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Obituary:

The passing of Edgar Samuel

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The passing of Edgar Samuel

Edgar Samuel was born in Hampstead in 1928, the eldest son of Wilfred Sampson Samuel and Viva Doreen née Blashki. In an article written by Edgar about his father, he says of him that he acquired a professional standard of expertise as a researcher and writer, and made a significant contribution to the history of the Jewish community in England. Wilfred was the main founder of the Jewish Museum in London, and gathered together the nucleus of its superb collection.

Edgar attended school at Polak's House, Clifton College, Bristol and subsequently studied for a B.A. (Hons) and an M.Phil. Later he became a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

And so Edgar followed in his father's footsteps, working as the director of the Jewish Museum from 1983 to 1995 in its earlier home of Woburn House in Euston. He worked conscientiously to ensure the museum's unique collection was transferred to its current home in Camden Town, subsequently handing over the leadership of the museum to Rickie Burman.

Edgar was also very active in the work of the Jewish Historical Society of England, initially joining his father on its council shortly after the end of the Second World War and serving on it for many decades, becoming the president of the society in 1988, having served as the chairman of the society's publications committee. He made substantial contributions to the society's *Transactions*. Edgar was the chairman of Anglo-Jewish Archives, and was a member of the records and treasures committee of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation, London. His publications include "The Provenance of the Westminster Talmud" in *Transactions* (1982), *The Portuguese Jewish Community in London (1656–1830)* in 1992, and *At the End of the Earth: Essays on the History of the Jews of England and Portugal* in 2004.

Edgar was always available to Anglo-Jewish historians, and offered advice and wise counsel to them, ensuring that research into Anglo-Jewish history was undertaken at the highest possible level. One could always rely on Edgar to identify new sources of research, and he held the Jewish Museum and the Jewish Historical Society very close to his heart.

David Jacobs

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