

Jewish Historical Studies

Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England

A chronological survey of the collective biography of British Jews
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How to cite: Jolles, M. 'A chronological survey of the collective biography of British Jews.' *Jewish Historical Studies*, 2018, 50 (1), 8, pp.159-182. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.jhs.2018v50.007>

Published: 16 April 2019

Peer Review:

This article has been peer reviewed through the journal's standard double blind peer-review, where both the reviewers and authors are anonymised during review.

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Open Access:

Jewish Historical Studies is a peer-reviewed open access journal.

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A chronological survey of the collective biography of British Jews

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This survey of collective biographies in Anglo-Jewish history, as opposed to one of individual biographies, covers two main activities. The first is the simple collection of biographical accounts. In the briefest version, this may be a list of individuals each furnished with just one or two lines of notes, as found in Albert Hyamson's "Plan of a Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish Biography" (1949).¹ Fuller versions may be represented by the accounts in, say, *Who's Who* or the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter, ODNB) or, regarding specifically Anglo-Jewish works, by the final biographical section (from the 1897/8 edition onwards) of the *Jewish Year Book*, or by Paul Emden's *Jews of Britain*, published in 1944,² or by the *Palgrave Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish History*, published in 2011.³ All these Anglo-Jewish publications are described below.

The second activity is the compilation and presentation of a comprehensive biographical database comprising lists or tabulations, systematically arranged, of information relating to British Jews in respect of any chosen set of particulars, such as attainments, vocations, posts, qualifications, awards, and any other characteristic or aptitude. Such lists include MPs, mayors, senior law officers, QCs, FRs, musicians, academics, and so on. Lists of this nature may be found in the penultimate section of the *Jewish Year Book* or in my *Directory of Distinguished British Jews*.⁴ In this survey, the term "collective biography" is limited to printed

1 Albert M. Hyamson, "Plan of a Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish Biography" in *Anglo-Jewish Notabilities: Their Arms and Testamentary Dispositions* (London: Jewish Historical Society of England [hereafter, JHSE], 1949), 1–73.

2 Paul H. Emden, *Jews of Britain: A Series of Biographies* (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co, 1944).

3 William D. Rubinstein, Michael Jolles, and Hilary L. Rubinstein, *The Palgrave Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) [British Library Catalogue (hereafter, BL) OIC941.004].

4 Michael Jolles, *A Directory of Distinguished British Jews, 1830–1930, with Selected Compilations extending from 1830 to 2000* (London: Jolles Publications, 2002) [2000 ed. BL OIC941.004].

works published on a national rather than an institutional or local basis, written exclusively in the English language, relating to British Jews of the post-Resettlement period. A chronological survey of the development of collective biography of British Jews is presented.

Compilers

Compilers may be classified into three groups. Firstly, there are the original compilers of institutional databases, which include synagogue membership lists (such as lists of United Synagogue seat-holders), circumcision registers, burial authorization records, *Yizkor* booklets (for annual prayers in memory of the departed, whose Hebrew names are often listed in them), and charity subscription lists. These lists were compiled mainly for internal reasons, without regard to noteworthiness, and without the future historian or researcher in mind. They were infrequently published prominently, if ever, on a national basis. For example, it was only after decades or centuries that extracts from birth registers, circumcision registers, abstracts of *ketubot* (marriage certificates), and burial registers were transcribed and published by the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation, London, and the Jewish Historical Society of England (JHSE) in the series of *Bevis Marks Records* (1940–97).⁵ Secondly, individual historians and amateur researchers have, on their own initiative, from the early twentieth century in particular, compiled and published their findings primarily for the use of historians. For instance, a sample of compilations that appeared in the *Miscellanies of the Jewish Historical Society of England* (hereafter, *Miscellanies*) between 1896 and 1962,⁶ once the acme of Anglo-Jewish historical compilation, consists of lists of Bevis Marks Synagogue *ketubot* from 1689 to 1700,⁷ passes issued to Jews travelling to and from the Continent between 1689 and 1696,⁸ burial register details of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation of Jews in London for 1657 to 1735 (about 1,500 names),⁹ Jews in the London census lists in 1695 (about

5 *Bevis Marks Records*, 6 vols (London: Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation and the JHSE, 1940–97).

6 *Miscellanies of the Jewish Historical Society of England* (hereafter, *Miscellanies*), last published in 1984.

7 Moses Gaster, "The Ketuboth of Bevis Marks", *Miscellanies* 2 (1935): 71–81.

8 Israel Abrahams, "Passes issued to Jews in the Period 1689 and 1696", *Miscellanies* 1 (1925): xxiv–xxxiii.

9 Richard D. Barnett, "The Burial Register of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews, London 1657–1735", *Miscellanies* 6 (1962): 1–72.

500 names),¹⁰ Jewish holders of Bank of England Stock,¹¹ members of the Great Synagogue up to 1791,¹² Jewish brokers of the City of London (about 60 names),¹³ Jews whose obituaries appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine*,¹⁴ Jewish Fellows of the Royal Society,¹⁵ and Jewish Underwriting Members of Lloyd's.¹⁶ In the same vein, Morris Rosenbaum compiled a list of 1,050 Jewish freemasons of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.¹⁷ Thirdly, there are the compilers of material for the *Jewish Year Book* and its antecedents, who were writing during the nineteenth century for the general Jewish reader or user, not for the historian or researcher. A survey of the succession of individuals who contributed to this third strand of collective biography is presented here first.

Almanacs and other antecedents to the Jewish Year Book

For more than a century now, the printed publication including collective biography with which Anglo-Jewish historical scholars would have been most conversant is the *Jewish Year Book*.¹⁸ This mainstay has served as the quintessential Anglo-Jewish biographical database. It was brought about in 1896 by its highly industrious founder and first editor, Joseph Jacobs (1854–1916). The *Jewish Year Book*, admired for having been prepared for publication in just three months, was preceded by earlier prototypes, primitive by comparison. These were created by a succession of individuals who are mentioned below. As will be apparent, it all started with almanacs.

10 Arthur P. Arnold, "A List of Jews and their Households in London; extracted from the Census Lists of 1695", *Miscellanies* 6 (1962): 73–141.

11 J. A. Giuseppi, "Early Jewish Holders of Bank of England Stock (1694–1725)", *Miscellanies* 6 (1962): 143–74.

12 Cecil Roth, "The Membership of the Great Synagogue, London, to 1791", *Miscellanies* 6 (1962): 175–85.

13 Dudley Abrahams, "Jew Brokers of the City of London", *Miscellanies* 3 (1937): 80–94.

14 Albert M. Hyamson, "The Jewish Obituaries in the *Gentleman's Magazine*", *Miscellanies* 4 (1942): 33–60.

15 Redcliffe N. Salaman, "The Jewish Fellows of the Royal Society", *Miscellanies* 5 (1948): 146–75.

16 Wilfred S. Samuel, "Tentative List of Jewish Underwriting Members of Lloyd's (from some time prior to 1800 until the year 1901)", *Miscellanies* 5 (1948): 176–92.

17 Listed in John Shaftesley, "Jews in English Regular Freemasonry, 1717–1860", *Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* (hereafter, *Transactions*) 25 (1977): 151–209.

18 The *Jewish Year Book* was published in London from 1896/7 to 2015, except for the four years 1941–44.

The first Jewish almanac in England to contain Jewish biographical information was issued in 1837 by Isaac Vallentine (c. 1793–1868). Its calendrical section bore many similarities of features to earlier ones. Elisheva Carlebach's informative *Palaces of Time: Jewish Calendar and Culture in Early Modern Europe* (2011) puts almanacs in perspective: "By the 1660s, the books that sold the most copies every year were almanacs and calendars. An estimated 400,000 copies were sold annually, bought by one of every three families in Europe".¹⁹ The ODNB also records that more than 30,000 copies of the *Oxford Almanac for the Year of Our Lord 1673*, edited by a Christian clergyman, were printed.²⁰

It was at Oxford in 1692 that the Spanish-born Isaac Abendana (died 1699), the translator of the Mishnah into Latin, published his popular and well-received almanacs each year from 1692 to 1699. The 1694 issue's title page reads: "An Almanack for the Year of Christ, 1694. being the second after Bissextile or Leap Year. Oxford, Printed at the Theatre in the Year 1694." The next page starts: "The Jewish Kalendar: containing an account of their fasts and festivals".²¹ Calendar tables with both Christian and Jewish features of the year were supplemented by various essays, such as an explanation of the Jewish calendar. This indicated which feasts and fasts were observed or obsolete. There was also an English-language chronology of Jewish history. A more complete, but non-astronomical, version of this was published in 1782 by David Levi (1742–1801) in his *A Succinct Account of the Rites, and Ceremonies, of the Jews* but it does not include any calendars.²² Early almanacs were ephemeral and discarded at the end of the year. Accordingly, they are now extremely scarce and valuable.

Subsequent Jewish almanac compilers were Haham David Nieto (1654–1728), his son Isaac, and his grandson Phineas. Moses Bensabat Amzalak's *David Nieto: Notícia Biobibliográfica* (1923) records Nieto's calendar as of 5478 and 1718, covering 1718 to 1800, and as being in Hebrew

19 Elisheva Carlebach, *Palaces of Time: Jewish Calendar and Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Belknap Press, Harvard University Press, 2011), 33.

20 Stuart Handley, "Maurice Wheeler (1647/8–1727)", in ODNB (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

21 Israel Abrahams, "Isaac Abendana's Cambridge Mishnah and Oxford Calendars", *Transactions* 8 (1918): 105–6, 117–18 [1694 ed., BL C.194.a.798]

22 David Levi, *A Succinct Account of the Rites, and Ceremonies, of the Jews* (London: Printed for J. Parsons, No. 21, Paternoster Row, 1782).

and Spanish.²³ Together the three Nietos published almanacs covering 1717/18 to 1838. One of David's great-great-grandsons, Abraham Haim Nieto (1838–1919) published an almanac in New York in 1902 that served there until 2002.²⁴ Others were Alexander Alexander (from 1772, the date given by Maurice Myers as the earliest eighteenth-century Jewish pocket-sized coaching calendar)²⁵ and “Moses” Meldola.²⁶ These names reflect the strong connection between calendars, printing, and prayerbook printing and translation. From 1834, an Act of Parliament repealing the stamp duties on almanacs and directories resulted in an increase in the production of almanacs.²⁷ Next was Hyam Barnett (c. 1763–1845; “Haim, son of Sender”), a printer and publisher of prayerbooks and other books, who produced a Jewish almanac for 1812 and a series of them from 1835/6 to 1846/7;²⁸ this series included short Jewish historical chronologies. The 1839/40 edition included thirty-eight charities, with only three names of individuals, and the 1843/4 edition included a list of provincial

23 Moses Bensabat Amzalak, *David Nieto: Notícia Biobibliográfica* (Lisbon: 1923), 26 [BL 11850.i.35; D. Nieto's calendar not detected in BL catalogue]. The list of almanacs in Joseph Jacobs and Lucien Wolf, *Anglo-Judaica: A Bibliographical Guide to Anglo-Jewish History. Publication of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition. No. 3* (London: Office of the Jewish Chronicle, 1888 [BL 4033.h.26]) includes an entry (item 1312) by D. Nieto: “Calendar for the years 5478–5560. Hebrew and Spanish. 1717”, also mentioned in Cecil Roth, *Magna Bibliotheca Anglo-Judaica: A Bibliographical Guide to Anglo-Jewish History* (London: Jewish Historical Society of England, 1937), 426, item 3.

24 Abraham Haim Nieto, *Nieto's Jewish Almanac for Hundred Years from New Year 5663/1902 to 5763/2002 showing the New Moons, Festivals and Fasts, with the sections of the law as read in the Synagogues every Sabbath in the year . . .* (New York: the author, 1902). Its foreword records that David Nieto's calendar was published in 1718, Isaac Nieto's covered 1740 to 1762, Phineas Nieto's covered 1791–1838, and Elias Lindo's covered 1838–1902 [BL P.P.2522.gf].

25 Maurice Myers, “Calendars of the Coaching Days”, *Transactions* 5 (1908): 219. Jacobs and Wolf, *Anglo-Judaica* includes an entry (item 1313) for A. Alexander dated 1782: “A. Alexander. – Almanac for Jewish Commercial Travellers, with names of English Towns in Hebrew Letters, giving details of Coaches, Market Days, &c. 1782.” Also, Roth, *Magna*, 426, item 5, records: “Hebrew pocket almanack, published annually by A. Alexander from 1772” [BL, Alexander almanac not inspected].

26 Jacobs and Wolf, *Anglo-Judaica* includes an entry (item 1314) for Moses Meldola: “A New Almanac for the year 5568 A.M. 12mo. 1807”, also recorded in Roth, *Magna*, 427, item 7. [Meldola almanac not inspected: BL in 2018 recorded this item as mislaid.]

27 An Act to repeal the Stamp Duties on Almanacs and Directories, and to give other relief with relation to the Stamp Duties in Great Britain and Ireland, respectively, 1834.

28 *Luah shel shenat hameshat alafim 596 li-veri'at ha-'olam* (London: ‘sold only by H. Barnett, Printer and Bookseller, 2 Duke's Place, Aldgate, London’, 1835) [BL P.P.2465; catalogue provides parallel title: *Hebrew and English Almanack for the year 5596, corresponding with 1835–36*].

congregations, with no names of individuals.²⁹ On Barnett's death in 1845, the format of his almanacs was copied by his successor printer and publisher, Samuel Solomon (1804–1876), the brother of the educationalist Henry Naphtali Solomon (1796–1881); he produced almanacs from 1847 to 1851.³⁰ On Solomon's death in 1876, Philip Vallentine (c. 1826–1906), the son of the founder of the *Jewish Chronicle* Isaac Vallentine, bought his stock. Another almanac printer was Ann Abrahams (died 1881), whose business produced them from about 1874 to 1884.³¹

Isaac Vallentine and Elias Lindo

The first almanac whose calendrical features were supplemented by biographical information was that issued by Isaac Vallentine in 1837.³² Six pages were devoted to details of 7 synagogues, 1 “beth hamedrash” (*beit hamidrash*, place of study of Torah), and 35 other, mainly charitable, institutions, with the names of about a hundred officials, such as presidents, secretaries, or treasurers, all in London. His almanac was issued annually or biennially, and became for decades the most popular Jewish pocket-sized diary in England, but their contents increased only sluggishly. The 1846–48 edition contained a list of synagogue officials in London, about 180 institutional officials, and 60 wardens from 37 provincial communities, the first detected almanac to do so.³³ This landmark event, a set of names of English Jews in a national publication, became the platform or vehicle for a corpus of collective biography,

29 The 1839/1840 issue is entitled H. Barnett, *Hebrew and English Almanack, for the Years 1839 & 1840, Corresponding to the Year 5600* (London: H. Barnett, Printer and Bookseller, 2, Duke's Place, Aldgate, London, [1839]) [BL 1937.a.19, bound with the following eds: Vallentine 1837–39; Barnett 1839 & 1840 (5600); 1840 & 1841; 1841 & 1842; 1842 & 1843; 1843 & 1844; 1844 & 1845; 1846 & 1847; Samuel Solomon 1847 & 1848; 1848 & 1849; 1849 & 1850; 1850 & 1851].

30 The 1847 issue is entitled S. Solomon, *Hebrew and English Almanack, for the Years 1847 & 1848, Corresponding to the Year 5608* (London: Published by S. Solomon, 2 Bevis Mark [sic]) [BL 1937.a.19].

31 *Jewish Chronicle* (hereafter, JC), 13 Feb. 1874, 774; 18 Sept. 1874, 404; 3 Dec. 1875, 581; 7 Nov. 1884, 15.

32 Isaac Vallentine, *Hebrew and English Almanac, for the Years 5598–99, Corresponding to the Years 1837, 1838 and 1839; with the Names of the Jewish Charitable Institutions; Remarkable Events, &c. &c.* (London: Printed and Published by I. Vallentine, Stoney Lane, Houndsditch, 1837) [1837–39 ed. BL 1937.a.19; 1838–40 ed. BL 8560.a.67; 1849–51, 1852–54, 1854–56 eds BL 1937.a.11].

33 Isaac Vallentine, *Hebrew and English Almanac, for the Years 5607 and 5608, from the Creation, Corresponding with the Years C.E. 1846, 1847, and 1848* (London: Printed and Published by I. Vallentine, 132, Houndsditch) [BL 1937.a.36, bound with Vallentine's 1838–40 ed.].

modest though it may seem by today's standards, and was transmitted through a succession of publications until the appearance of the *Jewish Year Book* some fifty-nine years later.

At the same time, with the Phineas Nieto calendar due to expire in 1838, the merchant, calendrist, and historian Elias Haim Lindo (1783–1865), with the assistance of the Astronomer Royal, and with the sanction of Chief Rabbi Hirschell and Reverend David Meldola – for sanction of calendars was sought from ecclesiastical authorities – prepared the follow-up coverage in 1838 in his smartly printed *A Jewish Calendar for Sixty-Four Years*.³⁴ Lindo provided detailed calendrical matter covering up to 1902. Thirty pages on Jewish historical chronology cover more than 800 events, and served as a precursor to the chronologies in the *Jewish Year Book*. He presented, within four pages, the names of twenty-eight different secretaries of the forty-one listed Jewish institutions in London, mainly charities, hospitals, and colleges, arranged in chronological order of foundation (the first in 1664). Jewish charity officials were then the first main subject of this strand of collective biography.

Lindo was followed by Herschell Filipowski (1816–1872), an actuary, mathematician, editor, typographer, translator, expert on antilogarithms, and the inventor of a type of calculating machine. In his 1847/48 almanac, *Assiph* [Harvest],³⁵ were listed 7 London Jewish ecclesiastics, 11 Deputies, 13 synagogues, schools, 35 charitable institutions, and, commendably, the names of just over 100 officials of provincial congregations or their related societies, one of the first almanacs to include provincial officers, not just their wardens.³⁶ There were no later editions. Incidentally, when working on *The Colonial Life Assurance Company Almanack*, he had the

34 E. H. Lindo, *A Jewish Calendar for Sixty-Four Years*, detailing the New Moons, Festivals, and Fasts, with the sections of the Law as read in the synagogues every Sabbath during the year; also the days on which the hour for commencing Sabbath is altered; together with the corresponding Christian dates, to which are added Tables for continuing the calendar to A. M. 6000–2240 C. Æ. and a chronological table, forming a summary of Jewish history from the flood to the present time. With various other useful tables (London: L. Thompson, 19, Great St. Helen's, 1838) [University College London (hereafter, UCL), Special Collections; private collection].

35 Herschell Filipowski, ed., *Assiph, or Harvest: the Annual Hebrew Magazine; Containing various Literary and Critical Essays on Hebrew Literature and General Science, Elucidations on different passages in Holy Writ, Poems and Translations from the Living Tongues, found in Ancient and Modern Works, printed and MSS.* Edited by Herschell Filipowski. With an Hebrew and English Almanac, A.M. 5608.–C.E. 1847–1848 (London: Meldola, Cahn, & Co., 18 St Mary Axe, City, 1847) [BL H.P.25].

36 An advertisement in *JC*, 23 July 1847, 203, records that Vallentine's Almanac for 5608 (1847–48), to be published a few days later, would also contain a list of provincial synagogues and officers.

boldness to add to it three pages on the Jewish calendar.³⁷ He had already, in 1844, published a *Prospectus to Chronology*.³⁸

Myer Henry Myers and Asher Myers

Little changed for the next twenty-six years, when, in 1874, two more pioneers, apparently unrelated to each other, Reverend Myer Henry Myers (1836–1886) and Asher Isaac Myers (1848–1902), independently issued their own publications. Myer Henry Myers, the son of the second reader at the Great Synagogue, London, had served as Minister at Kingston, Jamaica, in 1867. He created the handsomely presented *Myers's Jewish Annual, Calendar and Diary*, a series of annuals of roughly ninety pages that ran from 1874 to 1899.³⁹ The earliest edition was printed by S. Solomon. Twelve were examined. Every few years more categories of information were added. There were no names until the 1878 issue. The 1881 issue recorded, for example, 48 provincial synagogues, with their street names, 120 council members and other officials of the United Synagogue, the secretaries of 16 Jewish colleges and national schools, 3 Jewish literary societies, 43 charitable institutions, and 38 London and provincial members of the Board of Deputies. In addition to calendrical information, some editions contained maxims and short stories.

On Myer Henry Myers's death, the *Annuals* were edited "for" his widow, Rachel Myers (died 1927), the daughter of J. D'Oliveyra, who was the Dutch consul at St Lucia.⁴⁰ His brother, Reverend Emanuel Moses Myers, published *The Centurial: A Jewish Calendar for One Hundred Years* in New York in 1890.⁴¹ Almanac production was an international activity involving Amsterdam, London, New York, and the West Indies. It was passed on through some families, such as the Nieto, Vallentine, and Myer Henry Myers families. More parochially, there was a fraternity among these

37 Herschell Filipowski, *The Colonial Life Assurance Company* (Edinburgh: Colonial Life Assurance Company, 1860) [BL P.P.2470.bc].

38 Jacobs and Wolf, *Anglo-Judaica*, 153, records that H. Filipowsky had published "Prospectus to Chronology. Liverpool. 1844. [Twelve valuable tables for calculating Hebrew dates.]" [not in BL catalogue].

39 The 1898 and 1899 editions were advertised in *JC*, 26 Aug. 1898, 13; 25 Aug. 1899, 5 [BL P.P.2480.0a contains several editions from 1874 to 1896].

40 Rachel Myers, ed., *The Jewish Calendar, Manual, and Diary, containing the date of each Sabbath and Festival for the year 5649...* (London: L. Schaap, 1888); *JC*, 9 May 1862, 1.

41 E. M. Myers, *The Centurial: A Jewish Calendar for one Hundred Years. Compiled by Rev. E. M. Myers with a summary of nearly seven hundred events of History from the time of creation to the present year* (Cincinnati: Stettiner, Lambert and Co., Printers; New York: Bloch Printing and Publishing Co., 1890) [BL 8562.ee.2].

printers and publishers, who worked within an easy walking distance of the portals of the major synagogue authorities, at Bevis Marks, the Great Synagogue, the Beth Din, the Board of Guardians, and Jews' Free School. There was a clear association between collective biography, calendar publishing, charity office-holders, publishers, printers, distributors, teachers at Jewish schools, and Anglo-Jewish newspapers. Newspaper editors and owners such as Asher Myers, Isaac Vallentine, Abraham Benisch (1811–1878), and Leopold Greenberg (1861–1931) became closely involved. It was Benisch who in 1855 proposed to establish a set of volumes to form an “Anglo-Jewish Library”, one of which was to be dedicated to Jewish biographical history;⁴² this was, however, never fulfilled.

Asher Isaac Myers, sometime editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*, compiled his landmark work *The Jewish Directory for 1874* in the same year as Myer Henry Myers's first *Jewish Annual*. This lists scores of Jewish institutions from across the country along with the individuals associated with them.⁴³ Forty-one subsequent pages list more than 1,700 names in alphabetical order, with their posts and addresses. In his preface, Myers states: “The idea being novel, I had to plough an untilled though not absolutely fallow field”. To his credit, he paid full attention to provincial communities. Incidentally, Asher Myers's son, Maurice Myers (1883–1940), a bibliophile and an expert on Jewish almanacs, later provided data for the obituary sections of the *Jewish Year Book*. It was also Maurice who, when the Mocatta Library at University College London was destroyed by enemy action, provided many replacement volumes.⁴⁴

Joseph Jacobs and Lucien Wolf

April 1887 witnessed a cardinal event, the “Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition” (held at the Royal Albert Hall, London), whose influence is easy to underestimate. Its chairman was Frederic D. Mocatta (1828–1905), who had presided at a public meeting in June 1870 inaugurating the Society of Hebrew Literature.⁴⁵ The exhibition was the launchpad of

42 JC, 10 Aug. 1855, 272; 7 Sept. 1855, 303.

43 Asher I. Myers, *The Jewish Directory for 1874. Containing a complete list of metropolitan and provincial synagogues, Jewish schools, associations, charitable and other institutions, societies, &c., with names and addresses of all persons holding official positions (honorary and salaried) in the Anglo-Jewish community; and other interesting information* (London: Asher I. Myers and Philip Vallentine, 1874) [BL P.P.2501.am]; no later editions.

44 JC, 7 Feb. 1941, 7.

45 David Salomons, “Preface”, in *Publications of the Society of Hebrew Literature: Miscellany of Hebrew Literature*, vol. 1, ed. Albert Löwy (London: N. Trübner and Co., 1872), iii.

many initiatives, publications, research projects, the first major Anglo-Jewish bibliography, and the formation of the Jewish Historical Society of England in 1893. The period from 1885 to the launch of the *Jewish Year Book* in 1896 is clearly the formative decade in the establishment of the discipline of Anglo-Jewish collective biography. Its major exponents during this decade were Lucien Wolf (1857–1930) and Joseph Jacobs (1854–1916).⁴⁶

Wolf, in 1886, published an essay entitled “Old Anglo-Jewish Families” reflecting his interest in genealogy, one of the earliest essays of the genre.⁴⁷ He then published in the *Jewish Chronicle* of November 1887 a list of 594 deceased British Jews (including 33 women, and 18 who lived before 1290), the first list of its nature. The title of the article was “Plan of a Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish Biography. [English, American, and Colonial]”.⁴⁸ In this list he furnished against each name, where known, the dates of birth and death, or *floruit*, along with their profession or accomplishment. He reprinted the Plan verbatim in a separate eleven-page booklet, this being the first substantial nationally based Anglo-Jewish collective biographical work, based on noteworthiness, and physically independent of an almanac or newspaper – some 231 years after Jews were readmitted to England.⁴⁹

This was preceded by another biographical list, entitled “Jewish Celebrities of the Nineteenth Century 1875–1885”, that appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle* in 1885. However, it was an international list, divided into various categories, such as Belles-Lettres, the Press, Music, Stage, Poetry, Science, and Philosophy.⁵⁰ Compiled by Joseph Jacobs as part of his anthropological research while investigating the ability of Jews compared with “Englishmen and Scotsmen”, he had amassed the names of eminent Jews in various fields and occupations. Jacobs and Wolf then collaborated on the production of the *Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition Catalogue* (1887) and the *Bibliotheca Anglo-Judaica* (1888), which was the first substantial

46 Henry Paine Stokes, “Address by the President”, *Transactions* 8 (1918): 129–30; Israel Zangwill, “Address by Israel Zangwill”, *ibid.*, 131–46; Lucien Wolf, “Address by Lucien Wolf”, *ibid.*, 147–9; Israel Abrahams, “Bibliography by Dr. I. Abrahams. Dr Joseph Jacobs’s Contributions to Anglo-Jewish History, Literature, and Statistics”, *ibid.*, 150–52.

47 Repr. in Lucien Wolf, “Old Anglo-Jewish Families”, in *Essays in Jewish History by Lucien Wolf with a Memoir*, ed. Cecil Roth (London: JHSE, 1934), 205–29.

48 *JC*, 4 Nov. 1887, 16; 11 Nov. 1887, 16.

49 Lucien Wolf, *Plan of a Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish Biography*. [English, American, and Colonial.], reprinted from the “*Jewish Chronicle*,” November 4–11, 1887 (London: Jewish Chronicle Office, 1887) [BL 4515. ff.4].

50 *JC*, 25 Sept. 1885, 7.

bibliographical guide to Anglo-Jewish history.⁵¹ This contained a section on biography, supplying 391 names of individuals, all but a handful of which had already been included in Wolf's *Plan*, along with brief source notes and newspaper obituary details.

Jacobs's *Jewish Year Book* (1897/8 edition onwards) contains a "Who's Who" section or "Communal Directory" consisting of hundreds of names of living British Jews. This was preceded by a compilational section dedicated to specific lists of Jews, such as knights, MPs, and so on, these lists varying from decade to decade. By the end of the run of 114 issues of the *Jewish Year Book* in 2015, there had been altogether 32 different specific lists of British Jews. Usually less than half this number appeared in any given issue, and none between 1925 and 1940. Several other sections relate to various metropolitan and provincial Jewish institutions, such that by the third edition (1898/99), the index to the institutional pages included about 1500 surnames with initials.⁵² Jewish newspapers also served as massive repositories of biographical information. The *Jewish Chronicle* has now published more than 7,800 issues but, like the *Jewish Year Books*, their valuable content is ephemeral and not cumulative. The *Jewish Year Book* was suggested by Leopold Greenberg, later the editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*. Some subsequent analogous yearbooks contained biographical sections, such as the *European Jewish Year Book* (1950s),⁵³ the *Zionist Year Book*,⁵⁴ and to a limited extent the *Glasgow Jewish Year Book* (1937/38),⁵⁵ but not the *Hashanah Scottish Jewish Year Book* (1955/56), which, incidentally, includes material on Scottish communal organizations with their history and names of (then current) officers.⁵⁶

51 Jacobs and Wolf, *Bibliotheca Anglo-Judaica*.

52 The early editions of the *Jewish Year Book* printed updates of Wolf's and Jacobs's lists, as *Anglo-Jewish Worthies* and *Jewish Celebrities*, respectively, with slight variations in their titles.

53 Hermann Bary, ed., *European Jewish Year Book: Jewish Life in Europe 5714 1953/54*, 3rd ed. (Frankfurt am Main and Paris: Union-Druckerei und Verlagsanstalt, 1953), 403–46 [private collection, not in BL catalogue].

54 Shaindy Mason, *Zionist Year Book 5730 (1969–1970)*, 19th ed. (London: Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 1969), 386–457 [private collection; BL P.P.2480.occ.X.Ref345.a, 1976 and 1976–83/4 eds].

55 Boris Silver, ed., *Glasgow Jewish Year Book 5699/1938–1939* (Glasgow: Glasgow City Press, 1938), No. 2, with a section on rabbis and hazanim inc. their photographs [BL P.P.2510.ml; Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, Glasgow, holds 1937–38 and 1938–39 eds].

56 Marcus I. Green and Basil Seltzer, *Hashanah The Scottish Jewish Year Book 5716 1955–56*, 1st ed. (Glasgow: Hashanah Committee of the Glasgow Commission of the Jewish National Fund, 1955–56), 149–81 [Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, Glasgow, holds 1955–56, 1956–57, 1957–58 eds; not in BL catalogue].

In 1893, just before the advent of the *Jewish Year Book*, Harfield's *Commercial Directory of the Jews of the United Kingdom* was published.⁵⁷ G. Eugene Harfield listed the names, addresses, and occupation of more than two thousand Jewish businessmen and workers, with the entries arranged in order of towns. It received a poor review by Asher Myers in the *Jewish Chronicle*, claiming it was "quite useless for practical purposes, the bulk of prominent names being omitted, others wrongly inserted, some non-Jewish names are included, and the list of Jewish Institutions is altogether out-of-date, some of the officials having resigned or died years ago; and apparently it is only by accident that any of them are correctly given".⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Myers had not updated his own 1874 *Directory* for twenty years.⁵⁹ Harfield's identity has remained obscure for decades, although there was a Courland-born Goodman E. Harfield, described in the 1911 decennial census as a "teacher of languages and author" and as an American citizen domiciled in England.⁶⁰ He may also have been the "G. E. Harfield" who was the headmaster of the West Ham Synagogue Talmud Torah and Sabbath religious classes,⁶¹ who died in 1916, aged 46. By September 1896, his directory had been overshadowed by the *Jewish Year Book*.

Thanks to Joseph Jacobs, the launching of the *Jewish Year Book* may have emboldened the Americans to launch their own three years later, in September 1899. The *American Jewish Year Book* was modelled to a certain extent on the English version. Jacobs edited their seventeenth volume. In 1900, Jacobs departed for the USA where he became a contributor of several hundred articles (including many biographical ones) to the *Jewish Encyclopedia*,⁶² of which he became the revising editor; this was a serious loss to Anglo-Jewry historical scholarship. His own, rather slender, *Jews*

57 G. Eugene Harfield, *A Commercial Directory of the Jews of the United Kingdom* (London and Richmond, VA: Hewlett and Pierce, 1893); also 1894 and 1896 eds [1893 private collection; 1894 UCL Library.]

58 JC, 20 July 1894, 26.

59 Stephen Massil recorded that he had seen an annotated copy marked for future publication: "Preface to facsimile edition", in *The Jewish Year Book: An Annual Record of Matters Jewish*, 5657 (1896–1897). *A Centenary Facsimile of the First Jewish Year Book* (London and Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 1996), viii.

60 Ancestry.com, 1911 England census, RG14/9411/149 (accessed Dec. 2018), citing *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1911* (Kew: National Archives, 1911).

61 JC, 24 Jan. 1913, 32.

62 Isidore Singer, ed., *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York and London: Funk and Wagnells, 1901).

of *Distinction* (1815–1915), a list of 902 notable international Jews, including some with partial Jewish ancestry, was published in 1919 posthumously and privately.⁶³

A passing note should be made of Raphael Mazin (c. 1866–1938; originally Mazah, born near Minsk) who had, by about 1891, started a Jewish bookshop in Whitechapel, selling Hebrew and Yiddish works. For the Jewish immigrant, he published a series of pocket calendars, some partly in Yiddish with the occasional Russian words (for example, the months on the calendar page). The 1915–16 issue was suited for transmigrants and contained information for those heading for the USA, as well as a history of the Jews of Britain, a list of chief rabbis and Hahamim, and a biographical section describing seventeen British Jews, all in Yiddish.⁶⁴

Sidney Salomon and antisemitism

Throughout the twentieth century the *Jewish Year Book* had no competitor. However, researchers independent of the *Jewish Year Book*, Jewish newspapers, and of the City or East End printer took the initiative in terms of Anglo-Jewish biography. Fifty years after Wolf and Jacobs's pioneering work, we encounter another contributor, Sidney Salomon (1885–1965), the press officer of the Board of Deputies, who had been wounded at Passchendaele. With the Nazi threat then all too convincing, he compiled *The Jews of Britain* in July 1938, providing statistical evidence of the positive Jewish contribution to British life.⁶⁵ But his main mission was to refute the misleading propaganda about Jews that emanated from the Nazis and some Britons. Few names are mentioned, perhaps deliberately. He had certainly seen Jewish names abused already.

One particularly unwelcome publication about British Jews was *The Jews' Who's Who: Israelite Finance. Its sinister influence*, published in London in 1920 by the Judaic Press, founded by Henry Hamilton Beamish (1873–1948). A pillar-box red-covered book almost identical to the *Jewish Year Book*, it was laden with a catalogue of populist, antisemitic and xenophobic tropes, and misleading, unreliable, and derogatory material about the financial

63 Joseph Jacobs, *Jews of Distinction* (1815–1915) (New York: privately printed, 1919), 5–68 [private collection; not in BL catalogue].

64 Mazin's "Kol-bo", *Yiddish–English and Russian Almanac and Year-Book for the year 5676 – 1915–16* (London: R. Mazin & Co., 141 Whitechapel Rd., E., [1915]) [BL HEC.1986.a.8g].

65 Sidney Salomon, *The Jews of Britain* (London: Jarrolds, 1938).

holdings and other activities of Jews and many others, especially those with German-sounding names, whom he incorrectly implied to have been Jewish. Beamish contended, wrongly, that world business, wars, freemasonry, gold, diamonds, consular posts, Soviet politics, the press, knighthoods, and other honours were controlled by the hidden hand of an international conspiracy of Jews, who, he also claimed, devised the League of Nations.⁶⁶ At the foot of most pages were quotations, some by Jews, which could somehow, out of context, be construed to imply something dishonourable about Jews.

The 1920s and 1930s were a fertile period for books describing the contribution of Jews to civilization. In this field, 1899 had seen *Justice to the Jew* by the American Madison C. Peters⁶⁷ and, in 1920, *Jewish Contributions to Civilization* by Joseph Jacobs was posthumously published.⁶⁸ *The Real Jew: Some Aspects of the Jewish Contribution to Civilization* (1925), edited by H. Newman,⁶⁹ was followed by Cecil Roth's *The Jewish Contribution to Civilisation* (1938).⁷⁰ Striving to rebut derogatory mischaracterizations of Jews which had permeated Europe during the 1930s, Roth enumerated the accomplishments of noteworthy Jews, commenting that "there is no branch of human culture or civilisation which Jews (I refrain from speaking of 'the Jews') have not touched or enriched". Roth contended, perhaps unwarrantably, that England had given birth to "no philosopher on the same plane as Spinoza: no musician who excels Mendelssohn: no contemporary painter, perhaps, of the calibre of Pissarro, or Liebermann". In his third edition (1956), he stated that he had originally written it "in a quasi-racial standpoint" and that he would have wished to write on the Jewish contribution rather than the contribution of Jews themselves. The third edition replaced the index of names with a much shorter index of subjects. Maybe he had a presentiment of those criticisms of his approach that some characterize by such terms as defensive, meliorist, whiggish, 'contribution', self-congratulatory, or apologetic.

SS-General Walter Schellenberg (1910–1952), Chief of Reichssicher-

66 Henry Hamilton Beamish, *The Jews' Who's Who: Israelite Finance. Its sinister influence* (London: Judaic Press, 1920), 19.

67 Madison C. Peters, *Justice to the Jew: The Story of what he has done for the World* (London and New York: F. Tennyson Neely, 1899) [UCL Library].

68 Joseph Jacobs, *Jewish Contributions to Civilization: An Estimate* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1920).

69 H. Newman, ed., *The Real Jew: Some Aspects of the Jewish Contribution to Civilization* (London: A. & C. Black, 1925).

70 Cecil Roth, *The Jewish Contribution to Civilisation* (London: Macmillan, 1938).

heitshauptamt (German counter-intelligence), in May 1940 was in charge of compiling lists of Britons to be arrested or ‘taken into protective custody’. These were mainly politicians, consular staff, Jews, left-wing political activists, and journalists. On his hit list of 2,820 Britons to be arrested there were many Jews. Among them were members of the Jewish Historical Society of England, such as Norman Bentwich, Israel Cohen, A. S. Diamond, Victor Gollancz, Paul Goodman, Ivan Marion Greenberg, Cyril Henriques, Joseph H. Hertz, Albert Hyamson, Ashe Lincoln, Cecil Roth, and Harry Samuels.⁷¹

Paul Emden and Albert Hyamson

In 1944, Paul Emden (1882–1953), a banker from Frankfurt, saw the eventual publication of his *Jews of Britain: A Series of Biographies*, the first substantial one-volume biographical compilation of deceased British Jews.⁷² He describes many politicians, financiers, and businessmen but only a few scientists and no chief rabbis. Emden is particularly strong on emancipation, colonials, finance, and industry. There are few references to Jews active in the arts, little material on Sephardim (such as Nieto and Meldola), early twentieth-century academics, or on community figures, and hardly a hint of the German and Austrian refugees of the 1930s, the predicament of whose families on the Continent was then distinctly perilous. Masterly, polished, and readable, it contains no photographs, lists, or tables. The original proposed title of the book, as seen on a pre-publication printed copy, was not “Jews of Britain”, but “Reciprocation”.⁷³ Emden was anticipated by Henry Samuel Morais (1860–1935), an American whose *Eminent Israelites of the Nineteenth Century* (1880) provided biographical accounts of 107 Jews, a quarter of whom were English or had lived in England. In this work, Morais acknowledged the assistance of James Picciotto (1830–1897).⁷⁴

On 7 June 1945, a month after VE Day, Albert Hyamson (1875–1954) delivered a lecture to the Jewish Historical Society of England entitled

71 Walter Schellenberg, *Invasion 1940: The Nazi Invasion Plan for Britain* (London: St Ermin’s Press, 2000), intro. John Erickson; *The Black Book (Sonderfahndungsliste G.B.)*, Facsimile Reprint Series (London: Imperial War Museum, 1989).

72 Paul H. Emden, *Jews of Britain: A Series of Biographies* (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co., 1944).

73 Private collection.

74 Henry Samuel Morais, *Eminent Israelites of the Nineteenth Century: A Series of Biographical Sketches* (Philadelphia: Edward Stern & Co, 1880), iv.

“Materials for a Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish Biography”.⁷⁵ Four years later saw the embryonic version of this project. In 1949, Hyamson completed a list of 2,092 names of British Jews in his *Plan of a Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish Biography*. Running to sixty-nine pages, it acknowledged the list of individuals that Lucien Wolf and Joseph Jacobs had included in their *Bibliotheca Anglo-Judaica* of 1888, some sixty years earlier. However Hyamson omitted more than 120 names that had appeared in Wolf’s *Plan*; of this number more than fifty were “colonials”. He included almost all those listed in the index of Emden’s book. Hyamson recorded against each individual’s name the years of birth and death, only a few words recording their most noted achievement or an occupational term, and the source references. Unfortunately, he never completed his prospective biographical dictionary. Hyamson, a compiler extraordinaire, wrote *A Dictionary of Universal Biography of All Ages and All People* in 1915, listing more than 100,000 individuals,⁷⁶ and in 1942 he compiled a list of about 1,017 Jewish obituaries (of which 295 were women) that he had detected in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* covering from 1731 to 1868;⁷⁷ about 160 of these were included in his own 1949 *Plan* and 97 had been in Wolf’s *Plan* (1887). He had also written on Jewish mayors in 1902.⁷⁸

Hyamson had already published a *History of the Jews in England* in 1908 when he was just thirty-three.⁷⁹ Anglo-Jewish histories naturally refer to many individual Jews but some writers, such as Vivian Lipman (1921–1990) and Israel Finestein (1921–2009), were more generous in furnishing biographical information in the text or notes. It was Finestein who, in 1956, re-edited, with biographical information-laden endnotes, the vividly written *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History* (1875) by James Picciotto, who peppered his text of the first substantial history of British Jews written by a Jew.⁸⁰ So, Hyamson’s narrative (1908) was preceded thirty-three years earlier by Picciotto’s (1875) and was succeeded, some thirty-three years

75 As stated in the Preface to *Transactions* 15 (1946): xvi.

76 Albert Hyamson, *A Dictionary of Universal Biography* (London: Routledge, 1915) [BL HLR920.02: 2nd ed. (1951)].

77 Albert Hyamson, “The Jewish Obituaries in the *Gentleman’s Magazine*”, *Miscellanies* 4 (1942): 33–60.

78 *JC*, 14 Nov. 1902, 13.

79 Albert M. Hyamson, *History of the Jews in England* (London: Chatto & Windus for the JHSE, 1908).

80 James Picciotto, *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History* (London: Trübner & Co., 1875); Israel Finestein, *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History by James Picciotto, revised and edited, with a prologue, notes and an epilogue* (London: Soncino Press, 1956).

later, by Roth's *A History of the Jews in England* (1941), and then after a gap of nearly fifty years, by a remarkable cluster of at least six further Anglo-Jewish histories covering varying periods. Another writer, the composer Charles Salaman (1814–1901) included in his book *Jews As They Are* (1882) a survey of “noteworthy events marking Jewish progress during the past half century 1830–1880”, one of the first detailed chronological accounts of Jewish attainments, relating mainly to municipal and political events; this was, therefore, another precursor to the Anglo-Jewish historical chronologies that appeared in the *Jewish Year Book* between 1902/3 and 1924.⁸¹ Salaman also provided brief biographical details of about thirty Jewish clergy and their posts in Britain.

Progress from 1999

In 1999, fifty years after the publication of Hyamson's *Plan of a Biographical Dictionary* (1949) and fifty-five years after Emden's *Jews of Britain* (1944), I compiled *A Directory of Distinguished British Jews*, whose 2002 edition, of 256 pages, ranging mainly from 1830 to the present day, subjects to scrutiny at least fifty-three different categories of British Jews according to their achievements or other particulars.⁸² It formed the first comprehensive biographical database to include both deceased and living British Jews. This is not to overlook the two-page list of British and Commonwealth Jews who held public office, compiled by Theodor H. Gaster (1906–1992), which appeared in the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*.⁸³

Emden and Hyamson had adopted a policy of including only those who had died (by 1944 and 1949 respectively). This policy effectively excludes from a biographical dictionary, sometimes for decades, many notables such as the government ministers Herbert Samuel (1870–1963, a cabinet minister in 1909), Emanuel Shinwell (1884–1986), and Leslie Hore-Belisha (1893–1957). In 2006, my essay “British Jews: Their Biographical Record” dealt with the categorization of British Jews and, indirectly, with their selection for inclusion.⁸⁴

81 Charles Salaman, *Jews As They Are* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1885), 61–95, 169–72.

82 Jolles, *Directory of Distinguished British Jews* (2002 ed.).

83 Theodor H. Gaster, “Public Office, Jews in”, in *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, ed. Isaac Landman, 10 vols (New York: Universal Jewish Encyclopedia Co., 1943), vol. 9, 24–6.

84 Michael Jolles, “British Jews: Their Biographical Record”, *The Jewish Year Book* 2006 5766–5767 (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2006), xi–xv.

During the half-centuries between 1896 and 1944 and between 1950 and 1999, independent researchers, with a generally narrower focus, not only started recording biographical aspects of British Jews in various occupational sectors, such as law, medicine, and business, but also employed a wide range of other approaches, which appeared in books, the *Transactions*, and other journals. Many of these are listed in four Anglo-Jewish bibliographies published by the JHSE.⁸⁵ A small sample illustrating the variety of approach includes the following, which appeared in book form. Reverend Michael Adler, in his thousand-page *British Jewry Book of Honour* (1922), listed all known Jewish servicemen in the First World War, including more than 360 pages of photographs, a remarkable feat, considering the hardships of the immediate postwar period.⁸⁶ Others have written on, say, refugees and on the Kindertransport. In 1971, Chaim Bermant's *The Cousinhood: The Anglo-Jewish Gentry* opened up to the general public a view into those established Anglo-Jewish families who were descended from the merchant Levi Barent Cohen (1747–1808).⁸⁷ In 1999, Asher Tropp's *Jews in the Professions in Great Britain 1891–1991* produced in just over 100 pages a set of names of Jewish professionals, furnished with brief biographical details.⁸⁸

An important contribution to biography has also been made by genealogists, some of whom have provided various biographers and historians with genealogical details of their subjects. Early exponents included Sir Thomas Colyer-Fergusson (1865–1951), Ronald D'Arcy Hart (1895–1985), Albert Hyamson, and Rabbi Morris Rosenbaum (1871–1947). In 1901, Lucien Wolf published a history and genealogy of the Yates and Samuel families and, in 1958, D'Arcy Hart produced *The Samuel Family of Liverpool and London*, a superlative genealogical work

85 Cecil Roth, *Magna Bibliotheca Anglo-Judaica: A Bibliographical Guide to Anglo-Jewish History* (London: JHSE, 1937); Ruth P. Lehmann, *Nova Bibliotheca Anglo-Judaica: A Bibliographical Guide to Anglo-Jewish History 1937–1960* (London: JHSE, 1961); Ruth P. Lehmann, *Anglo-Jewish Bibliography 1937–1970* (London: JHSE, 1973); Ruth P. Goldschmidt-Lehmann, Stephen W. Massil, and Peter Shmuel Salinger, *Anglo-Jewish Bibliography 1971–1990* (London: JHSE, 1992).

86 Michael Adler, comp., *British Jewry Book of Honour* (London: Caxton Publishing, 1922).

87 Chaim Bermant, *The Cousinhood: The Anglo-Jewish Gentry* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1971).

88 Asher Tropp, *Jews in the Professions in Great Britain 1891–1991* (London: Maccabeans, 1991).

with family trees, biographical notes, and 85 portraits.⁸⁹ Members of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain (founded in 1992) have also been highly productive. In 1999, Frank Gent compiled a list of about 1,850 marriages conducted at the Great Synagogue, London, between 1791 and 1830.⁹⁰ Doreen Berger extracted biographical and genealogical information from the *Jewish Chronicle* from 1861 to 1880 in *The Jewish Victorian: Genealogical Information from the Jewish Newspapers*.⁹¹ In 2010, Petra Laidlaw's *An Index to the Jewish Community of the British Isles in 1851* produced a database of more than 29,000 Jews living in Britain in that year.⁹² Stuart Rosenblatt's limited edition of his monumental nineteen-volume publication (2016) on Irish Jewish genealogy (56,000 individuals) may claim to have been the world's first almost complete genealogy of a nation's Jewry.⁹³ The nature of local Anglo-Jewish community histories, which have proliferated since 1990, has evolved to include biographical and genealogical sections. For example, Hilary Thomas and John Cowell's 2012 book *An Industrious Minority: A History of the Bolton Jewish Community* includes a section of 120 pages, one of the largest sets of biographical accounts in any Anglo-Jewish community history.⁹⁴ The standard of biographical research was raised by Keith Pearce in *The Jews of Cornwall* (2014), which includes biographical vignettes, photographs, genealogical tables, lists of burials, and headstone details.⁹⁵ There are few collective

89 Ronald J. D'Arcy Hart, ed., *The Samuel Family of Liverpool and London from 1755 onwards: A Biographical and Genealogical Dictionary of the Descendants of Emanuel Samuel* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958).

90 Frank J. Gent, *Great Synagogue Marriage Records 1791–1830* (Crediton: Frank J. Gent, 1999) [BL OIC 929.308].

91 Doreen Berger, *The Jewish Victorian: Genealogical Information from the Jewish Newspapers 1871–1880* (London: Robert Boyd, 1999); Doreen Berger, *The Jewish Victorian: Genealogical Information from the Jewish Newspapers 1861–1870* (London: Robert Boyd, 2004) [BL OIC 929.308].

92 Petra Laidlaw, *An Index to the Jewish Community of the British Isles in 1851* (privately published, 2014) [2010 ed., BL YC.2011.b.481; Library of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain, London].

93 Stuart Rosenblatt, *The Book of Irish Jewry*, vol. 19 (Dublin: privately printed, 2016), 2,008 pp, covering both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland [Library of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain, London].

94 Hilary Thomas and John Cowell, *An Industrious Minority: A History of the Bolton Jewish Community* (Southport: privately published, 2012).

95 Keith Pearce, *The Jews of Cornwall: A History. Tradition and Settlement to 1913* (Wellington, Somerset: Halsgrove, 2014).

biographical works on individual Jews in local communities⁹⁶ but, since 2006, at least four biographical books or booklets based on selected Jews buried in individual cemeteries have been published.⁹⁷

In 2011, William D. Rubinstein, Hilary L. Rubinstein, and I compiled the *Palgrave Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish History* which includes articles on Jewish communities, institutions, and historical events. Ninety-five per cent of the 3600 articles are biographical, and of these seventeen per cent relate to two or more individuals. Altogether, about 4,300 individuals are described. This is effectively the culmination of what Wolf and Jacobs had aspired to achieve some 123 years earlier, although “colonials” who had lived only fleetingly in Britain are excluded. W. D. Rubinstein, the author of *A History of the Jews in the English-Speaking World: Great Britain* (1996) also served as the editor and the compiler of more than two hundred (mainly) biographical entries relating to Great Britain and British Commonwealth Jews and communities (except Canada) for the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (2007), succeeding contributors to the 1971 edition such as Cecil Roth and V. D. Lipman. Charles Spencer (1920–2010) and Michael Denman also provided biographies, of British artists and scientists, respectively. Another source of printed biographical data, the ODNB, was published in 2004. This included about eight hundred entries on British Jews,⁹⁸ and a considerable number have been added to the online version.

In 2018, Aubrey Newman alerted me to the existence at the University of Leicester of a set of manuscripts which he had rescued from being destroyed some years earlier.⁹⁹ Written by David Englander (1949–1999), a social historian at the Open University, they had not been examined before. They are the draft versions of a biographical dictionary of British

96 One example is Murray Freedman, *25 Characters in Leeds Jewish History* (Leeds: privately published, 2004).

97 Jon Epstein and David Jacobs, *A History of our Time: Rabbis and Teachers buried at Hoop Lane Cemetery* (London: Leo Baeck College, 2006); Caron Lipman, *The Sephardic Jewish Cemeteries at Queen Mary, University of London* (London: Queen Mary, University of London, 2012); Saul Marks, *Deane Road Cemetery: Liverpool's Oldest Jewish Burial Ground. Guide Book* (Liverpool: Deane Road Cemetery Committee, 2014); Aviva Landau, *Edmonton Federation Cemetery: A Look at the Lives of Prominent Rabbonim and Communal Leaders buried at this Historic Cemetery* (London: Federation of Synagogues, 2018).

98 Michael Jolles, “Jews and the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography”, *Jewish Historical Society Newsletter* 11 (Jan. 2005): 1–5; William D. Rubinstein, “Jews in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography”, *Transactions* 40 (2005): 247–51.

99 University of Leicester, Archives and Special Collections 2015/38, “Unpublished manuscript. A Biographical Dictionary of British Jews by the late Dr David Englander, Reader in History at the Open University”.

Jews in an advanced state of preparation, apparently created single-handedly during the 1990s, and consist of about 4,300 articles (a similar number of individuals to the *Palgrave* dictionary) but strictly one individual per article. A comparison of entries within a small sample of four hundred consecutive entries of post-Resettlement British Jews revealed that about forty per cent were found in both Englander's manuscript and *Palgrave*. While this general concordance rate is not high, it is high for relatively major individuals. Englander's version, which provided no source references, contained relatively more entries of rabbis, colonials, and those minor communal figures who are found in the biographical section of the *Jewish Year Book*, on which he appeared to rely. Comparison of the two works' contents reflects the larger source material resorted to by *Palgrave* available during the first decade of the twenty-first century that had been denied to Englander – the ODNB, *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, the *Jewish Chronicle* online archive, and much other material.

Overseas comparisons

The first *Who's Who in American Jewry*, with more than 2,000 entries, was published in 1926. The third edition, of 1938, edited by John Simons, had 8,477 entries.¹⁰⁰ These include the mother's maiden name, which British collective biographical works do not record routinely (nor do *Jewish Chronicle* obituaries), and are furnished with about 400 photographs, another feature that British compilers do not include. It was supplemented by a geographical index of their addresses. In 1955, its successor publication recorded 10,700 Jews from more than twenty countries, becoming the first attempt at a global Jewish biographical dictionary (in the English language) of living Jews.¹⁰¹ An entry was only published if the

100 Julius Schwartz and Solomon Aaron Kaye, *Who's Who in American Jewry 1926* (New York: Jewish Biographical Bureau, 1927), 680 pp. The preface to the 2nd ed. (1928), 781pp., quoted Joseph Jacobs: "Against the vague anti-Semitic denunciations of Jewish characteristics, which are mainly the results of prejudice, and, in any case, cannot be checked or measured, we must set down the results of Jewish achievement"; John Simons, ed., *Who's Who in American Jewry: A Biographical Dictionary of Living Jews of the United States and Canada, volume 3, 1938–1939* (New York: National News Association, 1938), 1,174 pp; see also Leo M. Glassman, *Biographical Encyclopaedia of American Jews* (New York: Maurice Jacobs and Leo M. Glassman, 1935), 606 pp.

101 Harry Schneiderman and Itzhak J. Carmin, ed., *Who's Who in World Jewry: A Biographical Dictionary of Outstanding Jews* (New York: Who's Who in World Jewry, Inc., with Monde Publishers, 1955); followed by Harry Cohen and Itzhak J. Carmin, ed., *World Jewish Register 1955/56* (New York: Monde Publishers, 1955), divided into eleven fields (Commerce

subject had corresponded with the editors; a large proportion of subjects were middle-class professionals and businessmen. All the entries were in the “Who’s Who” style based on submitted information by the subject, in contrast to the narrative-style compiler-composed entries favoured by authors of biographical dictionaries used by historians. The former approach, also adopted by South African Jewry, whose first collective biographical work appeared in 1929 (two years after the founding of the South African Jewish Historical Society in April 1927),¹⁰² and by Israel,¹⁰³ predisposes to the omission of such aspects as by whom the individual was influenced, the significance of their work, their legacy, reception, and evaluation.

Canada’s first collective biographer, an indefatigable Zvi Cohen, edited the 1933 *Canadian Jewry: Prominent Jews of Canada*, having visited nearly every town in the Dominion, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, so as to acquaint himself with the progress of Jewish communities and the local leaders.¹⁰⁴ His 304-page volume contains about a thousand entries of living

and Industry, Community Affairs, Education, Finance, Fine Art, Law, etc); Harry Cohen and Itzhak J. Carmin, ed., *Jews in the World of Science* (New York: Monde Publishers, 1956); further eds 1965, 1972, 1978, 1981, 1987 (which last included a list of hundreds of Jewish Soviet refuseniks).

102 Morris de Saxe, ed., *The South African Jewish Year Book: Directory of Jewish Organisations and Who’s Who in South African Jewry 1929, 5289–90* (Johannesburg: South African Jewish Historical Society, 1929), 293–393; it was followed by these publications each of which contained “Who’s Who” sections: Dora Sowden, *The Jew in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Century Publishing, [c. 1944]); Leon Feldberg, ed., *South African Jewry 1965 edition* (Johannesburg: Fieldhouse Publishing House, 1965); Leon Feldberg, ed., *South African Jewry 1967–68 edition* (Johannesburg: Fieldhouse Publishing House, 1967); Leon Feldberg, ed., *South African Jewry 1976–77 edition* (Roodepoort: Alex White & Co., [1976/77]).

103 Alexander Aurel and Peretz Cornfeld, ed., *The Near and Middle East Who’s Who, Volume I: Palestine, Trans-Jordan, 1945–1946* (Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, Haifa: Near and Middle East Who’s Who Publ. Co., 1945), 1,160 entries; followed by Peretz Cornfeld, ed., *Palestine Personalities* (Tel-Aviv: Palestine Personalities, 1947); Alexander M. Aurel-Ariely, ed., *The Near and Middle East Who’s Who, Volume II: Israel. Who’s Who in the State of Israel* (Tel Aviv: Near and Middle East Who’s Who Publ. Co., 1949); Peretz Dagan (formerly Cornfeld), *Who’s Who Israel 1952* (Tel Aviv: Who’s Who in the State of Israel Publishing House, 1952), followed by further English eds with minor variations in title. An earlier biographical dictionary is Mehmet Zeki Ormandag, *Who is Who in the Orient, Volume IV: Palestine Fourth Section 1935–1936* (Jerusalem: Syrian Orphanage Press, [1935]), parallel text in English and French; it consists of entries on the British, Jews, and Arabs in Palestine, with more than 200 photographs.

104 Zvi Cohen, *Canadian Jewry: Prominent Jews of Canada. A History of Canadian Jewry especially of the Present Time through Reviews and Biographical Sketches* (Toronto: Canadian Jewish Historical Publishing, 1933).

individuals, almost all furnished with photographs. In 1964, following in his methodological footsteps, Rabbi Eli Gottesman (born 1932) used a bus on his research travels as a mobile synagogue. Of more than two thousand entries in his *Who's Who in Canadian Jewry* (1964), the majority were furnished with photographs.¹⁰⁵ In a later work of 1989, subjects were asked to complete a section in a questionnaire about their special interests and what achievement or feature of their life they were most proud of; their responses were published.¹⁰⁶

The thoroughness of all these publications was eclipsed in 1999 by that of the three-volume edition of 2,400-paged cross-referenced *Biographisches Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration nach 1933* (*International Biographical Dictionary of Central European Émigrés 1933–1945*), containing 8,700 entries of Jewish and non-Jewish deceased and living individuals who left Germany during this twelve-year period, some arriving in Britain.¹⁰⁷ Entries contain details where ascertainable of family history (with significant particulars relating to their parents, siblings, spouse, and children), religion, emigration dates and destinations, education, career, bibliography, and sources. Some of these (pre-2000) overseas works were many times the size of their British counterparts. Overseas biographical dictionaries used their subjects' own submissions (often with photographs), which were then edited and formatted, whereas the British accounts were, generally, created by the authors or editors themselves (and rarely with photographs).

Conclusion

The desire for a type of community compendium as a component of the annual almanacs, particularly from the 1830s, as well as the mounting community confidence of the 1880s and 1890s, and the perceived need during the tragic 1940s to describe the positive achievements of Jews, had all prompted the production (or plans for them) of publications

105 Eli Gottesman, *Who's Who in Canadian Jewry* (Montreal: Central Rabbinical Seminary of Canada, 1964).

106 Edmond Y. Lipsitz, *Canadian Jewry Today: Who's Who in Canadian Jewry* (Ontario: JESL Educational Products, 1989). A particular feature of the Canadian biographical dictionaries that have been examined is that they all have name indexes.

107 Werner Röder and Herbert A. Strauss, ed., *Biographisches Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration nach 1933*, vol. 1: Politik, Wirtschaft, Öffentliches Leben; vol. 2 in English: *International Biographical Dictionary of Central European Émigrés 1933–1945: The Arts, Sciences, and Literature*; vol. 3 in German and English: *Gesamtregister Index* (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1999).

of collective biographical works of Anglo-Jewry, albeit on a markedly intermittent basis. An unprecedented resurgence of activity since the 1990s has witnessed, *inter alia*, a comprehensive collective biographical database of British Jews as well as the long-awaited realization of what earlier pioneers had in vain striven to achieve, an Anglo-Jewish biographical dictionary. Biographical accounts of British Jews, with varying degrees of authoritativeness, are now appearing on the internet at a rapid rate, while printed works on collective biography have also seen a recent popularity.¹⁰⁸

108 E.g. the Jewish Museum in London had by December 2018 published four volumes in their Jewish Lives Project, on Commerce, Arts, Public Service, and Thought.

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