbach Collection*

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



***Please support The Rosenbach!***

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## WELCOME TO THE GALLERY GATEWAY

### WHAT IS A GALLERY GATEWAY?

Welcome to the Gallery Gateway for The Rosenbach's exhibition *In the Beginning: Three Jewish Firsts from The Rosenbach Collection*. This Gallery Gateway provides all of the content presented on-site in The Rosenbach's exhibition galleries via an easily-accessible, easy-to-print online format. The Gallery Gateway is a hybrid of a traditional museum exhibition catalogue and digital exhibitions, which have become popular in recent years. The Gateway presents a large amount of visual and text-based content in a PDF format that makes exhibition content as accessible as possible. The document can be viewed online or downloaded to a personal device for viewing or printing.

*The purpose of the Gallery Gateway is to make exhibition content available to those who cannot visit The Rosenbach in person and to create a permanent record of the information shared in the exhibition.*

The Rosenbach will make Gallery Gateways for its exhibitions available in its Online Exhibition Portal at **[rosenbach.org/gallery-gateway](https://rosenbach.org/gallery-gateway)**. You will also find other special features there, including sound effects for web listening, digital interactives, graphics from the gallery, interviews, and other video content. Check the portal for other features as more Gallery Gateways go live.

### HOW TO USE THE GALLERY GATEWAY

#### View the Artifacts

- Explore photos of objects included in the exhibition.

#### Read the Text

- Engage with the interpretive text that accompanies artifacts on display in the exhibition.

#### Consider a Visit!

- Discover The Rosenbach through research, tours, and programs.



## KEY EXHIBITION DETAILS

# IN THE BEGINNING

THREE JEWISH  
FIRSTS FROM  
THE ROSENBACH  
COLLECTION



ON VIEW AT THE ROSENBACH  
SEPTEMBER 18, 2013–JANUARY 12, 2014

Museum co-founder Dr. A.S.W. Rosenbach assembled three astonishing collections that document Jewish firsts: the first Hebrew printed books in the world, the first books by and about Jewish Americans, and the artifacts of the Gratzes, one of Philadelphia's earliest and most prominent Jewish families. Spanning five centuries, these objects celebrate the rich and storied heritage of the Jewish people, a tradition that The Rosenbach fosters by continuing to collect Judaica to share with the public.

## INTRODUCTION

*How could we sing the Lord's song  
in a foreign land?*  
—Psalm 137

### THE EXHIBITION

The question from the psalm that describes the Jewish people's exile in Babylon in the sixth century B. C. E.—six verses of which you will encounter in conjunction with an artifact from that era—is an essential theme of this exhibition.

The three “firsts” in this exhibition represent three aspects of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach's collecting within the genre of Judaica. His interest in early printing included a collection of significant Hebrew incunabula—the earliest Hebrew books ever printed. His scholarly interests and philanthropic activities in the world of American Judaica led to his collecting the earliest books written by and about early American Jews. And his familial connection to the Gratz family—one of the most civically impactful early Jewish families in Philadelphia—made possible an important and ongoing artifactual collection.

As much as the objects you will see in this exhibition reflect Dr. Rosenbach's mastery in collecting and his personal passions, all three areas are bound together through time by the common experiences of the people they represent. Beginning in exile in Babylon—the original Jewish diaspora or dispersion—and moving around the world over 2,500 years, these scribes and artists, printers and readers, rabbis and merchants, teachers and activists, among others, had to find their way as Jews wherever they lived despite political and religious upheavals around them. In other words, these objects help tell the stories of how they sang the Lord's song in all of these lands.

We note with gratitude the funders of this exhibition, David and Renee Sackey. David Rosenbach Sackey, a great-nephew of the founders of The Rosenbach, supported the museum as a member of its board and by his enthusiastic involvement with projects like *In the Beginning* and *Chosen: Philadelphia's Great Hebraica*, which brought the region's significant Judaic treasures together in 2007. He left us far too soon, but his memory and guidance remain with us.

We hope you enjoy this glimpse into The Rosenbach's Judaica collections. Our research library offers many opportunities to engage in person with these and additional objects of interest. If you are interested in exploring these collections further, please see page 93 of this Gallery Gateway for more information on how to contact our research library.

# IN THE BEGINNING

THREE JEWISH  
FIRSTS FROM  
THE ROSENBACH  
COLLECTION



## **INCUNABULA**

The earliest printed books, in this case the earliest books printed in Hebrew.

## **EARLY AMERICAN JUDAICA**

The first books printed by or about American Jews.

## **GRATZ FAMILY ARTIFACTS**

A prominent Jewish family in early Philadelphia's political, religious, and civic life.

**T**hese collections represent three sides of Dr. A.S.W. Rosenbach's collecting enterprise: his interest in early printing and in Hebrew printing in particular, his scholarship and philanthropic activities in American Judaica, and his familial connection to the Gratzes. Yet, intellectual and historical themes that run across time also link these objects in the experiences of the Jewish people.

How do we see the human experience of a "Jewish first" expressed in an object, whether it is that of the first Jews forced to live in exile in a far-off land; or of the printers and readers of the earliest European Hebrew books living in the shadow of the Inquisition; or of Judah Monis, whose family experienced forced conversion abroad, who then came to America only to undergo a public baptism in Boston; or of the Gratz family, whose American patriotism was practiced in equal measure with their Judaism?

This exhibition traces these objects, not as the disparate but sought-after rarities of a consummate collector, but as essential clues in a sweeping, centuries-long tale of diaspora, or dispersion. Together they tell stories of cultural achievement despite danger and displacement. They speak to the dual impulses to transmit Jewish culture and to accommodate to each successive environment. Although each "first" we look at may be geographically or temporally different, the cultural impulses it records remain essentially similar.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON—  
THERE WE SAT DOWN AND THERE WE WEPT  
WHEN WE REMEMBERED ZION.  
ON THE WILLOWS THERE  
WE HUNG UP OUR HARPS.  
FOR THERE OUR CAPTORS  
ASKED US FOR SONGS,  
AND OUR TORMENTORS ASKED FOR MIRTH, SAYING,  
‘SING US ONE OF THE SONGS OF ZION!’

HOW COULD WE SING THE LORD’S SONG  
IN A FOREIGN LAND?  
IF I FORGET YOU, O JERUSALEM,  
LET MY RIGHT HAND WITHER!  
LET MY TONGUE CLING TO THE ROOF OF MY MOUTH,  
IF I DO NOT REMEMBER YOU,  
IF I DO NOT SET JERUSALEM  
ABOVE MY HIGHEST JOY.

—PSALM 137

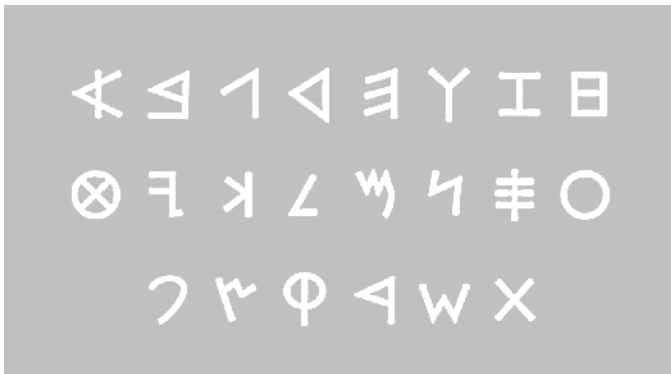


## 1. Amulet dedicated by Nebuchadnezzar II

(634–562 BCE), sardonyx, Babylon  
6th century BCE  
1954.2040a

Discovered in the bed of the Euphrates River during archeological work in 1873, this amulet was likely one of the eyes of a votive statue. The tiny inscription in Akkadian cuneiform tells us that the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar dedicated this amulet (and possibly the statue) to the god Nebo for the preservation of his life. Nebo was the god of wisdom, agriculture, and, perhaps most pertinent here, writing.

In 587–6 BCE, Nebuchadnezzar's armies besieged the city of Jerusalem, home of the Jewish Kingdom of Judah, destroying its Temple and forcing the remaining inhabitants into exile in Babylon. Until the Persian King Cyrus defeated Nebuchadnezzar in 538 BCE and ended the exile, the Jews had their first experience of diaspora, or dispersion from their cultural and religious homeland. For a people steeped in the oral tradition, writing became central to retaining their faith in exile. Several later books of the Bible were most likely written at this time, and by their return from exile, they had consolidated the Torah (the first five books of the Bible). The ancient alphabet, now known as paleo-Hebrew (seen at left), was almost entirely abandoned for the square script used to express the Hebrew language to this day (square scripts can be found in Objects 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7). This new alphabet was used to write the Aramaic language, to which Jews were exposed during this period. A kind of lingua franca of the ancient world, Aramaic would remain with the Jewish people for centuries, becoming a spoken language, as well (see Object 6).



Paleo-Hebrew Alphabet

When the Jews returned to Jerusalem after a fifty-year sojourn, many of their co-religionists did not follow, but gave birth to a larger diaspora by remaining in Mesopotamia, or traveling elsewhere—and others would join these communities in later episodes of expulsion and scattering over the centuries.



*Singing Songs in Foreign Lands:*

EARLY HEBREW PRINTING









The exile in Babylon was sorrowful, but also culturally and intellectually productive, setting the tone for future experiences of dispersion in many locations. The books in this section represent just a few of these later centers of diaspora culture. Does the initial response to the earliest exile—maintaining and transmitting faith and culture through writing, while adopting elements of the host culture—resonate even in these later objects?

The first dated Hebrew printed books appeared in Italy in 1475, with Jewish printers working only in the Italian and Iberian peninsulas during this early period that produced incunabula, meaning “from the cradle,” or the first printed books using movable type. Hostility towards Jews in the earlier centers of German printing had made work there impossible at that time. Even in more favorable locations, where Jews had warmer relationships with local secular leaders, Jewish books were subject to censorship and Jewish businesses were under pressure with the influence of the spreading Inquisition.

In this very first year that Jewish printers began to publish Hebrew texts in towns in northern Italy (Reggio Calabria, Piove di Sacco, Mantua), Jews were widely arrested, tortured, and killed after the blood libel resulting from the disappearance and death of a young boy in nearby Trento: it was falsely claimed that Jews killed him and used his blood to bake Passover matzoh.

Despite such circumstances, some of which are evidenced in the books themselves, Jewish printers continued to produce books. We can see in these artifacts that the content reflects not only a continuity of Jewish tradition, but also various responses to the host cultures, whether in design, language or style, or simply the regional Jewish culture embracing its own presentational choices.

The need for Hebrew content grew even after the expulsions from Spain and Portugal at the end of the 15th century. Hebrew printing would spread over Europe and beyond in the 16th century, often at the presses of non-Jews, whose audiences included Jews, Christian Hebraists (who looked for the roots of their faith in original Jewish texts), and conversos (forced converts from Judaism) who wished to return to Judaism. And so, the Jewish print culture had grown in about a half-century from small family businesses, sometimes on the run, to an international trade.

*Note: We have skipped from the 6th century BCE to the 15th century CE in this section. Dr. Rosenbach did not pursue early Hebrew manuscripts for his personal collection. For more information on early Hebrew manuscripts, see Chosen: Philadelphia's Great Hebraica, an exhibition catalogue (2007) written by David Stern and edited by Judith Guston, which is available in The Rosenbach's book store.*



# A Woman in Print





## 2. Judah ben Jehiel

(1420-1425–ca. 1498)  
 Nofet tsufim: al hokhmat ha-melitsah  
 Mantua: Abraham ben Solomon Conat  
 [ca. 1475-1477]. Incun 474n

### WHAT IS IT AND WHO READ IT

Probably appearing during the first year Hebrew books were printed, *Nofet Tsufim* (*The Book of the Honeycomb's Flow*) is a work of philosophy rather than a religious text. Bibles were not the first books printed in Hebrew, as the market for them was uncertain; many already existed in manuscript form. But Jewish readers at this time were a cosmopolitan lot and this text on rhetoric—combining biblical and secular readings, much as the academy its author founded did in its teaching—was an example of that worldliness.

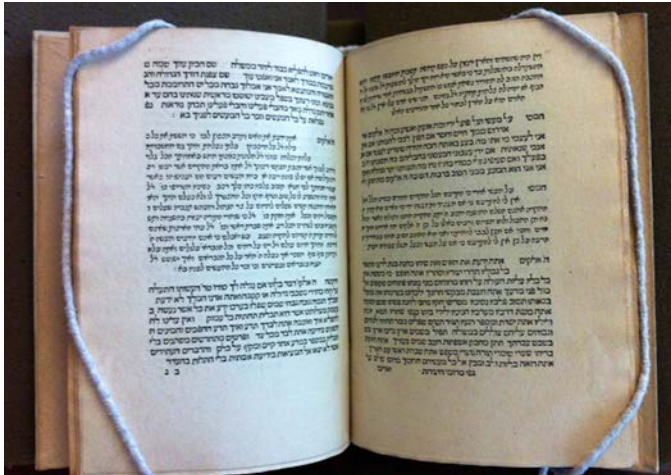
### WHO WROTE AND PRINTED THE BOOK

Messer Leon (his honorific title: “Messer” = “Maestro,” “Leon” = “Judah”), whose book was the only work published in Hebrew during its author’s lifetime in the 15th century, was something of a polymath. This rabbi, philosopher, and physician had a printer for his book who was another rabbi and physician, Abraham Conat, who worked alongside his wife, Estellina, to produce many of the earliest Hebrew texts in Europe. In the colophon, or production note, at the end of this and other volumes he printed, he stated that he was “the least of the men of influence . . . who writes with many pens without the help of miracles . . .”

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THE TEXT ITSELF

Rather than using a traditional, square Hebrew font, Conat designed his own fonts. As you look at other typefaces in this section, you will see that this font is of the cursive style; the style is typically Italian and is now named for Conat.





### 3. Jedaiah ben Abraham Bedersi ha-Penini

(ca. 1270–ca. 1340), Behinat Olam  
 Soncino: Joshua Solomon Soncino  
 [12 Dec. 1484]. Incun 484j

#### WHAT, WHO, WHEN, AND WHERE

*Behinat Olam* (An Examination of the World) is a poetic and ethical work that contrasts the worldly with the religious. The author's pen-name, ha-Penini, means "the dispenser of pearls." This printing of the work is its second: the first, between 1476–80, was published by Estellina Conat, who also printed alongside her husband Abraham (see Object 2). *Behinat Olam* was a solo effort and a successful one, leading to this second printing by Joshua Solomon Soncino, one of a family of prolific printers who took their name from the Italian town Soncino, then in the Duchy of Milan (see Objects 4 and 5 for other Soncino imprints).

#### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THE TEXT ITSELF

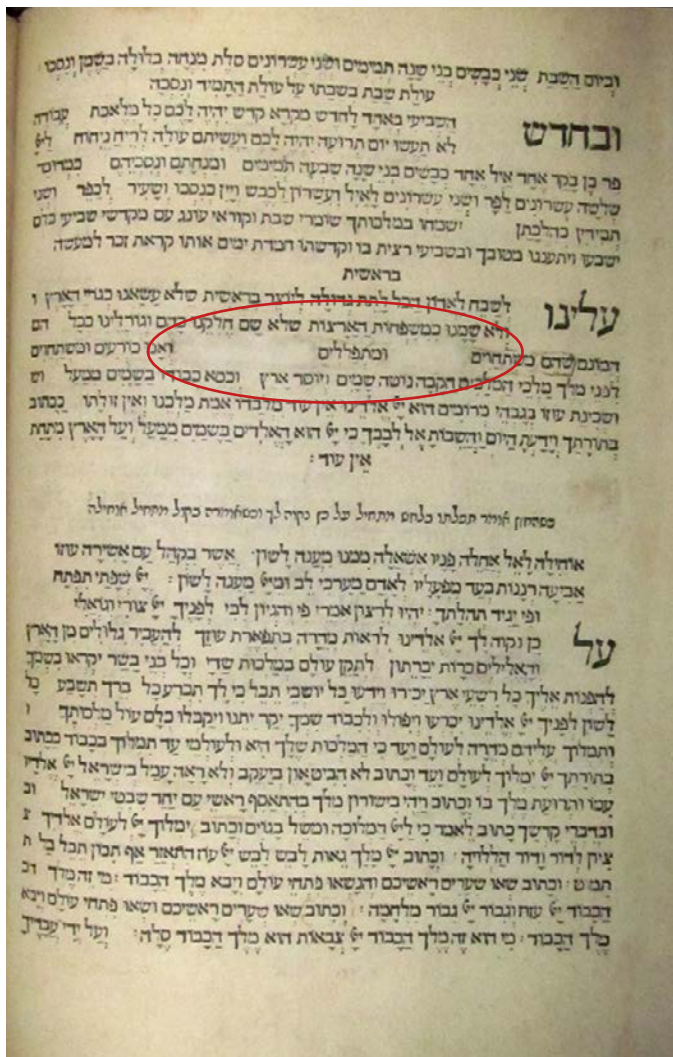
Note that the text is printed in a traditional, square font, while the commentary (presented alternately with the sections of text) is printed in a more cursive font.

#### A NOTE ON SURVIVAL

Estellina Conat's first printing of this medieval religious work is quite rare among surviving early Hebrew books, with only 6 known to be extant. The Soncino printing is less so, but still rare, with 38 remaining. We don't know how many of these first books were originally printed with the exception of a few printers who note they produced 300 or 400, or as few as 125 in one case. Suffice it to say, there were not many to start with and they endured many challenges to survival over time.



# A Family of Printers



## 4. [Siddur (Roman rite)]

Mahzor tefilot kol ha-shanah ke-fiminhag K. K. Roma helek 1-2  
[Soncino; Kasal Majore: Bene Yisrael Natan Sonsino  
Tishre-20 Elul 5246, i.e., Sept. 12-Oct. 9, 1485-Aug. 21, 1486]  
Incun 485m v.1-2

### WHO, WHAT, WHEN, AND WHERE

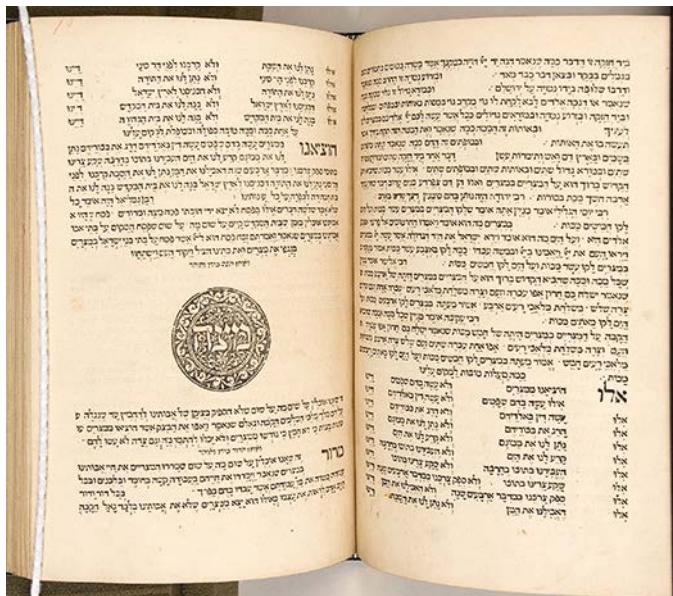
The story of the Soncino family may best reflect the economic and social pressures on Jews during this time period, and this book embodies that story. This work is the very first printing of a mahzor, an annual prayer book for Jewish holidays. Sometime in late 1485, half-way through printing the mahzor, the Soncino family had to pick up its household and its printing press and move to Castel Maggiore. This move, from their home half-way between Milan and Mantua to a new location just north of Bologna, was about 125 miles. It was there they completed printing the mahzor. Although we don't know exactly what happened in this instance, the Soncinos' own imprints are evidence of their constant moves, with a dozen locations in Italy, Greece, and Turkey through the tumultuous years leading to the middle of the 16th century.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THE TEXT ITSELF

Volume 1: On the right-hand page is the prayer Aleinu, or "It is our duty," the second-most-frequently recited prayer in the Jewish liturgy. A prayer with ancient roots, this highlighted section would have referred to lines from Isaiah that noted the powerlessness of the gods of Egypt. The paraphrase, "For they worship vanity and emptiness, and pray to a god who cannot save," was left blank in an act of self-censorship and was intended to be filled in by hand as printers realized the possibility of insult to Christians. Their fear was borne out in mistaken literal interpretations of the text and numerologically-inspired conspiracy theories derived from mystical traditions that caused more active censorship. The numerological value of some of the missing words is the same as that of "Jesus" and of other words as that of "Jesus and Mohammed." Here, you can see the blank spaces left by the printer and,

Continued...





if you look closely, the blots of ink left from trying to wash the writing from those same blanks. We do not know if the secondary censorship was contemporary to or later than the time of the printing or by whom it was done.

## VOLUME 2

This page is opened to the celebration of Passover, highlighted by the very first printed image of a matzah (which says “matzah” in Hebrew on it). The practice of having a separate Passover haggadah (a pamphlet that sets forth the order of the Passover seder, or ritual meal) had already begun in manuscript form in Spain two centuries earlier, but Italian Jews held fast to the older tradition and kept their haggadah as part of the annual prayerbook, both in manuscript and in print.





## 5. Immanuel ben Solomon ben Jekuthiel of Rome

(1261-1328), Safer ha-Mahberot. Brescia: Gershon Soncino  
[30 Oct. 1491]. Incun 491i

### THE POET

A polymath of an earlier era than Messer Leon (see Object 2), Immanuel began his career in Rome, writing and speaking on many subjects, but found his voice in composing poetry. He wrote in Italian and Hebrew, lending style from one to the other, and even drawing upon his contemporary, Dante (1265-1321). The final poem in this late-in-life collection *Safer ha-Mahberot*, or Book of Compositions, is titled *Ha-Tofet ve-ha-Eden*, or Hell and Paradise, a journey led by a spiritual guide through hell and into paradise, which earned him the designation the “Jewish Dante.”

### THE PRINTER AND THE PLACE

This book was printed in Brescia during a brief period of relative peace between the earlier blood libel attacks and the suppression of Jewish money-lending that supported business. Offering its protection, the Venetian state was able to hold back the tide of anti-Jewish sentiment until a wave of sermons led to another expulsion in 1494. Gershon Soncino was able to complete the printing of this volume and a complete edition of the Bible in 1492 before his family had to move on yet again.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THE TEXT ITSELF

The Dante-esque *Hell and Paradise* begins on the left-hand page. If you look carefully at the right-hand page, you will notice two things: first, that there are two fonts, one square and one cursive, as we’ve seen previously in Gershon Soncino’s uncle Joshua’s printing of Behinat Olam (see Object 3); also, note the tiny, penciled-in vowel points beneath the Hebrew letters. These were made by a reader and were not printed with this text, although they were being experimented with by this time (see Objects 6 and 7).

The background of the slide is a solid purple color with a repeating, intricate floral or scrollwork pattern in a slightly darker shade of purple. The pattern consists of swirling, leaf-like shapes that create a dense, textured effect.

# Experiments with Vowels



## 6. [Bible. O.T. Pentateuch. Hebrew] Hamishah humshe Torah

[Bologna: Abraham ben Hayyim for  
Joseph ben Abraham Caravida, 26 Jan. 1482]  
Incun 482p

### WHO WORKED ON THIS VOLUME?

The printer of this volume was Abraham ben Hayyim de Tintori of Pesaro, or “Abraham the Dyer.” He had previously worked at a press in Ferrara, achieving the status of master and setting up his own press in 1477. He completed printing one book begun by Abraham Conat, the printer of *Nofet Tsufim* (see Object 2). He seems to have disappeared that year, only to reappear in 1482 at the Bologna press of Joseph Caravida, and to the delight of Joseph Hayyim ben Aaron, who would serve as his editor.

### WHY THIS BOOK IS IMPORTANT?

This was the first effort at printing the Hebrew Pentateuch (the Five Books of Moses, often referred to simply as “the Bible”) and the first experiment with vowels and accents in Hebrew biblical text. This was a tall order, as the composition on the page was a challenge, given the traditional requirements for content and arrangement. But Joseph Hayyim (the editor) was proud of the outcome, partially paraphrasing Isaiah, “he who will purchase of these volumes will be pleased, and he who will study diligently of them will be blessed with progeny and length of days.”

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THE TEXT ITSELF

Unlike the Torah, the manuscript scroll Jews use for liturgical purposes, printed Bibles are used for study and may employ vowels and other markings. The Bible page consists of a central section of biblical text, along with commentary at top and bottom written by Rashi, Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes, a medieval French rabbi (1040-1105). The column on the side is the Targum Onkelos, an explanation of the biblical text in Aramaic. While Aramaic had not been read or spoken among ordinary Jews for about a thousand years

Continued...

by the time this Bible was printed, the continuing presence of the Targum in the Bible reflects two things about the maintenance of tradition: (1) In antiquity, Aramaic had been the common language of a Jewish people whose population lacked formal education in Hebrew, which had become a language of study; the Targum was an explanation in the spoken language of the portion of the Hebrew Torah that was read aloud each week. (2) There are Talmudic (i.e., authoritative rabbinic) requirements to study the Targum, so this tradition will likely remain, even if few are able to observe it.

### **A NOTE ON THE DIFFICULTY OF PRINTING**

Now that you know what's on the page, look more closely. You may notice that not every vowel (small mark on the line below letters) is centered beneath a letter. Look at the Targum (that vertical column of text on the outside of each page). At the end of many lines, reading right to left, the printer has inserted a single letter to fill what would have been a gap at the left end of the line, and what would have created a jagged margin instead of a neat, justified margin. That single letter is always the first letter of the first word of the next line. It's a neat visual trick, but it's a little disconcerting for the reader. This problem derives from not being able to alter the spacing across each line of print because each piece of type is the same width. Our next printer will resolve both of these problems... (see Object 7).

### **IF YOU READ HEBREW**

What passage of the Bible is this book opened to?

### **IF YOU DON'T READ HEBREW**

A brief (and fun) slide show [here](#) will help you decipher the Hebrew text.

The background of the slide is a solid purple color with a repeating, intricate floral or scrollwork pattern in a slightly darker shade of purple. The pattern consists of swirling, leaf-like shapes that create a dense, textured effect.

# Technical Refinements





## 7. [Bible. O.T. Pentateuch. Hebrew] Hamishah humshe Torah

David ben Joseph ben Yachya, ed.  
[Lisbon: Joseph Chalfon for Rabbi Eliezer Toledano  
8 July–6 Aug. 1491]  
Incun 491p

### WHO, WHEN, AND WHERE

This dramatic Bible was printed in Lisbon by Eliezer Toledano in 1491, the same year that another Pentateuch with vowels and accents was printed—in Naples—by the peripatetic Joshua Solomon Soncino (see Objects 3, 4 and 5 for The Rosenbach's Soncino imprints). Printing had its start much later in Portugal than in Italy, beginning in 1487 in the town of Faro, with the first Hebrew press; non-Jewish printing in Portugal began even later, in 1495.

### MATERIALS

Like the Bologna Pentateuch (see Object 6), this Bible is printed on vellum, the skin of a sheep, calf, or goat. It is enclosed in its original box binding, one of only six bindings of this type still extant in the world. This binding was peculiar to the area around Lisbon and was quite practical: it both helped to restrain the naturally springy vellum pages from expanding beyond the desired shape of a closed book, and—with the aid of now-missing straps—it would have kept out dust, insects, and other vermin that are harmful to the health of a book. The leather of the box binding is tooled in a decorative pattern reminiscent of Islamic carpets (see Object 8 for more discussion), reflecting an integration of visual cultures in this city in the period.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THE TEXT ITSELF

The organization of text on the pages of this book is the same as that in the Bologna Pentateuch of 1482, but the printer has made some changes in order to justify the columns properly and to locate the vowels and other markings properly in relationship to the letters. Look carefully at the width of each letter in the main section of text in the center of the page

*Continued...*



and in the column of text on the edge of each page (the Targum). Can you see that some letters are much wider than others? This is the solution to justifying the margins with ease, as any line can be given a custom width by adjusting the width of its letters. This practice looks back at the manuscript tradition, in which scribes regularly adjusted the width of letters to fit the width of the line they need to complete. Vowels and accents are also in their correct places. Although we don't know exactly why this is so in this volume and not so in the Bologna Pentateuch, clues in both texts help us make an educated guess that it has to do with how pieces of metal type are made and how they are placed into a form prior to printing. Both changes naturally added great expense for the printing of this volume, so much so that the printer noted in the colophon that his book rivaled the Temple itself in both beauty and cost.

The background of the slide is a solid purple color with a repeating, intricate floral or scrollwork pattern in a slightly darker shade of purple. The pattern consists of swirling, leaf-like shapes that create a dense, textured effect.

# Concurrent Tradition





## 8. [Bible. O.T. Hebrew]

Torah: manuscript on vellum, Lisbon, [1496]  
 Lewis O 140. Gift of John Frederick Lewis  
 Rare Book Department, The Free Library of Philadelphia

It is worthwhile to note as we end this section on early Hebrew printing that there remained a contemporaneous manuscript tradition throughout the period of the printed books we've addressed, both in Italy and in the Iberian Peninsula. This volume, a manuscript Bible, was completed five years after the previous Bible was printed in 1491. The Spanish and Portuguese royal families were joined in marriage in late 1496; following the Spanish example, Jews would be expelled from Portugal in early 1497, right after the completion of this book. Scholars point to the eclectic nature of the book's writing and decoration as a reflection of the tumultuous nature of this period and the state of movement among Jews. The book's later life mirrored the next episode of dispersion. As Jews moved to the Ottoman Empire—their new home in the diaspora—the book moved with them to Istanbul, ending up somehow in the collection of the Turkish Sultan. In 1840, there was another blood libel, this time in Damascus. Philanthropist Moses Montefiore and his bibliophilic secretary Louis Loewe tried to resolve the tragedy. Buying the Bible at "full price" (according to a note written in the book itself) from the Sultan's collection, they encouraged him to declare the blood libel false, saving the lives of the Jews of Damascus.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THE TEXT ITSELF

This volume looks backward to an earlier tradition of Masoretic Bibles, those with annotations written in micrographic script that were meant to stabilize the transmission of the text over time. The earliest surviving fragments of such texts date to the 11th century, but examples such as this one take micrography to a high level of artistry. If you look at the left-hand page you will see the interlaced swirling lines at the top and bottom. These are

*Continued...*

lines of text in micrography that are written on the opposite side of this vellum leaf. You cannot read the text—and probably could not easily even if you do read Hebrew, as it is so small—but you can see the unique designs created with language in these manuscripts. This book takes all of its decoration to the highest level, with designs inspired by Islamic art, even some taken from Spanish Qur’ans, such as the one shown here known as a “carpet page.” The tooling of the leather on the box binding of the Lisbon Pentateuch (see Object 7) is graphically similar to this carpet design. You may also want to look at the large letters that surround the carpet-like decoration. Notice that the widths of similar letters are not the same. This is one example of the manuscript tradition noted in Object 7 with respect to varied widths of printed letters.

*... to sing Davids Hebrew songs in english words ...:*

## LOST TRIBES AND CONVERTS IN THE NEW WORLD





## ... to sing Davids Hebrew songs in english words ... LOST TRIBES AND CONVERTS IN THE NEW WORLD

When James Oglethorpe, the first English settler in America, wrote his account of the first voyage to Georgia, he mentioned the "lost tribes" of Israel. He wrote that he had seen "many of the children of Israel" and that they were "very good people" and "very religious". He also mentioned that they were "very good people" and "very religious".

The "lost tribes" were one of the great mysteries of the world. For centuries, people had been searching for them. Some believed that they were still in the Americas, while others believed that they had migrated to other parts of the world. The search for the "lost tribes" was a major part of the exploration and settlement of the New World.

England had established its first colony in America in 1607. The colony was founded by a group of English settlers who had been searching for the "lost tribes" of Israel. They believed that the "lost tribes" were still in the Americas, and they wanted to find them. The search for the "lost tribes" was a major part of the exploration and settlement of the New World.

On the other side of the Atlantic, the English had established a colony in the West Indies. The colony was founded by a group of English settlers who had been searching for the "lost tribes" of Israel. They believed that the "lost tribes" were still in the Americas, and they wanted to find them. The search for the "lost tribes" was a major part of the exploration and settlement of the New World.

With the "lost tribes" of Israel, the English had found a new source of labor. The "lost tribes" were a group of people who had been searching for the "lost tribes" of Israel. They believed that the "lost tribes" were still in the Americas, and they wanted to find them. The search for the "lost tribes" was a major part of the exploration and settlement of the New World.

With these words the translators of the Bay Psalm Book (Object 9), the first book printed in America in 1640, would describe their mission. Throughout the previous century, Christian printers had produced Jewish books for an audience that included Christian Hebraists. In the 17th century, many devout Christians continued to find the basis for their own faith in Jewish texts. Yet, their relationship with the Jewish people themselves was complicated and made more so by the colonization and exploration of the New World.

Dr. Rosenbach was one of the great collectors of early American Judaica and its first bibliographer. His tenure as president of the American Jewish Historical Society (1921-1948) resulted in a donation to that institution from his collection of books and pamphlets from prior to 1850 that were written by or about American Jews. The objects that remain here are essential “Jewish firsts” of the American Jewish experience. These books from the mid-17th and early-18th centuries tell us the interwoven tales of colorful personalities of the period, both Jewish and Christian, and their often symbiotic religious and political goals on both sides of the Atlantic. Two Jewish figures are central to these stories: Menasseh ben Israel and Judah Monis.

England had expelled its Jews in 1290. Although individual Jews—mostly merchants and physicians—had found their way back into the country, there was no movement to readmit them as a population until 1650 when Amsterdam rabbi and printer, Menasseh ben Israel pled with Oliver Cromwell for their return. An earlier story on which his plea depended—the purported discovery of the Lost Tribes of Israel in the New World—created a sense of urgency to fulfill a Jewish messianic prophecy to disperse the Jewish people to all nations to bring forth the Messiah. Menasseh’s writings, in turn, spurred on the Millenarian inclinations of some English Puritans, who were eager to convert Jews to create the conditions for the End of Days. Menasseh would see his messianic goals subverted by the drive for conversion—particularly of indigenous people in America—and he would die before personally partaking of the Jews’ gradual return to England.

On the other side of the Atlantic, New England Puritans envisioned themselves as the new Chosen People whose exodus and wanderings had led them to a New Jerusalem. They were spiritually driven to know the roots of their faith as Jews themselves did, and also to bring Jews into the faith through conversion. Like Menasseh ben Israel, Judah Monis desired to go where Jews were

*Continued...*

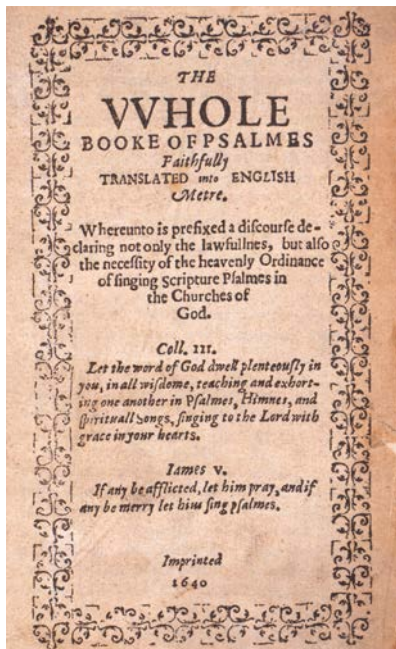
scarce. Descended from a family of forced converts under the Portuguese Inquisition, he was living in New York among other Jews when he decided to move to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where there were almost none. In 1720, he became the first Jew to receive a degree from Harvard University. As part of his academic work, he produced a Hebrew grammar, which Harvard intended for the instruction of its students for biblical study in the original. But Harvard faculty were required to be Christians. Monis's private conversion was deemed inadequate, so a public spectacle was held, complete with published documentation of his new beliefs. Although Monis's life at Harvard was controversial, Hebrew remained in the curriculum from his day forward.

With so few "real" Jews in England and its New World colonies, these books address them almost as myths and as means to religious ends. When the real Menasseh ben Israel and Judah Monis tried to exert some agency on behalf of themselves or their people, they found themselves acting alone in the much larger religious dramas playing out around them.



# Jews in the New World





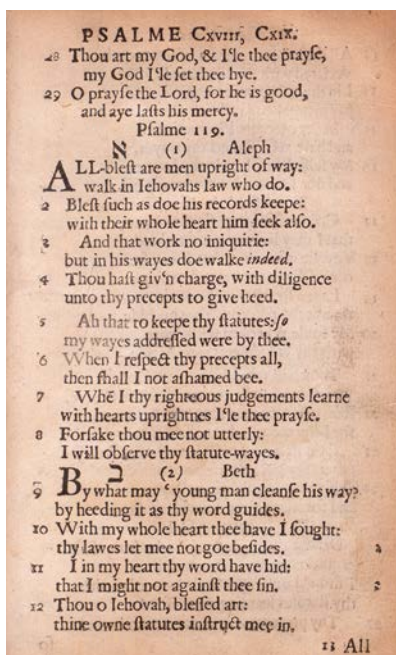
## 9. The whole booke of Psalmes, faithfully translated in to English metre ...

[Cambridge, Mass.]: Imprinted [by Stephen Day]  
1640. A 640w

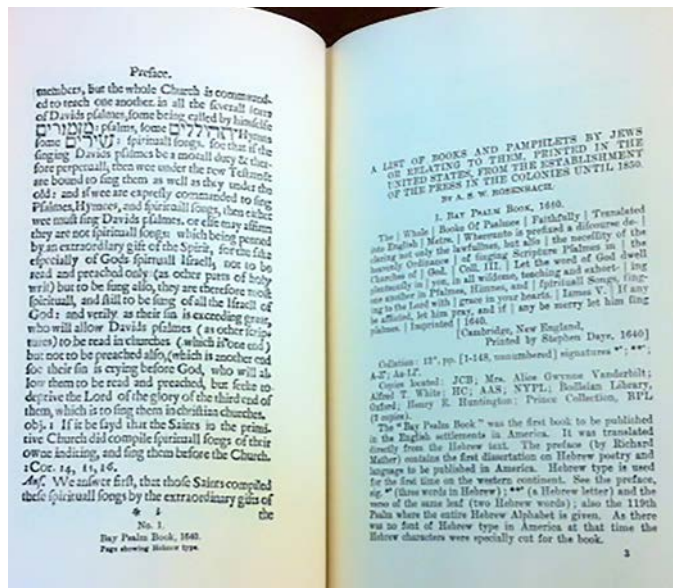
Commonly called the Bay Psalm Book, this volume is the first book printed in what is now the United States. The Puritan theologians (including John Eliot, a missionary and linguist, whom we'll meet again in this section) who undertook this translation of the Psalms into English were educated in England's great universities, where they'd learned Hebrew. They believed that it was as much an obligation for observers of the New Testament to sing these spiritual songs as it was for those of the Old (see Object 10) and to do so as closely to the original language as possible.

Fittingly, this is also the first book printed in what is now the United States to contain Hebrew fonts. In a speech in 1947, Dr. Rosenbach reported that the fonts were most likely carved in wood here rather than cast in lead and brought with the press from England as the other fonts were. It was clearly important to have these letters, even for the limited uses selected for this book, which included an alphabetic acrostic, shown here, and several individual words in the introduction (see Object 10).

There were no Jews physically living in America at this time and none living openly in England. Yet, the ideas of Judaism and Jews in America seemed not far from the minds of theologians in both locations. Was it due to the search for the spiritual roots of Christianity, as we saw with earlier Christian Hebraists and now with the translators of the Bay Psalm Book? Or was there another role that Jews themselves would play?







## 10. A.S.W. Rosenbach, An American Jewish Bibliography

Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society 30  
1926. Ref

Prior to the donation of his own collection of Early American Judaica to the American Jewish Historical Society, Dr. A.S.W. Rosenbach had undertaken a significant scholarly work, the first bibliography of this subject matter ever completed for works from 1640 to 1850. As you can see here, he began with the Bay Psalm Book, convinced that the use of Hebrew fonts and strict adherence to the original Hebrew kept it within the scope of his work on Judaica. He remained true to form by including other works that commented on Jews, as well as including books by Jews.

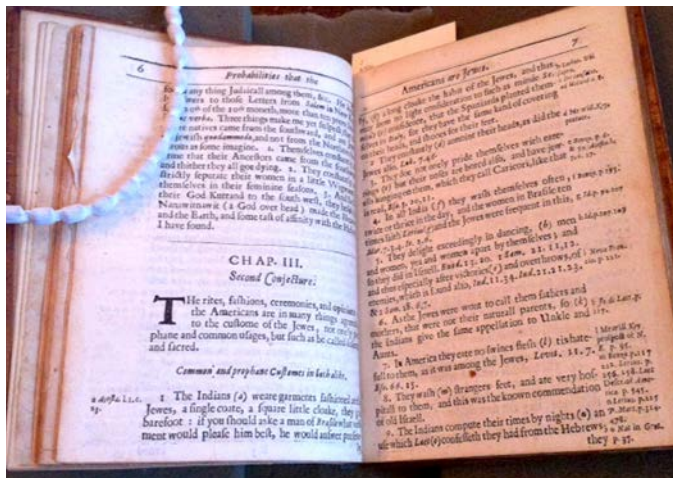
Note the words in Hebrew on this page duplicated from the Bay Psalm Book's introduction. Also, on the right-hand page, there is a list of locations of the extant copies of the book. Dr. Rosenbach listed books in his own collection under the abbreviation "ASWR." That abbreviation does not appear here, as this book was published in 1926, seven years before he would purchase his own, as-of-yet-undiscovered copy of the Bay Psalm Book. Thus, only ten copies are listed here.

Although two imprints (a document and an almanac) preceded the Bay Psalm Book on the first printing press, neither survives. 1700 copies were printed and used here or sent back to England, but only 11 survive today. Of those few, only five, including The Rosenbach's, still maintain their original bindings.



# Native Americans and the Lost Tribes of Israel





## 14. Thomas Thorowgood *Jewes in America, or, probabilities that the Americans are of that race*

London: Printed by W.H. for Tho. Slater  
1650. J 650t

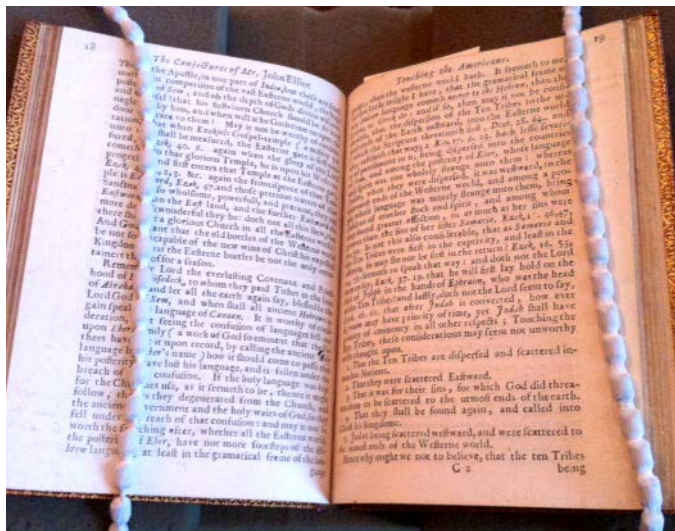
In the same year that Menasseh ben Israel first published his *Hope of Israel*, British theologian Thomas Thorowgood published his own theories that Native Americans were descended from the Lost Tribes of Israel. Although Spanish explorers had reported as early as the 16th century that native peoples of the Americas appeared and behaved in ways similar to Jews, they had never asserted their descent from Jews themselves. Here Thorowgood lists the cultural similarities between Indians and Jews as one of the proofs of his theory.

After the proofs, he highlights the desirability for spreading the gospel to the Indians/Jews to bring about the End of Days, summarizing:

*From the Jewes our faith began,  
To the Gentiles then it ran,  
To the Jewes returne it shall,  
Before the dredfull end of all.*

The final section recounts the story of Antonio de Montezinos (see Objects 11 and 12) that Menasseh ben Israel had used to introduce an eye-witness account of the fact that Jews were already living in the Americas.





## 15. Thomas Thorowgood

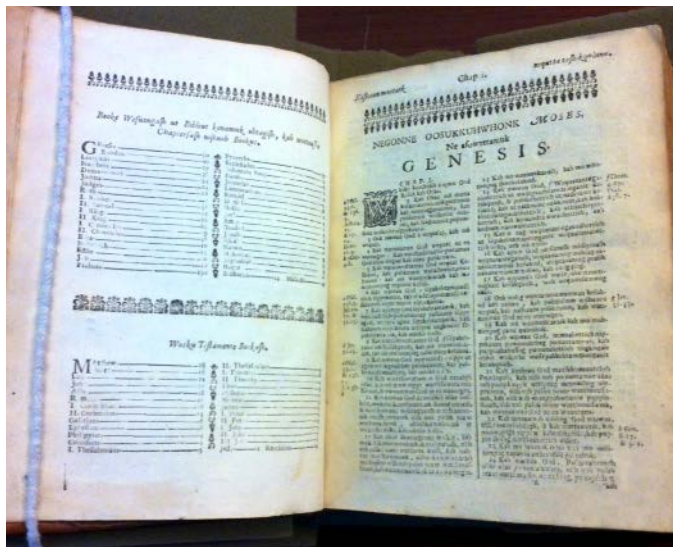
### *Jews in America, or probabilities that those Indians are Judaical ...*

London: Printed for Henry Brome  
1660. J 660t

After Thorowgood's first publication, others came out on both sides of his Indians-are-Jews proposition, causing him to issue another book ten years later with even stronger proofs on behalf of his cause. And who better to bolster his opinion than the theologian, linguist, and "apostle to the Indians of America," John Eliot, one of the translators of the Bay Psalm Book (see Object 9)? Eliot contributed an essay outlining how Native American language was surely derived from Hebrew by tracing the linguistic development of Native American language from Hebrew since antiquity. If the native population could be identified as simultaneously Jewish, this was further proof that Eliot's efforts at conversion were worthwhile and worth funding, a constant effort for him.

Three years after the appearance of this publication, Eliot would write in his personal correspondence that making Hebrew a universal language would aid in the spread of Christianity. His other projects—his *Indian Bible* (see Object 16) and *Indian Grammar* (see Object 17)—were surely a focus of his conversion efforts, but it seems that he continued to have Hebrew on his mind (see Object 17), albeit not as fervently as it was on Thorowgood's.





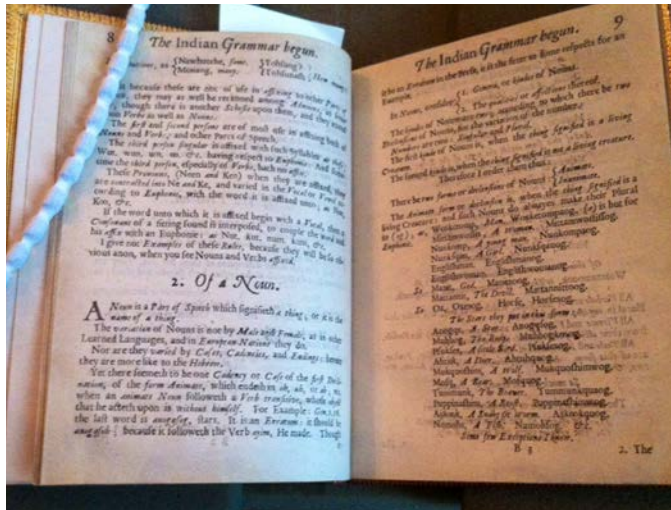
## 16. [Bible. Massachusetts] *Mamusse wunneetupanatamwe up-biblum God ...*

Cambridge, Mass.: Printeuoop nashpe Samuel Green kah  
Marmaduke Johnson  
1663-1661

In an effort that took John Eliot and his indigenous assistants fourteen years to translate, the first Bible to be printed in America was ready for the press—a press that needed new typefaces brought from England with extra Ks and Os used in the transcription of the Massachusett language. The New Testament was published separately first, followed by the complete Bible with a psalter two years later.

Additional books in Native American languages were printed during the end of the 17th century, but the question arose as to whether it was as effective to preach to the Native Americans in their own language, or to teach them English instead.

Parliament had established The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England to fund religious activities such as Eliot's work, but he had to work consistently to prove the efficacy of his efforts, and to compete with Harvard College for the proceeds of this fund. Harvard had begun an Indian College intended both to convert and to educate young Native Americans.



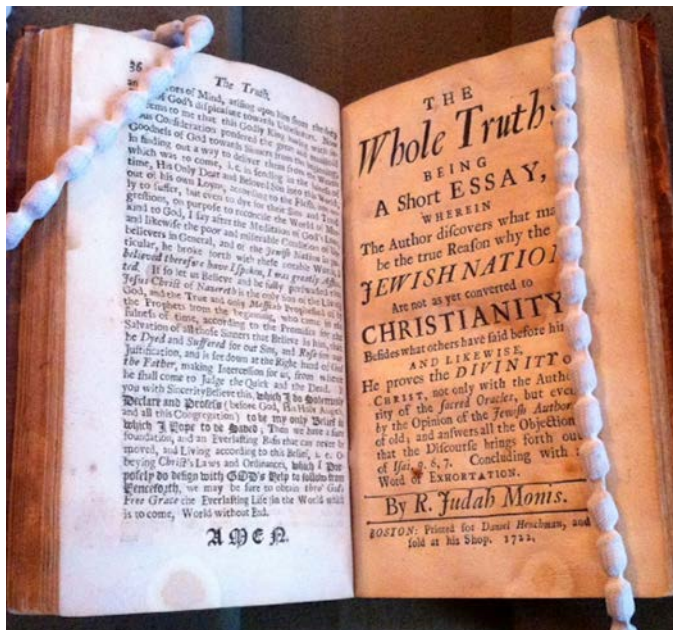
## 17. John Eliot (1604-1690), *The Indian grammar begun ...*

Cambridge, [Mass.]: Printed by Marmaduke Johnson  
1666. A 666i

Eliot worked with the printer of his Bible to produce this Indian Grammar, which describes the Massachusett language for other speakers of English, presumably other missionaries who would work to convert the Native Americans. On the left-hand page, where he begins his discussion of nouns, he notes that the Massachusett noun does not vary as those in other "learned languages" and "European Nations" by gender, case, or ending, making it more like Hebrew in his estimation.



# Judah Monis and Hebrew at Harvard

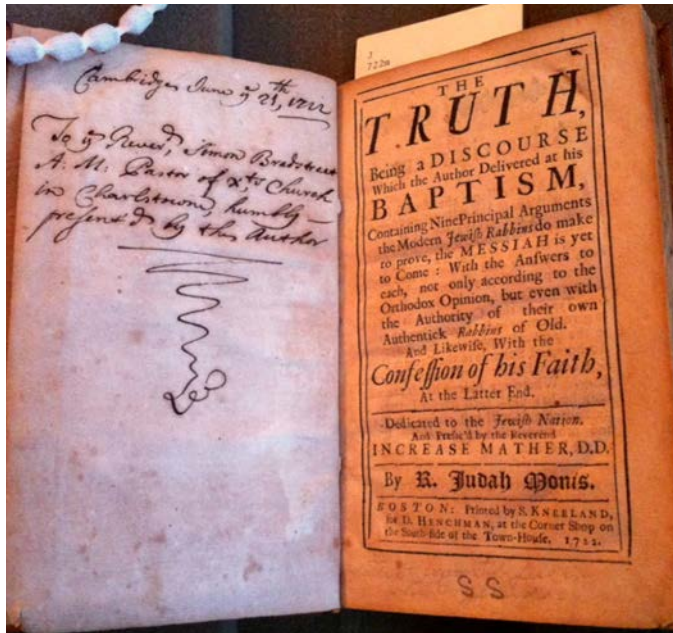


## 18. Benjamin Coleman (1643-1747) A discourse had in the College-hall at Cambridge ...

Boston: Printed [by S. Kneeland] for Daniel Henchman  
1722. J 722c

This volume records the events of the baptism of Judah Monis, including the speeches given by Benjamin Coleman, Harvard graduate and influential and highly important early Boston minister, and by Monis himself. The speech delivered by Monis, titled *The Truth*, which outlines his newfound belief in Christ, is bound together here with two additional discourses published afterward, *The Whole Truth*, and *Nothing But the Truth*, which also defend his new faith based on biblical principles.

The volume contains introductory material provided by an elderly Increase Mather (1639-1723), the Puritan minister perhaps most famous today for his involvement in the Salem witch trials, but also a president of Harvard College and highly influential author, speaker, and political force of his time. Less than a year before his death, Mather must have taken some solace in Monis's conversion, not having achieved what he had argued earlier in his life, that the "national conversion" of the Jews was both possible and not far off.



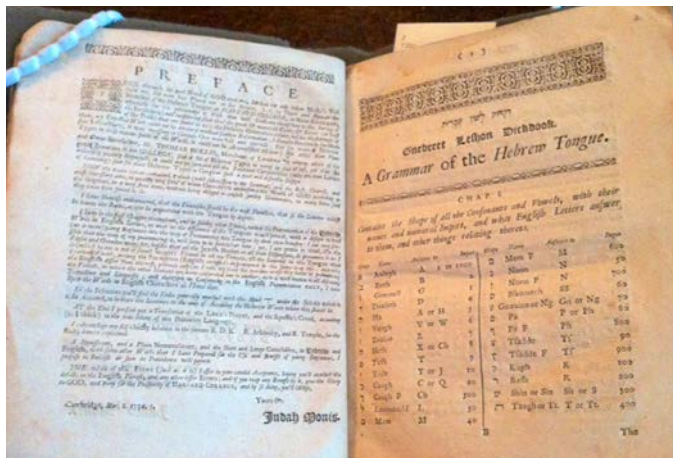
## 19. Judah Monis (1680?-1761?) *The truth, being a discourse ...*

Boston: Printed by S. Kneeland for D. Henchman  
1722. J 722m

Another copy of the speech delivered by Monis at his public baptism and the two pamphlets that followed, these publications were available in different combinations, both with and without the introductory material. This edition is signed and dated by the author, Monis himself, and dedicated to Reverend Simon Bradstreet of Charlestown.

The public baptism of Monis was his second, the first having taken place in private. An outcry among Harvard faculty, particularly that Monis was observing the Sabbath on Saturdays, was the cause for the second, public ceremony. It is reported that even after the public baptism Monis was seen observing Sabbath on Saturdays.



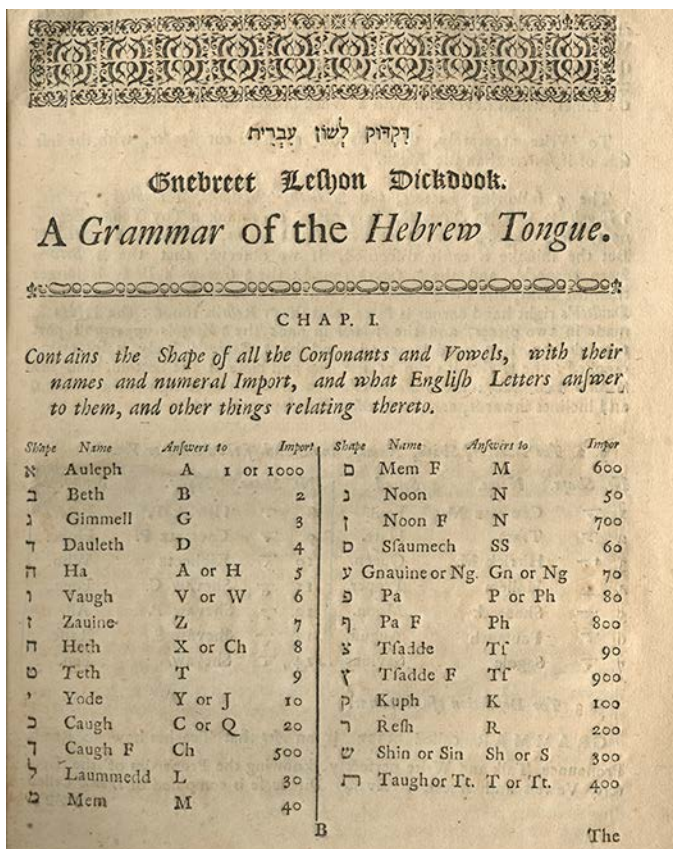


## 20. Judah Monis (1680?-1761?) ... A grammar of the Hebrew tongue ...

Boston: Printed by Jonas Green  
1735. J 735m

Judah Monis, the descendant of Portuguese *conversos* and a practicing Jew, received the first college degree granted to a Jew in America from Harvard University. He developed his Hebrew grammar to assist students at Harvard, who were required to study religious texts in the original language, but who had no formal way of learning Hebrew. In 1722, Harvard enlisted Monis to instruct classes in the Hebrew language, but Harvard faculty were required to be Christians.

His conversion prior to his appointment drew much criticism; Jews were skeptical and Christians were suspicious. The resulting public baptism, accompanied by public lectures on his new-found faith, never put the controversy to rest. Monis's grammar, at first hand-copied by his students, was finally printed in 1735. He taught at Harvard until 1760 and died four years later. His tombstone identifies him as "Rabbi Judah Monis," and refers in scripture to his origin as a Jew, but also to his conversion. Harvard continued to teach Hebrew after Monis's departure.



*I am again going beyond the ocean—to Philadelphia....  
I must learn the ways of the world:*

THE GRATZ FAMILY,  
AT HOME IN AMERICA



...manuscript of ...  
during the War of 1812



HYMAN GRATZ

- joined brother Simon in an orphanage, then turned his attention to the insurance business
- Director of the Pennsylvania Company for Insurance
- Served on the Executive and as Treasurer of the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts
- Treasurer of Congregation Mikveh Israel, 1840-1845
- Managed Jewish Publication Society of America
- Left a fund of \$100,000 that founded Gratz College

- Secretary of the Jewish Association for the Relief of Women and Children in Reduced Circumstances
- Instrumental in founding Philadelphia Orphan Asylum
- Served Mikveh Israel school and female Hebrew Benevolent Society
- Administered foundation of a Jewish Foster-home and was instrumental in its establishment, as well as the Fuel Society and the Young Society



SOLOMON MOSES  
(1774-1825)

- (1787-1848)
- Secretary of Congregation Mikveh Israel
- Served on board of directors of Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb
- Elected to the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry, serving in the War of 1812



MARIA CECIL  
GIST GRATZ  
(1797-1841)

...manuscript of ...  
during the War of 1812



In 1759, Michael Gratz (1740–1811) wrote wistfully to his family in Prussian Upper Silesia as he left London to join his older brother in Philadelphia. Awaiting him in Silesia would have been an arranged marriage, a life of study, and an historical pattern of government restrictions. He had already traveled the world on merchant ships and wanted more. Constantly shifting English laws regulating Jewish employment made his decision to leave London even simpler. America seemed wide open. A few Jews had already established themselves as merchants in Philadelphia, banding together in trade networks with those in other port cities such as New York and Newport. They would succeed together because experience proved they would otherwise be labeled with each other's failures. But, despite their limited numbers (in 1776, there were about 1,000 Jews out of about 2.5 million people in America—that's .04%), in areas where they did settle, they were treated relatively well. Some of their neighbors found them suspicious—and made it known—but their contributions were necessary in a young and growing America that already valued character and individual achievement.

After his arrival, Gratz quickly moved from apprentice to a New York- and Philadelphia-based Jewish merchant to his brother Barnard's partner in a trade business called B. and M. Gratz. He bought a ship for coastal and Caribbean trade. Their business grew, but times were changing around them. In response to the Stamp Act, both brothers signed Philadelphia's Non-Importation Agreement of 1765. The pressures on coastal trade in the early 1770s may have led them to expand their land dealings on the frontier. An historic opportunity to create partnerships with influential non-Jews and own vast tracts of wealth-creating land, the Gratzes' real estate enterprise brought them what Jews in earlier times could not have imagined: belonging and ownership within the larger culture.

During the Revolution, Gratz's attentions were divided: family, faith, nation, and business. In 1769, he had married Miriam Simon, one of early Lancaster settler Joseph Simon's daughters, and they had a growing family. He was one of the leaders of Philadelphia's Jewish community; having helped bring together ritual objects and organize the congregation, he was instrumental in seeing Congregation Mikveh Israel build its first synagogue when Jewish refugees from other cities occupied by the British fled to Philadelphia during the war. During Philadelphia's occupation, Gratz worked overland supply routes, outfitted his ship as a blockade-runner, and became a privateer for the patriot cause. He also supplied the American troops. He and Barnard struggled to keep their businesses going.

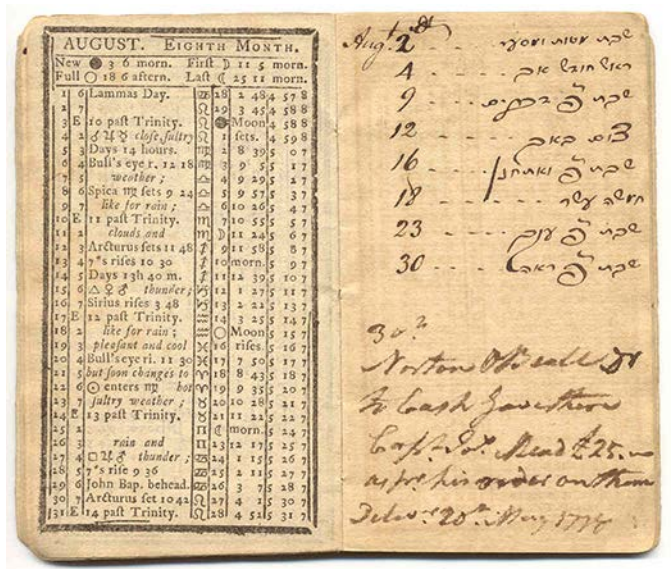
After the war, while Jews still had to ask their government for full participation in civic life, they had certainly found themselves more at home in the American diaspora than in those that had preceded it. While Michael Gratz came to Philadelphia to learn the

*Continued...*

ways of the world, he did not leave his Jewish world behind. The objects in this section speak to the balance between history and future as seen in Gratz's strategic observance of his faith even on the frontier of a new country he helped found. The objects of the gracious life his wealth helped him bestow on his family and their acts of philanthropy and public service show a desire to become part of a society that had accepted their people as none other had. The Gratz family experienced a life in their new world where they could both express their ancient Judaism and embrace their new Americanism.

The Rosenbachs were related to the Gratz family through Aaron Levy, their maternal great-great uncle, who was childless and adopted Michael's son, Simon, as the heir to his estate. This was a legal means to resolving his estate and business matters. While the Rosenbach brothers collected Gratz family materials during their lifetimes out of family interest—and concurrent interest in American history—it was also an interest of the descendants of the Gratz family to see their belongings preserved here once the brothers had designated The Rosenbach as a museum and library in their wills. The Rosenbach continues to collect Gratz family artifacts, many of which still come as donations from Gratz descendants.





## 21. Poor Will's pocket almanac for the year 1777 (Michael Gratz's copy)

Philadelphia: J. Cruikshank  
1776  
A 776po

One of four pocket-sized almanacs still being printed during the lean years of the American Revolution, this diminutive version of a standard American almanac provided its numerous readers with necessary information for civic life, from weather and the times of tides to interest rates and the dates of courts and fairs. As a merchant, Michael Gratz needed this simple guide to local knowledge. It also served as a diary with its interleaved, blank pages. Gratz filled those pages with a Jewish calendar, inscribing one page of Hebrew text opposite each page of the printed, secular calendar. By doing so, he transformed this object into an expression of his simultaneous identity as an American and a Jew.

Gratz's older brother Barnard noted in a letter (see next page) to his son-in-law, who had relocated to Baltimore, which was without a Jewish community, "I have an allmonock for you & put all the Hebrew feast and fasts in it which shall send you by first safe oppt'y." This letter suggests that transforming American almanacs was a practice that enabled the Gratzes to connect spiritually to the larger Jewish community even when they themselves were not living among their co-religionists. This 1777 *Poor Will's* is the only extant example of an almanac transformed by the Gratz family into a Hebrew calendar.

The image to the left is the heavy, embossed Dutch paper used as the cover of this almanac. Pocket almanacs were the only almanacs in the period to receive covers from their printers, as they were meant to be carried and therefore needed protection.



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Dr. Solley

Philad. Feb. 4. 1795

I have to acknowledge the Rec<sup>t</sup>. of your 2 letters, of the 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> of Jan<sup>y</sup>. The contents of both I duly note & am much surprised, you saying you was expected a letter by Mr. Willmors, when I wrote you by post the day before he left this, it was put in the post office, on Friday the 23. Janu. last where in I acquainted you of the whole bargain of Michael with Duwall as you desired in your letter to me of the 15. ulto, of which letter you never took notice of if you see it or not, should be sorry if that letter was lost. I last night rec<sup>d</sup>. a letter from Michael dated Brunswick last Friday, so that he could not get to New York untill Sunday, when from a friend he will not be able to be home this week. Therefore should Mr. Duwall arrive at Baltimore this week let him be glad to him & persuade him to stay there till Michael gets there as he certainly will be there in the course of next week am happy to hear that you are happily situated & moved in your New house on which occasion I sincerely Congratulate you & wish all. Health happiness & Prosperity am glad to hear that you have some thing to eat, as Mr. Swanberg pitted you of not having anything to eat but Butter am sorry to find it is not convenient for you to partake me with the Loan mentioned in my last as I would not wish to have it unless you could command the Spirit for a little while. Give my affectionate love to my Dr. Rachel & Children hoping you & them all can enjoy Health in which Mariam & Children join. I have an Almanack for you & put all the Feasts & fasts in it which shall send you by first safe opp<sup>t</sup>. I am as usual Dr. Solley your aff<sup>ct</sup> friend  
Barnard G.

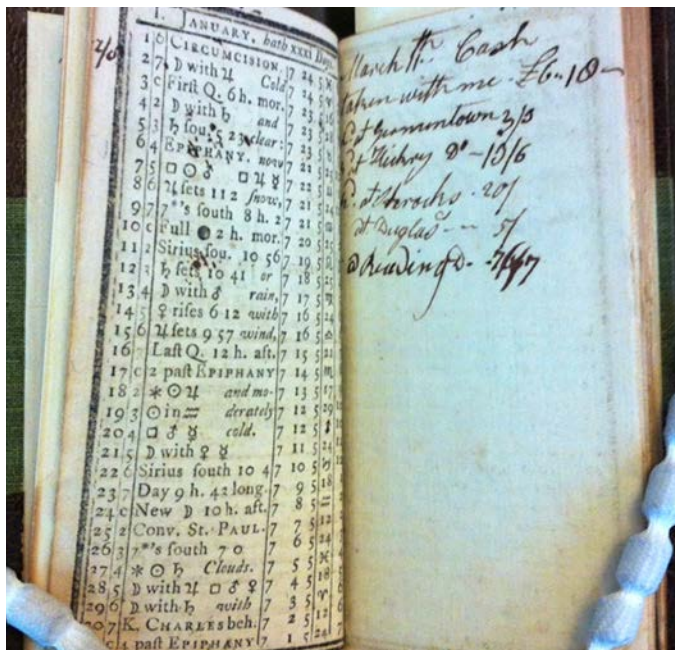
Barnard Gratz, Philadelphia, Autograph Letter Signed to Solomon Etting, Baltimore, 4 February 1795

Gratz Family (Philadelphia) papers; P-8; Box 1; Folder 3  
American Jewish Historical Society, Boston, MA and New York, NY





# Michael Gratz and the West



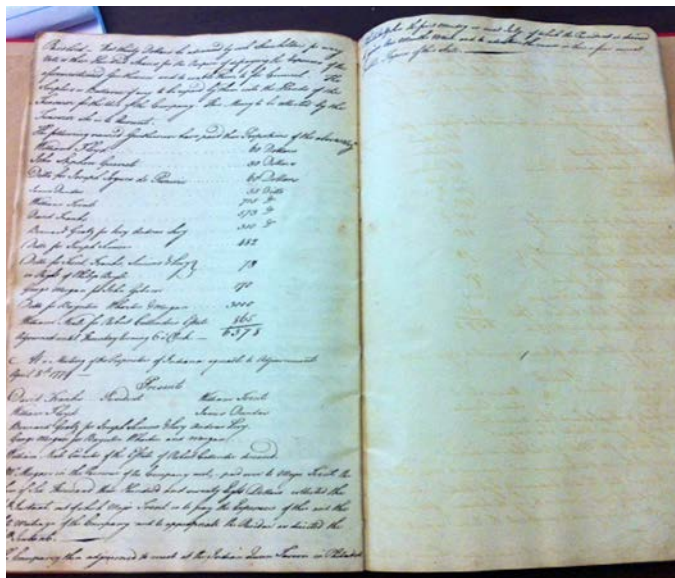
## 22. Mr. Weatherwise's pocket-almanac ... for 1762 (Michael Gratz's copy)

Philadelphia: W. Dunlap

1761

A 761m

This almanac was purchased in the second year after Michael Gratz's arrival in America. He wrote notes on only a few of its interleaved pages, all of them pertaining to funds he took with him or those he owed to others. Here he noted money given to him in Jonestown to purchase a lottery ticket upon his return to Philadelphia. Jonestown is just under 100 miles from Philadelphia and about 33 from Lancaster, where Joseph Simon, who arrived there around 1740 and was Gratz's future father-in-law, lived and worked in the lucrative fur trade. Gratz's trip to this frontier town may have been for that purpose, as well. Joseph Simon's home was a stopping-point for Jewish merchants, as he owned the ritual objects required for Sabbath and holidays and one could usually find a *minyán*, or quorum required for certain rituals, at Simon's home.



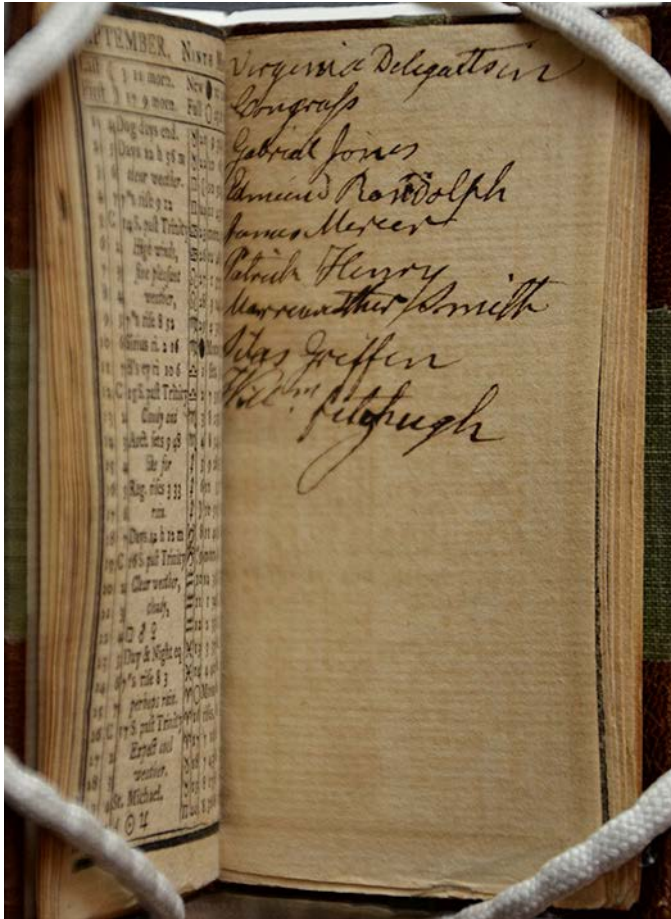
## 23. Indiana Company, Records

Philadelphia  
1775-1779  
AMs 1079/10

After the French and Indian War, groups of merchants who had lost goods during the war made claims to the British Crown for compensation. Through treaties with Native American tribes, those merchants, who called themselves the “suffering traders” and the “still suffering traders,” were given grants in the Ohio River valley—land that was proposed as a colony to be called Vandalia prior to the Revolution and, later, the state of Westsylvania. Virginia and Pennsylvania defeated these claims to the land and those earlier holdings now comprise parts of Kentucky, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

These minutes of the Indiana Company, which was the corporate name the “still suffering traders” took to claim some 2.5 million acres of land in return for losses suffered in 1763, show Barnard Gratz representing a number of individuals and entities including “Trent, Franks, Simons [sic] & Levy.” This group, which included his and Michael’s former employers, Levy and Franks, along with Michael’s father-in-law Joseph Simon and frontier trader William Trent, had already merged with a group representing Samuel Wharton, frontier trader George Croghan and others. Despite the large numbers of influential citizens holding lands through these companies, the states were more powerful after the Revolution and many landholders had to settle for smaller or no compensation.



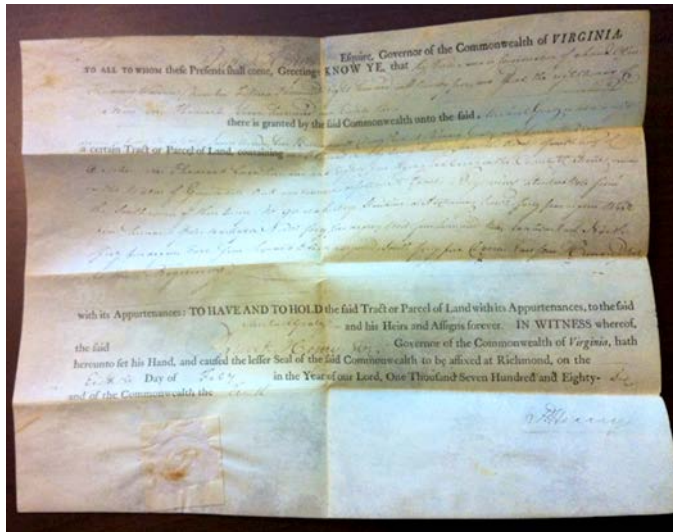


## 24. Poor Will's pocket almanac for the year 1779 (Michael Gratz's copy)

Philadelphia: J. Crukshank  
1778  
A 778po

This almanac is heavily annotated with notes of Michael Gratz's financial dealings for this year, particularly with respect to the land companies and their principal partners. On this page, Gratz listed the members of the Virginia Delegation to Congress, among whom were two future governors of the state, Patrick Henry and Edmund Randolph. He lobbied Virginia to cede its western claims to the land companies, whose competing claims had been granted by the British Crown and Native American tribes for losses in the French and Indian War. Congress delayed, pushing the dispute into the late 1780s.

Eventually, the states would void the pre-war conveyances, taking the lands for themselves. Suits brought on behalf of the Pennsylvania landholders against the Commonwealth of Virginia would find their way to the Supreme Court, proving to be among the interpretive framework for the Eleventh Amendment to the Constitution in *Hollingsworth v. Virginia*, 3 U.S. 378 (1798), which held that individuals from one state could not sue another state (Hollingsworth was a shareholder in the Indiana Company and a Pennsylvania resident).

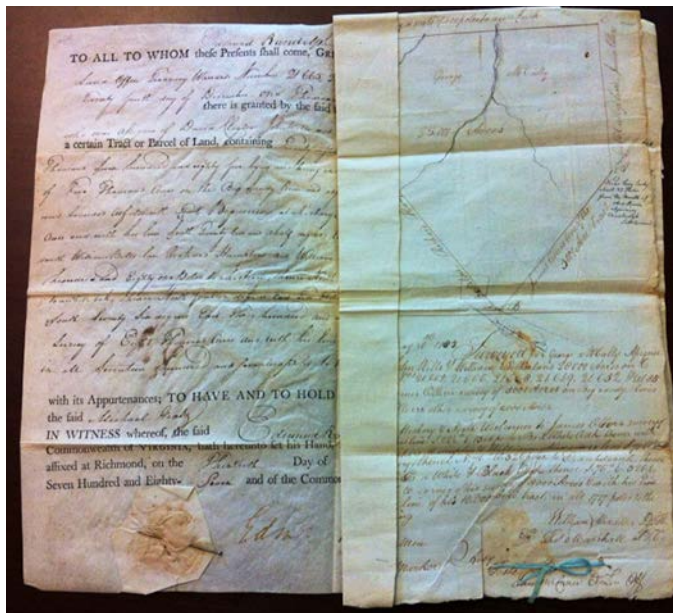


## 25. Virginia Governor (1784-86; Patrick Henry) Deed to Michael Gratz for land in Virginia

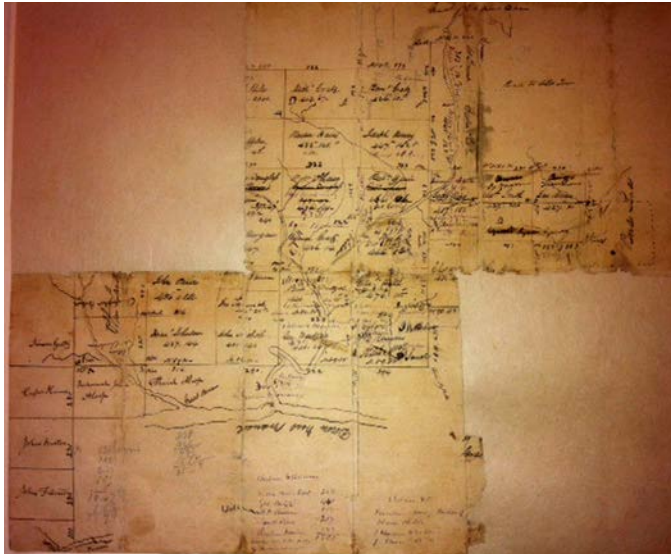
8 February 1786  
Gratz 01:49  
Gift of Mrs. Anderson Gratz

## 26. Virginia Governor (1786-88; Edmund Randolph) Deed to Michael Gratz conveying 28,000 acres in Fayette County

30 April 1787  
Gratz 01:50  
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Evan Randolph in memory of Francis Lewis Randolph



Although Michael Gratz would lose much of the land he held through the land companies referenced earlier, he still had many privately held tracts. These deeds were signed by two successive Virginia governors he'd previously and unsuccessfully petitioned on behalf of the land companies when the two men were in Congress. For the 1787 deed, it is traditionally reported that the grant was compensation for Gratz's outfitting George Rogers Clark's expedition against the Shawnees during the Revolution. This land is east of Lexington, Kentucky, today. Benjamin Gratz, Michael and Miriam Gratz's youngest son, moved to Lexington in 1819 in part to manage these lands and remained there until his death in 1884.



## 27. Gratz family, Plat of land owned by members of the Gratz family and others, [not after 1811]

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This informal and tattered map speaks in only a muted way to the significant role of land speculation in the business life of Michael Gratz and his brother Barnard from their arrival in America during the hostilities of the French and Indian War through their support of the Revolutionary cause. Sadly, the positive outcome of that conflict in which they were so invested as patriots would lead to financial losses for them and their fellow investors.

The large and reputable land-holding companies did not discriminate based on religion in their formation or their dissolution, but were intended to create mutual prosperity and the geographic expansion of the inchoate, independent United States. This plat of land in Centre County, Pennsylvania, along the west fork of the Susquehanna River, shows lots of land assigned to Gratz family members, including Michael and Barnard, as well as a number of Michael's sons, and many prominent Philadelphians, Jews and non-Jews alike.



The background is a solid dark red color with a subtle, repeating floral pattern. The pattern consists of stylized flowers and leaves in a slightly lighter shade of red, creating a textured effect.

# Aaron Levy and the Gratz Adoption



## 28. Peter Getz (1764-1809), tankard

Silver  
Lancaster, Pa.  
ca. 1790  
1954.1862

This striking tankard, while a traditional form for the 18th century, is also emblematic of the deep and lasting connection between the Gratz and Rosenbach families. It was originally owned by Aaron Levy (1742-1815), a merchant and land-speculating early (1760) Jewish immigrant to Pennsylvania, who was the first maternal ancestor (a great-great uncle) of the Rosenbach brothers to come to America. Levy and his wife Rachel had no children, but the law (then, as well as now) allows adoptions of adult children of living parents for the purpose of inheritance. Levy's fellow merchant and business associate, Michael Gratz, who, with his wife Miriam, had ten of twelve children survive to adulthood, offered Levy his son Simon as an heir. In Levy's will, many of his personal effects, including silver and prayer books, were distributed among the Gratz siblings, including the last surviving sibling, Benjamin, and thence to The Rosenbach through bequests from his descendants. This tankard, however, made its way through another branch of the Gratz family, where it was sought out in New Orleans by Philip Rosenbach and purchased, adding to the Levy/Gratz materials collected during the lifetimes of The Rosenbach's founders.

If you visit the first Jewish cemetery in Philadelphia (on Spruce Street, between 8th and 9th Streets), you will see that the Levy and Gratz families remain joined in eternity. The Gratz graves form a line from the back wall of the cemetery towards the front, along a walkway, beginning with parents Miriam and Michael and ending with Simon; directly behind Simon's grave are his adoptive parents, Rachel and Aaron Levy.





## 29. Portrait miniature of Rachel Phillips Levy

Unknown artist, watercolor on ivory with hair (case not original)  
1790-1800  
1954.1618

This miniature of Aaron Levy's wife Rachel was bequeathed in his will (written in 1802, although he didn't die until 1815 and his wife would predecease him) to his heir, Simon Gratz, stating, "my Miniature and the Miniature of my Wife, if she my said wife should not otherwise dispose of the Said Miniatures." Unlike Levy's full-sized portrait and the portraits of the Gratz family (see pages 81-92), this small portrait of Rachel Levy seems to have been collected during the Rosenbachs' lifetimes, although records of its acquisition have not been located. Note the lock of Rachel Levy's hair, which would have been arranged in a window in the back of the original frame as a memento of her for a loved one.



### 30. Joseph Thomas Vancouvenbergh, chocolate pot

Silver and wood  
Paris  
ca. 1775  
1970.0003  
Gift of Henrietta Gratz Clay

This pear-shaped chocolate pot—with a covered hole in its lid for a “muddler,” or long-handled spoon to keep the cocoa stirred—may have been purchased in France by Aaron Levy among other goods he bought for import. In this case, he may have saved this luxury item from destruction during the French Revolution when many such objects were confiscated. This pot was given by Levy to Benjamin Gratz, the youngest of the Gratz siblings, and it descended through his family, coming to The Rosenbach through a gift in 1970.



### 31. Spoons, sugar nip, mote spoon, and shagreen case

Unknown makers, silver and shark or ray skin  
Possibly England  
1730-1760  
2002.0233  
Gift of Henrietta Gratz Clay



This is an elegant silver tea set comprised of tea spoons (11 are extant), a nip for cutting sugar from a cone (the form in which sugar was shipped), and a mote spoon for skimming loose leaves with the perforated-bowl end and clearing clogs in the tea pot's strainer with the pointed end. Aaron Levy gave this set to Benjamin Gratz and it descended through his family and came to The Rosenbach in a 1970 bequest. Although it is possibly of English manufacture, the family noted its probable Dutch origin, most likely because Aaron Levy himself immigrated to America from Amsterdam.





# The Gratz Siblings





## 32. Shop sign of Hyman Gratz (1776-1857)

Unknown maker  
Painted tin  
Probably Philadelphia  
ca. 1820  
2005.0271

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Hyman Gratz joined with older brother Simon in taking over their father and uncle's merchant business and managed lands left to them by Michael Gratz and Aaron Levy. In 1818, Hyman began a solo effort in the insurance business, which became his lifelong profession. Both he and Simon were patrons of the arts, with Simon being one of the founders of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and Hyman its treasurer from 1841-1857. Treasurer of Congregation Mikveh Israel from 1824 until the year prior to his death, Hyman also set aside a deed of trust to form and maintain "a college for the education of Jews residing in the city and county of Philadelphia" and after the death of his last heir, Gratz College was founded.

This sign was probably acquired by the Rosenbach brothers, but has no documentation. Perhaps it originated in Hyman's insurance business.



### 33. [Siddur]

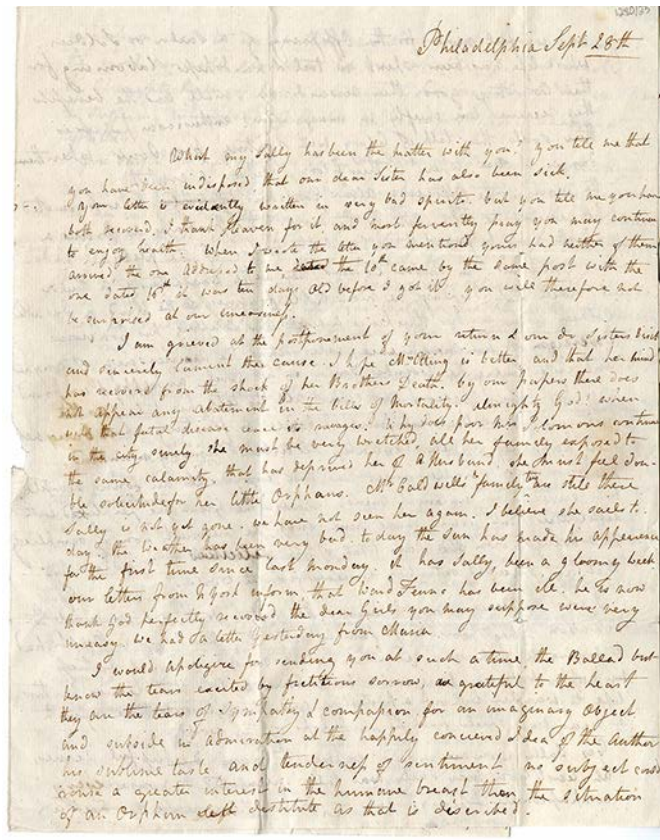
(belonging to Hyman Gratz)

[Amsterdam: House of Immanuel Benveniste, 1658]

J 660p

This *siddur*, or daily prayer book, belonging to Hyman Gratz, was published in Amsterdam by Immanuel Benveniste, a Jewish printer originally from Venice, who lived and worked at the same time as Menasseh ben Israel (see Objects 11, 12, and 13). It is bound together with a *mahzor*, an annual prayer book (see Object 4), which was also printed in Amsterdam, but by another printer and in 1715, and a *siddur* for use during fast days, also printed by Benveniste in 1658. The two components printed by Benveniste were originally part of a larger set of prayer books that came bound together for liturgical use throughout the year (Sabbaths, holidays, fasts, and readings). Some sections became lost or rebound with components from other printers over time, which explains this mixed group of volumes. The Benveniste imprints remain quite rare, particularly in the United States.

This volume may have come to America from Amsterdam with Aaron Levy, although it is not certain; Levy bequeathed his Hebrew prayer books to Benjamin Gratz, but may have given this book to Hyman during his lifetime. Hyman gave this book to his nephew, Jacob Henry Joseph, who was married to his sister Rachel's daughter Sarah Moses. Jacob Henry gave it to their son Henry Joseph, who gave it to his cousin, Clarence Isaac De Sola (1858-1920). De Sola was the leader of the Zionist movement in Canada. He knew Dr. Rosenbach through his affiliation with the American Jewish Historical Society, but The Rosenbach didn't acquire this book until about 50 years after De Sola's death, purchasing it from a Canadian bookseller.



## 34. Rebecca Gratz (1781-1869) Autograph letter signed to Sarah Gratz (1779-1817)

Philadelphia  
28 September [1800]  
Gratz 01:10

In this letter, Rebecca wrote to older sister Sarah updating her on family and friends with respect to illnesses, deaths, and recoveries from the current yellow fever epidemic. She would continue as the clearinghouse of family information—as well as acting as the family care-giver for her entire life. She enclosed a ballad—typical in its period drama—that she both apologized for in its excess given the sorrow of the time, but which she thought might also prove inspirational. A champion of her faith even at a young age, she reminded her sister to “recall the Almighty Ruler is beneficent and Good.”



### 35. Carte-de-visite of Rebecca Gratz

Unknown photographer  
Albumen print  
Philadelphia  
ca. 1865  
2011.0008  
Gift of Mrs. Anderson Gratz

By Rebecca Gratz's middle age, she was already widely known for her good works and for her supposed influence on the character of Rebecca in Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*—a story for which there is no proof, which persists today, and yet, which she and her circle did nothing to squelch. Still, her good works also contribute to her lasting legacy, from the founding of the Philadelphia Orphan Asylum, the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society, and Jewish Foster Home. She started the Hebrew Sunday School and through it taught Dr. Rosenbach's mother, Isabella, who recalled her childhood fear of a very stern, elderly Miss Gratz.

This carte-de-visite speaks to Rebecca Gratz's public appeal even into her old age. On the reverse is written, "Miss Gratz Phila/Miss Rebecca Gratz/Phila—in old age." She didn't marry or follow traditional roles for women of her era, but instead gained prominence through her work. Her portraits in The Rosenbach collection—and even in this late-in-life photograph—convey the confident self-presentation necessary for her endeavors.



1291/14

My Dear Rachel

Will you never more trust my word? which I  
 pledged yesterday to return home this morning, but I hope you  
 will let the necessity of the case plead for me. the bad weather  
 makes it impossible for me to come in in the chair and if I  
 did you could not return here as it is to be left in town. But  
 Henry's horse wants shoeing and the carriage will absolutely  
 be in to-morrow for you - our Meland Rechen is so much better  
 that you need not let the disappointment give you any extraor-  
 dinary anxiety. And Bob & my self dined with her last  
 night and had the satisfaction of seeing her take a nap of four  
 hours length without any aid from the laudanum.  
 the drops she takes appear to do her a great deal of good - and  
 her Minister gives her no trouble - the Dr. and nurse are of opinion  
 that she will be well much sooner than she would have done  
 had the pain continued in her thigh. she does not appear to me  
 to be any weaker. and thank God we have every prospect of  
 a complete recovery. they talk of leaving to take this day a  
 week. Rechen has well had as good a night's rest since her con-  
 firmment and said after every sleep she felt more refreshed -

## 36. Rebecca Gratz, Autograph letter signed to Rachel Gratz (1783-1823)

Germantown  
 26 October 1805  
 Gratz 01:12

Rebecca wrote to younger—and closest—sister Rachel stating that the inclement weather prevented her from returning to town after having tended to ailing sister Richea Gratz Hays (1774-1858). Hays had been ill since giving birth to daughter Sara Ann, who would later wed Alfred Mordecai, the first Jewish graduate of West Point. Sara Hays was also a later Philadelphia “neighbor” of The Rosenbach (the brothers had not yet moved to the street at that early date), living at 1816 Delancey Place. She died in 1894.

Rachel Gratz married Solomon Moses, a merchant from New York, in 1807, but died not long after the birth of her seventh child, leaving Rebecca to raise her family. Rachel Gratz Moses's daughter Sarah Gratz Moses Joseph became part of two of Canada's important Jewish families, the Josephs and the De Solas (see Object 33). The portraits of Michael Gratz and Rebecca Gratz in the hat by Thomas Sully, Rachel Gratz and Solomon Moses by Gilbert Stuart, and Joseph Gratz by G.P.A. Healy (see pages 81-92) have all come to The Rosenbach from members of the Joseph family.



### 37. Grooming box belonging to Joseph Gratz (1785-1858)

Unknown maker  
Amboyna wood, brass, ebony, ivory, Chinese porcelain, mirrored glass  
Probably England  
1800-1825  
2004.0067

Like his siblings, Joseph served on the leadership of Congregation Mikveh Israel, which their father and uncle helped found, but he also served his country, joining the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry in 1809 and serving during the War of 1812. Also following in his siblings' footsteps, Joseph, along with younger brother Jacob, was on the board of directors of the Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb.



A literate and cultured man, Joseph was a frequent correspondent of his older sister Rebecca Gratz. Most of the books that have descended with Rachel Gratz's desk and bookcase (now in The Rosenbach's Parlor) were at one time owned by Joseph Gratz and retain his signature. This grooming box speaks to his well-traveled side. Made of the most luxurious materials gathered from exotic locales, this grooming set would have been enjoyed by someone who could both appreciate and afford it. This box was purchased from the Estate of Henrietta Gratz Clay; it had not been included in her substantial gift to The Rosenbach prior to her death.



### 38. Peale Museum, silhouette of Benjamin Gratz (1792-1884)

Paper with later gilt metal and glass easel  
Philadelphia  
1811  
1995.0005  
Gift of Henrietta Gratz Clay

Benjamin was the youngest of the Gratz siblings. He enlisted under Gen. Thomas Cadwalader at the outbreak of the War of 1812 and joined Capt. John Smith's Pennsylvania Volunteers as second lieutenant in 1813. Educated at the University of Pennsylvania, he graduated with a master's degree in 1815 and was admitted to the Pennsylvania bar in 1817. In 1819, he moved to Kentucky, where he married Maria Cecil Gist (1797-1841), daughter of Nathaniel Gist (1733-1796), a prominent Kentucky frontiersman and fighter in the French and Indian War and Revolution. Her stepfather, Charles Scott, became governor of Kentucky in 1808. After Maria's untimely death, Benjamin married her niece, Anna Maria Boswell Shelby. Although both marriages were outside his faith, his family welcomed his wives, particularly Maria, as family.

Benjamin Gratz was a trustee of Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky, and was engaged in the manufacture of hemp rope, building roads, and constructing the Lexington and Ohio Railroad. He helped establish the Lexington Public Library, which was the first public library in the West. During the Civil War—while he enslaved people in the operation of his businesses—Gratz supported the Union, turning his home into a commissary for Union soldiers encamped at the university grounds nearby.





### 39. Dessert service belonging to Anna Maria Boswell Shelby Gratz (1808-1882)

Unknown maker  
Porcelain  
France  
1820-1829  
1954.2115  
Gift of Henrietta Gratz Clay

This service includes 55 pieces, represented here by the sugar bowl, creamer, dessert plate, and cup. In the high Empire style and made in France, it was a true luxury item given to Anna Boswell, the daughter of Maria Cecil Gist Gratz's sister Judith Gist Boswell, on her first marriage to Orville Shelby in 1829. Shelby died in 1835. After Maria Gratz, Benjamin Gratz's first wife, died in 1841, Benjamin wed her niece Anna in 1843. She had two children from her first marriage and had another four with Benjamin Gratz. Maria Gratz had given birth to six children with Benjamin.





# Henrietta Gratz Clay and The Rosenbach Collection

their keepers.

I asked Mr. Cornelius to tell me who bought the highway. If consistent, but evidently it was not consistent as he did not tell me. You might perhaps nose around in your part of the country and see what you can find out sometime. Mr. Cornelius did ask me to send him a photograph of the chair. He was in quite a hurry about it as he is going abroad on the 17<sup>th</sup>. I did not have a photograph to send him and I could not get one in time as I shall just let him wait. Do you mind sometimes investigating him somewhat? I suppose he is all right but I would rather like your idea on the subject. He is Charles O. Cornelius and is one of the curators of the Metropolitan Museum. I shall probably be going to New York sometime between now and winter and shall, of course, let you know.

I enjoyed having you for a visitor so much and I wish there was enough of interest here to bring you often.

Again assuring you of my appreciation of the books and with my best regards,

Sincerely,  
Henrietta Gratz

July 12, 1930

#### 40. Henrietta Gratz Clay (1892-1975) Autograph letter signed to A.S.W. Rosenbach

Lexington  
12 July 1930  
RCo I:042:02

#### 41. A.S.W. Rosenbach (1876-1952) Postal telegram to Henrietta Gratz Clay

Philadelphia  
4 September 1930  
RCo I:042:02

Henrietta Gratz Clay, a descendant of Benjamin and Anna Maria Boswell Shelby Gratz living in their Lexington, Kentucky, home, had a long correspondence with Dr. Rosenbach and they visited each other in New York and Lexington. In the 1930s, Henrietta must have found her finances difficult. She considered selling the family collection—objects dating back to Michael Gratz's day—and asked for Dr. Rosenbach's assistance. In July, she noted her discomfort in not knowing who was purchasing Michael Gratz's furniture. The circle of agents involved had widened to include Charles O. Cornelius, then associate curator of American art at the Metropolitan Museum and an expert in American furniture. The Gratz furniture was eventually sold to Henry Francis du Pont and now resides at the Winterthur Museum.

The post-script to the note stated that she was prepared to send a group of Rebecca Gratz manuscripts to the American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS). Dr. Rosenbach was then president of AJHS. His return telegram noted that he would present the manuscripts in his official capacity at the Society's next gathering. In a later note, Henrietta thanked him, mentioning the coverage of the donation in The New York Times. It is clear that well before the founding of his own institution, Dr. Rosenbach did not seek larger Gratz collections for himself. Instead, he acted as agent on behalf of his friend and relative to find suitable homes—and a fee for his business—for the furniture, and also served in his role as a board member of AJHS by steering appropriate donations to the Society, rather than towards his personal collection.

POSTAL TELEGRAPH - COMMERCIAL CABLES		CLARENCE H. MACRAE, PRESIDENT	
CLASS OF SERVICE REQUIRED	TELEGRAM	RECEIVER'S NUMBER	
Fast Telegram		CHECK	
Day Letter		TIME FILLED	
Night Telegram		STANDARD TIME	
<p>TELEGRAMS TO ALL AMERICA CABLEGRAMS TO ALL THE WORLD</p>			

Send the following Telegram, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to.

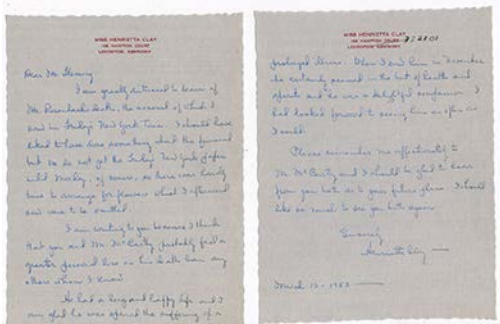
MISS HENRIETTA CLAY  
c/o SECURITY TRUST COMPANY  
LEXINGTON KENTUCKY

SEPTEMBER 4, 1930.

ON MY RETURN FIND THE GRATZ LETTERS WHICH YOU ARE KIND ENOUGH TO PRESENT AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY WILL PRESENT THEM ON YOUR BEHALF AT NEXT MEETING MY PERSONAL APPRECIATION OF THIS SPLENDID GIFT KINDEST REGARDS AND LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU DURING THE COMING SEASON

A.S.W. ROSENBAACH

(Charge to The Rosenbach Co., 1350 Walnut St.)



## 42. Henrietta Gratz Clay, Autograph letter signed to John Fleming

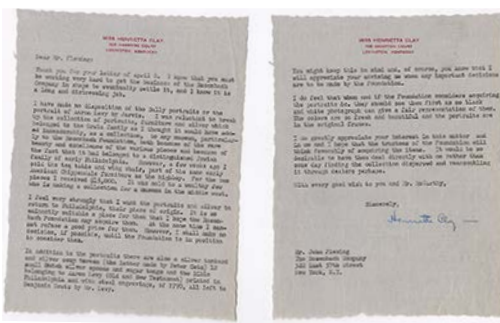
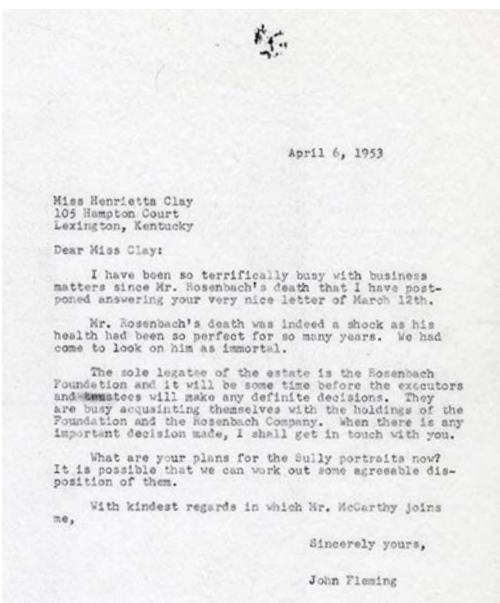
Lexington  
12 March 1953  
RCO I:042:02

## 43. John Fleming (1910-1987), Carbon copy of letter to Henrietta Gratz Clay

Philadelphia  
6 April 1953  
RCO I:042:02

## 44. Henrietta Gratz Clay, Typed letter signed to John Fleming

Lexington  
undated  
RCO I:042:02



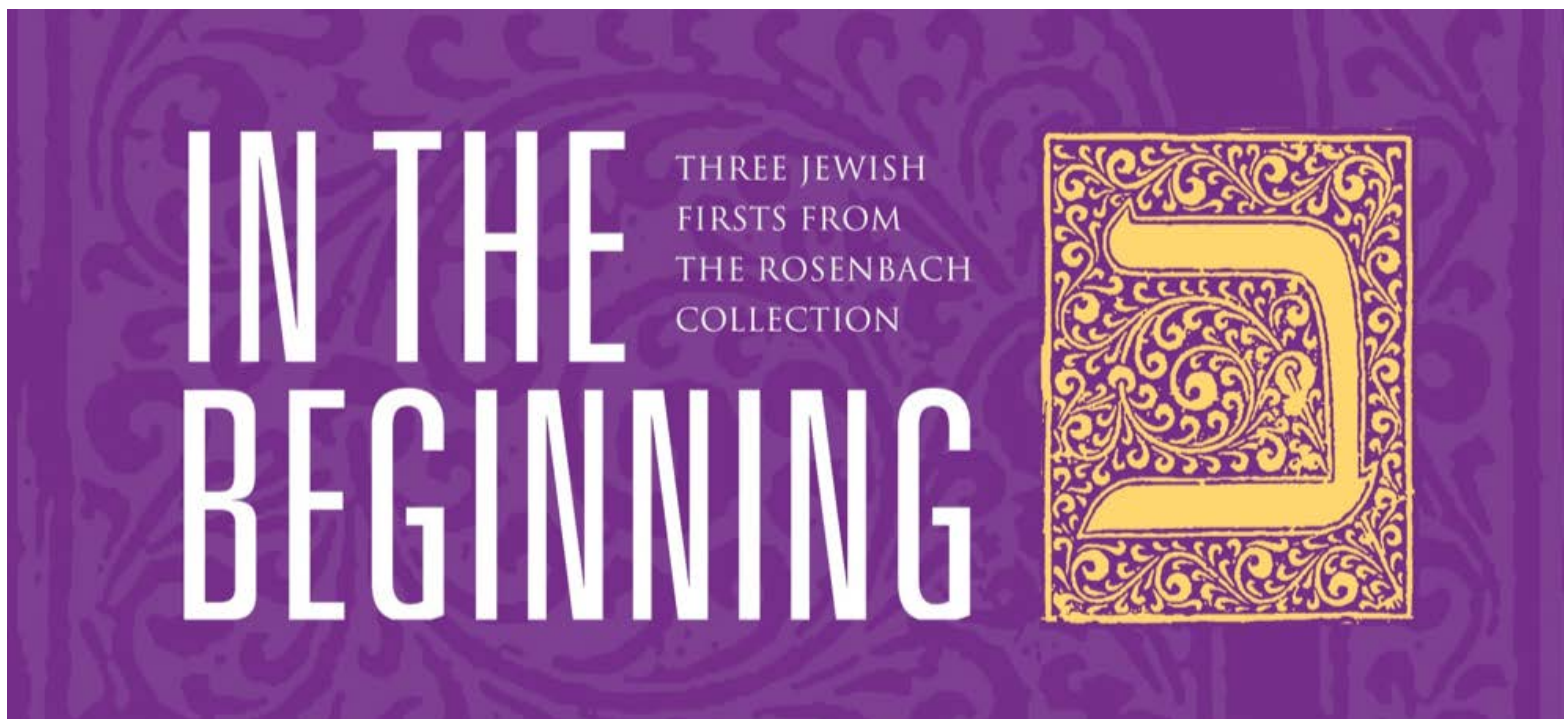
After hearing of Philip Rosenbach's death, Henrietta wrote to John Fleming, the successor to the Rosenbachs' business, whom she had met on her visits to New York. He had worked with the Rosenbachs since he was 15. She asked him for news of future plans for The Rosenbach Foundation, the predecessor of the museum and library, which had been founded under the brothers' wills.

John Fleming responded, asking at the very end of his letter if she'd given any thought to the disposition of the Sully paintings. Henrietta had previously written to A.S.W. Rosenbach about some condition problems with her portrait of Rebecca Gratz—an issue that Dr. Rosenbach addressed by having Henrietta bring the portrait to New York for conservation treatment at his expense. Henrietta continued to try to interest A.S.W. in the portraits, noting that a group of "gentlemen from Cincinnati"—dropping the name of a rabbi associated with the American Jewish Archives—was stopping to look at the portraits in the house in Lexington. A.S.W. didn't bite. It's unclear whether he wouldn't have wanted to compete with another Jewish organization or if he was waiting for their offer, which never came. But Fleming hardly missed a beat before attempting an acquisition.

Henrietta responded, noting that she would always have liked the entire collection to come to The Rosenbach. As the museum had just been established, that would hardly have been possible, but she noted that she would wait for Fleming and the trustees to come to a decision before making other plans. She did say that she would like to get a price for the group and listed the items available for sale. We have no record of negotiations over the ensuing years. Henrietta made a gift to the Foundation of many of those items in 1970. She died in 1975.

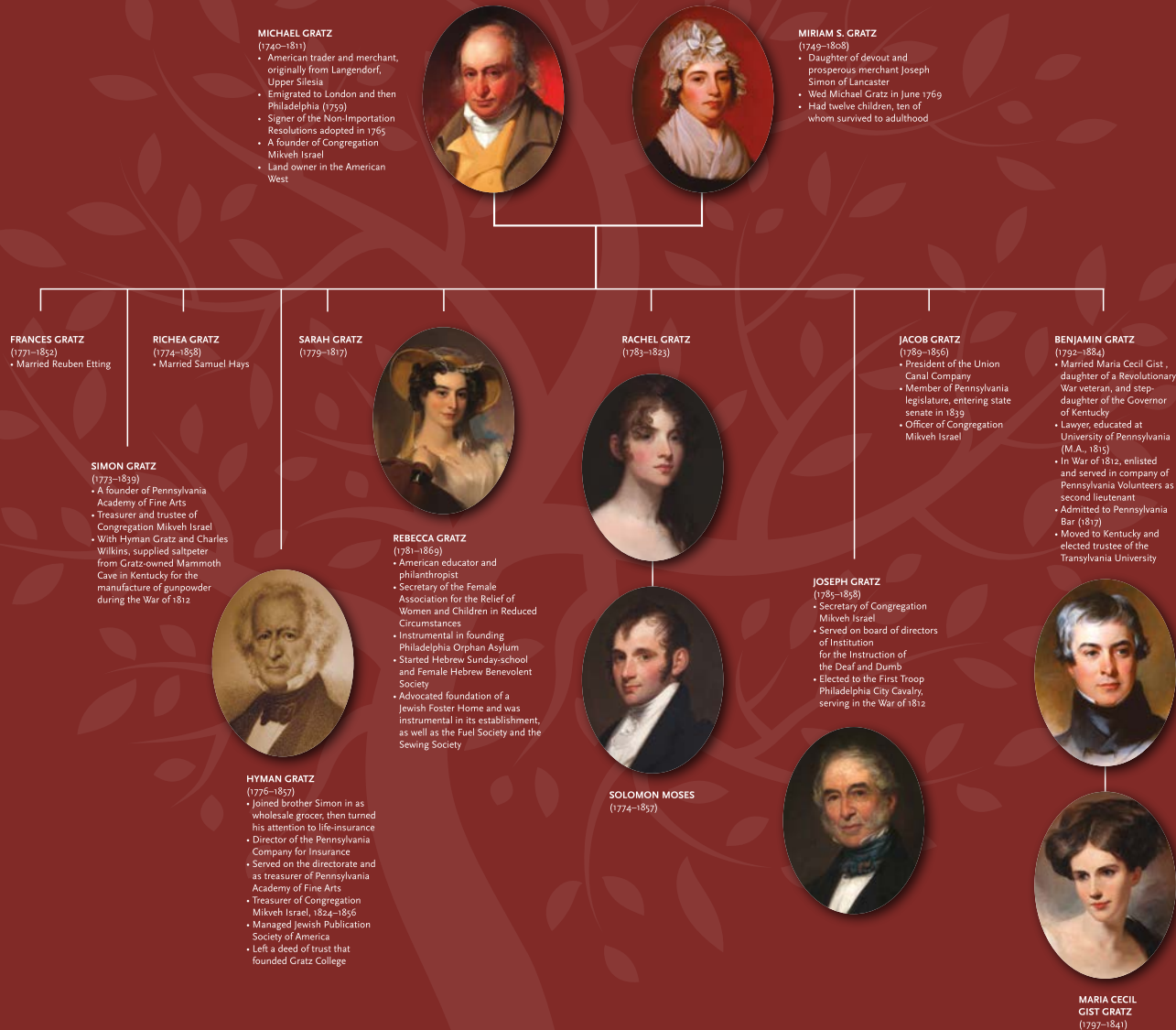
# SPECIAL FEATURES





A brief (and fun) slide show [here](#) will help you decipher the Hebrew text.

# THE GRATZ FAMILY TREE





### **Scrolling Digital Frame of Gratz Family Portraits**

During the exhibition itself, images of The Rosenbach's collection of Gratz family portraits, which hang in the historic house, were projected within a single frame and scrolled through continuously for visitors to view. You can view the family portraits in detail on the following pages.





Thomas Sully (1783-1872)

**Michael Gratz**

Philadelphia, 1808

2008.0004

Gift of David Elwell





Jane Cooper Sully Darley (1807-1877) after Gilbert Stuart

**Miriam Simon Gratz**

Philadelphia, 1831

1954.1938

Gift of Henrietta Gratz Clay



Thomas Sully (1783-1872)

**Rebecca Gratz**

Philadelphia, 1831

2010.0027.001

Photograph by Douglas A. Lockard



Thomas Sully (1783-1872)

**Rebecca Gratz**

Philadelphia, 1831

1954.1936

Gift of Henrietta Gratz Clay





Thomas Sully (1783-1872)

**Benjamin Gratz**

Philadelphia, 1831

1954.1937

Gift of Henrietta Gratz Clay





Thomas Sully, (1783-1872)

**Maria Cecil Gist Gratz**

Philadelphia, 1831

2012.0004

Gift of John H. Thomas in memory of  
Hermine Cary Gratz Johnstone



Thomas Sully (1783-1872)

[copy of Rosenbach 2012.0004]

**Maria Cecil Gist Gratz**

Philadelphia, 1841 or later

2011.0023.001

Gift of Maria Roberts and William Roberts



Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828)

**Rachel Gratz Moses**

Philadelphia, 1806

2014.0004.001

Gift of David Elwell

Photograph by Douglas A. Lockard





Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828)

**Solomon Moses**

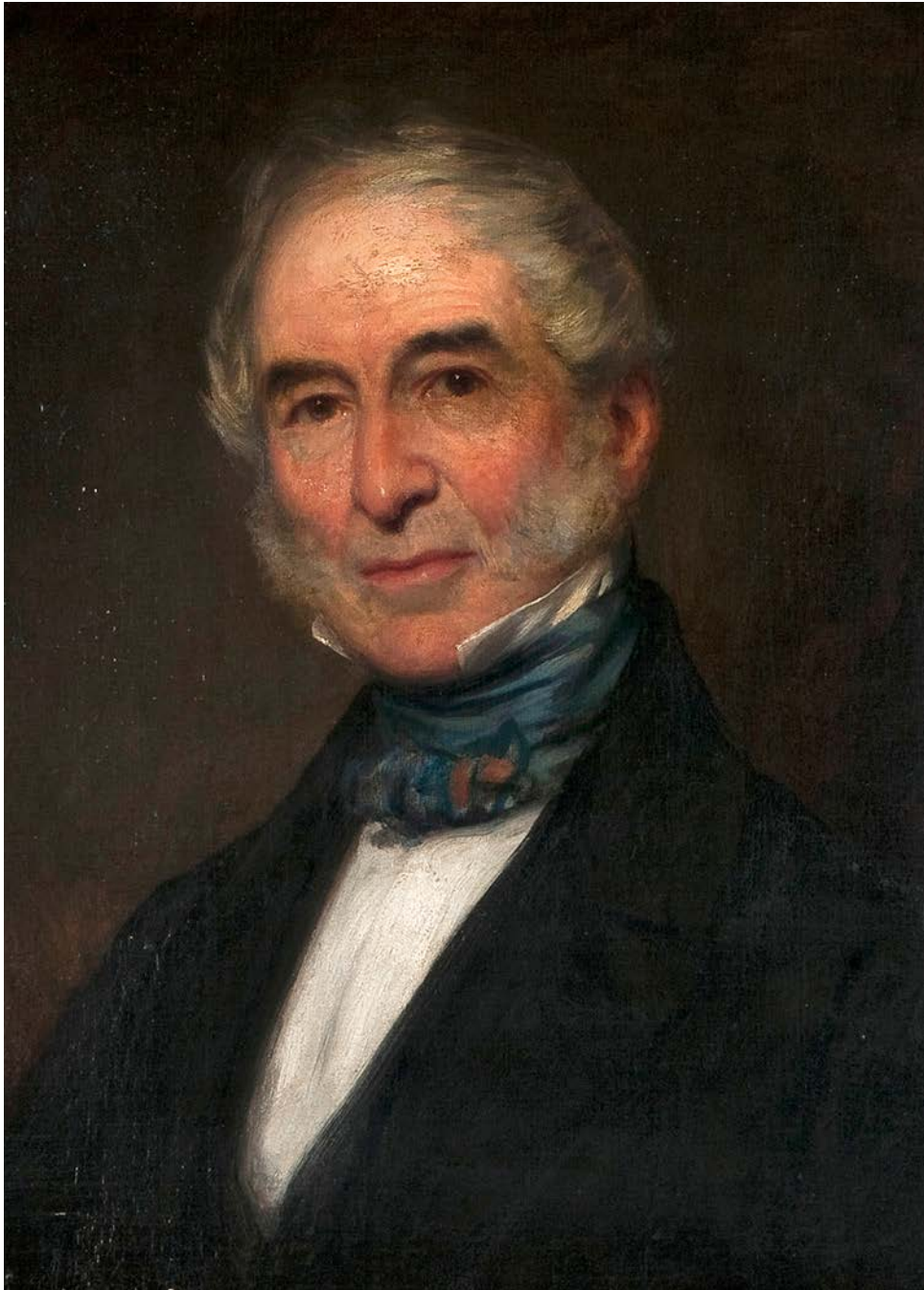
Philadelphia, 1806

2014.0004.002

Gift of David Elwell

Photograph by Douglas A. Lockard





G. P. A. Healy (1813-1894)

**Joseph Gratz**

Philadelphia, 1850-58

2010.0027.002

Photograph by Douglas A. Lockard



John Wesley Jarvis (1781-1839)

**Aaron Levy**

Philadelphia, 1810

1954.1940

Gift of Henrietta Gratz Clay



John Wesley Jarvis (1787-1827)  
**Possibly Maria Cecil Gist Gratz**  
Lexington, Kentucky, 1820-25  
1984.0005  
Bequest of Mrs. Anderson Gratz





## VISIT THE ROSENBACH

### How to Make a Research Appointment and Access Other Rosenbach and Free Library of Philadelphia Resources

The Rosenbach's world-renowned collection of rare books, manuscripts, and fine and decorative-art objects is accessible free of charge for your study and use.

To learn more about the kinds of materials we hold, visit [rosenbach.org/collections](https://rosenbach.org/collections). Also, explore the various Collections Guides and databases accessible at [rosenbach.org/research/catalogs-databases](https://rosenbach.org/research/catalogs-databases).

To communicate with a member of The Rosenbach's staff about our holdings, visit [rosenbach.org/research/make-an-inquiry](https://rosenbach.org/research/make-an-inquiry). Research appointments may be made at [rosenbach.org/research/make-an-appointment](https://rosenbach.org/research/make-an-appointment).

The Rosenbach offers an array of tours and programs designed to showcase our collections and inspire learning. To learn more, visit [rosenbach.org/visit](https://rosenbach.org/visit) and [rosenbach.org/events](https://rosenbach.org/events).

Call The Rosenbach at **1.215.732.1600** to speak with a representative.

The Rosenbach also encourages you to explore the resources of our affiliated institution, the Free Library of Philadelphia. Visit the Free Library's catalog at [catalog.freelibrary.org](https://catalog.freelibrary.org) to discover resources including audiobooks available to Free Library of Philadelphia cardholders. Also, visit [freelibrary.org/collections](https://freelibrary.org/collections) to learn about Special Collections accessible at the Parkway Central Library (1901 Vine Street, Philadelphia).



We foster inquiry, learning, and  
creative thought by engaging audiences  
in programs, exhibitions, and research  
inspired by our collections.



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