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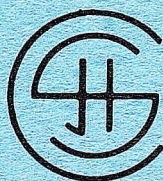
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'The Agony of Israel': Watson Kirkconnell and Canadian Jewry

JACK LIPINSKY * ‡

Résumé

Les lecteurs du *Jewish Standard* l'édition de Juin 1943 furent sûrement conscients des rumeurs inquiétantes concernant le sort de leurs frères dans l'Europe occupée par les Nazis. A cette époque, ils avaient également une bonne raison de se demander si quelqu'un à part les Juifs était préoccupé par le sort du Judaïsme Européen. Ainsi, il doit avoir été rassurant de lire un long poème écrit par un Gentil qui fut très sympathique aux douleurs des Juifs d'Europe. Ce poème est intitulé ainsi: "The Agony of Israel" et le nom de l'auteur est Watson Kirkconnell.

De nos jours, le nom de Kirkconnell est oublié; il y a cinquante ans il était familier aux oreilles des dirigeants du Judaïsme Canadien. De document retrace son pèlerinage intellectuel à partir de la quatrième génération de Canadiens W.A.S.P. jusqu'à la théorie dirigeante et au promoteur du concept de la masaique canadienne.

Ains que nous le verrons, la carrière de Kirkconnell jette une vive lueur sur plusieurs aspects de l'histoire juive du Canada particulièrement dans le rôle de la press Yiddish.

Readers of the June 1943 edition of the *Jewish Standard* were surely aware of the ominous rumours concerning the fate of their brethren in Nazi-occupied Europe.¹ By this time they also had good reason to wonder if anyone besides

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Jews was concerned with the fate of European Jewry. Thus, it must have been reassuring to read a long poem by a Gentile which was highly sympathetic to travails of European Jewry. The poem, entitled, "The Agony of Israel," began:

Bow your heads, all ye nations
And humble yourselves, all ye peoples
In the presence of sorrow unspeakable
At the sight of anguish beyond measure;
For the sons of Israel are slaughtered all the day long
And the daughters of Jerusalem are violated and slain
And the synagogue is burned in the fire
And the place of the Congregation is utterly destroyed.²

The author's name was Watson Kirkconnell.

Today Kirkconnell's name is all but forgotten; fifty years ago it was familiar to the leaders of Canadian Jewry. This paper will trace his intellectual pilgrimage from fourth generation W.A.S.P. Canadian to leading theorist and promoter of the Canadian Mosaic concept. As we shall see, Kirkconnell's career throws a bright light on many aspects of Canadian Jewish history, especially on the role of the Yiddish press.

Kirkconnell was born in Port Hope, Ontario on 16 May 1895. Both his parents were teachers. After a brilliant scholastic career, marked by a love of learning for its own sake, Watson enrolled in Queen's University in October 1913. He decided to focus his luminous and intense intellect on philology and aspired to a Professorship in Comparative Philology or Comparative Literature.

By 1916 he had his M.A. and a gold medal in both Latin and Greek. He then volunteered for war service and spent the next three years guarding German P.O.W.'s at Fort Henry and Kapuskasing. After the war, Watson felt that it was too late to resume his pursuit of linguistic scholarship. A long siege of illness in 1919-20 added physical exhaustion to his mental exhaustion. By early 1921 he had lost almost all hope of continuing his education.

Suddenly, in the spring of 1921, the portal of scholarship opened once more. Watson won an I.O.D.E. scholarship to Oxford. But even the prospect of one year at this famous university could not completely dispel Watson's depression over the disruption of his education. He decided to become a journalist and convinced himself that an Oxford B. Litt. in Economics would provide a good background for what he admitted was "a humbler profession."³

Kirkconnell arrived at Oxford just when the great institution was recovering

from the War. It was a time when internationalism and the importance of the League of Nations were important discussion topics.⁴ Watson was very interested in the 'problems of the Peace' and devoted his B. Litt. thesis to an examination of the threat to world peace presented by high unemployment and rampant and renascent nationalism during the postwar recession.⁵ Watson believed then—and for the rest of his life—that nationalism was the greatest threat to a peaceful Europe. During a Christmas vacation tour of the Near East, Watson was powerfully convinced of the validity of his thesis when he witnessed the plight of the Armenians with his own eyes.⁶

Kirkconnell returned home in August 1922. He was preparing to seek a journalistic job when a great opportunity arose. Arthur Phelps, Professor of English at Wesley College in Winnipeg, offered Watson an assistant Professorship in English. Watson hesitated, knowing that he lacked formal training in this field, but Phelps's pleas finally convinced him. It proved to be the key decision of his life—for it kept a born scholar in the ranks of academe.

The sure vision of historical hindsight reveals that the location of Wesley College catalyzed Watson's encounters with the New Canadians. Winnipeg in the early 1920's was a Canadian Babel, whose polygot population epitomized the potentialities of the Canadian West. For many English-Canadians, Winnipeg was dangerously dominated by its foreigners who were held responsible for the General Strike of 1919. New Canadians rejoiced in the cosmopolitan diversity of the city and regarded it as an important cultural centre.

Confronted by this ethnic diversity, Kirkconnell vacillated between Anglo conformity and sympathy for the New Canadians. His fear of nationalism and his hatred of Communism led him to declare that "in Winnipeg . . . there had already been an attempt at revolution in 1919 . . . floated on a black river of revolutionary purpose among the foreign language radicals of the prairie city."⁸ Yet at the same time, Kirkconnell was prepared to look upon most New Canadians as "neither angels or devils, but three-dimensional human beings like the rest of us, striving to build a new existence in a new country."⁹

In 1924 Watson married Isabel Peel after a three year engagement. He was not to enjoy marital bliss for long; Isabel died on 16 July 1935 after giving birth to twin sons the previous day. This shattering blow threatened to turn the young Professor's life into a nightmare. He was now alone for the twins were left with Isabel's parents, and he lived in a garret on top of the Men's Residence—85 steps from the warmth of human companionship. Watson had always enjoyed solitude; but the crushing solitude of grief threatened his sanity.

To occupy his grieving mind, Watson turned back to his first love—philology. He determined to use the large number of languages he knew or had learned at Wesley to help him translate elegiac poetry in many languages as a memorial tribute to his wife.

Watson labored at his task for almost two years. He was careful to translate the poetry faithfully in order that each poem would retain the metre, shades of meaning, and “emotional voltage of the original.”¹⁰ The intellectual and emotional experience of these two years forever changed Watson’s opinion of New Canadians and their culture:

I confess that . . . the task [of writing the book of elegiac poetry] . . . became at last an instrument of deliverance and revelation, not in any religious sense as normally so conceived, but in the broadest realm of the human spirit. In the years before I had believed in an academic way in the common humanity of mankind. My studies in history, economics, and anthropology had helped me towards a fuller intellectual realization of that truth. But I had remained emotionally blind to the reality until my heart, made sensitive by grief, had felt through the poetry of fifty languages man’s common perception of the sacredness of grief and the beauty of life even in its tragedy.¹¹

Thus, Isabel’s death catalyzed Watson into becoming emotionally as well as intellectually involved with the New Canadians.

The publication of these collected elegiac translations as *European Elegies* in 1928 marked the emergence of Kirkconnell as the defender of New Canadians against Angloconformity. His insistence that the European cultural heritage of Slavs and Ukrainians was superior to that of Anglo-Canadians flew in the face of Angloconformists insistence on the cultural inferiority of the ‘bohunks’.¹² Like any new convert, Watson was filled with zeal; by 1930 he attacked the ‘melting-pot’ theory, cornerstone of Angloconformity, in no uncertain terms:

I disagree profoundly with those who would hack off completely all roots of European culture into conformity with some arbitrarily nationalistic pattern; I believe rather that the perpetration of the finest elements of Old World culture will incalculably enrich the life of the New World.¹³

Watson believed, a bit naively, that all properly enlightened men could be more tolerant of New Canadians. The only reason for their tolerance was ignorance. For a Professor the solution seemed obvious: write a book informing people about the beauty of New Canadian culture. Kirkconnell’s next book, *The New Heritage*, attempted to fill this need. It was published in 1930.¹⁴

The book opened with a short introduction which sought to dispel any myths equating race and language. The next thirteen chapters were filled with laudatory comments about the European heritage of many New Canadians. An entire

chapter was devoted to Jews.¹⁵

This chapter was written in the semi-apologetic style familiar to all readers of the late Chief Rabbi Hertz's works; Kirkconnell tried to prove that Jews were useful and a force for good in the world because of men like Halevi, Isaiah, Ibn Gabirol, Marx, Mayerbeer, and a host of others. As befitted an intellectual, Kirkconnell told the intellectual history of the Jews with a special emphasis on Spinoza. He also revealed his interest in poetry by quoting from and pontificating at length on the merits of Ibn Gabirol and Yehuda HaLevi.

Kirkconnell argued that when all the contributions of Jews to world culture were added up, it was obvious that the Jews had made many important contributions to world civilization.¹⁶ Kirkconnell now decided to take his intellectual odyssey against intolerance to the next logical step: he would prove that New Canadians had contributed as much to Canada as their forebears had contributed to world culture.

Driven by his belief that the fires of nationalism could only be quenched by the still waters of international and interethnic brotherhood, and fearful that the Great Depression would rekindle the same fires of nationalism that had led to World War One, Watson labored to build bridges between New and Old Canadians. Indeed he labored on three fronts simultaneously: he continued translating new Canadian poetry, he wrote his own verse, and he wrote on the multinational nature of Canada.

By 1935 he had translated even more European verse and had established himself as a poet of considerable stature with the publication of his first volume of poetry, *The Tide of Life*. Most of the poems in this volume had been written in 1928, and one, "Intolerance", is strikingly similar to Kirkconnell's earlier writing on this theme. The poem characterized Intolerance as:

A tireless fiend, winging from the tracts of hell

whose appearance was a loathsome as its origin:

Old smoke, odor of ash, lingers about thee yet
Old Chains, fetter and rack, jangle upon thy breast,
Old creeds, slimy and blind, crawl on thy filthy flesh
Old hates, fetid and foul, reek from thy patriot throat.

Yet Watson believed that this hell-bred carrion could yet be slain:

Times change, truth is increased, sunlight of reason dawns.¹⁷

It is obvious that the remarkable continuity of thought between "Intolerance" and *The European Heritage* was intentional. The poem sketches the

malaise; the book seeks to provide the cure by filling Kirkconnell's own prescription:

“Truth is increased, sunlight of reason dawns.”

Yet all men have their biases and Kirkconnell was no exception. His relationship with Jews never proceeded beyond intellectual involvement: unlike many other ethnic groups he befriended, he was never quite able to understand the emotions of Canadian Jewry. The basis for this attitude lay in his Baptist upbringing, which instilled in him the belief that Jews were religiously inferior to Christians. As he typified Judaism in a poem entitled “Blood”, ironically published along with “Intolerance” in *The Tides of Life*:

Mosaic cultus sanctified the gore
of butchered beast and bird, and more and more

Hosea raised his voice against a world
That so misused the character divine
Isaiah's curse was hurled
Against the blind and heartless Jews that sought
Their righteousness in blood; and Micah taught
That G-d had set the sacrifices as naught
But centuries annulled the vision of that day
And let priest confirm their savage rite.
Until at last G-d's all-fulfilling might
Brought forth a man who walked a humble way.¹⁸

In 1935 Kirkconnell released *Canadian Overtones*, a book of translations of poetry by New Canadians in seven different languages. Interestingly enough, Yiddish was not one of them. In his 1967 memoirs, *A Slice of Canada*, Kirkconnell stated that he could not translate Yiddish because, “my competence is too limited to be of much value.”¹⁹ It is difficult to credit his word on this point. It is hard to believe that a man familiar with Hebrew and Middle German could not know Yiddish. Besides, Kirkconnell frequently reviewed Yiddish poetry, and, as we shall see, was familiar with the Yiddish press. We may also dismiss that notion that Watson hired a translator given his perennially precarious finances.²⁰

Canadian Overtones confirmed Kirkconnell's vision of Canada as a land whose cultural potential could best be achieved by integrating New Canadians into Canada without stripping away their ethnic past which could inspire a re-birth of Canadian culture.²¹

Canadian Overtones caught the eye of A.S.P. Woodhouse, editor of the *University of Toronto Quarterly*. He gave Watson a podium from which to spread his gospel of interethnic fraternity by appointing him editor of a ‘New Canadian Letters’ section. Kirkconnell held this post from 1937 to 1968 and re-

viewed New Canadian literature, and, for the first eight years, their press as well. This appointment marked the acknowledgement of Kirkconnell's pre-eminence as an interpreter of New Canadian culture.

As European events drew war ever closer, Canadians began to eye new Canadians as potential fifth columnists. Kirkconnell, ever vigilant when the goodwill towards new Canadians that he had so painstakingly nurtured was threatened, decided to exert a special effort. In summer 1938 he travelled to Europe to see the situation for himself. His reports, syndicated by the Southam newspaper chain, are remarkable for their total absence of commentary on German Jewry. At first blush, this would seem to be a policy dictated by prudence; Kirkconnell could not be expected to reveal the truth while in Germany and risk imprisonment. Yet, when Kirkconnell returned home he refrained from publicizing what he had seen.

Shortly after he returned, Watson gave a radio lecture on "Minorities in Europe".²² He did not mention the plight of the Jews at all. Only one conclusion is possible: Kirkconnell did not believe that Jews, unlike all the other new Canadian groups he came into contact with, were a minority group entitled to a homeland of their own. As we shall see, he never changed his mind on this vital point.

The event of *Kristallnacht* shocked many hitherto blase Canadians—albeit only for a short time. Watson was deeply shaken; his long emphasis on the basic brotherhood of Man was under attack. He joined the Canadian National Committee on Refugees which called for the admission of selected refugees into Canada and constantly urged that Jews make up some of these refugees on the basis of strict humanitarianism.²³ This policy was consistent with Watson's belief in the brotherhood of all men and he threw himself into the CNCR's work with gusto.

The shock of *Kristallnacht* led Watson to finally reveal some of the persecution of Jews he had seen on his European trip. In an article on "Canada and the Refugees" published in June 1939, he wrote vividly of antisemitism in Vienna and of refugees waiting without hope in Prague. But by far the most revealing part of the article told the story of a boat moored at Bratislava with "300 Viennese refugees aboard."²⁴ which could not enter Czechoslovakia or Hungary and whose return was barred by the Austrian police. It was only thirty years later that Watson finally revealed that these refugees were Jews.²⁵

By now war was imminent. All through the fear-filled summer and early autumn of 1939 Watson labored on a survey of new Canadian opinion as revealed

by their press. His verdict, which appeared in October 1939 entitled, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, argued that 98% of the new Canadians were loyal citizens. Watson was particularly supportive of Canadian Jewry, who were under fire from Canadian Nazis as well as foreign foes. He refuted Nazi propaganda claims that Jews polluted Aryan stock through intermarriage by citing census figures revealing that the rate of Jewish intermarriage was phenomenally low. He also refuted the myth that the Jews controlled Canadian journalism²⁶

This careful analysis of the new Canadian press won rave reviews from critics and established Kirkconnell's name as the national expert on new Canadian opinion at a time when the Federal government was desperately searching for a way to monitor this opinion. This led to Kirkconnell's appointment to many government committees, the most important of which were the Nationalities Branch, the Bureau of Public Information, and its successor, the Wartime Information Board.

The desire to ensure a united Canadian war effort led Kirkconnell to maintain his vigilance on new Canadian opinion. This drew him into even closer contact with Canadian Jews. Many academics were interested in Watson's ideas now, and he was invited to London, Ontario to present a paper at the annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association in May 1940. Watson, recently appointed as Chairman of English at McMaster University, delivered a fascinating paper on "The European-Canadians in their Press", in which he reasserted his belief that the vast majority of New Canadians were loyal.

A good deal of space was devoted to the Yiddish press. Kirkconnell noted that the circulation of these papers was 121,011—a jump of 28,000 since 1931. He attributed this amazing increase, which brought an average of three newspapers to each Jewish house, to "religious consciousness, Zionist nationalism, and the outside pressure of community prejudice."²⁷ Yet, Kirkconnell was not afraid that the intense group consciousness of the News would lead to "a balkanization of our national life."²⁸ He reminded his audience that in the Great War Canadian Jews had enlisted and had been decorated at a significantly higher rate than the national average. He was sure that this performance would be repeated.

As a result of this paper, Canadian Jewry began to notice Kirkconnell. Louis Rosenberg glowingly praised him in his weekly column in Winnipeg's *Dos Yiddish Vort* as being "unique in Canadian life" because "he has gone out to meet us more than halfway."²⁹ Watson Kirkconnell's name became a household word for many Canadian Jews when he contributed an article entitled

'Canada, a Multicultural State'' to the second "Canadian Jewish Yearbook" which appeared in September 1940.

In this article Watson alluded briefly to his Winnipeg experience with the "aggressive and intelligent"³⁰Jews of that city. Most of his article focused on the possibilities of enriching national life through the maintenance of ethnic cultural diversity. He believed that the war would cement the ties between New Canadians and their new homeland as all united behind the war effort.

In Ottawa, many government ministers were interested in making sure that Kirkconnell's dream came true and that the new Canadians would unite behind the war effort. The Bureau of Public Information (BPI) was established in late August 1939. It was responsible to the Minister of Labor. In September and October its functions were broadened by a series of Orders-in-Council and on 8 December 1939, P.C. 4073 authorized the hiring of a Director. The BPI was to distribute information about the war effort and was to use the war as a unifying symbol for all Canadians. In July 1940 the BPI was given a higher profile; it was now the responsibility of the Minister of National War Services.³¹ This coincided with a fresh outbreak of Anglo-Canadian xenophobia that accompanied the invasion of France and the subsequent banning of the Communist Party of Canada and many of its ethnic affiliates.

By this time Canadian Fascism was all but dead; the government was thus able to focus all its attention on Communism, which was much the greater threat anyway.³² Communism was not really that great a threat either, but popular opinion equated all Eastern European immigrants with Communism. In actual fact, while the Communist Party of Canada was composed mainly of Finnish, Ukrainian, and Jewish members, only a minority of each ethnic group belonged to the Communist Party of Canada.

Kirkconnell had always been fervently anti-Communist.³³ He did not have much contact with Communism in Winnipeg,³⁴ but his research for *Canada, Europe and Hitler* had revealed that a minority of certain new Canadians were attracted to Communism. Watson was happy to observe that *Der Kampf*, the Toronto Jewish Communist newspaper, was actively denouncing Russia in September 1939.³⁵He reaffirmed this conclusion one year later in a Canadian Club speech.³⁶

By June 1941 his relationship with Canadian Jewry was at its apex. In a very important pamphlet for the BPI entitled *Canadians All*, and published in June 1941, Watson reminded his readers that both Russia and Germany ardently desired the destruction of the British Empire.³⁷ He then informed his readers that

the C.P.C. membership was mainly Anglo-Canadian, and that “their most aggressive leaders are . . . among the Scotch from Glasgow.”³⁸ Canadian Jews were discussed in a long section vetted by Oscar Cohen of the CJC-Central,³⁹ and were praised at great length for their excellent record in many diverse fields. Kirkconnell reminded his readers of Canadian Jewry’s distinguished war record and warned them that accepting antisemitism was the first step to “paralyzing our nationale morale” and thus playing into the Nazis’ hands.⁴⁰

Shortly after the publication of *Canadians All*, Germany invaded Russia. This event completely changed the BPI’s approach to wartime information. Now Russia had to be portrayed as an ally. The federal government went even further than many Canadians, including Kirkconnell, deemed necessary when BPI information began to endorse the Communist system itself.⁴¹ This leftward shift in government policy left Kirkconnell, who sharply differentiated between support for Russia and support for Communism, in disfavor with the government. His *Canadians All*, was withdrawn; it was re-released after all his anti-Communist attacks had been carefully expunged.⁴²

Kirkconnell was frustrated by these attacks, especially since they occurred just as he was gaining recognition for his many talents. In 1942 he won the Lorne Pierce medal of the Royal Society of Canada, and was elected president of the Canadian Authors Association and Chairman of its Writers War Committee. But his honesty in denouncing Communism coupled with the increasing ineffectiveness of the BPI at winning the loyalty of new Canadians led to the reorganization of the BPI into the WIB in August 1942. On 28 January 1943 John Grierson became effective head of the WIB. He was convinced that Kirkconnell was a Red-baiter and had to be dismissed.⁴³

On 1 February Kirkconnell lashed out in a Canadian Club address in Toronto on “Our Communists and the New Canadians”. He attacked the reappearance of Communist newspapers under new mastheads, such as the *Vochenblatt* whose editor, J. Gershman, was correctly identified as “a prominent Jewish Communist who surrendered along with Tim Buck last September and has been conditionally released.”⁴⁴ He calmly exposed Communist threats against him and promised to continue his battle against the re-legitimization of Communism in Canada.

Kirkconnell was immediately attacked as being an antisemite by the Jewish community as a result of his speech. He claimed that the ADL was set loose on him—but this is dubious in light of the low profile in which Canadian Jewry preferred to adopt on these matters. Kirkconnell explained his actions by stat-

ing that he was only trying to tell the Jews, as he did every other ethnic group, to clean the Reds from their midst. As he noted in his memoirs, “It almost seemed that to label *any* political leftist as a Jew was the unpardonable sin.”⁴⁵

This attitude is reasonable; at the time Kirkconnell was certainly not anti-semitic. But Canadian Jews did not like attention being drawn to divisive forces in their midst; and despite Kirkconnell’s accusations, they were trying to clean their doorsteps of Communism. Despite Kirkconnell’s best efforts, he did not quite understand the inner dynamics of Canadian Jewry—who chose to admit Communists into the Canadian Jewish Congress and other bodies—without giving them much responsibility and even less of their trust so as to present a united front to improve the overall image of Canadian Jewry. Kirkconnell prided himself on understanding new Canadians; he certainly did not understand the Jews as well as he understood the Ukrainians or Icelandic-Canadians.

In 1944, infuriated with the continuing leftward shift of government information policy, Kirkconnell published *Seven Pillars of Freedom*, a long, lavishly documented expose of CPC propaganda in Canada. Most of the information was accurate, and an infuriated Communist press swarmed around Watson like angry bees. But, unfortunately, Kirkconnell’s assessment of Canadian Jewry departed from his usual standard of scrupulous accuracy.

In a lengthy discussion of the woeful lack of fraternity in Canada, Kirkconnell bemoaned the persistence of antisemitism. After reminding his readers that “wholesale extermination of the Jews is under way in Hitler’s Europe”⁴⁶ he reprinted his poem on ‘The Agony of Israel’ and lambasted the government for its heartless refugee policy. All this was consistent in light of his attitude towards Canadian Jewry in the previous five years.

But now, frustrated by the advance of Communism and the apparent refusal of Canadian Jewry to heed his advice, Kirkconnell sounded a new note. He stated that ‘one sole factor partly explains, without excusing, this national hardness of heart [towards Jewish refugees]. That is the notorious leadership given to Canadian Communism by a substantial minority of the Canadian Jews.

. . . Jews, moreover, have been the dynamic nucleus of the party.’ He then continued with the outrageous suggestion that “Norman Freed is really no. 1 Communist, with Sam Carr, Annie Buller, Becky Buhay and Joseph Salsberg as part of the organizing centre . . . Comrades Buck, Smith, and Dube are merely strategic fronts for the boys in the back room.”⁴⁷

As if this misinformation from a man who knew, but chose not to publish the truth were not enough, Kirkconnell went on to attack Canadian Jewry for elect-

ing Communists to Parliament, for attacking his work and credibility, and for not heeding his advice and cleaning the Communist from their midst. “You cannot keep a pig in a city backyard without the neighbours knowing about it,” he proclaimed.⁴⁸

Kirkconnell then embarked on a stream of self-adulation, informing his readers that he had ruined his eyes learning foreign languages so as to better understand new Canadians. He stated that his work was motivated solely by “the desire for the building of a better way of life in Canada” and not for political gain.⁴⁹ He therefore insisted that he refused “to be frightened into silence by accusations of anti-Semitism and racial intolerance issuing from the Communist board of strategy and re-echoed in Jewish quarters.”⁵⁰

There is no record of any official C.J.C. response to Kirkconnell’s attack. David Rome clearly recalls that, contrary to Kirkconnell’s claims, the CJC left him alone because “they were not in a position to go after anyone.”⁵¹ But it is certain that Kirkconnell’s attack met with disapproval from all those Jews who read it. They must have been shocked to see their former defender attacking them—but worse was yet to come.

The Gouzenko revelations convinced Kirkconnell that his lonely voice had been correct in its assessment of Communism. In the postwar year he continued to rail against Russia. His appointment as President of Acadia University in 1948 along with the supposedly apolitical complexion of this post did not still his pen when it came to Communism.⁵² A strange silence pervaded his relationship with Canadian Jewry which contrasted sharply with his friendly relations with new other new Canadians. He wrote no “letters to the editor” urging relief of Jewish postwar refugees and was equally silent on the issue of the partition of Palestine. As Kirkconnell’s papers are not yet available, we can only guess at the reasons for this strange silence. We can guide ourselves by using the only two revealing tidbits of Kirkconnell’s post-war thoughts on Jews.

In a 1957 review for his *Letters in Canada* in the *University of Toronto Quarterly* of H. Sawatsky’s *Templars of Mennonite Stock*, Kirkconnell acidly linked his archenemies, the Communists, to the Zionist Israelis:

those [templars] in Russia were wiped out in World War Two by the Communists. Those in Palestine were driven out in 1946-48 by the Israeli invaders, along with a million other victims of Zionist violence . . . The author of the present history belongs to the group that was settled in Palestine until the Israelis usurped the land.⁵³

It seems that Kirkconnell had accepted the rhetoric of the PLO long before that group had even begun its existence.

In 1968 Kirkconnell delivered a Presidential Address to the Royal Society of

Canada. Ostensibly, his lecture was philological; it dealt with three legendary animals—the *Leviathan*, *Behemoth*, and *Kraken* that “may serve as emblems for political entities.”⁵⁴ After a long, often obtuse discussion on the nature of nationalism, Kirkconnell got to his major point. He discussed *kraken*, a Norwegian sea-monster, and described two views of it. “One”, he ingenuously noted “is often alleged to be an octopus of world finance, which was blamed by Neville Chamberlain for dragging France and Britain into an unnecessary World War II.”⁵⁵ Just in case this allusion was not clear to an audience of scholars, Watson provided a footnote which indicated the Forrester Diaries as his source of information. A glance at the indicated page is clear enough: Forrester remarks that J.P. Kennedy had informed him that “Chamberlain stated that America and the world Jews had forced England into war.”⁵⁶ After thirty years Kirkconnell had come full circle: he now was an antisemite.

This tragic and ironic *volte-face* is understandable given the tide of world events that first drew Kirkconnell and Canadian Jewry together and then swept them apart. For his part, Watson tried to “meet the Jews more than halfway” by informing himself of their customs, reading their literature and press, defending them against antisemitism, and pleading on Christian and humanitarian grounds for the admission of some of Jewish refugees into Canada. Until 23 June 1941, when Hitler invaded Russia, Kirkconnell’s desire to paint a favorable picture of Canadian Jewry meshed perfectly with the policy of the CJC.

The German invasion of Russia changed the face of the home front. It allowed Communism to relegitimize itself in Canada. Kirkconnell was brave enough to distinguish between aiding Russia and aiding Communism, but in the heat of the crisis the Canadian government found it more useful to blur this distinction.⁵⁷ Kirkconnell, one of the best informed men in the country on the real nature of the CPC, fought a lonely crusade against the government’s policy. Like many crusaders, he was ostracized and subjected to ridicule; like many crusaders, in his zeal he saw all the issues in the solid colours of black and white. Thus, the apparent refusal of Canadian Jewry to denounce Jewish Communists were met by scorn from Kirkconnell.

Despite his knowledge of Canadian Jewry, Kirkconnell could not quite transcend the cultural barriers between Christian and Jew that he himself had done so much to lower. He understood facts about Jews; he did not understand their emotions. He thus could not understand that even though Communists sat on the Joint Public Relation Committee (JPRC) and CJC Executive they were not trusted,⁵⁸ that Canadian Jewry, like the federal government, accepted the

Communists without trusting them, out of a desire to close ranks in wartime.

After the war, bitter at Canadian Jewry's apparent rejection of his advice despite his long and lonely battles on their behalf, his old animosities towards Judaism came to the fore. He could never reconcile himself to the idea of the Jews having a land of their own. After the Six Day War, with Israel's survival seemingly secure, his antipathy exploded into actual antisemitism.

Kirkconnell's career reveals that, in the final analysis, he was unable to overcome the cultural and emotional barriers between Gentile and Jew despite all his talents. His behaviour reveals that his idea of a Canadian Mosaic was a fragile intellectualism that collapsed under a wartime stress that evoked a more basic appeal to religious sentiments deeply inculcated in childhood and adolescence. It is tragically ironic, yet revealing of the intellectual weakness of the Canadian Mosaic concept, that a man of such clear vision who wrote sensitively about 'The Agony of Israel' at its darkest hour, spitefully refrained from supporting the establishment of the very state whose existence would prevent the recurrence of so agonizing a tragedy.

NOTES

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3. idem. *A Slice of Canada*. (Toronto:University of Toronto Press, 1967),p.15
4. For a good description of Oxford life when Kirkconnell attended see C. Hollis. *Oxford in the Twenties* (London:Heinemann, 1976). It should be noted that Oxford was in academic decline at this time. See J.L. Granatstein. *A Man of Influence: Norman A. Robertson and Canadian Statecraft. 1929-68*. (Toronto:Deneau, 1981),p.11-17
5. His thesis was later published as *Internation Aspects of Unemployment*. (London: Allen and Unwin, 1923).
6. For a fuller discussion see J. Lipinsky. "The Intellectual Road to a Canadian Mosaic Concept: Watson Kirkconnell and the New Canadians, 1895-1945."(unpublished '2000' paper for Professor C.C. Berger, 1978) p.10-13
7. D. Bercuson and K. McNaught. *The Winnipeg Strike: 1919*. (Toronto:Longman, 1974), p.35,103-105
8. Kirkconnell. *Slice*. p.314
9. *ibid.*,p.260
10. *ibid.*,p.55-6
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18. *ibid.*,p.22-23
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23. On the Canadian National Committee for Refugees see I. Abella and H. Troper. "Canadian Jewry and the Refugee Crisis" in J. Daglie and T. Fernando. (eds.) *Ethnicity, Power, and Politics in Canada.* (Toronto:Methuen, 1981):233-51, especially p.248-50
24. This article is reprinted in W. Kirkconnell. *Twilight of Liberty.* (Toronto:Oxford University Press, 1941),p.60-66
25. *idem.* *Slice.* p.335
26. *idem.* *Canada, Europe, and Hitler.* (Toronto:Oxford University Press, 1939),p.157
27. *idem.* "The European Canadians in their press." *Canadian Historical Association Report* (1940):85-92 at p.88
28. *ibid.*,p.90
29. *Dos Yiddishe Vort/Israelite Press.* (Winnipeg) "Kirkconnell field." 27 September 1940. p.1
30. W. Kirkconnell. "Canada, A Multicultural State." in *Canadian Jewish Yearbook 5701(1940-41).*(Montreal:Canadian Jewish Yearbook,1940):p.97-101 at p.97. This may be the first use of the word 'multicultural' in Canada
31. For a brief historical account of the formation of the BPI see *Canada House of Commons Debates.* 8 July 1940, p.1393; 23 July 1940. p.1839; 17 February 1941, p.799. A full and excellent account may be found in W.R. Young. "Making the Truth Graphic: The Canadian Government's Home Front Information Structure and Programmes during World War Two." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation:University of British Columbia, 1978)
32. L.R. Betcherman. *The Swastika and the Maple Leaf.* (Toronto:Fitzhenry Whiteside, 1973), p.137-46
33. W. Kirkconnell. *International Aspects.* p.200-219
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35. *idem.* *Canada, Europe, and Hitler.* p.179-86
36. *idem.* "European Elements in Canadian Life." *Canadian Club of Toronto.* 4 November 1940. p.9
37. *idem.* *Canadians All* (Ottawa:Bureau of Public Information, 1941),p.15
38. *ibid.* loc. cit.
39. *idem.* *Slice.* p.273
40. *idem.* *Canadians All* p.38
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42. Kirkconnell. *Slice.* p.315
43. Young. "Making Truth Graphic." p.192
44. W. Kirkconnell. "Our Communists and the New Canadians." *Canadian Club of Toronto.* 1 February 1943. p.13
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47. *ibid.*,p.192-3
48. *ibid.*, loc. cit.
49. *ibid.*, p.194

50. *ibid.*, p.194-95
51. Letter from D. Rome to J. Lipinsky. 27 April 1982 in the author's possession.
52. W. Kirkconnell. "Canadian Communists and the Comintern." *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* (1948):91-116; W. Kirkconnell. "Integrity in Foreign Affairs." *Ukrainian Quarterly* 11 (Autumn 1955):300-310
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54. *idem.* "Leviathan, Behemoth, Kraken." *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* (168):161-170 at 161.
55. *ibid.*, loc. cit.
56. J. Forrestal. *The Forrestal Diaries*.
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58. personal interview with Mr. F. Catzman, Q.C., 23 March 1982.

Erratum:

In David Bercuson's article *Illegal Corvettes: Canadian Blockade Runners to Palestine, 1946-1949* (VI: Spring, 1982 p.14) the sentence "Jewish Immigration to Palestine was *illegal* in any accepted international sense" should, of course read "Jewish immigration to Palestine was *illegal* in that it violated the regulations of the Mandatory government but it was not *illegal* in any accepted international sense . . ."

The editor deeply regrets this error.

Bishop's Medical Faculty 1871-1905: Its Jewish Dean, Aaron Hart David, and its Jewish Students

ELIZABETH HEARN MILNER

Résumé

Le Dr. Aaron Hart David, premier médecin Juif du Canada, fut doyen de la Faculté de Médecine de l'Université Bishop de 1871 à Montréal et Major dans le 42^{ème} Bataillon de la Milice Canadienne. Le grand-père Aaron Hart David que s'appelait Lazarus David, dut venir au Canada avec les troupes du Colonel Amherst en 1757.

Le double système d'éducation que évolua au Québec reconnaissant seulement les Catholiques et les Protestants, rendit pratiquement impossible aux enfants des premiers venus Juifs en minorité l'accès à un enseignement élémentaire même.

Aaron Hart David fut envoyé à Round Hill School à Northampton, Massachusetts, pour y recevoir un enseignement. Il revint au Québec et fut mis en apprentissage chez le Dr. William Caldwell de Montréal en 1829. Il y demeura pendant trois ans puis continua à l'Université d'Édimbourg afin de parfaire sa formation de médecin. Il fut diplômé médecin en 1833, un des deux premiers médecins Juifs au Québec et au Canada.

Le Dr. Philip Hart reçut également son diplôme en médecine en 1833. Toutefois, le Dr. Hart mourut en 1842 pendant que le Dr. David connut une plus longue carrière.

Introduction

Dr. Aaron Hart David, Canada's first Jewish medical doctor, was Dean of Bishop's Medical Faculty from 1871 until his death in 1882. Aaron Hart David was born in Montreal in 1812. He was the son of Samuel David, a Montreal merchant and a Major in the 42nd Battalion of the Canadian Militia. Aaron Hart

David's grandfather was Lazarus David who had come to Canada with Colonel Amherst's troops in 1757. Lazarus David's headstone is the oldest Jewish cemetery marker found in Canada.

The dual system of education that evolved in Quebec, which recognized only Catholics and Protestants, made it almost impossible for the children of the early Jewish minority to receive even an elementary education. Aaron Hart David was sent to Round Hill School in Northampton, Massachusetts, for his education. He then returned to Quebec and was indentured to Dr. William Caldwell of Montreal in 1829. He remained an apprentice under Dr. Caldwell for three years and then proceeded to the University of Edinburgh to complete his training as a physician. Aaron Hart David graduated as a medical doctor in 1833, one of the first two Jewish medical doctors in Quebec and Canada. Dr. Philip Hart also received his medical degree in 1833. Dr. Hart died, however in 1842, whereas Dr. David had a long and distinguished career.

The late Dr. Harry C. Ballon M.D. of Montreal wrote about Dr. David in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* of January 1962. David Rome of the Jewish Congress in Montreal has also written about Dr. Aaron Hart David. In May of 1981, I received a Canada Council Explorations Grant to research and write the history of *Bishop's Medical Faculty*, which began in Montreal in 1871 and amalgamated with McGill's Medical Faculty in 1905. Through my research, information about Dr. Aaron Hart David's struggles as Dean of Bishop's Medical Faculty for eleven years has come to light, as well as information about the Jewish students that attended the small, innovative, medical school that Dr. David helped found and lead. Of particular interest is Regina Lewis-Landau who graduated from Bishop's Medical College in 1895. She was the first Jewess to graduate as a medical doctor in Canada.

Background

In order to understand the tremendous difficulties faced by Dr. David when he was Dean of Bishop's Medical College, one must be aware of the medical monopoly that existed in Montreal from 1829 up to 1871.

In 1815 a group of Montreal women began The House of Recovery to care for the sick and needy immigrants of the city. By 1819, the establishment had moved to larger quarters and a group of Montreal physicians were attending at the hospital. The doctors serving at the The House of Recovery were the same doctors that had been made members of the Montreal Medical Examining Board, which granted licences to all those who wished to practise medicine in

the Montreal area. By 1822 The House of Recovery was called Montreal General Hospital and four years later the physicians at the hospital decided to begin a medical school called the Montreal Medical Institution. They submitted a request for a charter to the Quebec Legislature but the request was refused because the school was not affiliated with a university. The physicians then approached McGill with the idea of beginning a medical faculty. The idea was accepted, the physicians of Montreal General Hospital were made McGill professors and in 1829 McGill's Medical Faculty opened its doors. The result of this union was that a powerful group of medical men controlled Montreal General Hospital, McGill's Medical Faculty and the Medical Examining Board of Montreal.

In 1851 a group of Montreal practitioners, including Dr. Aaron Hart David, Canada's first Jewish medical doctor, opened a second, English-speaking, medical college called the St. Lawrence School of Medicine. The students of the new school were blocked from attending clinical lectures at Montreal General Hospital and the founders were forced to begin their own hospital — St. Patrick's Hospital. Had students graduated from the St. Lawrence School of Medicine, they would have been forced to take the examinations given by the Montreal Medical Examining Board because the new school was not affiliated with a university and could not grant its own degrees. After only one year, the St. Lawrence School of Medicine was forced to close its doors. The sting of defeat was keenly felt, and one of the founders, Aaron Hart David, remembered the weaknesses of the St. Lawrence when he helped to found another medical school twenty years later.

Another Medical School Begins in Montreal - 1871

In 1871 five Montreal doctors once again decided to begin a second, English-speaking, medical school in Montreal. These men were Aaron Hart David, Charles Smallwood, William Hingston, Francis Wayland Campbell and Edward Henry Trenholme.

The first recorded minutes of the founders of the new medical school of 1871 were dated February 1st of that year. This meeting took place in the home of Aaron Hart David at 42 Beaver Hall Terrace. It is unfortunate that nothing appears to exist that records the earlier meetings that must have taken place. It is very probable that Dr. David may have initiated the plan to begin a medical school in 1871. He was the one founder that had been involved with the St. Lawrence School of Medicine, and the first recorded meetings took place in Dr.

David's home, which suggests that he may have called the meetings. It is possible that he was the moving force behind the plan, but no conclusive proof has been found to date.

At the meeting held on February 1st, an affiliation with the University of Bishop's College in Lennoxville was discussed. This would certainly have been a concern of Dr. David. Immediately following this meeting Dr. David left for Lennoxville to discuss an affiliation with the Corporation of the University of Bishop's College.

On February 3, 1871, the founders of the school met once again at Dr. David's home and he reported that his meeting in Lennoxville had been successful. The new school of medicine in Montreal officially became the Medical Faculty of the University of Bishop's College after a formal meeting held in Montreal on March 9, 1871.

The University of Bishop's College in Lennoxville had been founded in 1843 through the efforts of the third Anglican Bishop of Quebec, George Jehosaphat Mountain. The college was above all an Anglican institution devoted to providing an education in the Arts and Theology to young men preparing for the Anglican clergy.

At the outset, it appears doubtful that Aaron Hart David would have been considered a suitable choice for the Dean of Bishop's Medical Faculty. A strange set of circumstances, however, made him Dean of this faculty of a very Anglican University, and the first Jewish Dean of any university faculty in Canada.

Dr. Charles Smallwood was first named Dean of Bishop's Medical Faculty. Dr. Smallwood had an international reputation because of his work in electricity and meteorology, not in medicine. He held a professorship at McGill in meteorology and had received the degree L.L.D. from that institution. He accepted the position of Dean in March of 1871 and resigned in June of the same year because he had received an appointment, to do scientific research, from the U.S. War Department and the Department of Marine and Fisheries. The resignation threw the new school into chaos.

Dr. William Hingston was quickly named Dean but only two months later he resigned. On August 7th he had been given an ultimatum by the Hotel Dieu, where he was an attending physician, to either leave the hospital or resign as Dean of Bishop's Medical Faculty. He chose to do the latter and resigned on August 12, 1871.

Dr. Aaron Hart David, the most senior and experienced doctor left of the

three remaining founders, took over as chairman of the faculty and staff meetings. He was faced with an almost impossible task. The calendar for the new medical school had been printed while Dr. Hingston was Dean and it was now incorrect but there was no money to have it reprinted. The staff had to be reorganized and a new doctor had to be found to lecture voluntarily at the college. It was the middle of August and the faculty had promised the University of Bishop's College that the medical school would open in October. The school, however existed only on paper as no rooms had been found in which to give lectures. On top of this, Montreal General Hospital's Governors were refusing to admit Bishop's students to clinical lectures, contending that they only accepted medical students that matriculated into McGill. This was the devastating situation into which Dr. David was thrown. It is little wonder that Dr. Hingston, upon his resignation, advised the remaining faculty members to give up their project.

Somehow, under Dr. David's leadership, Bishop's Medical Faculty carried on and prepared to open. Just thirteen days before the school's opening date a flat with suitable quarters for lecturing was found at the corner of McGill and Notre Dame Streets. The block in which the flat was located was called the Toupin Block. Also just thirteen days before the school's opening, Dr. Aaron Hart David was named Dean by the Corporation of the University of Bishop's College.

The official opening of Bishop's Medical Faculty took place in the school's rented quarters on October 4, 1871. Dr. David spoke on the occasion. He recalled the failures of the St. Lawrence School of Medicine and spoke of the challenge that lay ahead.

Dr. Aaron Hart's Years As Dean 1871-1882

Problem followed upon problem during Dr. David's years as Dean of Bishop's Medical Faculty. Men of lesser ability and drive would have given up but Dr. David persisted, determined to make the impoverished medical school a success.

The school had no financial help from the University of Bishop's College; that had not been a part of the affiliate agreement. The faculty applied for a grant from the provincial government. For three years they were turned down but finally received a grant of \$500.00. This amount increased for a few years to \$600.00, but then decreased once again to the original amount. Having no endowment or money held in common the faculty found it difficult to function

as a unit.

Two outstanding problems needed to be solved by Dr. David and the faculty members. The rented flat in the Toupin Block was only suitable for didactic lectures and better facilities had to be found. It was also essential that the new faculty break the monopoly held by the physicians of McGill and Montreal General Hospital and get their students into clinical lectures at Montreal General Hospital.

These two serious difficulties were finally solved. Under Dr. David's leadership, the faculty entered into an agreement with Dr. Robert Godfrey, a senior doctor on the staff of Bishop's Medical College. Dr. Godfrey agreed to purchase a lot at the corner of Jeanne Mance and Ontario Streets and build a medical school with the understanding that Bishop's Medical Faculty would rent the building. This building was completed for the opening of the second school year. Circular letters were sent to friends of the college and influential people in Montreal explaining the unfair stand McGill and Montreal General Hospital were taking, in refusing to admit Bishop's students to clinical lectures and hospital work. A petition was also sent to the Governors of Montreal General Hospital and the Hotel Dieu. Finally in 1873 Bishop's students were admitted to both hospitals and the price of tickets for attendance at the hospitals was published in the Bishop's Medical College Calendar.

At the same time as all this was going on Dr. David became very ill. His illness was announced to the faculty at a meeting held in September of 1873. The seriousness of Dr. David's poor health was a well-kept secret at the time but he had cancer of the bowel. In the following year, 1874, Dr. David suffered the further tragedy of the death of one of his sons.

In spite of Dr. David's personal loss and his serious illness he carried on as Dean of Bishop's Medical College overseeing the introduction of many innovations in medical education. Hygiene was introduced at Bishop's in 1871. This does not seem unusual but the subject was not on McGill's curriculum at the time. In 1874 Bishop's introduced Practical Physiology to their curriculum and a physiology laboratory, the first of its kind in Canada, was constructed in the Bishop's College Building.

During the scholastic year 1875-1876, Dr. David was faced with two serious and unusual problems. In January of that year, the body of a woman was taken from a Cornwall cemetery, and somehow Bishop's Medical Faculty was suspected of having the body. A detective and a Mr. Burton showed up at the medical school to see Dr. David and, upon investigation, the body in the school's

dissecting room turned out to be that of Mrs. Burton. The incident was published in both the Cornwall and Montreal newspapers and a Bishop's Medical student was found responsible. Dr. David delicately settled the resulting furore and earned the admiration of his faculty members and staff. This matter was scarcely settled when another incident occurred. The medical student selected as valedictorian for the graduation of the faculty in 1876 made a speech which was considered inappropriate by the hierarchy of the University of Bishop's College. Exactly what was said in the address remains a mystery but the displeasure of the university was expressed in several letters to Dr. David. Dr. David settled the matter by outlining new procedures for the selection of the Medical Faculty valedictorian and the matter was put to rest.

In 1877 another innovative step was taken by Bishop's Medical Faculty. In the summer of that year, the faculty began a summer school which offered accredited courses. McGill began a summer school for medical students during the same year but only practical experience was offered to those who enrolled.

In 1875 Bishop's Medical Faculty had taken over the control of a small hospital located at 51 St. Antoine Street. The hospital was called the Woman's Hospital and it became one of the first specialty hospitals in Quebec. In 1879-1880 Bishop's Medical Faculty took over the Mills Building or Western Hospital as Woman's Hospital. The Bishop's students had specialized practical experience in obstetrics and gynaecology at the college's Woman's Hospital.

In June of 1880 Dr. David's health was failing and he submitted his resignation as both Professor of the Practice of Medicine and Dean of Bishop's Medical Faculty. In September the faculty responded by making him Emeritus Professor of the Practice of Medicine and refusing to accept his resignation as Dean of the faculty. By December of 1880 Dr. Aaron Hart David was very ill. The faculty then began the plans to establish the Aaron Hart David Scholarship which was to be awarded to a first year student and would consist of free tuition for the following three years of study. (Eventually the scholarship was discontinued and the Aaron Hart David Medal was awarded. This medal was first awarded at the close of the school year 1889-1890.)

In March of 1881 Dr. David must have been in remission because his health was improved. He attended the convocation of the college which was now being held in Synod Hall behind Christ Church Cathedral in Montreal. A special address of appreciation was made on this occasion to Dr. David by R. W. Heneker, the Chancellor of the University of Bishop's College. Dr. David was also told of the scholarship, established in his name, at this convocation.

Dr. F.W. Campbell, Dr. David's friend and supporter, now Vice-Dean of the faculty spoke next, giving the report for the year 1880-81. He then stated that the faculty declined to accept Dr. David's resignation as Dean of the college. It was very obviously a display of great admiration and affection on the part of Dr. Campbell, the professors and students of Bishop's Medical College.

Dr. David carried on as best he could but finally in 1882 he was confined to his bed and absent from the convocation held in April of 1882. Dr. F.W. Campbell made the following remarks about Dr. David at that convocation.

"A year ago, struggling against bodily infirmity, his well-known energy carried him through the entire meeting. This year, although with us in thought and sympathy, his strength is such that he is unable to leave the house, and the duty of representing him falls upon me. I am sure this assembly joins heartily with the Faculty in the hope that his life may be spared many years, and that his heart may be warmed by the increasing success attending Bishop's Medical School."

On November, 5 1882, Dr. A. H. David died. The diagnosis was cancer of the bowel about the sigmoid flexure and this was confirmed by a post mortem.

There is much more to be written about Dr. David, his eleven years as Dean of Bishop's Medical Faculty and his relationship with his successor, Dr. Francis Wayland Campbell. Sacks' *The History of the Jews in Canada* and Dr. H. C. Ballou's article about Dr. Aaron Hart David both mention Dr. A. H. David's diary. This valuable document would shed more light on Dr. David's life and work. Unfortunately the diary appears to be lost. Dr. David was respected and admired by the faculty members of Bishop's Medical Faculty and the students of the college. Dr. David first resigned from the faculty because of his health in 1880. Dr. F. W. Campbell would have been made Dean had Dr. David resigned but Dr. Campbell preferred to press Dr. David to remain with the faculty. In 1881-1882 Dr. David resigned once again and again Dr. Campbell insisted that Dr. David remain as Dean, yet Dr. Campbell was fulfilling most of Dr. David's duties. Bishop's Medical College was really Dr. Aaron Hart David for the first eleven years and Dr. F. W. Campbell for the remaining twenty-three years. Dr. David established an innovative medical college in 1871 and Dr. Campbell continued as Dean in 1882, following Dr. David's philosophy of education.

Dr. Regina Lewis-Landau — Canada's First Jewish Lady Doctor

Bishop's Medical College was the first medical school in Quebec to accept women. The first woman graduated from Bishop's as a medical doctor in 1895, twenty-seven years before a lady doctor graduated from McGill. Between,



Regina Lewis Landau

Canada's first Jewish woman doctor, taken in 1895. (Photograph courtesy of the author)

1895 and 1900 twelve women graduated as medical practitioners from Bishop's.

In 1891 Regina Lewis-Landau registered as a student at Bishop's Medical College. She had been born in Richmond, Virginia in 1875. Her parents were Isador and Pauline Landau of Germany. The Landau family crossed the Atlantic and settled in Richmond, where Regina was born. There were also two other girls in the family. In 1879, Isador Landau died and the family moved to Philadelphia. Seven years later the family moved to Montreal, Quebec.

Regina attended Montreal High School and then matriculated into Bishop's Medical College. In 1895 Regina Lewis-Landau (she chose to hyphenate her name) graduated from Bishop's as a medical doctor. She also won the Chancellor's Prize that year for writing the best final examinations.

The convocation of 1895, held in Synod Hall in Montreal, was a special event. Rabbi Veld of Temple Emanu-el of Montreal was asked to speak on the occasion of the graduation of the first Jewish lady as a medical doctor in Canada. According to an account of the event which appeared in the *Mitre* of April 1895, the University of Bishop's College publication

“Rabbi Veld gave a brilliant address in which he greatly praised Bishop's College for extending its benefits to all classes regardless of nation or creed. He referred to the honor and distinction won by Bishop's College in being the first institution in Canada to grant a diploma to a Jewess. In the name of the community he represented, he expressed sincere thanks for the liberality which Bishop's had shown to those of other races and creeds.”

Following her graduation Dr. Lewis-Landau went to the University of Edinburgh where she earned a Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons. She also visited medical institutions in Paris, Berlin and London.

Upon Dr. Lewis-Landau's return to Montreal she opened an office at 729 Sherbrooke Street. She became involved in volunteer relief work in the immigrant area of Montreal which was known as the settlement. She was particularly concerned about teaching the basic principles of hygiene to the young wives and mothers she assisted. Her mission sounds simplistic today but in the 1890's it was revolutionary.

Dr. Regina Lewis-Landau also advocated higher education for women. She was one of the first members of the Women's Club of Montreal. She belonged to the Council of Jewish Women, the Montreal Medical Association and Temple Emanu-el. She founded a Literary Society for young ladies. The purpose of this society was not merely to introduce young ladies to good literature but to create a consciousness-raising experience for young women and spur them on to seek university education and a place in the professions.

On July 27, 1902, Dr. Lewis-Landau married Dr. Julius Herman Jacobson.

He was one year younger than Regina and his family, like the Landau family had come to America from Germany.

Regina Lewis-Landau Jacobson left Montreal after her marriage and made her home in Toledo, Ohio. She devoted herself to the brilliant doctor she had married, Dr. Julius Herman Jacobson, and made education and public hygiene her causes. She became Toledo's leading club woman. She used her medical knowledge and her husband's influential position to press her public education in social hygiene. She held memberships in the Toledo Women's Club, the Council of Jewish Women, the Educational Club of Toledo and the Agnes Morris Shakespeare Class. She served on the city Board of the Federation of Women's Clubs, the Sisterhood of the Collingwood Avenue Temple of Toledo, the Toledo City Club and the Americanization Board.

Through the efforts of Dr. Regina Lewis-Landau Jacobson the study of health education and social hygiene was introduced into the public school curriculums of Toledo as a special project. She served as a member of the Social Hygiene Council and in 1923 she became chairman of the Health Education Committee of the Federation of Women's Clubs. She, herself, gave instructions in the care of babies to classes of girls in public schools of Toledo under the auspices of the Child Welfare Committee as an activity of Children's Year.

In 1918, at the age of forty-two, Regina Lewis-Landau Jacobson became a widow. Four years later she married Dr. I. H. Lewkowicz of Youngstown, Ohio. Her volunteer work continued. She served as a volunteer of St. Vincent's Hospital, the auxiliary of the Society for Crippled Children, the Toledo United Nations Association and the Toledo League of Women Voters.

In July of 1950 Dr. Regina Lewis-Landau died at the age of seventy-two. She was survived by her son and two daughters, six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

It is difficult to estimate the extent of Dr. Lewis-Landau's influence. She had educated the women in the settlement area of Montreal and worked to have hygiene added to the curriculum of Toledo, Ohio schools. Her consciousness-raising associations for young women must have had far-reaching effects also. One might have wished for a different biographical sketch of Canada's first lady Jewish physician but there is no denying that Dr. Lewis-Landau made her contribution to society in her own way.

Other Jewish Students at Bishop's Medical College

During the thirty-four years that Bishop's Medical College existed twenty

students indicated in the college register that they were Jewish. The birth places of these students were listed as Poland, Russia, Scotland, England, the United States and Canada. Seventeen of the twenty Jewish students were enrolled in medicine and of those seventeen ten students graduated.

The first Jewish medical student to graduate from Bishop's Medical College was David Alexander Hart, Aaron Hart David's son-in-law, from Three Rivers. He graduated in 1874 and established his practice in Montreal at 296 Sherbrooke Street West. He was still in practice at this address in 1910, twenty-six years later.

N. Shacher, who graduated as a doctor from Bishop's in 1905 opened an office at 95 Sherbrooke Street East. Other Bishop's medical graduates who were Jewish likely also remained in Montreal but only these two practitioners were listed in the Bell Telephone Archives as having offices. This does not mean that other Jewish men that had graduated from Bishop's Medical Faculty were not practicing in Montreal at this time.

In 1895 Bishop's Medical Faculty began a Dental Department which offered the degree D.D.S. (Dr. of Dental Surgery). This was the first dental school in Quebec to award such a degree. In 1896 The Dental College of the Province of Quebec, which had begun in Montreal in 1892, asked for an affiliation with the University of Bishop's College and Bishop's Medical Faculty in order to offer the degree D.D.S. The Dental College of the Province of Quebec really desired an affiliation with McGill and/or Laval. Laval, however, was not interested at this time in beginning a dental school and McGill refused to grant the degree D.D.S.

Three Jewish gentlemen received the degree D.D.S. from Bishop's. These men were the first Jewish dentists to receive such a degree from a Quebec institution. Dr. J. Rubin and Dr. Edward Elkan received their degrees in 1905 and Samuel S. Ship received his dental degree in 1906, the last year that the University of Bishop's College gave the degree.

Conclusions

Although Dr. Aaron Hart David was seriously ill for nine of his eleven years as Dean of Bishop's Medical College he kept the impoverished institution alive providing a broad curriculum, which included didactic lectures, practical laboratory work and hospital experience. He was admired, respected and loved by all those who worked with him at the college. Dr. Francis Wayland Campbell, Dr. David's most faithful supporter, served as Dean of the school following Dr.

David's death. He continued to lead the college implementing the original and liberal policies that Dr. David had begun.

Bishop's Medical Faculty was not an extension of the University of Bishop's College in Lennoxville but the result of an affiliation between a group of Montreal doctors and the university. The affiliation was, consequently, so loose that it left Dr. David and later Dr. Campbell free to maintain a liberal and innovative school which accepted students of all faiths, nationalities and races, enrolled women thirteen years before they were enrolled at the University of Bishop's College, and began a dental school affiliated with a university and offered the degree D.D.S. as of 1896.

Two hundred and forty-six medical doctors and sixty dentists graduated from Bishop's Medical Faculty. Twelve women graduated in medicine and one woman graduated in dentistry — Georgina McBain. The school graduated Quebec's first lady doctors, Canada's first Jewish lady doctor, the first Jewish dentists in Quebec with the degree D.D.S. from a Quebec university and Quebec's first lady dentist holding the degree D.D.S. from a Quebec university.

The graduates of Bishop's Medical College spread out all over the world. Several of them became specialists, one of the graduates wrote extensively about the history of medicine in both Canada and Quebec, a number of graduates contributed to medical journals, encyclopedias and texts, and a few became internationally famous for their original contributions in medicine and dentistry. These are surprising accomplishments for a small, struggling faculty that lasted only thirty-four years: a university faculty which was the first in Canada to have a Jewish Dean, Canada's first Jewish medical doctor, Aaron Hart David.

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The Jews of Kingston
A Comparative Study of Organized and
Non-Affiliated Jews
(A Preliminary Report)*†

MARION E. MEYER

Résumé

Seulement 50% environ des Juifs vivant à Kingston et, d'après des statistiques, dans la plupart des centres urbains au Canada, était officiellement affilié à des institutions religieuses juives existantes. Cependant, très peu de chercheurs, s'il en fut, ont systématiquement documenté ce que sont les différences de positions intra-groupe et inter-groupe actuellement, des Juifs "affiliés" et des Juifs "non-affiliés" en regard à des sujets tels que la religion, l'identité, la survie culturelle du Judiasme et l'appui envers l'Etat d'Israel.

Ceci, à une échelle limitée, est l'essentiel de mon oeuvre. Le document suivant est un rapport préliminaire de certaines de mes découvertes à ce jour.

A l'origine, la recherche visait à faire l'esquisse du profil sociologique de Beth Israel, la Communauté Juive Orthodoxe de Kingston.

Toutefois, peu de temps après le début de la recherche, deux, facteurs devinrent importants à l'élargissement de son étendue:

1. La découverte, par 15 familles, de Iyr-Ha-Melech, une petite congrégation réformiste qui accrut la complexité de la vie juive à Kingston;
2. La découverte, grâce à Statistiques Canada (recensement de 1971), à l'effet que près de la moitié de la population juive ne pouvait pas être décomptée par le biais de l'affiliation à une synagogue.

La première étape, c'est-à-dire le profil sociologique de Beth-Israel fut néan-

* Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Jewish Historical Society Ottawa, June 1982

† Documentation for this paper is available through the Editor

moins brossée, tout comme à l'origine, comme une unité distincte et fut prête pour fin de publication en 1978.

L'étude de la congrégation Iyr-Ha-Melech et la recherche des Juifs manquant de Kingston fut entreprise par après.

Only about 50 per cent of Jews living in Kingston and, it is estimated, in most Canadian urban centres, affiliate formally with existing Jewish religious institutions.¹ Yet, very few researchers, if any, have so far systematically documented what are the present day intra- and inter-group attitudinal differences of "affiliated" and "non-affiliated" Jews with respect to subjects such as religion *per se*, identity, cultural survival of Judaism and support for the State of Israel.²

This, on a limited scale, is the thrust of my work. The following paper is a preliminary report of some of my findings to date.

Originally, the research aimed at drawing a sociological profile of Beth Israel, the Orthodox Jewish community of Kingston.

Shortly after the start of the research, however, two factors became influential for the broadening of its scope:

1. The founding, by 15 families, of Iyr-Ha-Melech, a small Reform Congregation, which increased the complexity of Jewish life in Kingston;
2. The discovery, thanks to Statistics Canada Census Track 1971, that nearly half of the enumerated Jewish population could not be accounted for through synagogue affiliation.

The first step, i.e. the sociological profile of Beth Israel, was nevertheless handled, as originally intended, as a separate unit and was ready for publication by 1978. The study of Congregation Iyr-Ha-Melech and the search for the missing Jews of Kingston proceeded thereafter.

The following are some preliminary findings concerning these three constituencies of Jews, some of their demographic characteristics, as well as their attitudes towards some specific matters of Jewish concern.

Beth Israel

To be located in Kingston is to benefit from the advantages which come with a small big-town. The city with its surroundings is the site of an unusually large number of service institutions for its size (approximately 60,000

inhabitants in the city, or 100,000 including the immediate surroundings). Among these institutions are: the military, five federal and provincial prisons, three major hospitals and the university. Not all have had a direct impact on Beth Israel. Very rarely did Beth Israel include a transient member connected with the military. Never, to my knowledge, was any member employed by the penal system. However, the proportion of physicians and academics, connected with Queen's University, grew steadily from the 1960's onwards. Within a period of approximately fifteen years, the composition of Beth Israel Congregation thus changed into a bimodal pattern. On the one hand, there were the old-timers, i.e. the merchants, who settled in Kingston prior to 1960; on the other hand, there were the newcomers, the professionals and academics, who came to Kingston after 1960, mainly attracted by the expanding university. Indeed there were no newcomer merchants and only four old-timer professionals at the time of the 1976-77 survey. We shall return to this point later on.

Very briefly, the first known Jews in Kingston were two Germans, Abraham Nordheimer [1846] and Simon Obendorffer [1848], who came from Bavaria because of a slump in trade, and special taxes and restrictions which led to a wave of emigration starting in 1836. For some time, Nordheimer was the music master of the Governor General, Sir Charles Bagot. Eventually, he left for Toronto and founded the Nordheimer Piano Company. Obendorffer started a cigar factory in Kingston. In time, he became the first president of the Kingston Jewish Congregation.

The vast majority of Beth Israel's 192 members, studied in 1976, are from East and Central Europe by descent. By birth, 65% are Canadian, 77% are of North American origin, and only 14.3% of the membership actually immigrated from Europe. As can be seen, in terms of geographical origin, the membership is strongly homogeneous. Not so homogeneous, as mentioned earlier, is the division of the membership into newcomers, the professionals/academics, and the old-timers, the merchants. Making room for the former was bound to result in some displacement; some shifting of power was unavoidable.

It is not surprising, therefore, that, in the course of this research, we found some differences in attitudes, sometimes reflecting the resentment generated by the need to integrate — as it were, overnight — an "invasion" of academics.

For instance, the membership's attitude towards education revealed some

interesting ambivalences among the old-timer merchants: 83% of this group felt that “education” helps to solve complex problems, but over half, 54.5% thought that “too many were getting too high an education.” At the same time, there was no difference of opinion between the old-timers and the newcomers when it came to their expectations for their children. 98.5% of the combined group were hoping for a university education for their boys and 97% favoured it for their girls.

Comments made by members of the business community, during in-depth interviews, are enlightening about their feelings regarding the academics, who have increasingly imposed their own and different perspective. At times, this new way is perceived as being out of touch with the realities of life and lacking in business acumen.

“I think what’s happening is that the shul . . . is run by the Board made up mainly of professionals who are not businessmen. They are doing things idealistically and we are always in the red.”

As for the education of their own children, the old-timers were hoping that they would possess both learning and wealth.

“. . . I would have thought that what would have happened [is that] my sons would have had a good education . . . and would have been in business. But . . . it was a never-ending business of going to school it seemed . . . X, he is 28, hasn’t earned a great sum of money even on his summer holiday, sort of thing. When I was in business for four years, I was making more money than my father was making.”

Education, in short, must not be carried too far if it is not to become dysfunctional. Alas, some of the offsprings became what they were playing at, mainly doctors and lawyers.

As has already been seen, there is some disagreement among the two groups as to how the congregation should be run.

About the informal and autocratic ways of the old-timers, one of the academics commented:

“. . . X took it upon himself, many years ago, to look after Committee Y . . . He did that by putting his own money into certain developments without asking permission . . . far be it from me to detract from the important things that he did . . . (but) certainly from the standpoint of simply running the Committee, X had no business taking upon himself to operate . . . as if it was his private domain.”

In short, with the arrival of the new breed of professionals, more formalized and less paternalistic procedures were introduced. At the same time, the above illustrates well the sense of profound identification the old-timers had with their congregation.

Differences notwithstanding, members of Beth Israel, the Orthodox Congregation, are overwhelmingly “Conservative” by their own definition as well as by their life-style. A nostalgic attachment to orthodoxy, as detected by Kalen.³ among Conservative affiliates of Toronto, is also evident here. The renewed support for an Orthodox synagogue, following the foundation of Iyr-Ha-Melech, is frequently perceived as a bulwark against assimilation. It is hoped that orthodoxy, as a “higher religious model”, will induce the children to stay within Judaism. Indeed, a commitment to socialize the children into a strong Judaic tradition is equally shared by the two components of the congregation.

Asked how important it was to her that her children should remain in the Jewish faith, the wife of a businessman replied:

“ . . . intellectually, I have reason to suspect that it’s not that important. I have knowledge and a certain feeling, in an intellectual way, that it isn’t. And yet, emotionally, by my heart and by everything else, I would say it is very, very important that they remain in the Jewish faith.”

Remarkably similar feelings were expressed by a professional.

“ . . . If you look at it coldly and calculatingly and unemotionally, there is no reason to me why that shouldn’t happen [that the children intermarry]. And yet, if you look at it emotionally, it’s a betrayal . . . ”

It is interesting to note that more than twice as many respondents of childbearing age than those aged 61 and over declared that intermarriage was intolerable. The older members preferred statements such as “regrettable” or “sometimes unavoidable”.

Next to the shared feeling of the necessity to socialize the young into the Jewish tradition is the shared unquestioning support for and identification with the State of Israel. In fact, these two areas of consensus constitute the main bonds between the members of Beth Israel, transcending age as well as time of arrival in Kingston.

Representative of these feelings is the emotional appeal made during a Hadassah meeting by one congregant, who expressed her thoughts about Jews critical of the State of Israel:

“ . . . It is extremely disconcerting that so many Jews in the diaspora are to-day speaking out against Israel. How strange. Must we always try to pacify disinterested and unconcerned Gentiles. Are they going to look after us? . . . In taking care of ourselves, a positive attitude is always best. So it goes with Israel, financial support won’t help if we are destructive by expressing negative opinions . . . ”

In summary, historical events were the factors which determined the bimodal structure of Beth Israel Congregation. A commitment to the cultural

survival of Judaism and the survival of the State of Israel are the main bonds and integrative forces of the community.

For the second part of this research, these elements were used as indicators of closeness or remoteness from current Jewish concerns in the study of Iyr-Ha-Melech and of the non-affiliated Jews of Kingston.

Iyr-Ha-Melech

The small membership of Iyr-Ha-Melech does not allow for any generalization which could be deemed relevant for Reform Judaism. The Congregation is considered here only as a distinct part of the Jewish community of Kingston.

In 1979, 17 families were known to belong to the synagogue. Of 16 of these families, 28 individuals were interviewed with at least one member from every family present. The following are some salient characteristics of the group:

Half of the interviewed families were intermarried.

All but one couple were 40 years old or younger.

All, but the older couple, which had formerly belong to Beth Israel, settled in Kingston after 1960.

One third of the respondents came from the United States.

Half the Jewish members define themselves as agnostics; a few as atheists.

The group is homogeneous in its level of education: 23 members have university degrees, 3 are college graduates, 13 are instructors at Queen's University, 5 others are students.

All members have positive feelings towards cultural Judaism. In most cases, socialization of the children is the reason given for joining the Reform Synagogue. One member, who calls himself a non-believer, gave the following, rather typical reasons for joining:

“. . . I would like to give them [the children] some consciousness of just what it means to be Jewish. Consciousness of the fact that they are Jewish and some idea of the hardships that has entailed.”

“I suppose I want to hedge my bets as far as their moral development is concerned. I am not quite sure what the balance is between religious doctrine, which I am not too worried about; Zionism, which I am somewhat worried about; and religious ethics and morality, which I would like them to have.”

Why Jewish ethics, given the fact that the respondent is not worried about Jewish doctrine?

“Well, I don’t really care whether they are religious or not. I would rather have them skeptical about religion. But I would rather have them skeptical Jews than skeptical something else.”

As for Israel, all gave verbal support for the survival of the State; 11 considered it their duty to come to its rescue in times of need. For half the members, however, support of the survival of the State of Israel did not preclude the right to criticize it. Only a minority of the members was known to support it financially.

In summary, it can be said that Iyr-Ha-Melech plays a vital role in the cultural survival of Judaism for those members who are religious skeptics and/or would have difficulties in an orthodox synagogue because of their intermarriage status.

The Non-Affiliated Jews

To find the missing Jews, which could not be accounted for through affiliation with either one of the two synagogues, I resorted to a method known as “snow-balling” (asking non-affiliated Jews for the names of others). In this way, I assembled a list of approximately 80 names. So far, 39 of the families thus listed have been approached and have been sent a questionnaire, which 34 returned completed. This represents a return rate of 87%, the highest of the three groups under study. By comparison, questionnaire returns for the two congregations were 40% for Beth Israel and 83% for the small Reform Congregation Iry-Ha-Melech. The fact is worth noting, for it reflects the enthusiasm with which the vast majority of the non-affiliated Jews greeted and co-operated with the research.

Some characteristics of the 39 families or 78 individuals of the Non-Affiliated Group contacted so far are:

- there are at least 29 intermarriages;
- 64 individuals have university degrees;
- 27 families include at least one academic; 52 persons originated in North America, with 32 being born in Canada and 20 coming from the U.S.A.

The remaining population of non-affiliated Jews immigrated from 3 continents and a great variety of countries: i.e. in Europe, from England, Holland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Sweden; in Africa, both South Africa and Morocco were represented. Individuals from South America

came from Argentina and Brazil. Finally, there was one Israeli.

Academics of Queen's University did not, by preference, associate with other Jewish academics. Among colleagues within the same discipline, being Jewish did not appear to play a role in predetermining friendships and/or other types of relationships. In short, an informal network of Jewish academics did not appear to exist.

As one might expect, skepticism about religion per se, not Judaism alone, was widespread. However, there were some notable exceptions. In its extreme form, non-affiliated skepticism was pointed enough to label it as hostile. Religion is often perceived as a devious force and as offering wrong solutions to human problems:

"I don't like religion because it separates people . . . Religion is often a way of avoiding responsibility . . . [it] gets people thinking in terms, which are not conducive to solving problems."

OR

"I have feelings about religion. In general, they are negative . . . Not very specifically about any religion, but religion in general. It may do certain things for people . . . [but] I think there are better alternatives. I would think that a social structure that would provide for the needs of a population as a whole, both in an economic sense and also in a social sense, would certainly help to do away with mythology . . . it [religion] leads to social inaction as opposed to social action."

On the other hand, non-affiliation was not necessarily correlated with negative feelings towards religion.

"While I consider "religion" i.e. the belief in a god-centered universe and ultimate purpose of things an indispensable ingredient of my personal life, I feel far less certain if "religion" is meant to imply the observation of denominational ties."

"Aside from the fact that I could only feel "at home" in an ecumenical type of religious service, I particularly reject the customary linkage of religion and nationalism [Israel as a central concern of modern Judaism]; the narrow and exclusive concern of Jewish culture based, in large part, on traditions, I sincerely respect . . ."

But while the respondent expresses discomfort with the linkage of religion and nationalism, there is no doubt as to where he stands with respect to the State of Israel:

"As to Israel: Regardless of outdated questions (Zionism vs. assimilation etc.) [it is] a fact and decisive factor of Jewish life to be reckoned with and consequently supported."

Perhaps most revealing of all are comments by individuals most hostile to religion and most critical of the politics of the State of Israel. For instance:

"I'm ambivalent . . . Don't have strong sentiments as some Jews have, including non-religious Jews. I get quite angry at certain actions of the Government of Israel . . . At the

same time I am not as hostile to Israel as I would be, given my political background, if I had not been brought up as a Jew . . . I guess I am more reasonable when it comes to the Middle East than I am about other countries . . . because the affect makes me examine my political convictions . . . It is easy to forget that there are human beings involved in political struggles; it is not so easy to do that in this case.”

In summary, it seems fair to say that, based on my research to date, the vast majority of the non-affiliated group has a strongly critical view of Israel. But this is tempered by emotional ties. Those interviewed often expressed understanding of Israeli reactions but believed that other political solutions were preferable.

Nor was nostalgia for a ritual religious past altogether absent. It was possible, so I found, to be an intermarried non-affiliated atheist and have one's boys circumcized by a mohel. Above all, a significant number of non-affiliated individuals expressed mild to strong interest in some form of secular Jewish education. Asked to rate from 0 to 10 the question:

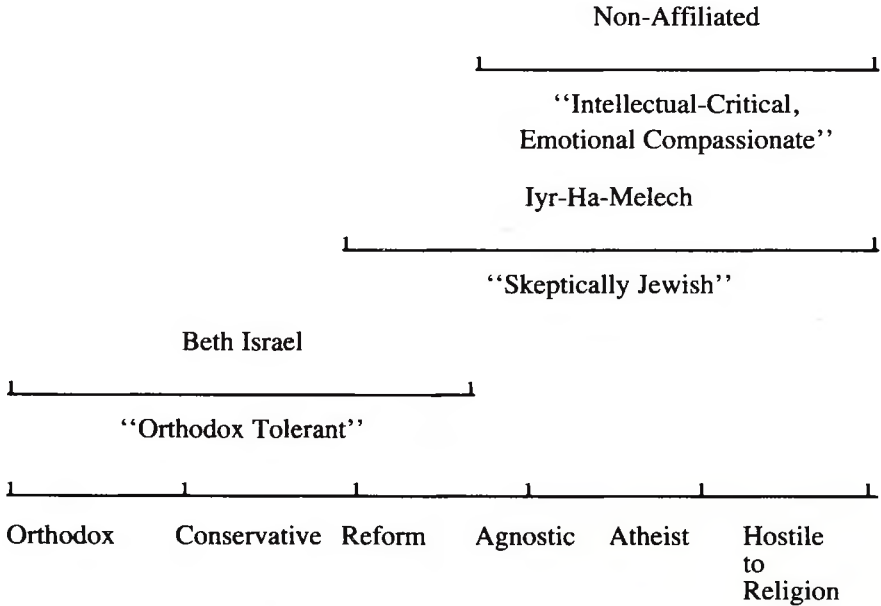
“If a secular Jewish education, based on Jewish culture and history, were available, would you like your children to receive this education?”

29% answered strongly positive, i.e. 7-10, while another 23.5% showed at least some mild interest, i.e. ratings from 3-6.

Conclusion

Ambivalence about one's religious attitudes appears to be a characteristic feature common to members of the three constituencies of Kingston's Jews. Graphically, the three groups could be represented as three partly overlapping bands forming a continuum going all the way from orthodoxy to hostility towards religion. On this continuum, Beth Israel, the oldest synagogue, which, for a long time served as an umbrella organization for all Jews desiring to affiliate formally, displays the widest span of all. It reaches from a sprinkling of orthodox Jews all the way to agnosticism. Representative of Beth Israel is the Jew who chooses orthodoxy not because of religious convictions but as a higher model, “the orthodox tolerant Jew”. The Iyr-Ha-Melech member is best characterized as a “religious skeptic, but skeptically Jewish”. As for the non-affiliated Jews, at least as far as the research has shown so far, “intellectual-critical, emotional-compassionate” is possibly the best characterization. Attitudes towards Israel are predominantly effective in all three groups, with rare exceptions claiming total detachment and disinterest. However, criticism of Israel is most prominent among the non-affiliated Jews and very much present among the Reform Synagogue members.

**The Jews of Kingston
Continuum of Religious Attitudes**



Beth Israel remains the centre of greatest Jewish activity religiously, in its tangible support of the State of Israel as well as in cultural and charitable undertakings.⁴ All three groups are vastly overrepresented in higher education. However, the exceedingly high rate for non-affiliated Jews, both in level of education and academics, has to be considered cautiously. It is important to remember here that the profile of the non-affiliated group may well change when data for the total known population will be analyzed. Nevertheless, previous research⁵ about religiosity indicates that irreligiosity increases with level of education. Also, it must be acknowledged that academics of the non-affiliated constituency are possibly more visible than other occupations. A special effort to find these is underway.

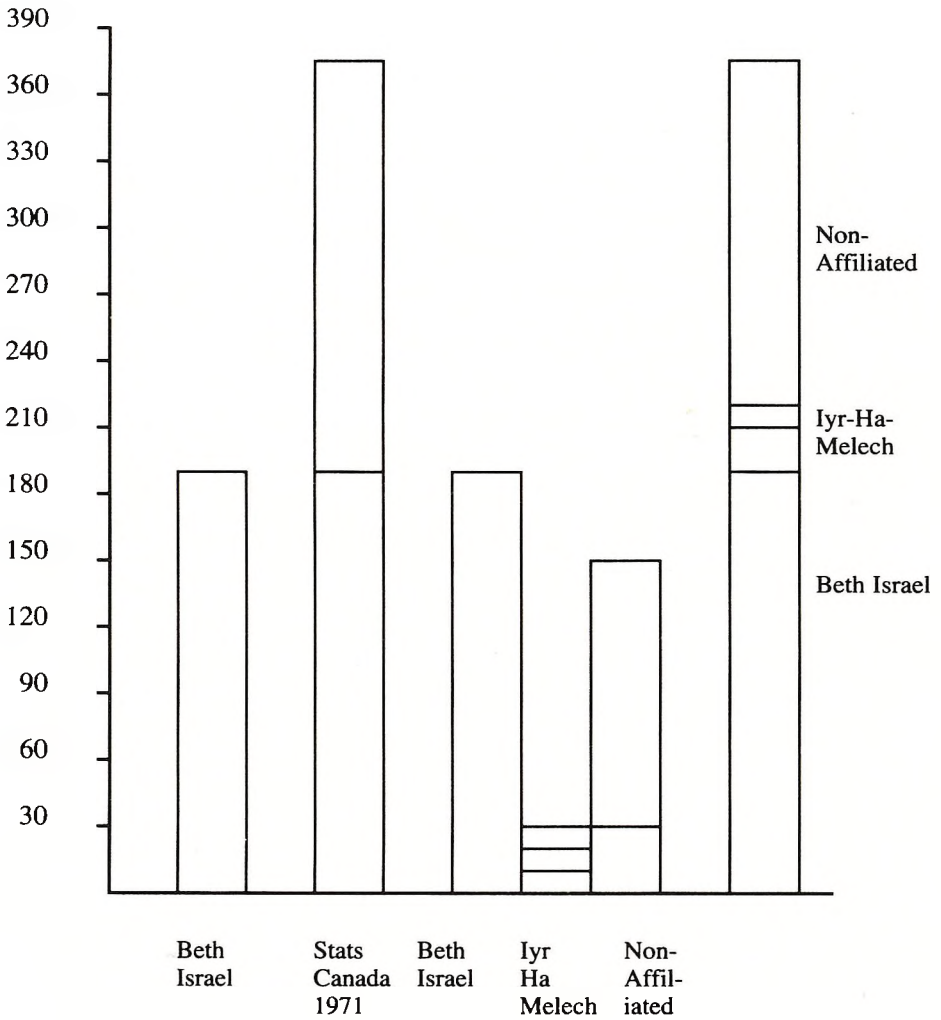
One further comment about the high overrepresentation of Jews in academia seems in order. As a whole, Jews are overrepresented at least sevenfold at Queen's University in relation to their percentage of the total Canadian population.

Most of the data covering non-affiliated Jews and collected to date remains to be analyzed and more needs to be gathered. This may well change some of the findings, it certainly will provide further information on more aspects of the life and attitudes of the non-affiliated. One point stands out so far: the vast majority of all individuals contacted, affiliated or not, has positive feelings towards Judaism.

NOTES

1. 1971 Census of Canada publications: 92-723, 92-724.
1961 Census of Canada publications: 92-545, 92-546.
2. For instance, E. Kallen in *Spanning Generations, A Study in Jewish Identity*, Don Mills, Ontario, Longman, Canada, 1977, p. 64 states: "Although there is little "hard data" on the estimated 50% of Toronto Jews who do not belong to synagogues (demographic report) or the 16% of "non-religious" Jews (Richmond), observers of Jewish life and behaviour in contemporary, urban North America seem to agree that many of the unaffiliated and allegedly non-religious Jews are essentially similar to the Conservative and Reform Jews in their current expressions of Jewish identity." See also Rosenberg, *The Jewish Community in Canada*, Toronto, McClelland and Steward, 1970, and M. Sklar, *America's Jews*, New York, Random House, 1971, p.125.
3. *ibid* p. 72
4. The following are some of the activities connected with Beth Israel:
 1. Synagogue — religious
 2. Women's Auxiliary
 3. Hebrew School including Kindergarten
 4. Adult education
 5. Youth group
 6. Archives committee
5. For instance Rodney Stark, Columbia University 1957 found that irreligiosity increased with the degree of exposure to scholarly perspectives.

The Jews of Kingston Probable Composition



The following was inadvertently left out of the article *In the beginning: a brief history of Jews in Atlantic Canada*, by M.M. Lazar and Sheva Medjuck (5: Oct. 1981) The Editor apologizes for the error.

Newfoundland

The history of the Jewish community of Newfoundland, like much else about that island province, is spoken of in terms of “firsts”. Labrador was claimed for England in 1677 by Joseph de la Penha, a Jewish merchant adventurer from Holland. Twenty years later, he was granted title to Labrador after rescuing William III from a sinking ship. While he never availed himself of the grant, this may be thought of as the first officially documented case of Jewish contact or influence in what was to become Canada.²⁰

Much of the early history of Jewish settlement in Newfoundland is open to speculation. It is believed that the first Jewish settler was an English Jew engaged in the fur trade who came to Newfoundland around 1800. There is some evidence suggesting that during the first half of the nineteenth century several other Jewish families had settled in the colony, primarily outside of St. John’s. These first Jewish settlers were Peter Ezekiel and a Mr. Tocque and Mr. Levi (who operated a business firm in Carbonear). Ezekiel seems to have come out from the West country. He married in Newfoundland (apparently the daughter of either Tocque or Levi). The Ezekiel family is still found in Newfoundland, though there are no family stories of their Jewish origins. However, the late Mr. Peter Ezekiel, when interviewed at age 94, a number of years ago, reported remembering his grandmother (who may have been a daughter or daughter-in-law of the first Mr. Ezekiel) lighting candles at the supper table once a week (Sabbath candles, perhaps?).²¹ It has also been suggested that the first Postmaster of Newfoundland, appointed in 1809, was Jewish.²²

The real history of the Newfoundland Jewish community begins, however, with the arrival in St. John’s of Israel Perlin from the United States. He was instrumental in founding the first synagogue in Newfoundland, The Hebrew Congregation of Newfoundland, in 1909. The Jewish community of Newfoundland grew slowly. In the first census that included Jews as a separate religious domination in 1935, there were 215 Jews reported. The 1971 census figures reports 360 Jews, mostly in St. John’s.

While Jews settled in most of the major towns of Newfoundland, St. John's remained the centre of the Jewish population of the province. The only presently existing synagogue, Beth El, is found there, as is the only rabbi in Newfoundland. The small Jewish communities on the west coast of the island attempted to maintain congregations (without professional staff) both in Stephenville and Cornerbrook up to the mid-60s. During the 1930s, there was a major attempt by several Jews on the west coast of Newfoundland to convince the British government to open the west coast for major resettlement of Jewish refugees from Europe. Nothing came of this attempt. The existence of American military bases, established in the very early 1940s, had some impact on the Jewish communities of Newfoundland, particularly those on the west coast and to a lesser extent, St. John's. With the closing of these bases, the Jewish communities of Newfoundland lost an important outside support mechanism which affected the viability of the smaller communities on the western side of the island.

While the Jewish community of Newfoundland seems to be well integrated into the surrounding community, having produced one M.P. (from the Cornerbrook community) and there being little evidence of public anti-semitism, its future viability is somewhat problematic. The young are moving out of the province and they are not being replaced by immigration of Jews.

Conclusion

In this paper we have attempted to convey a sense of the histories of the Jewish communities of Atlantic Canada. While we have, of course, been concerned with the historical accuracy of our findings, our overriding concern has been to convey the dynamics of Jewish life in Atlantic Canada. The heritage of Jews in the region has been obscured largely by the lack of systematically accumulated historical data. Although our search through available documents and our long discussions with older informants is certainly not exhaustive of the rich Jewish history we, nevertheless, feel it is an important first step to understanding the past. Our history can no longer simply be assumed. All too often what has been available distorts the past by conveying an image of things always being better, a "romantization of the past". These pleasant reminiscences often miss the struggles, the hard work, the obstacles to survival, and sometimes the failures. This does not suggest that what is needed is a mindless accumulation of more data, but rather more precise social description. We

have, therefore, attempted in this work to come a little closer to possessing what C. Wright Mills calls the sociological imagination which enables one:

“to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society. That is its task and its promise . . . No social study that does not come back to the problems of biography, of history and of their intersections within a society has completed its intellectual journey.”²³

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In Memoriam

DAVID E. NEWMAN, QC

Menachem Dovid ben Yosef Baruch

David Newman, who left this life *erev rosh chodesh Elul*, Saturday, August 29, 1981 as he stepped out of a shtiebel on Shabbat, was a man in love with life, in love with Judaism, in love with the aesthetic. He contributed to and was fascinated by every facet and component of Jewish life: the religious, the moral, the secular and the cultural. He was deeply immersed in every avenue and in all the highways and by-ways of total Jewish civilization: social, educational, recreational and philosophic.

From the outset he was a staunch friend and supporter of a Jewish community archives program, gave it his tangible assistance and keenly followed its progress. He was one of the early sponsors of this Canadian Jewish Historical Society Journal.

He combined in ideal proportion the deeply-rooted heritage of eastern Europe, where he spent his childhood, with the outward inquiring and challenging spirit of North America, where he spent his adolescence and acquired his later education.

He was a man whose public and private life knew no split and who in his family life and in his community activities epitomized a rarely achieved twentieth century ideal.

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