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Jewish Refugee Physicians in Prince Edward Island during the 1940s[1]

Abstract

The province of Prince Edward Island faced an acute shortage of physicians during World War II. The supply of doctors was limited for two primary reasons: enlistments in the Canadian armed forces; and an aging workforce nearing or entering retirement. The province turned to other sources to fill these gaps. An unexpected supply was European Jewish refugee physicians who fled before and during the war and eventually reached Canada. Despite the federal government's opposition to Jewish immigration, and the Canadian Medical Association's resistance to accepting refugee physicians, seven Jewish physicians practiced in PEI for varying length of time. This article reviews the medical services in PEI during the late 1930s and 1940s, efforts to alleviate the shortage of doctors, and attitudes towards Jewish refugee doctors and the roles of various stakeholders in facilitating or hindering their arrival. The article further explores how these refugee physicians' stories contributed to the province's health services, as well as their social and cultural integration into local society.

Résumé

La province de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard a fait face à une grave pénurie de médecins pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale. L'offre de médecins était limitée en raison de l'enrôlement dans les forces armées canadiennes et le fait que d'autres praticiens approchaient ou dépassaient l'âge de la retraite. La province s'est tournée vers d'autres sources pour combler ces lacunes. Un approvisionnement inattendu était constitué par les médecins juifs européens réfugiés qui ont fui avant et pendant la guerre pour rejoindre le Canada. Malgré l'opposition du gouvernement fédéral à l'immigration juive et la résistance de l'Association médicale canadienne à accepter des médecins réfugiés, sept médecins juifs ont pratiqué à l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard pendant une période plus ou moins longue. Cet article passe en revue les services médicaux à l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard à la fin des années 1930 et 1940, les efforts déployés pour pallier la pénurie de médecins, les attitudes envers les médecins juifs réfugiés et le rôle des divers intervenants dans la facilitation ou l'entrave de leur arrivée. L'article explore en outre comment les histoires de ces médecins réfugiés ont contribué aux services de santé de la province, ainsi qu'à leur intégration sociale et culturelle dans la société locale.

The province of Prince Edward Island faced an acute shortage of physicians during World War II. Before the war's outbreak, the quantity of doctors in PEI was limited, and their spatial distribution was uneven. Many physicians enlisted in the Canadian armed forces, resulting in job vacancies and reduced accessibility to medical services. Aggravating the shortage, several physicians were approaching or past retirement age and could not cover for those in the military. As it became clearer that the war

would not end quickly, the province considered other sources of doctors to address the shortage. An unexpected supply was European refugee physicians, many Jewish, who fled before and during the war and eventually reached Canada.

European-born and -educated Jewish refugee physicians first arrived in PEI in 1941. Despite the federal government's restrictions on Jewish immigration, seven Jewish physicians found opportunities on the Island. Two practiced for close to thirty years and retired in PEI and the others practiced there anywhere from a few weeks to thirteen years.

During the mid-twentieth century, twenty to twenty-five Jewish people resided in PEI, excluding Jewish men and women in the military stationed on the Island.[2] Jewish physicians were significantly over-represented in the province's medical community and Jewish population. Of the seven refugee doctors, only two intended to reach Canada, though PEI was not on their radar. The British arrested, detained, and subsequently forced three refugee physicians from Austria to travel to Canada for imprisonment in internment camps. The British deemed these and other aliens from enemy countries suspect. Two doctors took unanticipated and circuitous journeys to Canada. The seven doctors who arrived in PEI served as stop gaps to the acute shortage of doctors; some became part of a long-term solution.

Focusing on the experiences of Jewish refugee doctors who reached PEI, this article merges a chapter in the history of medicine in the province with the history of Jewish immigration to Canada during the Holocaust. Research on the Jewish immigration experience to Canada during the 1930s and 1940s is plentiful, led by seminal work on wartime movement and government restrictions by Irving Abella and Harold Troper, and Justin Comartin. More focused research by David Zimmerman and Paul Stortz underscores the plight of refugee academics attempting to enter Canada. In general, the historiography does not account for Jewish refugee doctors on the national or provincial levels. One important exception is Gerhard P. Bassler's work on the hiring of seven Jewish refugee doctors in the Dominion of Newfoundland shortly before the outbreak of World War II.[3]

This study opens with a summary of PEI's medical services during the 1940s. It then explores how the provincial government and the local medical association attempted to hire physicians. The seven doctors' stories are examined through the lens of migration studies, highlighting the push and pull factors and impediments at various stages along their journeys, as well as the cultural baggage they carried with them. The article focuses on their professional contributions to health services alongside the social and cultural challenges they faced integrating into local society. The article concludes with a reflection on the factors that brought the Jewish doctors to PEI and determined whether they remained in or migrated from the province.

Medical Services in PEI during the 1940s

PEI had a shortage of physicians, particularly in rural areas, and specialists in urban centres during the mid-twentieth century. Medical history produced mainly by practitioner-historians has focused on biographical studies of doctors, institutional histories, and efforts to combat epidemics. However, limited attention has been paid to the physician shortages and how government actors and the Prince Edward Island Medical Association (PEIMA) attempted to resolve the issue. R. G. Lea's seminal study *Island Medicine* mentioned three of the Jewish physicians discussed in this article. but acknowledged that "the role of many doctors has been played out in relative obscurity and there are many who came, practiced their profession for longer or shorter periods, and departed leaving little or no record that they, too, had been here and played a part in the drama."[4]

The registries of licenced physicians, published annually in the *Royal Gazette*, offer insight into their quantity and spatial distribution in PEI. Between 1936 and 1939 the number of licenced physicians increased from sixty-five to sixty-seven and served a population of around 95,000. In 1940, seventy-three licenced doctors were listed in the *Royal Gazette* but only sixty-one were actually practicing in PEI, with seven in the military and five absent. In 1944, the number of doctors fell to fifty-four, not including the eleven serving in the military.[5]

In 1941 twenty-three doctors worked in Charlottetown, the highest concentration in PEI; six practiced in Summerside. With almost half of PEI's doctors in Charlottetown and Summerside, rural areas were underserved. Small communities expressed dire need for doctors due to enlistment, relocation, retirement, and death. In Prince County, vacancies were reported in Malpeque, Tyne Valley, Cape Traverse, Wellington, and Alberton. At one point, the closest doctor to Alberton was in O'Leary, twenty-two kilometers away, and he required an up-front payment of $15 before making a call. In Queens County—not including Charlottetown—Clyde River, Oyster Bay Bridge, and Vernon Bridge all experienced vacancies or office closures. In Kings County there was no physician in Cardigan and only one in St. Peters Bay.[6]

In 1939 the province featured six medical institutions: Prince Edward Island Hospital, Charlottetown Hospital, Falconwood Hospital and Infirmary, and Prince Edward Island Sanitorium, all in Charlottetown; Prince County Hospital in Summerside; and Kings County Hospital in Montague. Two additional hospitals were established during the mid-1940s: West Prince Hospital in Alberton and Souris Hospital. The Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) also established hospitals: the Summerside base had thirty-five beds, three doctors, two nurses, and nineteen orderlies; and the Charlottetown base had forty-eight beds, three doctors, three nurses, and twenty-three orderlies.[7] Physicians practicing in the RCAF hospitals were not necessarily licenced in PEI. Jewish physician Samuel Janowsky maintained a PEI medical licence

from 1943 to 1946, overlapping with his service in the medical corps. Other non-resident Jewish physicians obtained PEI medical licences but their or Janowsky's presence in PEI has not been confirmed.[8]

First Attempts at Finding Doctors

Hiring Jewish refugee physicians involved various stakeholders: the provincial government; federal government departments and committees; local and national medical associations; medical licencing bodies; the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society (JIAS); and refugee support groups. The needs of provincial constituencies and public opinion influenced the selection process. The principal provincial decision-makers were Liberal premiers Thane A. Campbell (1936–1943) and J. Walter Jones (1943–1953) and Conservative leader of the opposition W. J. P. MacMillan (1935–1950). MacMillan was a physician and the province's first Minister of Education and Public Health in 1931.

The Canadian government was discriminatory in its wartime immigration policies. Prospective immigrants were divided into groups based on racial characteristics and their potential for assimilation. Most Jews fell into the "special permit" category. Evaluated on a case-by-case basis, Jewish asylum seekers required an Order in Council for admission. Only Jews from the United States and the British Empire did not fall into this category. In 1938, admissible Jewish immigrants included: bona fide farmers; refugees joining first degree relatives in Canada capable of supporting them; persons having sufficient capital to establish themselves; professional and technical persons when their service would be advantageous; persons with capital to establish new industries; and refugee orphan children under fourteen for adoption and education in Canada.[9]

Doctors allowed into Canada could not work in their profession without local medical licences. In April 1939 twelve doctors from Germany and Austria fleeing Nazi persecution were admitted to Canada. The nine provincial medical bodies did not provide enabling certificates, a requirement for sitting the Licentiate of the Medical Council of Canada (LMCC) examination.[10]

Before the war, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) took a position on admitting refugee physicians:

> Immigration, particularly referring to the admission of refugee doctors, provoked considerable discussion. It was the feeling of General Council that, while the Association is very sympathetic with our medical colleagues in some other lands for the plight in which they find themselves, Council is of the opinion that the medical schools of Canada are graduating more than a sufficient number of doctors for Canadian needs, and, therefore, Council could not support or justify the importation or admission of refugee doctors into Canada for the specific purpose of practising medicine.[11]

The Prince Edward Island Medical Society, established in 1889, joined the CMA in 1939 and became the Prince Edward Island Medical Association. The July 1941 annual meeting addressed the adverse effects the war had on medical services. "Dr. W. J. P. MacMillan spoke of the dearth of medical men in P.E.I. at the present time. He made a motion, that the secretary be instructed to write Dr. J. C. Routley, advising him we have no medical men available for active service."[12] The following year MacMillan stated that no more doctors should leave PEI for military service.

Four Jewish physicians—Israel Rachmel, David Berger, Adolf Birman, and Sydney Bandler—arrived in PEI in 1941 and 1942. The following capsule biographies describe their experiences of migration, resettlement, and integration.[13]

Israel Rachmel (1911–1980)

Israel Rachmel was born in Šiauliai in the Russian Empire (later Lithuania). In 1921 the family resided in the Lithuanian capital Kaunas, where Rachmel's father, Itsik, was a merchant. Rachmel studied at a Hebrew high school. Rising Lithuanian nationalism, together with economic difficulties, led to the emigration of 14,000 Lithuanian Jews between 1928 and 1939. In 1930 Rachmel attended the University of Caen and, six years later, completed his medical studies at the University of Strasbourg. He interned at the Jewish General Hospital in Kaunas upon his return to Lithuania.[14]

Rachmel entered Canada in April 1938 through an Order in Council, but not as a doctor. Temple Emanu-El, in Montreal, claimed that there was a scarcity of properly qualified Hebrew teachers in Canada and "this man is engaged as a public school teacher in Lithuania and that he is properly qualified and thoroughly conversant with the modern approach to children."[15] It is unclear how much time, if any, Rachmel spent teaching at Temple Emanu-El; but he interned in gynaecology and obstetrics at Women's General Hospital for three years.

In 1941 Rachmel started an internship at the PEI Hospital, in Charlottetown. An opportunity arose after David Berger, a Jewish radiologist, left Charlottetown. With radiologist and anesthesiologist J. Chester Houston on sick leave, Berger's departure necessitated an urgent search for a replacement. Rachmel covered anesthesiology. He passed the LMCC in July 1942 and opened his practise in November 1942 at 222 Queen Street. In 1943 he was appointed as anaesthetist at the PEI Hospital. Among his early medical research in Canada was the article "Pentothal Sodium Anesthesia," published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*.[16]

In 1945 Rachmel wed Charlottetown native Dorothy Ruth Davy in Montreal. The couple had one son, David. Dorothy played an important role in her husband's integration into Charlottetown society. Social notices often mentioned their attendance at community events.[17]

Rachmel was unguarded about his Jewish identity. In 1951 he and Dorothy travelled to Israel to visit his siblings David and Rivkah; he had not seen them in seventeen years. As the keynote speaker of Charlottetown YMCA's "World Outlook" meeting in January 1952, he shared his impressions of Israel. He would visit Israel several more times over the course of his life. Expressions of Rachmel's Jewish identity included membership in the Israel Medical Association, JIAS, Canadian Jewish Congress, and the Canadian Zionist Organization. The Rachmels regularly hosted Hanukkah parties in their Charlottetown home for Jewish community members.[18]

Patients and colleagues held Rachmel in high esteem. Patients publicly expressed their appreciation with "Cards of Thanks" printed in newspapers and by giving the middle name Rachmel to at least three males born in Charlottetown. One intern at the PEI Hospital, A. Stewart MacDonald, praised Rachmel's mentorship: "I got credit for 108 Obstetric cases when interning in the PEI Hospital. I did a lot of work with Dr. Rachmel, who was always at my beck and call when I got into problems while I was in Eldon [over thirty-seven kilometers away]."[19] Rachmel supported the Canadian Red Cross and local charity groups including the Lion's Club. He practiced medicine in Charlottetown until 1970. He passed away in 1980 and was laid to rest in PEI.[20]

Israel Rachmel (right) presenting an electro-magnet to the Prince Edward Island Hospital, 1954. Source: *Guardian of the Gulf*, December 2, 1954, 2.

David Berger (1901–1988)

In October 1941, David Berger, an X-ray specialist, began work at the PEI Hospital. Born in Nowy Sacz in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (later Poland), he graduated medical studies at the University of Cracow in 1927. Berger specialized in radiology and was in New York City on a fellowship in 1938. He returned to Poland before the German invasion in September 1939. Berger, his wife Malka, and six-year-old daughter Irena fled through the Soviet Union but were detained for a year before being permitted to continue to Japan. They sailed from Yokohama to Vancouver, arriving in June 1941. The Canadian government and the Free Polish Government had concluded an arrangement offering asylum to Polish refugees, including Jews stranded in Japan and Portugal. Berger and Sydney Bandler (described below) were among them.[21]

A *Charlottetown Guardian* reporter praised Berger for his English language skills: "he could pass anywhere for an English or American college professor." The reporter continued: "Dr. Berger speaks in the highest terms of the hospitality extended him in Canada. He is also very favorably impressed with Prince Edward Island and with the facilities at the P.E.I. Hospital and the work carried on by Dr. J. C. Houston, head of the X-ray department. He plans on settling in this country. For those democratic institutions he expressed the warmest regard." [22] While in PEI, he interacted with a Jewish couple, Dr. Leo and Ruhamah Frank. He was a weekend guest at the Southport home of this well-known fox breeder and his wife. Berger stayed in PEI for one month before accepting the position of head of the radiology department at the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal. He worked at the Jewish General Hospital from 1942 to 1951 and established the first isotope laboratory in Montreal.

David Berger. Source: *25th Anniversary Jewish General Hospital, Montreal* (Montreal: Jewish General Hospital, 1959), 52.

Adolf Birman (1896–1953)

Adolf Birman was born in Graz, Austria, studied at the University of Graz, and graduated in 1920. Specializing in plastic surgery, he practised in Vienna until 1938. In 1924 he published in the German *Journal of Surgery* about "goiters of the carotid gland" (what would likely today be called carotid body tumours).[23] Birman's departure from Vienna was chronicled in the *Montreal Gazette* in April 1939:

> Dr. Birman saw the handwriting on the wall with the rise of Hitler in Germany. A resident of Vienna, he managed to put by some money outside Austria. Last year, when persecution of the Jews arose to fever pitch, Dr. Birman had an unusual stroke of luck. For years he had attended a prominent Vienna family, members of which turned out to be leading Nazis. For friendship's sake they warned Dr. Birman he had better leave the country, and he was able to flee to Switzerland. Not only was he not persecuted in any way, but besides his family, consisting of his wife, his daughter and his aged mother-in-law, he was able to take most of his personal effects out of the country. Even his furniture he now has in Montreal. He was unable to take his personal fortune out of the country, however, and now depends on that which he was able to save previously.[24]

A September 1938 Order in Council supported Birman's entry into Canada, conditional on the transfer of his declared capital of fifty thousand dollars. Birman, his wife, daughter, and mother-in-law settled in Montreal, where Birman hoped to practice medicine; however, he was unable to obtain an enabling certificate. He voiced his frustration in the *Gazette* interview but viewed the requirement for foreign doctors to complete a year of internship at an institute in the province as fair. Birman had one remaining hope; his application to the Ontario College of Physicians was under review. If rejected, Birman was not optimistic about his future in medicine in Canada. He did not receive an enabling certificate from Ontario.[25]

In October 1941, Birman was a house doctor at the Charlottetown Hospital. How and why Birman chose PEI is not known. Following his arrival, the *Charlottetown Guardian*, explained that Birman "was high in praise of the hospitality shown him in this country, particularly in this province where he was greatly impressed with the Charlottetown Hospital and warmly commented on the aid given him by Premier Campbell, Dr. W.J. P. McMillian and Dr. H. D. Johnston who assisted in having him come to the Island." He stayed only for a few weeks. After returning to Montreal, he passed the LMCC in February 1943, worked on the staff of the Jewish General Hospital, and maintained a private practice. He passed away in Montreal on February 11, 1952.[26]

Sydney Bandler (1893–1981)

Sydney (Schulim) Bandler was born in Buczacz, Austria–Hungary (Poland from 1918 until 1939, and then Ukraine). He studied at a yeshiva, aspiring to be a rabbi, but decided to pursue medicine. After graduating from the University of Vienna in 1927, he opened a general practice. The Bandler family was not very observant, but they celebrated holidays and attended Passover seders.[27]

In July 1938, four months after Nazi Germany annexed Austria, German authorities arrested Bandler and imprisoned him in the Buchenwald concentration camp, where he was forced into hard labour, beaten, and malnourished. His wife Sarah managed to arrange for his release in 1939. The couple and their eight-year-old son Martin fled Austria to Milan, Italy. They were smuggled by boat from Italy to France. Bandler was arrested on landing and held in a French concentration camp. After his release, the family hoped to head north to England, but the Germans had eliminated any hope of safe passage. Instead, the Bandlers crossed the Pyrenees on foot and, without the help of a guide, reached neutral Portugal. Although Bandler hoped to resettle in the US or Shanghai, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society facilitated their entry into Canada.[28]

Shortly after arriving in Montreal in late June or early July 1939, Bandler most probably spoke at the Montefiore Club about his traumatic experience in Buchenwald. The United Jewish Refugee and War Relief Agencies and Jewish Council of Women sponsored the talk. The name of the speaker was withheld but the details point to Bandler:

> The appalling terror of 11 months of living in a Nazi concentration camp, with its persecution, starvation brutal slave-driving, with life hanging precariously in the balance that might be tipped by the sadistic whim of a storm trooper, was recounted by a Polish physician in an interview at the Montefiore Club last night. Through telling his story in a manner that displayed shattered nerves, the doctor spoke quite objectively of his own personal experience [...]

The speaker detailed camp life, including the many deaths he witnessed:

> Sometimes men would be found missing, seldom through escape, usually through death, either "natural" or suicide. Those who were considered to have worked slowly, or misbehaved, were punished; the first time 25 lashes, administered across their bare body, before the group of men; the second time by tying their hands behind their back, and hanging them up to a tree for a time, after which they were expected to go to work the following day; and finally, confinement in a darkened dungeon, with no smokes or reading, with daily third degrees administered by guards who came in to satisfy their sadistic lust throughout every day of the six weeks [...] One group of doctors, 60 in number, and too old to work, were forced by the guards to carry out the human excrements.[29]

Bandler spent a few months at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal and then at the tuberculosis sanitorium in St. Agathe, Quebec. JIAS helped find him a permanent position in Alberton, PEI. The Prince Edward Island Medical Board issued him an enabling certificate.

Bandler moved to the town of Alberton, which had a population of 554 in 1941 and was a regional hub for west Prince County with a train station, harbour, and courthouse. Alberton was in Premier Thane Campbell's electoral district and the placement of a doctor benefited his constituents. Bandler arrived in January 1942 and for three years he was the sole medical practitioner in Alberton. With no local hospital, patients requiring surgery or specialized treatment were transported to Summerside. Father William Monaghan at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church, in Alberton, took up the cause of founding a regional hospital. Bandler supported the initiative and was certain that lives would be saved by attending to patients in Alberton. The Albion Terrace Hotel was purchased and renovated to serve as a hospital. Bandler was consulted throughout the process. The Sisters of St. Martha provided the nursing and administrative staff.[30]

The Western Hospital opened in January 1945 with fifteen beds. Sister Mary Patricia, the first nurse to arrive, expressed her anxiousness. "Needless to say I was 'scared,' the only nurse to work with a refugee doctor from Poland, Dr. Bandler. As a Jew he spent time in the concentration camps and escaped with his wife and eight year old son and only meagre belongings."[31] The sister did not detail the reason for her fear. Bandler's imprisonment in a German concentration camp was public knowledge on PEI.[32]

At a citizenship ceremony in 1947, Campbell, now a chief justice, stated that he "was responsible, in part, for bringing Dr. Bandler to the Island and was happy to see that he had made a success of his citizenship and his profession." J. Watson MacNaught, a Liberal MP, congratulated Bandler and "spoke of the tremendous contributions that has been made to science in this country by Jewish students and professional men, many of whom are graduates of the University of Vienna, Dr. Bandler's University."[33]

Western Hospital in Alberton, circa 1945. Source: University of Prince Edward Island. CAUL-CBUA Atlantic Islandora Repository Network.

In 1947 the narcotics branch of the federal Department of Health wrote to Bandler informing him that his wartime enabling certificate had lapsed and could not prescribe certain medications. The PEIMA passed a motion to grant him an interim certificate.[34]

The Bandlers integrated into local society and developed close friendships. Martin attended school in Alberton and went to Prince of Wales College in Charlottetown for two years. The family continued to speak German among themselves, although the parents spoke Polish when they wanted to keep Martin from understanding. Bandler attempted to teach Martin Hebrew and prepare him for his bar mitzvah, but Martin was uncooperative. Martin had the impression that they were the only Jews on the Island, but other Jews resided in PEI and the Bandlers connected with some of them. Martin, in a 2012 oral history, recalled that his parents almost never spoke about their experiences during the Holocaust and the loss of most of their relatives in Europe. They expressed thankfulness to Canada for offering them shelter and described Canadians as very humane. Bandler and Sarah left Alberton in December 1954 wanting to be closer to Martin, who had moved to New York City after completing his medical studies at Dalhousie University, in Halifax. The couple maintained connections with a few residents of Alberton.[35]

Second Attempt at Finding Doctors

In July 1942, the Canadian Medical Procurement and Assignment Board (CMPAB), a committee at the Department of National Defence, was assigned the responsibility for the enlistment and placement of doctors. The board determined the number of physicians for the military and their allocation to the army, navy, and air force, civilian population, and war industries.[36]

For regions with few or no medical practitioners, the CMPAB developed a program enabling provincial medical licencing bodies to grant temporary licences to enlisted medical officers stationed in the province. Samuel Janowsky may have received his PEI medical licence, which he held from 1943 to 1946, under this program.[37]

An April 1943 survey of medical districts observed that with very few doctors in PEI, none could be spared for the military. Belfast, for instance, urgently needed a physician. Premier J. Walter Jones, known as the "Farmer Premier," was a bold advocate for agricultural and rural interests. Writing to Minister of National Defence James Ralston in October 1943, Jones expressed the need for at least six civilian doctors and asked that steps be taken to freeze doctors in their present locations.[38] In June 1943, the CMPAB addressed the subject of refugee physicians: "There are known to be a certain number of refugee physicians in Canada. The Board has been asked to find employment for them. Negotiations have been opened in three instances but so far the positions have not been filled."[39]

Efforts to locate doctors were buoyed by an unlikely source. In the summer of 1940, Canada received thousands of "enemy aliens" formerly imprisoned in British internment camps. Of those, more than 2,300 were Jewish refugees; more than 130 were doctors or medical students. With the approval of the CMPAB and the National Selective Service, two of them, Frederick Siebner and Maximillian Schapira, found their way to PEI, where they opened private practices. MacMillan, the leader of the opposition, explained that "after much negotiation and difficultly two evacuee Austrian doctors had been obtained."[40]

Frederick Siebner (1900–1952)

Frederick Siebner was born in Napajedla, Austro-Hungary (later Czechoslovakia). His family moved to Vienna when he was an infant. He graduated from the University of Vienna in 1926 and had a general practice in Vienna. Siebner spent much of his leisure time studying art and took numerous trips to Italy, France, and Greece to see the originals of famous painters and sculptors. In 1938 he fled Austria for England, where in 1939 he was interned as an enemy alien.[41]

In England, Siebner boarded the SS Sobieski. After landing in Quebec City, Siebner was transferred to Internment Camp N, near Sherbrooke, Quebec. The camp's prisoners were mainly civilian refugees and enemy merchant seamen. The camp consisted of two large sheds in an old train repair yard surrounded by barbed wire and watch towers with armed guards. At first the accommodations were poor, with leaky roofs, broken windows, and nine toilets for roughly nine hundred men. Internees were paid to repair the facilities and life was more bearable. In their free time, the prisoners developed rich and diverse cultural, educational, and physical activities.[42]

Released in April 1942, Siebner spent two years of residency at the Women's General Hospital in Montreal. In 1944 he signed a three-year contract with the government of PEI. The federal government provided $1,331 for relocation costs. He took over the late John Archibald Stewart's medical practice in Tyne Valley on the western shores of Malpeque Bay. Siebner, as the *Charlottetown Guardian* reported, "was welcomed by a friendly and grateful community. The people are enthusiastic about their new doctor and have shown their appreciation of the service he renders. He, for his part is enjoying the busy life of a rural practitioner and is happy among new-found friends."[43]

A few area residents remembered Siebner over seventy years after his departure. Ruth MacLean, née Miller, recalled the birth of her niece Margaret in January 1945. On a stormy and icy night, Wilma Miller, MacLean's sister-in-law, went into labour. Her husband George, MacLean's older brother, drove his sleigh from Birch Hill to Tyne Valley, seven kilometers away, to pick up Siebner. The delivery went smoothly. MacLean commented that "everyone thought he was a wonderful doctor." Roy Newcombe, another local resident, recalled a "Dr. Seedner" [sic] who cared for his suspected appendicitis in 1944. MacLean and Newcombe did not identify Siebner as being Jewish. Yet another local, Leigh Newcombe, born in 1929, claimed that everyone knew Siebner was Jewish. Siebner was involved in public health initiatives including inoculations against diphtheria and other diseases in area schools.[44]

Siebner married the Vienna-born Cilly Herschdoerfer at Rabbi Lippa Medjuck's residence in Moncton in 1945. At the September 1946 opening session of the County Court in Summerside, Judge L. G. Lewis administered the oath of allegiance to Siebner and Bernard Deutsch, a civil engineer from Czechoslovakia. Lewis congratulated them and stated that "he felt the confidence placed in them by Canada would be justified and they would be patriotic, industrious and peace loving citizens."[45]

Frederick Siebner, circa 1952.
Source: *Norwood-Norfolk Keystoner (Yearbook) 1953*, 7.

When Siebner's contract ended, he and his wife moved to upstate New York. He found a position as the health officer in Norfolk. The Norwood–Norfolk High School 1953 yearbook's tribute explained Siebner's decision to leave PEI. "In spite of having become a Canadian citizen Dr. Siebner's dream of entering the U.S.A. was finally realized in the beginning of 1947, and it was one of the happiest days of his life when he became an American citizen [in 1949]."[46]

Maximillian Schapira (1913–2000)

Born in Stanislaw, Austro–Hungary (later Poland), Maximilian Schapira was the youngest of four children. His family later moved to Vienna, where his parents, Chaim and Esther, ran a tailor shop. Schapira, who was active in competitive tennis and other sports, started medical studies at the University of Vienna. In 1938 he fled Austria and continued his studies in Switzerland. Schapira entered northern Italy but returned to Switzerland in the summer of 1939 after he was warned by a police captain, and a fellow tennis player, that Mussolini had ordered the expulsion of alien Jews.

Tennis club in Vienna, Max Schapira (second from right), circa 1937. Courtesy of Charles Schapira.

After the outbreak of the war, Schapira made his way to England, was interned, and later transported to Canada for continued internment. Two brothers, Shlomo and Josef, reached Palestine while another, Israel, remained in Vienna with their widowed mother. Schapira arrived in Canada aboard the tightly packed SS Ettrick. Jewish refugees were confined to the airless hold and endured the stench of seasickness and insufficient sanitation for ten days. He was imprisoned in Interment Camp L in Quebec City before being transferred to Camp N. In an interview, Schapira's son Paul relayed that the prisoners were allowed to play soccer and that his father broke his cheekbone in a game. The injury led to gangrene and Schapira's hospitalization. Initially he was treated very poorly because the staff thought he was a German soldier. Eventually they realized that he was a doctor and provided proper treatment. The infection healed over a period of months.[47]

Released in March 1942, Schapira worked for two years in Montreal. In February 1944, he relocated to PEI to replace the late physician Everett Bell in Cape Traverse. However, he opened his practice in Borden, seven kilometers away. This town, with a population of 512 in 1941, was built around the ferry service to New Brunswick.[48]

In July 1944 the Canadian government decided that enemy alien doctors satisfying certain conditions were eligible for enlistment as medical officers. Schapira enlisted in September 1944 with the rank of captain for three years. He was stationed at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal. There, he met registered nurse Barbara Wentzell of Indian Point, Nova Scotia, and they wed.[49]

Captain Maximillian Schapira, circa 1945. Courtesy of Charles Schapira.

Schapira returned to PEI with Barbara and their son Charles in 1947. He practiced family medicine in New Glasgow and North Rustico in north-central PEI. The area had a population of over three thousand in 1951. Schapira was praised for his high-quality medical services. In one case, one-year-old Marc Gallant's arm was caught in a washing machine wringer. Doctors thought it should be amputated. "Then Dr. Max Schapira, a young doctor who had been in the province only a few years, attempted an operation, making extensive skin grafts. Four months later the arm was almost like new." Eighteen years later, Gallant attempted to find Schapira in New York, where the family had relocated in the early 1950s. It was a daunting task with over one hundred doctors named "Schapira" in Manhattan alone. Gallant eventually found Schapira, who remembered the case. In another example, North Rustico resident Felix Pineau's foot was severed in a farming accident. Schapira accompanied him by air to an operating room in Charlottetown. After six hours, the foot was reconnected.[50] In addition to his physician's practice, Schapira participated in planning discussions for a regional maternity hospital and a nursing home.

While on the Island, the couple had two more children, Paul and Esther. Schapira competed at the Prince Edward Island Tennis Tournament. A member of Prince Edward Island Chess Club, he won the local chess tournament and the R. E. Mutch Trophy in 1950. Schapira and Barbara established personal connections with New Glasgow area residents.[51]

In January 1951, Schapira travelled to Israel to visit his two brothers. Shortly after his return, he closed his office. At a farewell event, "Quite a number gathered, repre-

senting the surrounding districts, to voice their regrets of the honoured guests' departure." [52] Schapira intended to return to PEI after completing postgraduate studies in the US. Charles, who attended a one-room schoolhouse in New Glasgow before the family left, thought their departure reflected the desire to connect the children with their Jewish heritage. The family remained in the United States, and Max became chief of anesthesiology at Montefiore Hospital in New York; he also taught at Albert Einstein Medical School.[53]

After the Arrival of Siebner and Schapira

Just over a week after the arrival of Schapira and Siebner, Col. Ernest Henry Strong, Conservative MLA from Prince County, vocalized his opposition to hiring of refugee doctors:

> He could see a danger in bringing too many evacuee doctors to this province, especially from enemy countries [...] Col. Strong said he believed in Canada for Canadians. He did not want to see leadership established in this country by men of Europe whose ideals were different. He was not a "yes, yes" man so far as his party leader was concerned. He differed with him on this point. "You can get anything if you go after it," he said. [...] "I am not saying anything about education. They are very highly educated I understand. Perhaps if they were taken into some of our colleges of learning they might teach postgraduate work.[54]

Nevertheless, after the passing of Malpeque doctor James W. Keir in February 1944, the town expressed an interest in finding a refugee doctor to replace him. In March 1944, W.J.P. MacMillan introduced a federal plan to supply doctors for rural districts in the provincial legislature. Doctors would be released from the military with a salary of $4,800, the rank of major, and various expenses. The province would guarantee the expenses and could recover its costs by the province or physicians collecting patient fees. Premier Jones reacted with some ambivalence: "It seems to me out of line with what we can do in Prince Edward Island. It looks a little too expensive for us, although it may be necessary to put one or two doctors in as planned." [55] He estimated the annual cost to the province per doctor at three thousand dollars.

In July 1944 the PEIMA discussed planning for the return of decommissioned doctors as well as refugee doctors The PEIMA passed a motion that "no further enabling certificates be granted by the Prince Edward Island Medical Council to refugee physicians, in order to safeguard the interests of Canadian medical men serving in the army."[56] Siebner and Schapira had arrived earlier that year under the auspices of PEIMA.

In September 1944 Jones approached Cyrus Macmillan, Liberal MP for the Queen's electoral district and parliamentary assistant to the minister of defence. Jones hoped

that Macmillan could facilitate the appointment of George Dewar as doctor in Belfast. Dewar was serving in the army, and Jones contended that he was one of the "young men who are extremely virile and ambitious, and could cover a large amount of territory."[57] The request was not approved.

Ontario senator Cairine Wilson intervened in the refugee situation and was in contact with Premiers Campbell and Jones. She was a vocal proponent for the admittance of Jewish and other refugees into Canada. She took on the plight of legitimate civilian refugees interned in Canada and petitioned the government for their release. In early 1942 over fifteen hundred enemy civilian refugees were still imprisoned, including over 130 doctors.[58] Three of these physicians eventually practiced medicine in PEI.

Complicating the situation were security concerns. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) was suspicious of Jewish refugees in internment camps in Canada. The RCMP contended that their prior internment in Britain was an expression of British authorities' uncertainty. On the possibility of Jewish refugees continuing their studies at Dalhousie University, in Halifax, the RCMP assistant commissioner concluded: "Whether refugees or not, these people are enemy nationals, a fact which should not be lost sight of, and certainly they should not be located where they can do us harm if so inclined."[59]

Working with Premier Campbell, Senator Wilson facilitated the placements of Siebner and Schapira. Premier Jones led the government when they arrived. Jones expressed his dissatisfaction with their placement in Prince County and not in Belfast in Queens County, which he asserted had a greater need. MacMillan explained that Tyne Valley and Cape Traverse had already applied to the CMPAB. As for Belfast, he explained "So far as my hon. friend's district [4th Queen's] is concerned no one from that district with the exception of the statement made by the Premier just now, has ever indicated that they wanted a doctor, or that they would support a doctor, or that they would take one of these evacuee doctors as those two sections have done."[60] In July 1944, Wilson wrote to Jones: "recently Dr. Siebner has been established in Tyne Valley, where I understand his services are much appreciated and also he is very well satisfied." Wilson's interest was not exclusively in Jewish refugees. She suggested Peter Paul Mandl, a Roman Catholic physician from Austria and refugee from Nazi oppression, as an appropriate fit for the planned hospital in Souris. Premier Jones discussed the matter with MacMillan and decided that under the current conditions, the PEIMA decision not to issue enabling certificates, Mandl would not fit in. Jones thanked Wilson for her interest and reiterated the great need for rural doctors.[61]

After the War

In October 1945 the PEIMA readdressed the question of enabling certificates for refugees. Doctors were not returning as quickly as hoped. Around 3,400 doctors had yet to be demobilized and not all demobilized doctors returned to their home provinces. For doctors with the ranks of captain or major, remaining in the military was financially enticing. The PEIMA decided that: "After some discussions re enabling certificates to refugee doctors, it was decided that this matter be left on rear until complete demobilization had been effected."[62] In August 1946 the PEIMA rescinded the 1944 and 1945 motions that dealt with enabling certificates for refugee doctors. Enabling certificates were left to the discretion of the Prince Edward Island Medical Council.[63]

Jewish refugee doctors continued to arrive after the war. After Schapira's release from the Canadian army in 1947, he set up his practice in New Glasgow. Edward Kassner opened a practice in Souris in 1948. In the 1950s non-Jewish refugee doctors reached PEI and set up practices or were interns. Among these doctors were those displaced during World War II and later those fleeing Eastern Europe under Soviet control, including after the failed Hungarian Revolution in 1956.[64]

Jewish physician Jean (Janco) Haimsohn (1911–1985) arrived in PEI, where in 1951 he replaced Bandler in Alberton for one month. Born in Romania, Haimsohn completed his medical studies at the University of Pavia, Italy, in 1938. He impressed local residents and the Alberton Canadian Legion branch asked the PEIMA "to do all possible in aiding Dr. John Haimson in obtaining his provincial permit to practice medicine in P.E.I. Dr. Haimson, a recent DP from Italy, comes to Alberton with good qualifications."[65] An unconfirmed report claimed he was with partisans in the Italian mountains and provided medical care to English and American commandos. In November 1951 the PEIMA executive committee discussed the "Alberton Situation," but no concrete action was taken. The PEIMA did not provide an enabling certificate. Haimsohn moved to Montreal and found a hospital position in neurology; he had specialized in this field at the University of Milan.[66]

At the end of the 1940s, the spatial distribution of doctors saw the continued shift to urban areas with thirty-one in Charlottetown (45.6 percent) and ten in Summerside (14.7 percent). Smaller concentrations could be found where the new hospitals were established with four doctors in Souris and two doctors in Alberton. With fewer rural physicians, their geographic coverage was sparser. The ratio of population to doctor in PEI was higher than the national average through the mid-twentieth century. In 1943 one doctor in Canada served 1,261 people and in PEI 1,659 and in 1951 the ratios decreased to 976 and 1,372 respectively. [67] Refugee physicians settling in PEI contributed to this improvement in the doctor to population ratio, but PEI continued to lag behind most of Canada.

Four of the sixty-eight doctors in PEI (5.8 percent) in 1949 were Jewish. This was remarkable given Jews made up only one-fortieth of 1 percent of the Island's population. Quantitatively the Jewish doctors were overrepresented in the Island medical community and qualitatively these physicians were appreciated by their patients and colleagues for their knowledge, professionalism, and devotion.[68]

Edward Kassner (1910–1999)

Edward Kassner was born in Vienna to parents with an Orthodox background. His father Leon was born in Poland and his mother Rosa in Romania. Rosa's father, Isadore Manasse, was a lay rabbi. The couple operated two haberdashery shops. They lived with their two sons in a one-bedroom apartment with a shared bathroom for about twenty years in Vienna's seventeenth district. Rosa kept a strictly kosher kitchen. Kassner recalled incidents of antisemitism during his childhood. At one soccer tournament, "let's get that little red hair Jew" onlookers shouted at his younger brother Karl. Kassner was very athletic, active in swimming, tennis, downhill skiing, ice skating, and soccer. He loved classical music and opera and played the violin. He studied at the University of Vienna Medical School, had an internship in internal medicine at the Rothschild Hospital, and later worked at the Catholic Hospital in Vienna.[69]

After the Anschluss in 1938, Kassner, his father, and Karl were interrogated by SS officers. The SS contacted the Catholic Hospital's administrator who confirmed that Kassner's services were essential, and he was released. Karl was sent to Dachau concentration camp, but his parents managed to secure his release. Although Leon, a World War I veteran, escaped further detainment in 1938, he and his wife later died at Majdanek concentration camp.

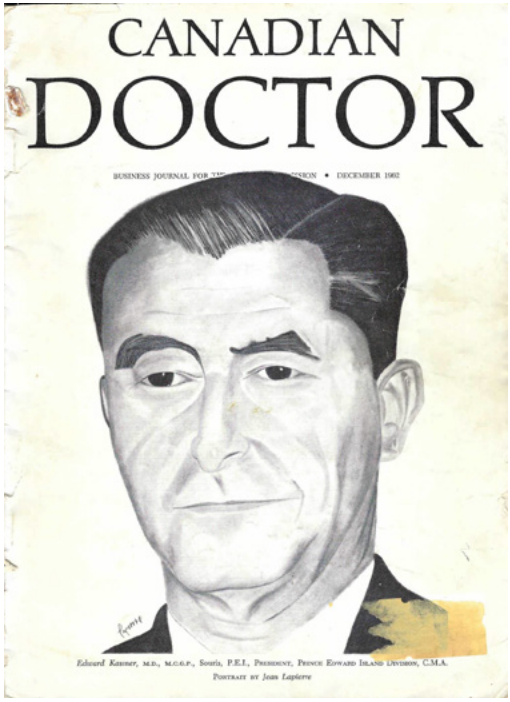
Kassner departed for England. There he volunteered his medical services but was turned down. In 1940 British authorities detained Kassner and subsequently transferred him to Canada aboard the SS Ettrick. Kassner was imprisoned at Interment Camp L before moving to Camp N. The camp authorities delegated the medical care of the internees to interned physicians. Kassner was its senior medical officer tending to other internees for two years but often lacked proper facilities and medical supplies to treat acute and chronic illness. Camp authorities needed to approve the transfer of urgent cases to the hospital in Sherbrooke but delays often led to unnecessary suffering and even death. He lived in the hut adjacent to the examining room.[70]

Kassner shared few details of his internment but expressed great irritation that on landing in Quebec City, Canadian soldiers unlawfully confiscated items of value from the arrivals, including a watch from his father. Several perpetrators were court martialed, and a portion of the belonging were recovered, but not Kassner's watch. He found waiting in the camp for Canadian authorities to decide his fate upsetting. In a 1994 interview, he referred to fellow internee Eric Koch's book *Deemed Suspect* from

1980 as an accurate depiction of camp conditions. Kassner avoided sharing his personal experiences of internment.[71]

Released in May 1942, Kassner was frustrated by the hurdles and length of time needed to obtain a medical licence. He interned at Montreal's Women's General Hospital, where he became chief resident. He met registered nurse Lois Irene Roper, who had grown up on a farm near Charlottetown and studied at the PEI Hospital nursing school. Israel Rachmel, a Jewish physician who had a practice in Charlottetown, connected Roper to an operating room nursing position in Montreal. In October 1948, Kassner and Roper wed at Temple Emanu-El, in Montreal, with the Schapiras of New Glasgow attending. While on their honeymoon in PEI, the Souris community asked Kassner to set up a practice. The couple decided to put down roots in Souris, where Irene's parents resided. The couple had three children, David, Richard, and Rachel.[72]

Souris, located in the Island's northeast, was concentrated around its sheltered harbour for fishing boats and shipping. The town had 1,183 residents in 1951 with a rural hinterland of over 3,300. Kassner opened his practice in November 1948 and retired in August 1977. Kassner provided a wide range of medical services and patients praised for his knowledge, skill, and dedication serving area residents. He delivered over three thousand babies while in Souris. He took all calls, and, in the winter, was transported by box sleigh to see patients. Sometimes patients paid him in lobsters, fish, chickens, and produce.[73]



Portrait of Dr. Edward Kassner, cover of *Canadian Doctor*, December 1962. Courtesy of Dr. Rachel Kassner.

He was engaged in local activities including chairing the First Aid Committee for the Souris Disaster Service under the auspices of the Red Cross. Kassner was chairman of PEI Chapter of the College of General Practice of Canada in 1958–1959 and was elected president of the PEIMA in 1962, expressions of great confidence by the Island medical community.[74]

Kassner was the president of the Souris Lions Club and had several hobbies, including trout fishing, curling, photography, music, stamp collecting, and chess. Everyone in Souris knew that the Kassners were Jewish. Their home was the only one in town without Christmas lights. He taught his children to be proud of their Jewish heritage. When possible, the Kassners celebrated Jewish holidays with other Jewish families. After retiring, the Kassners moved to Stratford and became more involved in the Jewish community, which was centred in Charlottetown, and supported Jewish causes. With no Jewish cemetery on the Island, they were laid to rest in Shaar Shalom Cemetery, in Halifax.

The Journeys of Jewish Refugee Doctors to PEI

The seven Jewish physicians who arrived in PEI carried diverse cultural baggage based on their places of birth and residence, education, socioeconomic status, knowledge of languages, level of religious adherence, cultural interests, and experiences. These doctors were born in the Austro-Hungarian and the Russian Empires before World War I. After the war, borders were redrawn with two doctors living in Poland, three in Austria, one in Czechoslovakia, and one in Lithuania. Two were children of immigrants to Austria while Sidney Bandler migrated from Poland to Vienna.

Five doctors studied in German with four at the University of Vienna and one at Graz University. David Berger studied in Polish at the University of Cracow and Israel Rachmel studied in French at universities in Caen and Strasbourg. These physicians usually knew a few languages. Their knowledge of Hebrew varied: Rachmel was able to teach Hebrew; Bandler and Kassner could pray and study in the language. Prior to arriving in Canada, the doctors had varying levels of English knowledge. When in England, refugees were instructed not to talk German in public places or any place where others may hear them and that they would learn English more quickly by talking it constantly. Berger had a fellowship in New York City prior to the war. The levels of English proficiency for Rachmel, Adolph Birman, and Bandler prior to their arrival are not known. The doctors improved their English skills enabling them to work in hospitals, take the LMCC exams, and communicate with patients but often retained their foreign accents.

Born from 1899 to 1913, they ranged in age from twenty-six to forty years old at the outbreak of World War II. They were at different stages of their careers and lives. Maximillian Schapira completed his studies in Switzerland after fleeing Austria

while Bandler and Birman had been practicing in Vienna for over a decade. Bandler, Birman, and Berger were married with one child. The others were single and wed in Canada. Rachmel and Kassner married women from PEI, an important factor in their decisions to remain, and one that contributed to their acculturation. Their spouses were interpreters and guides to Island norms and culture. Schapira married a Nova Scotian who helped him navigate local customs and behaviours. Siebner married an Austrian Jew who resided in the US.

Their journeys to Canada took different paths. Two entered Canada through Orders in Council before the war: Birman was admitted as having sufficient capital and Rachmel as a Hebrew teacher. Two took long and difficult routes; the Bandlers travelled via Lisbon and the Bergers via the Soviet Union and Japan. They benefited from an agreement between Canada and the Polish Free Government granting them refuge status. Siebner, Schapira, and Kassner were forcibly transported from Great Britain to Canada in 1940 and sent to Internment Camp N.

The Jewish doctors, although spread across the Island, connected with each other. Schapira and Kassner knew each other from Vienna. They were at Internment Camp N and maintained a strong friendship over the years. The Jewish doctors met each other at PEIMA meetings as well as socially. Kassner and Rachmel also connected with other Jews in PEI.

Their identities were composites of their Jewish heritage, the host cultures where they grew up and lived on their journeys, and their acculturation in Canada and PEI. Reinforcement of parts of their cultural identities was not possible due to circumstances along their journeys and very few people with similar identities. While in Canada, if in internment camps or living in Montreal, the doctors could find coreligionists and persons from the same countries of origin. However, once they reached PEI the pool of persons of the same religious background or cultural and national identity was very limited.[75]

These Jewish refugee physicians in PEI were well-accepted in society. Their otherness was easily identifiable—their accents, behaviour, bedside manner, and demeanor differed. These doctors were not considered suspect. In contrast, Jewish refugee doctors who reached the Dominion of Newfoundland in 1939 and 1940 were plagued by accusations and investigations that they were German spies.[76]

The refugee doctors in PEI received praise and thanks from their patients and colleagues for their competence and commitment. However, expressions of antisemitism—name calling and cursing—toward the doctors were reported, but it was rare. Their professional status contributed to very little outward expression of hatred or discrimination toward them. Notable was the lack of acknowledgement that the doctors were Jewish, a fact that they did not hide. Instead, they were referred to as

refugees or evacuees, from Europe or specific countries. For example, in 1946 the Senate Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour discussed Polish wartime immigration and highlighted Berger as "the famous radiologist and specialist in the treatment of cancer." The Senate discussion of Berger's story emphasized his Polish nationality and did not relate to his Jewishness.[77]

The experiences of imprisonment or internment in Germany, the Soviet Union, England, and Canada scarred five of the doctors. All the doctors were burdened with the guilt of surviving the Holocaust. They left behind in Europe parents, siblings, relatives, friends, and colleagues who died or were murdered during the Holocaust. Rachmel and Schapira visited Israel after 1948 and reunited with their siblings who had managed to flee to Palestine before the war. These visits strengthened their Jewish identity.

The environment the doctors encountered in Canada was on the one hand antagonistic and on the other hand welcoming. On a national level, the Government of Canada under Prime Minster William Lyon Mackenzie King did not want Jews fleeing from Europe entering Canada, but exceptions were made. And some voices, like that of Senator Cairine Wilson, called on the government to accept refugees before and during the war. The CMA asserted on the eve of the war that Canada had no need for refugee physicians since Canadian medical schools met the demand. After the war's outbreak, opposition to refugee physicians continued. PEI was more pragmatic but at the same time was hesitant. W. J. P. MacMillan, in cooperation with Premiers Campbell and Jones, recruited Jewish doctors to practice on the Island. In 1941 efforts were made to attract four refugee doctors but only two stayed. In 1944, the two refugee doctors released from internment practiced in PEI. Political opponents to their hiring asserted that the evacuee doctors would have negative cultural influences, a strong undertone of antisemitism although the word Jew was not used. At times, opposition came from the PEIMA which feared that refugee physicians would occupy positions and prevent the return of Island-born physicians after serving in the military. There is no evidence of popular opposition among Islanders.

The Jewish doctors integrated into Island society and contributed to its betterment. The doctors participated in planning and developing medical services, and they volunteered and contributed to charities that supported medical and social welfare. The doctors and their families were active in social and recreational groups and developed strong personal bonds with Islanders. Their arrival in PEI was strictly by chance. In the late 1930s, none of them would have thought that they would find themselves on an island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence with which they had no prior connections.

From a migration perspective, the push factors for their emigration from Europe were racial and religious discrimination, fear for their personal safety, and difficult

economic conditions. The pull factors of PEI were economic opportunity and personal security. The persistent need for doctors in PEI, which became more acute during the war, offered opportunities for these Jewish refugee physicians. Kassner and Rachmel found opportunity and tranquility and lived out their lives in PEI. Marrying women from PEI helped anchor the doctors to the Island. The opportunities of PEI were not sufficient to retain the other doctors. Berger's and Birman's sojourns were short-lived. They found better job opportunities in Montreal, where their families lived. The large and diverse Jewish community and urban amenities in Montreal were additional pull factors. Siebner, Bandler, and Schapira re-immigrated to the United States. The reasons for doing so included providing the children with better education and stronger Jewish identity, as well as opportunity for professional advancement.

Their cultural baggage, journeys, and experiences of the seven refugee physicians had certain similarities but also noticeable differences. Their primary common denominator in this discussion is their arrival in PEI and participation in the provincial medical services. The process of their hiring sheds light on the doctors' crisis in the 1940s. This chapter in the history of medicine in PEI reveals the considerations of the Government of PEI and the PEIMA in bringing foreign physicians to PEI as well as their important contributions to Island medicine.

Joseph B. Glass received his doctorate in geography from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He has authored books and academic articles on the historical geography of late Ottoman and British Mandate Palestine and Canadian and American Jewish immigration and settlement in Palestine. His book, *Sephardi Entrepreneurs in Jerusalem: The Valero Family 1800–1948*, co-authored with Ruth Kark, received an award for best monograph in Turkish economic and social history from the Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre in Istanbul. Glass moved to Pownal, PEI, in 2016. His work on the history of the Jewish presence on the Island has appeared in *Island Magazine* and the Atlantic Jewish Council's *Shalom Magazine*.

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Thank you to Dr. Rachel Kassner, Joel Palter, David Kassner, Richard Kassner, Charles Schapira, Esther Bryant, Paul Schapira, Jane Naylor, the Prince Edward Island Medical Association, the staff of the Prince Edward Island Provincial Archives and Record Office, Roy Newcombe, Catherine Hennessey, Professor Edward MacDonald, Martin Rutte, and Dr. Ari Dale.

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