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Romance and adventure do not belong exclusively to the individual. There can be a collective experience that tempers a community's determination to achieve and toughens its sinews to withstand adversity. A group of men and women, banded together to create and maintain an institution which embodies the highest spiritual ideals, will in the course of striving and working, encounter even richer impressions than can the individual, whose horizon may be not so broad, nor his goal so high.

As the Congregation of Adath Israel celebrates its one hundredth anniversary it can look back over a century filled with rich experiences. From humble beginnings it has grown in numbers and influence until today it ranks among the finest and most respected of Cincinnati's Jewish congregations. There were critical periods in its history, when its very existence was in jeopardy. Today it is a living symbol of the truth of the adage that "mighty oaks from little acorns grow".

"The outstanding fact in the history of the Congregation of Adath Israel and the fact which is the source of great satisfaction to us," wrote the late Rabbi Louis Feinberg, of revered memory, "is that it passed through the storm and stress period of American Jewish congregational life, unscathed. It has successfully withstood the wave of Reform, which, in the '50's and '60's", swept other congregations into the fold of the newly established Reform Judaism."

Congregation Adath Israel, the only congregation in Cincinnati founded before the '70's that has remained true to traditional Judaism, was started by a small group of Polish Jews and incorporated on March 24, 1851, by an act of the Ohio Legislature. Isaac Cohen was the first President. Its first house of worship was located in Lodge Alley, between Fifth and Sixth Streets. Just how long it remained there is not definitely known, but in 1860 it occupied the second floor of the building at the