A wonderful May 5, 2011 story from thejc.com reveals that Prince William and the entire military contingent of the Windsor wedding party were outfitted by a Jewish family run tailoring business — Kashket and Partners.

The family, originally from Poland and Russia supplied hats to Tsar Nicholas II, and derived their surname from shtrmelekh worn by Hasidic Jews. The Kashkets moved to London in the 1920s when grandfather, Alfred, one of the founding members of Loughton Synagogue in Essex, formed the UK company.

Many Commonwealth stamps, like this Canadian issue, vividly portray the Prince’s colonel in the Irish Guards scarlet uniform.

Wishing all our members and their families only the very best of all things in 5772.
A SYNAGOGUE ON AN EGYPTIAN STAMP

THE BEN EZRA SYNAGOGUE IN CAIRO

Many readers will have difficulty believing that a Jewish place of worship could be featured on the stamp of an Arab country, especially one formerly so hostile towards Israel.

In January 2004, the Egyptian post office issued Discover The Treasures of Egypt in Stamps as a prestige booklet. The 125 piastre value shows the interior of the ancient Ben Ezra Synagogue.

Originally a church, the Coptic Christians of Cairo sold the building to Jews in 882 to pay taxes imposed by Moslem rulers. It is recorded that the church was purchased by Abraham Ben Ezra from Jerusalem, for the sum of 20,000 dinars.

It became known as the Ben Ezra Synagogue and also the Synagogue of Elijah the Prophet and was a place of pilgrimage for North African Jews as well as the site of major festival celebrations. The most famous Jew of the middle ages, Moses Maimonides worshipped here, and as a result, the shul was also referred to as the Maimonides Synagogue. A centre for Rabbinica studies and infirmary were also sited adjacent to the building where miraculous healing was said to have taken place.

By the 1890’s the building needed repairs and was rebuilt as a faithful reconstruction of the original in 1892. During the restoration, a medieval Geniza (repository for sacred books and worn out Torah scrolls) was discovered, revealing thousands of original documents. These provided scholars an amazing insight into Jewish life during the middle ages.

Today the Ben Ezra Synagogue is a historical monument and the most visited Jewish site in Cairo. The original magnificently carved wooden doors have been removed and can today be seen in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

The author believes that this attractive and unique booklet was for sale to philatelists and that the thirty stamps, though valid for postal usage, did not enter into general circulation or be found used or on cover.

Many collectors of synagogues on stamps, did not know that a synagogue stamp was included in the prestige booklet.

The Ben Ezra Synagogue also appears on a 1997 Israel souvenir sheet issued in conjunction with the PACIFIC 97 International Philatelic Exposition. The 2 shekel stamp on the sheet commemorates the discovery of the Cairo Genizah in 1897.
Three Jewish Molecular Biologists Share the 2004 Nobel Prize in Chemistry

Ubiquitin is a small regulatory protein found in almost all tissues of eukaryotes (higher organisms). Its function is to tag damaged proteins for destruction by directing them to the proteosome, which is a large protein complex in the cell that degrades and recycles unneeded proteins. The discovery of proteosome functions was made by three Jewish molecular biologists, Aaron Ciechanover, Avram Hershko and Irwin Rose in the 1980s, for which they were awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2004. In recognition of the International Year of Chemistry in 2011, Israel issued two stamps showing the structure of ubiquitin and ribosome, respectively (Jan. 1, 2011). Several genetic disorders are associated with ubiquitin, including Angelman syndrome, Von Hippel-Lindow syndrome, and Fanconi anemia.

Ciechanover was born in 1947 in Haifa in what was then Palestine, his Polish-born parents having moved there in the 1920s. After receiving a B.Sc. in biology, he received his M.Sc. in 1970 and M.D. in 1975 from Hadassah Medical School. In 1976, he joined Hershko’s laboratory at the Technion in Haifa, Israel, where he received his D.Sc. in 1981. He is now a professor at the Technion.

Hershko was born in Kareag, Hungary in 1937. He and his family survived the Holocaust and emigrated to Israel in 1950. After receiving his B.Sc. in biology, he obtained an M.D. in 1965 and Ph.D. at the Hadassah Medical School. Hershko is now a distinguished professor at the Unit of Biochemistry, Technion in Haifa, Israel.

Irwin Rose was born in Brooklyn NY in 1926, but grew up in Spokane, WA. After service in the US Navy, he received his B.S. and Ph.D. in biochemistry at the University of Chicago. He was on the faculty of Yale Medical School (1954-65) and Fox Chase Cancer Center (1963-95).

— Gene Eisen

http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/IrwinRose.html
http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Hershko.html
http://www.lindau-nobel.org/LaureateDetailsAxCMS?UserID=6782