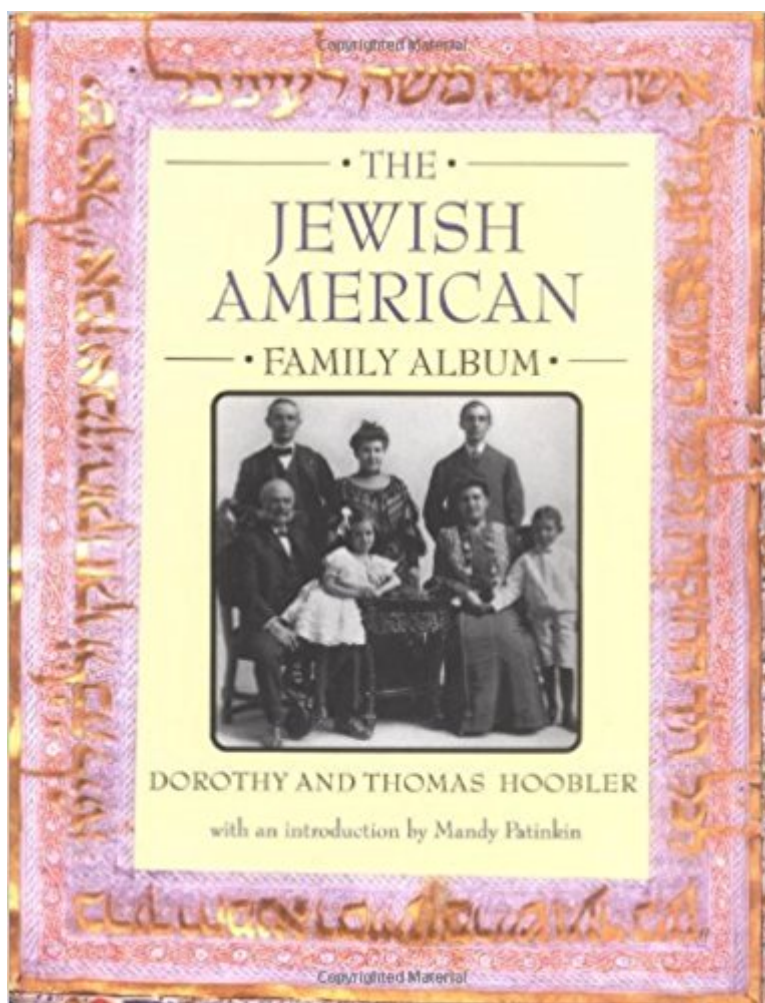


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# The Jewish American Family Album (American Family Albums)



## Synopsis

As long ago as September 1654, 23 Jews disembarked from a ship named the *Sainte Catherine* into New Amsterdam--today's New York City. They came to find a safe haven from oppression and religious persecution and to seek economic opportunity. But even they were not the first Jewish Americans, and they were certainly not the last. Three million Jewish immigrants followed in the next three centuries. Today, about 4 out of every 10 Jews in the world are U. S. citizens. The *Jewish American Family Album* tells personal stories of Jewish immigrants from their arrival in this country (as early as 1579) to the present day. Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler have found letters, diaries, and newspaper articles that describe what life was like in the old countries and tell of the difficulties encountered in leaving home for a new life in America. They have combed through family archives and scrapbooks to find personal accounts that make history as immediate and exciting as stories told generation after generation in any family. In their own words, we learn what life was like for these millions of Jewish immigrants. We read of the earliest of the Jewish Americans, some of whom fought and died in the Revolution. We hear from Holocaust survivors and their children. We discover that from the beginning, Jewish Americans provided a base of support--lodging and fellowship--for those who followed. The part Jewish Americans played in the settlement of the American West, their strategic importance to the U.S. labor movement, and their many contributions to theater and music are documented with rare first-person accounts and extraordinary photographs. We hear of the challenges the immigrants faced, including anti-Semitism, even in the "Land of the Free." But Jewish Americans linked old traditions with new ones to build communities that have become a permanent and important part of American life. The memories and experiences of well-known Jewish Americans such as comedians George Burns and Jack Benny, Oscar Solomon Straus (the first Jewish Presidential cabinet member), and novelist Edna Ferber are included, as are profiles of Barbra Streisand, Steven Spielberg, Leonard Bernstein, union leader Samuel Gompers, and poet Emma Lazarus, among others. But other Jewish Americans who did not achieve celebrity status are also represented. Moses Albert Levy, a doctor who joined Sam Houston's army, 13-year-old Mary Antin, who arrived in Boston in 1894, Sarah Thal, who was a homesteader in the Dakotas, and many more fascinating but unknown immigrants tell powerful, emotional, and sometimes funny stories of life in their new homeland. These memories and profiles are illustrated with rare and moving photographs from news sources and family collections. They show in vivid fashion a people who have brought us humor, spirit, and perseverance. The *Jewish American Family Album* is an important tribute to the magnificent variety of people and cultures that makes up our United States.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The American Family Album series delivers its inaugural volume, the Jewish American Family Album by Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler. Arranged in a magazine-like format, brief essays, sidebars and black-and-white photographs chronicle Jewish experience in America from the arrival of 23 Jews in New Amsterdam in 1654 until the present day (Oxford, \$19.95, all ages ISBN 0-19-509935-4 Nov.). Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 6-9?A handsome book that emphasizes the importance of family, continuity, and returning to one's roots. Prefacing each chapter is a description of the history, sociology, and pivotal people of the period being addressed; personal narratives follow. The first chapter covers the history of the Jews from their beginning to the formation of the modern state of Israel; the political and economic status of European Jews in the 19th century; and the Holocaust. Each of the next four chapters deals with another facet of the immigrant experience since colonial days, but mainly in the 20th century. The final chapter discusses the Jews' contributions to America. There is a Jewish-American time line, plus an extensive index. What makes this title unique is the high quality of the carefully researched and varied historical information and the Hooblers' judicious selection of primary-source excerpts, many of which are by well-known writers, politicians, and celebrities. These narratives

have anecdotal appeal and make for interesting reading. Many are from rare and out-of-print books. The text is augmented by excellent-quality, black-and-white photographs. The book's design contributes to ease of reading and comprehension. Milton Meltzer's *The Jewish Americans* (Crowell, 1982) established the standard, but this volume surpasses it. Altogether a fascinating, quality choice.?

Marcia W. Posner, Holocaust Memorial and Educational Center of Nassau County, Glen Cove, Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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