

Only in the last chapter of the book does Biderman directly address the question of loyalty to the Soviet Union. He notes that many have asked him about it, and that it puzzled his colleagues. He writes: "Communists are human beings with human faults in abundance. We belonged to a party that was stronger than any religion. To betray it was more than a sin. To challenge before 1956 was unthinkable. We were part of a rigid, dogmatic system that did not question the Soviet Union or local Party leadership." (p. 230) Biderman quotes a colleague, Joshua Gershman, editor of *Der Kamf*, the Yiddish-language, Canadian-Communist weekly, on the impediments to seeing the truth: "Yet where will I go? The Party is my life, without it I am nothing. What will I do, where can I be active?" (p. 163)

This memoir, then, is instructive regarding some of the personal and communal experiences of the Jewish Left in Canada in the twentieth century. Not surprisingly, many of the important questions remain unanswered or are, at best, superficially addressed. But however unsatisfactory Biderman's *apologia pro vito sua*, one should keep in mind that the goal, as Biderman and many of his Canadian Communist colleagues saw it, was the betterment of the people and the workers. The fight was noble though the soldiers were badly flawed.

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Eker, Glen. *Jews Resident in Ontario According to the 1851 to 1901 Censuses of Canada*. Toronto: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2002. v, 234 pp.

Glen Eker has undertaken an enormous task with results that will be of great benefit to demographers, genealogists, geographers, historians, and sociologists. Indeed, anyone concerned with Jewish population or with individual, nineteenth-century, Ontario Jews will find this book a rich resource. Eker has carefully scrutinized the nominal (individual) returns for each of the six decennial censuses taken in Ontario from 1851 to 1901,

transcribing much personal data for several thousand people who identified themselves as Jews by religion or ethnicity, or who were descended from Jews, and even for non-Jews living in a family with a Jewish member. Each person is identified by category. Entries are referenced to allow access to the more complete information to be found in the microfilmed censuses which are available in many libraries or in searchable online versions (1871, 1901 only) on the National Archives of Canada's ArchiviaNet site (www.archives.ca/02/0201_e.html). Researchers consulting these resources will find Eker's book a very useful guide.

The book is divided into two parts: the first includes Jews located everywhere in Ontario except Toronto, while the second deals only with Toronto residents. Each part is subdivided by census year; for each year, geographical units or areas are given (county, township, municipality, ward) and people are listed alphabetically by surname and given name. Several clear Toronto maps delineate the city's wards and show expansion over time, incorporating areas for which the earlier census returns are to be found in the first part or vice versa. A common index of surnames and one of places are important tools linking the sections of the book.

In both sections, each census is presented with special notes and information, and for all but 1851 (in Part 1) Eker lists his own summary tabulations of the areas in which Jewish residents were recorded, together with their numbers (see also below). The exception is due to the paucity of Jews recorded in 1851. Readers can easily total the numbers.

Names of people in families and personal information about them (depending on the questions asked in the various censuses) are presented as they were recorded by individual census takers. Because of space and format limitations and also to be consistent across census years so that reasonable comparisons may be made, the information is selective. Usually, Eker gives name, age, country or province of birth, ethnic origin (1871, 1881, 1901: eg. Irish, Hebrew, Jewish, Polish, Russian)

or religion (1851, 1861: e.g., Christian Israelite, Hebrae [sic] Jew, Israel Synagogue, Israelite, Jewish, Jewish Church, Synagogue), profession, occupation, or trade, and, for larger urban centres, the city ward or district. Because of changes to the questionnaire, the place of birth of each parent is given for 1891 instead of ethnic origin, and the year of immigration is included only for 1901. Often the category “profession or occupation or trade” is left blank, undoubtedly as in the original return. Curiously, Toronto’s 1861 transcriptions omit religion, while those for 1901 omit ethnic origin but include exact dates of birth.

In his introductions, the author carefully notes the important problems he faced in his work, together with the solutions employed to overcome them. One problem is spelling variations in family names and illegible entries. Eker solves most of the name problems by using a surname index with standardized headings. This helps to locate information about individuals everywhere in Ontario throughout the period. The author discovered significant errors in the statistical summary tables, which for a great many years were the only census records open to researchers. In this regard, the leading demographer of Canadian Jewry in the past, Louis Rosenberg (*Canada’s Jews: a Social and Economic Study...* Montreal: Canadian Jewish Congress, 1939; reprinted, edited by Morton Weinfeld, Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993), had only these limited tables to work from. For the most part, he did not use any of the censuses before 1871, and in Table 197 (“Urban Jewish Communities in Canada”), he relied on data from 1891 through 1931.

A few examples of how Eker has corrected the earlier summary information of the 1891 census are illustrative. Rosenberg (Table 197) and Eker indicate the same number of Jewish inhabitants for Berlin (Kitchener), Dundas, and Kingston but have different totals for Galt (4 R vs. 3 E), Guelph (11 R vs. 8 E), Hamilton (316 R vs. 315 E), Perth (1 R vs. 6 E), and Sarnia (38 R vs. 41 E). Eker lists 25 census districts in 1891

where the summary tables show from eleven to one Jew as resident, while the nominal returns show no Jews at all. The discrepancy amounts to 65 “missing” Jews. In the 1891 Toronto returns, the summary tables and Eker differ in their totals for all but one (St. Patrick’s) of the city’s eight wards, giving a total of 1,425 recorded by Rosenberg (who does not provide a breakdown by ward) and 1,441 calculated by Eker. One ward total is “off” by as much as 130 percent.

Thus Eker corrects and fine tunes the old crude figures, while providing easy access to new and to known data regarding Ontario Jews between 1851 and 1901. His meticulous attention to detail and to the various ways in which Jewish affiliation was indicated on the returns is extremely important. The personal information about each Jewish resident and the indexes and notes make Eker’s work a unique and invaluable resource for anyone interested in the nineteenth-century Jewish population of Ontario.

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Richard, Guy W. *le Cimetière Juif de Québec: Beth Israel Ohev Shalom*. Sillery: Septentrion, 2000. 135 pp.

This little book provides genealogical raw material concerning the Jewish community of Quebec City, which is now reduced to some 15 families but once numbered ten times that. Guy Wagner-Richard’s intention is to document the Jewish presence in the city, and the book is part of a larger project to integrate the Jewish past in Quebec into the traditional Francophone concept of the *patrimoine*, the collective patrimony (i-ix).

The book consists of a sketch of the Jewish cemetery in Quebec City, with each headstone graphically represented. Information about names, birth places, places of death, ancestors, and descendants has been filled out through careful research in the registers of Quebec and Montreal congregations, as well as the civil census. Interspersed throughout are expla-