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Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

Hoop Lane Jewish Cemetery

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Name:	Hoop Lane Jewish Cemetery
County:	Greater London Authority
District:	Barnet (London Borough)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 51.577603 Longitude: -0.19436129 National Grid Reference: TQ2521788071 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1465310 Date first listed: 11-Dec-2020 Statutory Address 1: Hoop Lane, Golders Green, London, NW11 7NJ

Historique de la conservation

The West London Synagogue of British Jews was established in 1840 as a breakaway congregation by 24 disaffected members of the Bevis Marks Synagogue – the principal synagogue of the Sephardi Jews of Spanish and Portuguese descent – and the Great Synagogue in Duke's Place, which served the Ashkenazi Jews from Central and Eastern Europe. The intention was to form a prayer group for 'neither German nor Portuguese but British Jews'; this congregation would go on to become the first in Britain to adopt Reform Judaism. Its founders, who included individuals from the wealthy and influential Mocatta and Goldsmid families, were initially prompted by the refusal of the City synagogues to countenance a West End congregation, but reforms to synagogue ritual and religious observance were soon adopted. Services were no longer conducted solely in Hebrew but in a mixture of Hebrew and English, prominence was given to moral commands over ritual observances, meaning, for instance, that it was permissible to drive to the synagogue on the Sabbath; and some sections of liturgy were omitted if they no longer corresponded to the beliefs of the congregation.

The Burton Street Chapel, Bloomsbury, was converted for use as a synagogue and consecrated in January 1842; this was succeeded in 1849 by the Margaret Street Synagogue, probably another conversion, overseen by David Mocatta. By the mid-1860s, a larger building was required, and the firm of Davis and Emanuel was engaged to build the synagogue in Upper Berkeley Street, completed in 1870 and still in use today. Both Henry David Davis (1839-1915) and Barrow Emanuel (1841-1904) were members of the West London Synagogue. This was their first commission for a religious building; they would go on to design the East London Synagogue at Stepney Green (1876-7) – built under the auspices of the Ashkenazi United Synagogue – and also the Sephardi synagogue at Maida Vale (1896), as well as the prayer hall or 'Ohel' (Hebrew 'tent') building at Hoop Lane Cemetery.

The West London Synagogue opened its first burial ground in 1843, having secured a plot of land at Balls Pond Road, Islington (the cemetery is officially known as Kingsbury Road). By the late 19th century a larger burial ground was needed and a site of some 15 acres of farmland was found on the north side of Hoop Lane, near the hamlet of Golders Green; this was purchased for £3000 in 1894. Discussions had been underway for some time with the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation about the

possibility of the two communities maintaining a site together; in 1896 eight acres were sold for Sephardi burial, and the two cemeteries were established, divided by an avenue. Davis and Emanuel's Ohel building was designed to provide two prayer halls, one for each community. The Jewish Chronicle noted that 'Both congregations are mutually appreciative of the courtesy and good feeling extended to each by the other, and have expressed resolutions expressing this, and also the hope that they may long continue to co-operate for the benefit of a common Judaism'. The first interment, in the Reform section, took place in 1897. Hoop Lane became the primary burial place for both communities, though the Sephardi Novo Cemetery in Mile End remained open for adult burials until 1906, and for child burials until 1918, whilst reserved plots at Balls Pond Road continued to be taken up until 1952. A Conjoint Committee of the two synagogues was set up to administer the ground, with rules established relating to grave sizes, and approval to be sought for tombstone designs. At first, only the southern sections were laid out, with the cemeteries gradually developing northwards into the site as more grave spaces were required. Two plots have been sold at the northern end of the cemetery: in 1935-6 the North Western Reform Synagogue was built at the end of Alyth Gardens to the west, and in the 1970s housing was built to the east.

In 1902 London's first crematorium was established on the south side of Hoop Lane. In 1907 the London Underground transport network was extended to Golders Green, following which the fields surrounding the cemetery were developed for housing, with Hampstead Garden Suburb immediately to the north and east. Jews began to settle in Golders Green just before the First World War and by 1930 the area was known as a place with a large Jewish population. The Hoop Lane Jewish Cemetery remains open for new burials, mainly in reserved plots. A jointly-administered successor ground opened at Edgewarebury in 1973.

Details

DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENT: of the 15 acres purchased in 1894, only the southern sections were laid out by 1915. The Ordnance Survey map of this date show these sections of the site, reaching as far northwards as Forres Gardens, in almost their present configuration, with a central north/south avenue dividing the Reform cemetery to the west from the Sephardi cemetery to the east, the ohel building to the south, and the lodge to the west of the main entrance. In 1935-6 the North Western Reform Synagogue (now known as the Alyth Synagogue) was built at the end of Alyth Gardens in the north-western section of the site, but the layout of the southern burial areas was otherwise unchanged. The burial area had expanded as far north as Hampstead Gardens by 1952, and had reached Dingwall Gardens by 1970. Those areas laid out after 1936 are excluded from the registration.

BOUNDARIES AND APPROACHES: the site is bounded by Hoop Lane to the south, with the Golders Green Crematorium immediately opposite. To the east the site is bounded by Temple Fortune Lane. The 1914-15 Roman Catholic Church of St Edward the Confessor stands immediately to the south-west, and Alyth Synagogue to the north-west. There is housing to the west and north. The cemetery entrance is at the centre of the Hoop Lane frontage. The entranceway (listed Grade II) is thought to date from the foundation of the cemetery, and consists of tall inner gate piers, with shorter outer piers defining the pedestrian entrances. The red-brick piers are constructed with moulded pilasters and have stone bases and domed caps, now painted. The elaborate wrought-iron gates with central roundels are original to the site, and were the gift of Frederick G Henriques, a prominent member of West London Synagogue. The boundary with Hoop Lane and Temple Fortune Lane is mainly formed by a low stock-brick wall, curving inwards towards the entrance and ramped to the gate piers; the wall is stepped to accommodate changes in ground level. The barrier is now heightened by security fencing with metal posts. Towards the west end of Hoop Lane a taller section of wall, red brick with recessed panels, forms the rear of the columbarium. The western boundary is formed by a buttressed stock-brick wall with red-brick capping. Changes in boundary materials surrounding the northern parts of the cemetery reflect the fact that these parts of the site were brought into use only later.

PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS: the lodge standing to the north-west of the entrance is understood to be contemporary with the opening of the cemetery. The architect is not known. Domestic in appearance, the red-brick and rough-cast building has Arts and Crafts-inspired features: the gable end facing the entrance forecourt has timber studding standing proud of the gable, whilst the roughcast upper storey is jettied over a ground-floor bay window, with a moulded terracotta storey band; there are 'Queen

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Anne' chimney stacks with brick detailing. The windows are uPVC replacements. Internally the building does not retain historic features. To the west is an attached contemporary WC block, for public use, and a later addition, used as a mortuary.

The prayer hall or Ohel building (listed Grade II) stands immediately to the north of the entrance. The building provides two prayer halls - for the Reform to the west, and for the Sephardim to the east - linked by a porte-corchère leading directly into the burial ground. In an eclectic style combining elements of Romanesque, Byzantine, and Arts and Crafts, of red brick with banding in stone and terracotta ornament, the building was designed by Davis and Emanuel, and completed for the opening of the cemetery in 1897. Each three-bay hall is entered from the carriageway, with hearses escorted into the cemetery for burial through doorways to the north. The prayer halls are similarly and simply appointed, with barrel roofs and glazed brick dados, but the walls of the Reform hall bear a number of memorial plaques. Modern hand-washing facilities are positioned inside the carriageway for mourners to wash their hands before returning to the Ohel for prayers following the interment, or before leaving the cemetery.

LAYOUT AND MONUMENTS: the layout of the cemetery is determined by the wide central avenue which separates the West London and Spanish and Portuguese congregations' respective burial areas, with the West London (Reform) to the west and the Spanish and Portuguese (Sephardi) to the east. In the original, southern part of the cemetery, the avenue leads to a 'rond point' at the centre of the cemetery forming a focal point from which paths lead west to the columbarium (see below) and east and south-east to a perimeter walkway skirting the site boundary. A diagonal path cuts across each side from the south-east. To the west of the central avenue is a grassed area, planted with memorial roses. Further north, outside the registered area, paths extend from the avenue at right angles.

Although the graves are set in straight rows throughout the site, the visual contrast between the two cemeteries is pronounced, reflecting the different burial practices and preferences of the two congregations. To the west, the graves are predominantly marked by upright headstones, following Ashkenazi convention, set in grassy pots with numerous shrubs planted. To the east, the recumbent tombs of the Sephardim lie within gravelled plots, with no vegetation other than boundary hedging and memorial roses lining the central avenue near the prayer hall. There is no religious obligation for Jewish graves to face in a particular direction, but by tradition they often face south-east towards Jerusalem. At Hoop Lane, the graves in the Sephardi cemetery all face south towards the cemetery entrance, whilst those in the Reform cemetery all face north; it is thought that this is simply to make a further distinction between the two areas.

The positioning of the graves is predominantly chronological, with spaces having been reserved for the later interment of family members. There are no internal sub-divisions such as hedged or walled family enclosures, nor are there areas defined by status. As in other Jewish cemeteries, the Cohanim are buried at the ends of rows: by tradition the Cohanim are descended from the Biblical High Priest Aaron, whose sons ministered in the Jerusalem temple; today the Cohanim still play a special role in the synagogue service. For reasons of ritual purity they may not come into direct contact with a dead body or walk amongst the graves in a cemetery. There are separate rows for children's graves. Within the Reform section, discrete plots are set aside for cremated remains. Against the southern boundary wall is the 1930s columbarium, the first to be built in a Jewish cemetery in Britain; orthodox Jewish tradition does not countenance cremation, but the Reform synagogue allowed the practice from the late C19. Built of brick, with seven bays containing repositories for ashes, the central bay was brought into service in recent years. A band of gold mosaic runs along the top of the walls with Hebrew inscriptions, including the final line of Psalm 27. A second columbarium was established in 2015, taking the form of low slopes in which ashes are laid beneath memorial tablets. The actual cremations take place in Golders Green Crematorium.

The monuments are relatively uniform in size, and modest in design, in keeping with the Jewish teaching that all are equal in death. Nonetheless, there is individuality within the designs, whilst some of the earlier memorials are relatively large and elaborate. Within the West London cemetery, there are several late-C19 and early-C20 monuments of types found in Christian cemeteries: some are in Gothic styles, and there are undressed rocks, broken columns, and Classically-inspired designs such as draped urns. One of the most ornate is a draped sarcophagus commemorating Emanuel Belilios (1837-1905), a Sephardi businessman in Hong Kong - an opium dealer, chairman of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, and founder of a girls' school. Another fairly lavish example combines Doric columns, floral swags, and a stepped top: this commemorates Mathilde Dresden

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(1843-1909), who left money to establish a lodging house in Hove for women in reduced circumstances. A screen formed of an aedicule with a broken pediment set on a low wall commemorates Henry Louis Biscoffsheim (1829-1908), who in 1882 provided London's first hand-operated wheeled casualty ambulances. Within the Sephardi cemetery the horizontal gravestones are generally simpler, and present a more consistent appearance overall, but there is much variety in the designs, which range from plain ledger slabs to coped stones or low chest tombs. Many have a slanted capstone, bearing the inscription; in some cases this is enriched with carving. Distinctive forms seen in other Jewish cemeteries of the period, such as stones in the form of scrolls, open books, and doors set ajar, are found on both sides. Other Jewish funerary motifs such as the broken branch indicating a life cut short, or the open hands making the 'Birkat HaCohanim' or priestly blessing, denoting the grave of a Cohen, are found in the Reform cemetery. The names on the graves in both cemeteries reflect the international origins of members of the congregations, as do the places of birth, which are frequently recorded. English predominates over Hebrew in the inscriptions and other European languages such as German and French also appear. Many graves bear the traditional abbreviation based on Samuel, 25:29, 'May his/her soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life' in Hebrew lettering.

Hoop Lane Jewish Cemetery is the final resting place of many noteworthy individuals. A small number of prominent rabbis and their families were re-interred in the Sephardi section when the Georgian section of the Nuevo Cemetery was dug up in 1974. Twentieth century rabbis and scholars include Moses Gaster (1856-1939), Haham ('wise man' and effectively Sephardi chief rabbi) scholar and Zionist; Reform rabbis Leo Baeck (1873-1956) who represented German Jews during the Second World War and later became Chairman of the World Union for Progressive Judaism (buried in the later northern area), and Hugo Gryn (1930-1996), best known as a broadcaster. Those noted for their community work include Samuel Lewis (1838-1902), provider of social housing, and Sir Basil Lucas Quintaxo Henriques (1890-1961), founder of Jewish youth clubs in the East End. Rufus Isaacs (1860-1935), Marquess of Reading, judge and Liberal politician, was Viceroy of India from 1921 to 1926, whilst Leslie Hore-Belisha, Baron Hore-Belisha (1893-1957) was a Liberal politician who in 1934 as transport minister introduced the amber globes on black and white posts marking pedestrian crossings known as 'Belisha beacons'. Those in the arts include the artist and designer Barnett Freedman (1901-1958), the mural painter Hans Feibusch (1898-1998, buried in the later northern area), the cellist Jacqueline du Pré (1945-1990), and Henry David Davis, one of the architects of the prayer hall building (Barrow Emanuel is buried in Balls Pond Road Cemetery).

To the north of the main entrance is a memorial wall, established in 2018, intended to honour men and women who provided help and support to Jews fleeing Nazi persecution. Those whose names are inscribed on plaques affixed to the wall include both Jews and non-Jews.

Summary

Hoop Lane Jewish Cemetery, jointly managed by West London (Reform) Synagogue and the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation (Sephardi), opened in 1896, with a prayer hall building by Davis and Emanuel. Only the original part of the cemetery, to the south, is registered.

Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.

Reasons for Designation

The original southern part of Hoop Lane Jewish Cemetery is registered at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Historic interest:

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* as the primary burial site for both the West London and Spanish and Portuguese congregations from 1897 to 1973; * the cemetery is a rare example of a burial site in England shared between two branches of Judaism, the venture being viewed as a positive collaborative project; * the range of tombs and inscriptions reflects the social and geographical mix of the two communities; the cemetery is the final resting place of a number of particularly distinguished individuals.

Landscape interest:

* for its expression of Jewish burial practices, demonstrating the contrast between upright, predominantly Ashkenazi memorials, and the recumbent Sephardi slabs; * the original southern section of the cemetery remains largely unchanged.

Group value: * with the unusual ohel building by Davis and Emanuel, having prayer halls for each congregation, and the entrance gateway, both structures being listed at Grade II; * the cemetery forms part of the varied funerary landscape of Hoop Lane, which includes the 1902 Golders Green Crematorium, a Grade-I registered landscape with numerous listed structures, the form of its buildings and grounds responding to those of the slightly earlier cemetery; the cemetery has a visual relationship with the tower of the Roman Catholic Church of St Edward the Confessor (Grade II) to the south-west, and that of the Church of St Jude, Hampstead Garden Suburb (Grade I) to the east, as well as the campanile of the crematorium's West Chapel to the south.

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