

THE HISTORY OF JEWISH BELIEVERS
IN THE CANADIAN PROTESTANT CHURCH, 1759-1995

BY

DANIEL JONATHAN NESSIM

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Donald M. Lewis
Supervisor

John B. Toews

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Daniel Jonathan Nessim

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ABSTRACT:

In Canada, Jews who believe that Jesus is the Messiah prophesied in Tenach have a history that can be traced from the mid-eighteenth century. Many Canadian Jewish believers¹ have consistently retained a strong sense of identity with their Jewish kindred and nation. Their number has grown steadily, and they have increasingly formed associations which affirm their Jewishness and faith in Jesus as the Messiah prophesied in Tenach. As this history has never been systematically or comprehensively documented it is the purpose of this thesis to prove these affirmations.

In order to document this history, much of which is centered in Toronto and Montreal two key methods of investigation were employed. First, the writer made a two week excursion to Toronto and Montreal. There the Anglican Diocese of Toronto archives, Jewish Community archives in Montreal, and numerous personal interviews were of great help. In addition to this, much fragmented material has been published and was available through normal methods of research. Further, informal

¹This term is used in order to encompass Christians with a Jewish racial background, "Hebrew Christians," and "Messianic Jews." For a fuller explanation see Appendix A.

contact *via* telephone with numerous Messianic leaders in Canada has helped the writer to keep his finger on the pulse of the movement and recent developments.

This thesis concludes that the number of Jews who believe in Jesus has increased over the entire period that can be documented. This increase is directly related to missionary endeavour and Jewish population growth. More recently, the movement has generated its own growth and momentum. Either as a result of greater numerical strength or developments in thought and self-perception among such believers, they have increasingly associated with each other. First isolated by time, distance, and lack of numerical strength, later brought together through the agency of evangelistic missions to the Jews, Jewish believers have increasingly formed autonomous organizations and congregations.

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INTRODUCTION

It is the purpose of this thesis to examine the history of Jewish believers in Canada. Through recounting that history it will determine to what extent, for what reasons, and at what point these individual believers can be understood to comprise a movement.¹ It is also in part the goal of this thesis to provide a record and basis for further study of the Messianic community that now exists.

This movement has as its origin the intense missionising efforts of the Church in the nineteenth century. These efforts to convert Jews to Christianity have their historical base in Britain. In large part this is due to the political and social shock to English society caused by the French Revolution and the events following. This in turn stimulated interest in eschatological questions. Eschatological questions went hand in hand with an increased interest in the conversion of the Jewish people. A growing British interest in evangelizing Jews

¹For the purposes of this study, a movement is understood to be comprised of a number of independent organizations working toward similar objectives. These organizations may be formal or informal, their activities may take various forms, but their common ideals and a consciousness of their inter-relatedness unite them in kind.

resulted in worldwide missions efforts to that end. Particular reference will be made to the establishment of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews, the largest of the Evangelical Jewish missions. Many Jews became believers and some of these emigrated to Canada.

Even preceding the British led evangelistic thrust, isolated Jewish believers carved out a niche in the Canadas' history. Some played significant roles in Canadian history and the history of the Canadian Church. Nevertheless, Hebrew Christianity itself in Canada rightly begins with nineteenth century Jewish believers. Canadian efforts at evangelizing Jews were fostered by the theological influence of Great Britain in conjunction with a growing Jewish population and the encouragement of influential Hebrew Christians. Thus there occurred in the nineteenth century an explosion of interest among Canadian Protestants (mainly Anglicans and Presbyterians) in evangelism of the Jewish community.

It was during these pre-Confederation years that the foundation for the movement as it is known today was laid. This becomes evident as one examines individual lives and discerns the self-perceptions and inter-relationships of these early Hebrew Christians. Upon the foundation of their self-awareness developed the self-consciousness and inter-relatedness of Jewish believers in the twilight of the twentieth century. Then the characteristics of a movement became increasingly prominent as association among Jewish believers increased.

The early part of this century was the heyday of Hebrew Christianity in Canada. Jewish immigration became increasingly

Ashkenazi in composition and the Jewish population in chiefly Protestant areas of the country increased disproportionately, contributing to increased conversions to Protestant Christianity. Meanwhile, missions to the Jews became increasingly sensitive to Jewish cultural concerns. In part this was due to the fact that they themselves were often staffed by Jews. These trends eventually culminated in the establishment of congregations of Jewish believers and the founding of the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America.

After showing signs of stagnation following the shock of the Holocaust, since the early 1960's the movement has continued to grow. Today it has given birth to the modern Messianic congregational movement and an independent Messianic Alliance.² Today the existence of both Hebrew Christianity and "Messianic Judaism" evidences the multi-faceted nature of the movement of Jews to Jesus.

This study comes to the conclusion that Hebrew Christianity and Messianic Judaism are a *bona fide* movement. This movement is based on the Jewish ethnicity of its adherents, their faith in Jesus as the Christ, and their continued assertion of their

²The Messianic Jewish Alliance of Canada, previously the Hebrew Christian Alliance of Canada, broke off from the American Alliance in 1975. See Chapter 5.

Jewishness.³

³Because of the significance of this terminological shift in Canada, it has been treated more in depth in Appendix A.

Chapter One: British Background to the Interest in Jewish Evangelism

I. INTRODUCTION

The French Revolution and the ensuing Napoleonic Era ushered in decades of social upheaval throughout Europe and Great Britain. There is a demonstrable relationship between these historical events and the development of evangelical interest in preaching the Gospel to the Jews in England. This interest became the impetus for missionary effort targeting Jews. This chapter records how this missionary effort developed and how it expanded to Canada. Most notable in this expansion was the effort conducted by the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews. Concurrently, in the same vein, the efforts of the Presbyterian Church also played a significant role.

II. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION: SOCIAL UPHEAVAL AS A THEOLOGICAL CATALYST

A. Social Upheaval

With the Revolution of 1789, French medieval feudalism,

which had been undergoing a gradual process of dissolution since the tenth and eleventh centuries, was brought to a dramatic end over a period of a few short months.¹ The 1792 massacre of prisoners held by the revolutionaries in Paris, and the French victory at Valmy a few days later, heralded a new terror that astounded Europe. The France of Robespierre and Voltaire became a new terror that eventually took the Pope captive to France and reached as far as Egypt with its armies.² By the end of the century the Emperor Napoleon not only held France's enemies at bay, but had conquered much of Europe with the sword.³

1. Events in Europe

It needs no skilled observer to note that the revolution was to many Frenchmen a religion to which their devotion was both fanatical and extreme. One contemporary noted with irony: "In one hand they bore the sword and in the other the rights of man."⁴ Traditional religiosity, while not entirely abandoned, came under severe attack while the rights of man

¹Gaetano Salvemini, *The French Revolution: 1788-1792*, trans. I.M. Rawson (New York: Norton, 1962), pp. 17-18, 325.

²Francois Furet and Denis Richet, *The French Revolution*, trans. S. Hardman (New York: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 399-404.

³Napoleon's dealings with the Jews in the East sparked rumours that he intended to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem and re-establish the Jews there. Mel Scult, *Millennial Expectations and Jewish Liberties: A Study of the Efforts to Convert the Jews in Britain, up to the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), p. 81.

⁴Mallet du Pan, t. II, p. 135, quoted by Albert Sorel, *Europe and the French Revolution: The Political Traditions*

were simultaneously exalted. Conflict with the Roman church was intense, as France struggled to free herself from shackles forged not by the nobility and monarchy alone, but also by Rome.⁵

The results of these events were somewhat beneficial to the European Jew. Napoleon abolished the infamous inquisition (at least for a time) in much of Europe and curtailed the powers of the Roman Catholic Church.⁶ Viewing the Jews as a nation rather than simply a religion, Napoleon adopted the principle of emancipation and instituted Jewish representative bodies with which he consulted.⁷ Pre-eminent among these was the "'Great Sanhedrin' consisting of rabbis and leading lay personalities."⁸ As time went on, however, it became clear that the real French objective was to eradicate

of the Old Regime, 1885, trans. A. Cobban & J.W. Hunt (New York: Doubleday, 1971), p. 168.

⁵Furet, op. cit., pp. 16-26.

⁶Upon his arrival on 4 December 1808, to claim the Spanish throne, Joseph Napoleon "issued a decree suppressing the Inquisition and confiscating its property to the crown." Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition* (New York: New American Library, 1965), p. 276. The effects of French power over the Catholic church must have been exaggerated in the minds of the British as evidenced by Edgar Allen Poe's *The Pit and the Pendulum*, "which tells how a victim of the Holy Tribunal at Toledo was saved from a remarkably ingenious torture, in the nick of time, by the entry of the French troops into Toledo." Cecil Roth, *The Spanish Inquisition* (New York: Norton, 1964), p. 258.

⁷Unfortunately, following Napoleon's defeat all of these advances in the treatment of the Jews were reversed (especially in some of the Italian states) and the gains were not to be made up for over a generation. Shmuel Ettinger, "The Modern Period," *A History of the Jewish People*, ed. H.H. Ben-Sasson. (1969: Trans. Cambridge: Harvard, 1976), pp. 762-763.

⁸Ibid., pp. 761-762.

the Jewish nation through assimilation. Nevertheless Jewish hopes were raised before they were dashed.⁹

Throughout Europe, the French ushered in an era of change that had long been in the offing. The Continent was taken unawares. The French revolution displayed the growing power of the bourgeoisie in Europe, and, particularly in France, the growing influence of their liberalism.¹⁰ There the liberal ideas that inspired the French Revolution nurtured an enduring belief in the possibility of human social progress.

2. Reaction in England

The British industrial revolution in turn was characterized by some as a twin to the French Revolution by some.¹¹ Both had profound social effects which were precipitated by the changing economics of progress.¹² This rapid change had global consequences, for the French and British quickly began to dominate the world as colonial powers. It is not surprising that in the midst of such

⁹Grayzell provides a vivid portrait of the trickery Napoleon used on the Jews before issuing his *décrets infâmes*. Solomon Grayzel, *A History of the Jews* 2nd. ed. (Philadelphia: JPS, 1968), pp. 575-578.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 53, 58.

¹¹Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: 1789-1848* (New York: World, 1962), p. 2.

¹²Dentzer, a journalist, puts it well: Both revolutions had a "flourishing 18th-century trade in ideology and statecraft: Enlightenment notions of liberty, equality and government at the consent of the governed..." Susan Dentzer, "Gory Means, Righteous Ends," *U.S. News and World Report*, July 17, 1989, p. 45.

social and political upheavals the English began intensified attempts to reinterpret their changing world. Unlike France, amidst the increasing secularization of the time, a new religious mindset had taken root in England. Thus England did not pass through the same kind of revolution as France. To a large degree this was due to the influence of Methodism.

Growing rapidly despite the opposition of the established Anglican church, Methodism (born out of a revival in the 1730's) had aroused the Evangelical passions of an earlier generation and gained a stronghold in the minds of the working class élite. More broadly, Evangelical Nonconformity¹³ promoted a "rigorous ethical conformity" in the nation and cooperated with the forces of law and order.¹⁴ This stance had particularly solidified as one of Methodism's key leaders, Charles Wesley, witnessed in London the devastating Gordon riots of 1780. The destruction was to him profoundly shocking, and although the riots were supposedly anti-Catholic in nature, they had decidedly political overtones that disturbed him. From that point on "Methodism

¹³Wesleyan Methodism, while the main expression of the earlier Evangelical Revival, was only part of it. Nonconformity in general was a term applied to groups that did not belong to the Church of England, thus including the Calvinistic Methodists, most Baptists and Congregationalists, and a large portion of the Quakers.

¹⁴Elie Halévy, *England in 1815*, Vol. 1, *A History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Watkin and Barker. 1913: 2nd. ed. (London: Ernest Benn, 1949), p. 425. see pp. 387-393, 410-427. Thompson concurred with Halévy fifty years later, negatively assessing Methodism as weakening "the poor from within, by adding to them the active ingredient of submission." E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the*

grew more and more intolerant of political dissent and discord"¹⁵ with obvious implications for its subsequent stance regarding the French Revolution.

Though much debated, Halévy's theory of a causal connection between Methodism and England's social stability has endured.¹⁶ While social, economic, and political factors all played a part, it was this particular expression of Christianity that was the prime cause.¹⁷ Unlike France, the English did not abolish their monarchy or the system of peerage so closely tied to it. Rather, increased devotion and religious commitment gave meaning to the difficult lives of the poor and wealthy alike. Thus the old cliché that "The English became pious when the French became Republican" has some truth.¹⁸

English Working Class, (London: Gollancz, 1963), pp. 354-355.

¹⁵Ralph E. Reed, Jr. "From Riots to Revivalism: The Gordon Riots of 1780, the Methodist Hymnody, and the Halévy Thesis Revisited," *Methodist History*, Vol. 26, No. 3, (April 1988), p. 186.

¹⁶Elissa S. Itzkin, "The Halévy Thesis - A Working Hypothesis? English Revivalism: Antidote for Revolution and Radicalism 1789-1815," *Church History*, Vol. 44, (March 1985), pp. 47-56.

¹⁷Elie Halévy, "The Birth of Methodism and England in 1815," *Religion and Revolution in Early-Industrial England: The Halévy Thesis and its critics*, ed. Gerald Wayne Olsen (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1990). In answer to the question why England was free of revolution, Halévy states "We have sought in vain to find the explanation by an analysis of her political institutions and economic organization. ...But the elite of the working class, the hard-working and capable bourgeois, had been imbued by the evangelical movement with a spirit from which the established order had nothing to fear" (p. 11).

¹⁸F.K. Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England* (Clarendon: Oxford, 1980), p. 36.

B. Theology Catalyzed

The political turmoil called traditional prophetic concepts and schemes into question. Fast-breaking and tumultuous events demanded theological interpretation. Current events caught the imagination of the English people, for at its heart the French Revolution had ferociously turned against the church. In 1797, when Pope Pius VI had fallen ill, Napoleon had given orders that no successor should be appointed, and when the Pope did indeed die in French captivity, the papacy had seemed to become extinct.¹⁹ In a Europe that had not changed so much in over a millennium, even prior to the Revolution, the prophetic Scriptures were coming alive. Out of the context of traditional theology, pens were set writing with new freshness and vigour.

English interpretations as to the prophetic meaning of the new European power were mixed. Under prevailing traditional understandings the world had been viewed from a post-millennial viewpoint (in this scheme of understanding the world is seen as being continually influenced for good by the Gospel until God's kingdom is established). Now this view came under increasing attack as other schemes were advanced. As Oliver observes, "a great deal of prophetic

¹⁹Le Roy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation*, Vol. 3, (Washington: Review & Herald, 1948), p. 327.

theology was produced in this period."²⁰

In the thirteenth century the Church had seriously concerned itself with the conversion of the Jews.²¹ In England particularly, where the Puritans had popularized knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures (this naturally included its prophetic portions) this concern reached new heights in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries among their dissenting descendants.²² The decades before the French Revolution were thus years of increasing prophetic speculation. From years much closer than ours Dickens described the era, portraying the growing interest in prophecy: ". . . it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity".²³

It was in the climate created in the wake of the Revolution that people became particularly credulous. As a

²⁰W.H. Oliver, *Prophets and Millennialists: The Uses of Biblical Prophecy in England from the 1790's to the 1840's* (London: Oxford, 1978), p. 14.

²¹Robert Chazan, *Daggers of Faith: Thirteenth Century Christian Missionizing and Jewish Response* (Berkeley: U. of California, 1989), p. 3ff. Chazan clearly demonstrates in this book that the thirteenth century (following the Crusades) marked a turning point in Christian responses to the Jews. The motives and means of this conversionism however are of course not commendable.

²²Clarke Garrett, *Respectable Folly: Millenarians and the French Revolution in France and England* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1975), p. 124.

²³Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 1859: reprint, (London: Penguin, 1985), p. 35. The rest of this quote highlights events mentioned later in this chapter: "It was the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five. . . . Mrs Southcott (sic) had recently attained her five-and-twentieth blessed birthday, of whom a prophetic private in the Life Guards had heralded the sublime

result two prophets rose to fame (or notoriety). Joanna Southcott (1750-1814), styled herself as a prophetess from the year 1792 and gained a wide following. Though poorly educated, Southcott gained a wide influence through publishing her "communications from the Spirit and interpretations of scripture."²⁴ Richard Brothers (1757-1824) was a "prophet" as deluded as Southcott who attracted attention from the summer of 1794 to spring of 1795.²⁵ Showing an interest in the Jews, he "claimed that the millennium and the restoration of the Hebrews to Palestine was at hand and that he would be the one to lead them in."²⁶ Misguidedly, he believed the "Jews" to be the ten "lost tribes" of Israel, many of whom lived in England.²⁷

Thus during and following the dark days of the French Revolution many English evangelicals found solace in an increased preoccupation with prophecy and the perception that events were unfolding as prophesied in the Scriptures.²⁸ Among them were a number of evangelicals, who while

appearance by announcing that arrangements were made for the swallowing up of London and Westminster."

²⁴J.F.C. Harrison, *The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism 1780-1850* (New Jersey: Rutgers, 1979), p. 88.

²⁵Ibid., p. 60.

²⁶D.N. Hempton, "Evangelicalism and Eschatology", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 31, No. 2, (April, 1980), p. 181.

²⁷Ibid., p. 61.

²⁸Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930* (Chicago: U. of Chicago, 1970), states forcefully that "The French

discounting the likes of Southcott and Brothers, nevertheless sought to divine the "signs of the times." Although diversity of opinion was generally the rule rather than the exception, virtual unanimity on key issues ensued. Students of apocalyptic literature "became convinced . . . that they were witnessing the fulfillment of the prophecies of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13."²⁹ Prophetic systems of interpretation flourished, most notably dispensationalism in the 1830's.³⁰

Many, particularly those who harked back to the Puritans, expected and even hoped that the papacy was going to be destroyed.³¹ To them the Roman church was but an extension of the evil archetype "Babylon" spoken of in the book of Revelation as an enemy of God and due for destruction. Spencer Perceval, the evangelical Prime Minister³² of Britain (from 1809 until his assassination on

Revolution was directly responsible for the revival of prophetic concern" (p. 5).

²⁹Sandeen, op. cit., p. 6. These prophecies deal with the beast that "will devour the whole earth" (Daniel 7:23) and "deceive the inhabitants of the earth" (Revelation 13:14). The prophecies surrounding this and other figures in these chapters seemed remarkably typical of current events.

³⁰Clarence B. Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism: Its Historical Genesis and Ecclesiastical Implications* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960), p. 7. Bass's comments about the origins of dispensationalism are apropos to an examination of the emerging eschatologies of the day. As he says: "...dispensationalism cannot be adequately evaluated apart from the personages involved in it, the times and events out of which it grew, and its presuppositions."

³¹Froom, op. cit., Vol. 3, pp. 734ff. Froom easily proves this with numerous citations.

³²Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795-1865* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), p. 218.

May 11, 1812) identified Napoleon as the woman in Revelation 17:3-6, and said regarding the French powers that "they have been raised up by Providence for the overthrow of the popish superstitions;..."³³ Others, of a different mind, feared that Napoleon was the Antichrist. A Baptist pastor in Norwich wrote to his father in November 1792 capturing the moment:

The successes of the French are truly astonishing by last week's paper tho the scenes occasioned by intestine (sic) wars are really dreadful beyond imagination. What is in futurity God only knows. The signs of destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon too much apply to us Ezek. 22. 23 &c &c . . .³⁴

Evangelism of the Jews had languished for years despite the Naturalization Bill (the "Jew Bill" as it was commonly called) of 1753 which was touted as a means to secure conversion of the Jews.³⁵ Now, inexorably, events and theological predispositions conspired to arouse an interest in the fate of the Jewish nation. For many the "restoration and conversion of the Jews were vital events in the sequence that would lead to the millennium."³⁶ The result was a "flourish of interest in the conversion and restoration of

³³Ibid., p. 219.

³⁴Joseph Kinghorn, quoted by C.B. Jewson, "Norwich Baptists and the French Revolution," *The Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 5 (Jan. 1972), p. 211. Kinghorn refers to the Old Testament Prophets in his letter.

³⁵William T. Gidney, *The Jews and their Evangelization* (London: Student Volunteer Missionary Union, 1899), p. 12. The "most notable events" in Jewish Evangelization mentioned by Gidney are the publication of a tract called *The Light at Eventide* by a Rev. John Muller around 1720 and its extensive distribution for decades thereafter.

³⁶Oliver, op. cit., p. 50.

the Jews."³⁷ Hopes for Jewish conversion began to be held in the context of Israel's national salvation in the land of Palestine.³⁸

So pervasive was the popular prophetic mindset as it developed that national opinion regarding the return of the Jews to the Promised Land was affected. Interest in the Jews took on political overtones as Christians dreamed of the political renaissance of Israel, deemed a necessary precursor to the return of the Messiah and His inauguration of the millennium. Truly the Revolution imparted an indirect but notable influence upon the "formation of British foreign policy in the nineteenth century."³⁹

III. CHANGING CONCEPTIONS: THE ROLE OF THE JEWS IN CHRISTIAN PROPHECY

A. Pre-Revolution Conceptions

While the French Revolution brought a heightened interest in prophecy in general, it also increased interest in the Jews' role in end-time events. In England a peculiar emphasis had long been placed upon the Jews' role in prophecy. Thus in the seventeenth century, the Puritans petitioned Oliver Cromwell to

³⁷Scult, op. cit., pp. 57ff, 85.

³⁸Scult, ibid., pp. 85ff.

³⁹Ronald R. Nelson, "Apocalyptic Speculation and the French Revolution," *Evangelical Quarterly*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (Oct.-Dec. 1981), p. 206.

allow the Jews, who had been banished some 350 years earlier, to return to England. The assumption was that the Jews must be converted and restored to Palestine in order for Christ to return. But they must first be restored to England, because they could not return to Palestine before they were scattered to every country in the world.⁴⁰

Cromwell, being sympathetic to the Jews, found that not everyone was favourable to the petition presented by the Puritans and R. Manasseh Ben Israel who represented the Jewish community.⁴¹ Nevertheless by an informal arrangement the decision to admit Jews was taken in 1656.⁴² The presence of Jews in England after the petition's success did not appreciably alter this theology. However, no hoped for large scale conversion occurred. In the New World Cotton Mather (1663-1728) and others like him placed a strong eschatological emphasis upon the need to turn Jews to their Messiah.⁴³ No great missionary success was experienced there either.

⁴⁰William Bjoraker, "The Beginning of Modern Jewish Missions in the English-speaking World," *Mishkan*, (Jerusalem: UCCI), Issue 16, 1/1992. Bjoraker refers to Barbara W. Tuchman, *Bible and Sword: How the British Came to Palestine*, (London: 1956), pp. 121-123.

⁴¹R. Manasseh Ben Israel (1604-1657) was a scholar from Amsterdam, and in conjunction with the Puritans argued for permission for the Jews to enter England. In his view, the arrival of Jews in England had "Messianic implications," as it would complete the dispersion of the Jews to the ends of the earth. Cecil Roth, "Manasseh Ben Israel", *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 11, c. 855-857.

⁴²H.H. Ben Sasson, "The Middle Ages", *A History of the Jewish People*, ed. Ben Sasson (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard, 1976), p. 654.

⁴³Eichhorn, op. cit., p. 7; Arthur Hertzberg, *The Jews in America: four centuries of an uneasy encounter: a history* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989), pp. 40-41.

B. Post-Revolution Conceptions

Following the French Revolution various persons were influential in propagating premillennialism and its accompanying doctrines concerning the nation of Israel in the end times.⁴⁴ The Napoleonic era seemed to fulfill many prophetic expectations.⁴⁵ Novel systems of interpretation found fertile soil. Some interpretations became trademarks of growing popular movements. As the century progressed the atmosphere did not dissipate. In this climate the London Society for Promoting Christianity (the LSPCJ) among the Jews was founded (in 1809) and flourished.⁴⁶

Edward Irving (1792-1834), was a "central figure in the ferment of the period."⁴⁷ A Church of Scotland minister who pastored a congregation in London, he was a highly controversial and inflammatory figure. Nevertheless, Irving

⁴⁴Premillennialism is best and most often defined in the words of its proponent Charles Caldwell Ryrie: "A dispensation is a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God's purpose." *Dispensationalism Today* (Chicago: Moody, 1965), p. 29.

⁴⁵However, note Ryrie and Kromminga's mention of dispensational concepts during this period. D.H. Kromminga, *The Christian Reformed Tradition from the Reformation to the Present*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1943), p. 50, and Ryrie, op. cit., pp. 67-74.

⁴⁶Not only was the LSPCJ founded at this time but also The Church of Scotland Jewish Mission (1840), the Free Church of Scotland Mission (1841), the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Mission (1841), and the British Society for the propagation of the Gospel among the Jews (1842). All were missionary societies to the Jews. William T. Gidney, *The History of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews, From 1809 to 1908* (London: LSPCJ, 1908), p. 214.

developed a following that is well remembered among British evangelicals. His *Babylon and Infidelity Foredoomed of God* by its title alone is a typical sign of the increased preoccupation with prophetic novelty. The movement Irving spawned popularized speculations "...on the chronology of the future - in what year the Jews were to be restored, Popery to be destroyed and the Millennium to begin."⁴⁸

Other writers also developed doctrines teaching the "restoration and conversion" of the Jews in connection with the second advent.⁴⁹ In fact, as in Bicheno's *The Restoration of the Jews* (1800), "the restoration and conversion of the Jews were vital events in the sequence that would lead to the millennium."⁵⁰

By 1855 the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review* reckoned that probably a majority of the evangelical Anglican clergy favoured premillennial views.⁵¹ This millenarian

⁴⁷D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History From the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Hyman, 1989), pp. 78-79.

⁴⁸This movement popularised such speculations among Christians not usually given to novelties, those who "resisted steadily all belief in the new 'Miracles' and 'Tongues'." Iain Murray, *The Puritan Hope: A Study in Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy* (London: Banner of Truth, 1971), p. 196.

⁴⁹Froom, op. cit., Vol. 4, p. 1220.

⁵⁰Oliver, op. cit., p. 50. Bicheno was a prophetic "specialist" who emerged from the English Dissenters.

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 85, 304. Quoting *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, vol. 4, no. 14 (1855), p. 698. This shift to premillennialism was not duplicated in America: "In 1859 an influential theological quarterly asserted without fear of contradiction that postmillennialism was the

interest was also evidenced among laymen, being sparked by evangelical concern for "Jewish conversion and the question involving Israel's return to Palestine to await the Messiah's advent."⁵²

The change in opinion about the Jews did not confine itself to evangelicals. George Eliot's (Marian Evans') influential *Daniel Deronda* (1876) showed both the author's personal change in attitudes, viewing Jews in a more favourable light, and growing popular sentiments for Jewish restoration to their homeland.⁵³ Without a doubt social revolution had brought about a revolution in popular eschatology, piquing the interest of the masses.

America too was in religious ferment. In Fayette, New York, the Mormon "church" was established in 1830, amidst speculation about the identity of the ten "lost" tribes and South American Indians. While "Irvingites in Britain announced it [the Apocalypse] for 1835 and 1838; William Miller, the founder of the Seventh Day Adventists in the USA, predicted it for 1843 and 1844, . . ."⁵⁴ In the days of Miller the Second Great Awakening spread from New England

'commonly received doctrine' among American Protestants" James H. Moorehead, "The Erosion of Postmillennialism in American Religious Thought, 1865-1925", *Church History*, Vol. 53, No. 1, (March 1984), p. 61.

⁵²William Bruce Wallace, *"Of Times and Seasons": The Implications of Eschatology for Evangelical Proto-Zionists in Nineteenth Century Britain* (MCS Thesis: Regent College, 1979), p. 118.

⁵³George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda* (1876: reprint, New York: New American Library, 1979).

⁵⁴Hobsbawm, op. cit., p. 228.

across the continent. In turn, Charles Taze Russell founded "Zion's Watch Tower" in 1879. This organization became known later as the "Jehovah's Witnesses."

Popular preoccupation with prophecy was evidenced by the success of J.N. Darby's theology, commonly called dispensationalism. Of all the prevalent views, Darby's eventually gained the greatest following.⁵⁵ This was largely facilitated by the worldwide spread of the Plymouth Brethren movement, which despite its internal divisions exerted a widespread influence among evangelicals. As a key figure in early Brethrenism, Darby exerted uncommon power.⁵⁶ He was a voluminous writer, and his theology has continued to be developed to this day.⁵⁷

The characteristic of being a developed system separated Darby's dispensationalism from its precursors.⁵⁸ Dispensationalism became noted for its focus on Israel and the Jews'

⁵⁵His was not the first promulgation of a dispensational system, but the first to take hold in such a widespread manner. Charles C. Ryrie points to dispensational "concepts" (some controvertible) held by Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Augustine, Pierre Poiret, John Edwards, and Isaac Watts, all before Darby in his book *Dispensationalism Today* (Chicago: Moody, 1965), pp. 67-74. D.H. Kromminga mentions Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669) as an introducer of seven period "dispensa-tionalism" in reformed theology in the seventeenth century *The Christian Reformed Tradition From the Reformation to the Present* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1943), p. 50.

⁵⁶Darby's ability to excommunicate his opponents rather than be accountable to them is an example of this. Bass, op. cit., p. 57.

⁵⁷It is well known that one of the key schools for this doctrine in North America is Dallas Theological Seminary.

role in latter day events. The assumption that there is "one people of God" came under withering scrutiny. This focus crystallized over the years into a *sine qua non* distinction between the Church and Israel. In this distinction, the Church is seen as a distinct people of God with heavenly objectives in view. In distinction Israel is a people of God with primarily earthly objectives in view in God's plan.⁵⁹

Naturally, this greatly altered the perceived role of the Jews in prophecy. In the older eschatological views, the Old Testament blessings and prophecies given to Israel had been understood to be the inheritance of the Church, thereby excluding the Jews. This view now began to give way to the view that the Jews were to be prominent actors in the unfolding of prophesied events. Some felt that they had a key role, even a spectacular one to play in the 'end times'.

The Jew, who had once been scorned throughout Europe, suddenly gained a new respect. As Oliver states, "undoubtedly it caused many Englishmen to be ashamed of their persecuting past, and to regard the Jews with a particular, if patronizing, affection."⁶⁰ Reinforcing the effects of this

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 186. Hoekema goes a bit too far in stating that dispensationalism originated with Darby.

⁵⁹This point is the first and most substantial of three that Ryrie introduces as the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism. Ryrie, op. cit., pp. 44-46. In the context of this study it is most notable for the first and most central of its *sine qua nons* that the Church is a distinct people from the people of Israel. Each people is seen to have its own identity, role in God's plan for humanity, and will remain distinct throughout eternity.

⁶⁰Oliver, op. cit., p. 50.

eschatological interest was the independently occurring emancipation of Jewry on the Continent. Jews began to gain stature in England. In what had previously been unthinkable, Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), a Jewish member of the Anglican Church who still clung fiercely to his Jewishness was elected Prime Minister of Great Britain. Disraeli was a novelist, activist, and philosopher. He held various political offices, most notably that of Prime Minister twice, the second time for six years beginning in 1874. In that office he quietly enacted significant policies designed to help Jewry. So much so, that sources that are usually hostile to "Meshummadim" ("traitors" - a term for Jews who profess Christian faith) hold him up as a hero.⁶¹

IV. MISSIONARY EXCITEMENT: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LONDON SOCIETY

Against the background of the intense animosity between Protestant and Catholic in England, the successes of the French over the Roman church and the suppression of the inquisition gave great encouragement to English evangelicals that their cause would prosper. Two "missionary and Bible societies had their birth at this very time, the British and Foreign in 1804, and the American in 1816."⁶²

In March of 1809, the London Society for the Promotion

⁶¹For a general review of Disraeli's life and significance, see Zvi Adiv, "Disraeli, Benjamin, Earl of Beaconsfield," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972), Vol. 6, cols. 103-109.

of Christianity Amongst the Jews (LSPCJ) was founded, evidencing the increasing eschatological interest in Jewish evangelism.⁶³ As Gidney states generally, "Last century (1801-1900) was fruitful in producing organizations for the Evangelization of the Jews."⁶⁴ The founder of the LSPCJ, Joseph Samuel Christian Frederick Frey,⁶⁵ was born on September 21, 1771 at Mainstockheim near Kitzingen in Franconia⁶⁶ and given a traditional Jewish rearing and education.⁶⁷ Following his conversion he became a missionary with the London Missionary Society (LMS) in 1802 with the intention of serving abroad.⁶⁸ Frey, however, soon saw the need to preach the Gospel to his fellow Jews within London itself, and the LMS supported him to this end. The arrangement was relatively short-lived however, as in Frey's opinion the LMS lacked understanding of the needs of a Jewish

⁶²Wallace, op. cit., p. 762.

⁶³Gidney, *The History*, op. cit.

⁶⁴Gidney, *The Jews and their Evangelization*, op. cit., p. 12.

⁶⁵Joseph Samuel Levy was given this name upon his baptism. David Max Eichhorn, *Evangelising the American Jew* (New York: Jonathan David, 1978), p. 20.

⁶⁶Roger H. Martin, *Evangelicals United: Ecumenical Stirrings in Pre-Victorian Britain, 1795-1830* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1983), p. 175. Martin quotes the *Evangelical Magazine* 4 (1796), p. 403 for a biography of Frey.

⁶⁷Eichhorn, op. cit., p. 18.

⁶⁸James Howard Warnock, *Evangelism among the Jews of North America: The Williamsburg Mission to the Jews, 1896 - 1917* (Vancouver: Regent College master's thesis, 1984), p. 7.

outreach. Not considerate of the great financial, familial and societal losses experienced by many new converts, they saw his ideas of "setting up a boarding school and a house of industry [where displaced converts could earn a living]" as "repulsive to most evangelicals because it was tantamount to 'bribing people to be Christians'."⁶⁹ As a result Frey and his supporters formed their own society in 1809 on non-denominational lines, like the LMS.⁷⁰

Due to disputes with the LMS the LSPCJ had a slow start. Eventually it gained the patronage of English nobility.⁷¹ This step to become a nondenominational society was one that only four societies in that day took. Of the four such societies only two remained interdenominational.⁷² Thus in 1815 the LSPCJ became an Anglican society now known as the Church's Ministry among the Jews (CMJ). This affiliation had a profound influence on its future work in Canada.

Within a few years the LSPCJ became "the largest by far of the British evangelical organizations concerned with proselytizing Jews."⁷³ Although the number of converts was not notable, activities were conducted vigourously along three

⁶⁹Martin, op. cit., p. 177.

⁷⁰Eugene Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society: its Environment, its Men and its Work*, (London: CMS, 1899), Vol. I of III, p. 153.

⁷¹Martin, op. cit., p. 179.

⁷²Donald M. Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness: The Evangelical Mission to Working Class London, 1828-1860*, (Westpoint, CT: Greenwood, 1986), p. 12.

lines. First, lectures were offered for prospective converts to attend. Second, a school and a centre for missionary work in London, known as Palestine Place was established.

Palestine Place also housed the Operative Jewish Converts' Institution which sought to provide employment to new and bereft Jewish believers. The third activity was the publication of literature.⁷⁴ The new society prospered financially, and steadily increased the scope of its activities.

By the year 1865 the LSPCJ had grown to pre-eminence among missions to the Jews, surpassing even the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews in size. "It was computed in 1865 that there were 33 missionary societies then working among the Jews, . . . of 200 agents employed, 126 were in the service of our [LSPCJ] society."⁷⁵ Moreover, despite its specialization the LSPCJ was a giant among the Evangelical societies in general, judging by its receipts.⁷⁶ It was not overly long before the growing society began looking for ways to expand its endeavours into the new world.

Another mission, founded by the Scots Murray McCheyne and Andrew Bonar, later played a role in the formation of Jewish believing communities in Canada. Bonar and Robert

⁷³Ibid., p. 131.

⁷⁴Martin, op. cit., pp. 182-183.

⁷⁵Gidney, op. cit., p. 323.

McCheyne, two key evangelicals in the Church of Scotland, were sent to Palestine in 1839 to survey the condition of the Jews there. Subsequently they played a key part in the eventual formation of a mission to the Jews by the Church of Scotland in 1842.⁷⁷ This mission, the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, eventually became known as the Christian Witness to Israel after its merger with the Barbican Mission. In the twentieth century it actively fostered a work in Vancouver, as will be seen in chapters four and five.

V. CONCLUSION

In the early nineteenth century the French revolution precipitated and accelerated rapid social change in Europe. These changes occurred in such an apocalyptic manner, at a time when prophetic expectations were already becoming a popular interest, that British evangelicals began to speculate on eschatology with unprecedented ardour. The Jews, rapidly becoming liberated from the restraints of Medievalism, were a key object of this speculation. In the interests of accelerating the future restoration of Israel so as to hasten the second advent, and also out of genuine concern for the salvation of the lost, Jewish missions were

⁷⁶Lewis, op. cit., p. 207.

⁷⁷Andrew A. Bonar, *Memoir & Remains of Robert Murray McCheyne* (1844: reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), p. 178. For McCheyne, "The Jewish mission continued near his

founded, grew and prospered.

The largest of these missions was the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews (LSPCJ). Presbyterian churches also began to support the idea of evangelizing Jews, most notably through the agency of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews.

heart, 'the nearest' . . . of all missionary enterprises."
Cp. Bjoraker, op. cit., p. 63.

Chapter Two: Jewish Believers and Early Evangelistic Efforts in the Colonial Period

I. INTRODUCTION

The history of Jewish converts to Christianity within the context of Canadian history predates the French Revolution and the impetus that it imparted to Jewish missions. Long before missionary efforts began in Canada and a significantly large Jewish community in the country existed to warrant such missionary effort, a few Jews (often traders) and some isolated Jewish believers appeared on the Canadian scene. Their existence provides a sharp contrast to the developed Messianic community of the late twentieth century. Evidence of the value they placed on affirming their Jewishness despite their Christian faith provides a common thread of identity with Jewish believers throughout Canada's history.

The Canadas were by no means unaffected by a Britain seething with apocalyptic speculation. Increased missionary efforts directed at Jews in Britain and the Continent in the early nineteenth century resulted in conversions of such a

number that even the colonies were affected by the converts' subsequent immigration to the New World. Thus as time went on immigrant Jewish believers began to take their places in the life of the Canadian church.

Although no organized form of Jewish believing community existed in Canada before Confederation, a history of Canadian Jewish believers would not be complete without the inclusion of notable Jewish believers, specifically those who were noteworthy enough in their accomplishments or role in the Canadian church to leave an accessible legacy. Their stories provide a backdrop and context for the Hebrew Christianity that later developed.

It is in the decades directly preceding Confederation, when these converts were gaining notoriety in the Canadian church and British and American missions to the Jews were growing in influence, that organized attempts to convert Canadian Jews to Christianity began.

II. CONVERTS IN THE CANADAS: EARLY EVENTS

During the colonial period the French and British colonies in what was to become Canada in 1867 were still closely linked to Britain culturally, ethnically, and economically. This was despite strong influence from the United States following the War of Independence in 1776.¹ The

¹After the American revolution, Britain retained her hold on the continent with what was to become the nation of Canada. In British North America there were no major grievances, and a loyalist background. Thus while American

Canadas were also linked religiously with Europe and Britain, most notably through the established Roman Catholic and Anglican churches.

In this environment Jews found themselves facing many of the same prejudices and stereotypes concerning them that prevailed in the old world. Such Jews as lived in the French colonies prior to British rule, as may be adduced by their names, were doubtless converts to Catholicism.² This was assured by Le Code Noir, established by Louis XIV in 1685 to exclude all non-Catholics from the colonies.³ In the British colonies, Jews were not so disadvantaged. Little is known of the earliest Jewish believers in the colonies, but some early events give clues as to the environment and role they found themselves in.

Illustrating the resistance of Jews to Christianity is the famous attempted immigration in 1738 of a French Jewish girl posing as a man. Under the innocuous name of Jacques la Farge, Esther Brandau is the first directly named Jewish immigrant to Canada, for during the French occupation, "neither Protestant nor Jew was allowed to dwell in that

influence was strong, "feelings of resentment and even fear towards the United States" reinforced imperial loyalty. See Edgar McInnis, *Canada: A Political and Social History* (New York: Rinehart, 1959), pp. 173ff.

²Benjamin Gutelius Sack, *History of Jews in Canada*, trans. R. Novek (Montreal: Harvest House, 1965), p. 5.

³Ibid., p. 3.

country."⁴ Brandau's guise did not last long, and soon the new immigrant was faced with a choice: convert to Catholicism or be deported back to France. She was sent to a convent, where the "nuns, unable to persuade the flighty girl to convert, declared her deranged and returned her to the court."⁵ Having displayed unusual courage for one so far removed from her community, Brandau returned as a Jew to France at the King's expense and no more was heard of her.

In another instance a Jew, being discovered aboard a French vessel bound for Acadia in 1752, did not have the same freedom of choice. Aaron Hart, Commissary-General in Halifax and one of the few Jews in Canada was "shocked to learn" of the Dutch Jew at the French fortress of Louisburg, on Cape Breton Island:

The ships officers compelled him to swear on the New Testament to be a true Christian "after he had been enlightened with the truth of the Roman Catholic and horror of the Judaic religion in which he had hitherto confessed faith."⁶

Such an event, while isolated, served to reinforce Jewish concerns about Christian missionizing. Extreme actions as those of the ship's officers were liable only to reinforce memories of persecution and injustices that had taken place

⁴Stanley B. Ryerson, *The Founding of Canada: Beginnings to 1815* (Toronto: Progress, 1960), p. 171. Also see Eichhorn, op. cit., p. 17, and Sack, op. cit., pp. 6ff.

⁵I. Harold Sharfman, *The Frontier Jews: An Account of Jewish Pioneers and Settlers in early America* (New Jersey: Citadel, 1977), p. 5. For a full account, see Sack, pp. 6-9.

in Europe.

A few years later a third Jew played a significant part in the history of Canada. Alexander Schomberg was son of the deist Meyer Low Schomberg who had once served as physician to the Great Synagogue of London. Under General James Wolfe he served as captain of the frigate *Diana* leading the British fleet up the St. Lawrence river to confront the French in 1759. He was the first of the British ashore and distinguished himself as he led the troops up the bluffs to conquer Quebec.⁷ Schomberg had adopted Christian faith, and while his faith as a Christian was not a matter of dispute, it is worth noting that his Jewish heritage was clear to all. He thus bore the dubious appellation of "Wolfe's Jew."⁸ While his faith did not cause his identity with the Jewish people to fall into dispute, in the longer term his place in *Encyclopædia Judaica* and Jewish histories acknowledges his role in Jewish history, if not his faith.

Ironically, General Montcalm of the French had as his aide the Brigadier General Gastogne Francois de Lévis, descendant of Henri de Lévy, Duke of Ventadour, who was Viceroy of New France (1625-1627) and a member of a family of New Christians that "openly hinted of their Jewish ancestry as

⁶Ibid., p. 27. Also Hart, op. cit., p. 4. There are minor variances in the two accounts, but in essence the same story is told.

⁷Arthur Daniel Hart, ed. *The Jew in Canada* (Toronto: Jewish Pub., 1926), p. 14.

⁸Ibid., pp. 27, 30.

represented by their centuries-old coat of arms."⁹ It may thus be that Christians of Jewish ancestry were to be found on both sides of the warring parties. As with New Christians in general however, the genuine faith of this family would always be a matter of suspicion. Many such Jews had become Christians for the sake of safety or social freedom, yet marrying only other New Christians and maintaining what they could of their Judaism under strict secrecy.

Following the French defeat and capitulation to the British in 1759-1760, the immigration of Jews to Canada greatly increased. This was due to the abolition of Le Code Noir in the widened English regime. Thus even with the first British soldiers, Canada's Jewish population began to grow.¹⁰

III. THE FIRST JEWISH BELIEVERS

Early missions to the Jews in Canada, in the first part of the nineteenth century, did not have results notable for their numbers. Outstanding among those Gentiles who were concerned to preach the Gospel to Jews was the chaplain Rev. Brooke Bridges Stevens. His high ethical standards and concern for the Jewish community as a whole won him the Jewish community's respect despite his attempts at

⁹The coat of arms displayed both a lion - symbol of the house of Judah - and three stars of David. Ibid., p. 27. See illustration and text in Appendix B.

¹⁰e.g. Aaron Hart, a commissary officer and fur trader. Ben G. Kayfetz, "Hart, Aaron" *Encyclopædia Judaica* (Keter: Jerusalem, 1972), 14:1351. See also Hart, op. cit., p. 14.

proselytizing.¹¹

Although organized efforts at evangelism did not begin in earnest until well after Confederation, according to a 1912 Jewish Era article,

several Jews were baptized in Canada between 1820 and 1839, among them Henry Abraham Joseph, born in Lower Canada in 1803 and baptized in 1836, 'a retired slave dealer and free thinker,' and David Baruch, baptized in Halifax in 1838.¹²

Before long, Jewish believers themselves were a key part of the effort. The reasons for this were pragmatic. Only Jewish believers were liable to know both the Yiddish and Hebrew of the Jewish community. While Jewish believers were shunned by the Jewish community, they were yet able to speak with the boldness that it took to confront their brethren directly.

The first notable Canadian Jewish believers that can be documented, however, were all immigrants, and only one of the three became a believer while in Canada. Remarkably unlike, they were all born within a very short time of each other. The Rev. Charles Freshman was born in the year 1819 in

¹¹"On the Jews of Lower Canada and 1837-1838" (Montreal: Canadian Jewish Archives, 1983) No. 28, Part 1, pp. 34ff. On the occasion of Steven's return to England the Jews of Montreal offered him a farewell address to express "the feeling of gratitude which we entertain towards you for the enlightened and liberal disposition which you have continually manifested towards that part of the remnant of the Children of Israel who have made Canada their resting place." In reply, Stevens stated "it has still been always my opinion, that sincere proselytes can never be made by any force save the power of agreement,..."

¹²Eichhorn, op. cit., p. 76 quotes Louis Meyer, *Jewish Era*, April 1912, pp. 49-57.

Hungary, and distinguished himself as a Canadian Methodist.¹³ Jacob Meier Hirschfelder, born in Baden-Baden, Germany, also in 1819, became an enigmatic but notable professor of biblical studies at the University of Toronto.¹⁴ Isaac Hellmuth, the second Anglican Bishop of Huron, was born on 14 Dec. 1820 near Warsaw, Poland, and is most remembered for his role in establishing Huron College, later to become the University of Western Ontario. Each of these is to be discussed in some detail.

A. Charles Freshman (1819-c.1880)

Charles (Karl) Freshman was born in St. Micklosh, Hungary, in 1819. The record of his life comes from his own autobiography, a lengthy tome of well over 300 pages which never seems to run out of anecdotes or homely recollections. Written in 1868, it unfortunately does not record the later years of Freshman's life. This work is coloured by his own personality and some degree of vanity.¹⁵

As was more common to his age than after the destruction of European Jewry before the Holocaust, it is clear that Charles Freshman was raised in a strict and orthodox Jewish home. Hungary was part of Eastern Europe, an area where

¹³Charles Freshman, *The Autobiography of the Rev. Charles Freshman* (Toronto: Rose, 1868), p.1.

¹⁴John S. Moir, *A History of Biblical Studies in Canada: A Sense of Proportion* (Chico: Scholars, 1982), p. 3.

¹⁵Freshman is candid enough about his pride, stating "I must have been endowed with a large development in that part

Haskalah had very little influence.¹⁶ Thus Freshman's description of the traditional nature of his upbringing within a tightly knit community fits what is known of the time. While his father was a businessman, his paternal grandfather was a Rabbi, and maternal grandfather a synagogue sexton.¹⁷ Accordingly his upbringing included all of the rites and traditions of Judaism, a fact that Freshman stresses, stating "My early religious training was strict in the extreme" and quoting Paul as a compatriot, "according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee."¹⁸

Freshman's prejudices were the same as would be expected from a Jew of his time and place. Evidently he was raised on the fables of the Toldoth Yeshu, as he recalls being taught that "Jesus . . . was a bastard"¹⁹ (a claim of the mediaeval Jewish "Life of Jesus"). All this served as a foundation for his description of the great gulf of antagonism that separated him from Christianity before his conversion.

From an early age Freshman was enrolled in training for the rabbinate.²⁰ Thus it was that when in 1855 he arrived in

of the cranium where self-esteem is located." op. cit., p. 5.

¹⁶*Haskalah* is the Hebrew term for The Enlightenment movement as it affected European Jewry beginning in the 1770s. Shmuel Ettinger, "The Modern Period", op. cit., p. 776.

¹⁷Freshman, op. cit., p. 1.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 5-6.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 7.

²⁰Ibid., p. 13.

Canada with his family, he promptly found a position as Rabbi in the Jewish congregation of Quebec City.²¹ That congregation was made up of a number of nationalities of Jews, but most predominantly English and German.²² There he worked for about three years trying to get his Sabbath desecrating congregants to obey the Law as they would have done in Europe, but with little success. While in Quebec City he began to read a Bible, including both the Testaments, which he had received in Cashaw, Hungary, from a unnamed Jewish missionary employed by the Scottish Church. His openness to Christian doctrine must have been evident, for he was solicited not only by Mr. Elliot, a Wesleyan minister, but at least two women, Mrs. McLeod and Miss Clapham, who would visit him and his wife and pray for her salvation (interestingly unaware that he was still not a Christian).²³ Through the agency of a Mr. Elliot, he eventually took a public stand as a believer in Jesus.

Soon Freshman became thoroughly enamoured with the Wesleyan Methodists, and began to take an active part in ministry among Protestant churches. He became an avid

²¹Ibid., pp. 50-51.

²²This was doubtless the first Jewish congregation of Quebec city, which was established in 1802. cp. Louis Rosenberg, *Chronology of Canadian Jewish History*. 1959.

²³Freshman, op. cit., p. 81. It is a curious coincidence that this lady bore the name of Clapham, similar to that part of London that had been the centre of British Evangelical activism for many years.

student of Wesleyan theology, as well as of English.²⁴ Because of his facility in German, however, he eventually found himself a missionary to the Germans in Canada. The type of work he performed over the years was recorded in his own words in 1868:

It will be eight years next conference since I began the German work in Canada. Then there was not a single German Wesleyan Methodist. Now, thanks be to God! (sic) we have eight missionary labourers in the vineyard, several local preachers and class-leaders, and over two hundred members in the society . . . Then we had not a single church or appointment; now we have twelve churches, and thirty congregations, . . . Besides all this, other German churches, which were becoming cold and dead, have been awakened and quickened through our instrumentality.²⁵

It thus appears that Freshman had a significant influence upon the early Canadian Church. Indeed, he quite expected that due to the efficacy of his labours, certain Lutherans would wish him dead! This gives a clue as to the dynamism of his character and possibly the controversial nature of his methods. A rough comparative statistical measure of Freshman's influence can also be advanced: "On the eve of Confederation Lutherans had some twenty pastors at work in more than sixty congregations and preaching

²⁴Ibid., p. 119.

²⁵Ibid., p. 312. It may be that Freshman portrays himself as more effective than he actually was, minimizing the important contributions of others and events beyond his control, yet there is clearly some factual basis. Freshman's autobiography was presumably published for the very people who would be most able to verify or dispute his claims.

stations."²⁶ Freshman by his own account established thirty Methodist congregations.

Freshman always valued his ties with his people and considered himself a Jew. Part of his ministry was to preach the Gospel to his fellow Jews. At one point he writes of the "Singular Conversion of a Rich Jew, from Berlin." In another he writes of a "Lecture to the Jews" in Detroit.²⁷ Both are indicative of a continuing interest in the salvation of his "brethren after the flesh" and his identification with them.

When he could, Freshman both gave and drew moral support from other Jewish believers. He describes Dr. I. Hellmuth as "A friend indeed to me, and a beloved brother in Christ Jesus - 'An Israelite indeed.'"²⁸ Ephraim Epstein, mentioned later in this chapter, he describes in more detached terms,²⁹ as well as other mentions of his meetings with other Jewish believers.

In a later publication by Freshman, *The Jews and the Israelites* (1870), it is apparent that he had come to believe in the national restoration of Israel, "even before the mass conversion of his former coreligionists."³⁰ Thus even though

²⁶Robert T. Handy, *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada* (New York: Oxford, 1977), p. 252.

²⁷Ibid., pp. xiv-xv.

²⁸Freshman, op. cit., p. 94.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 120, 135-137.

³⁰Michael Brown, *Jew of Juif? Jews, French Canadians, and Anglo-Canadians, 1759-1914* (New York: JPS, 1987), p. 18.

he had not previously focused his efforts on Jews, their conversion was clearly a concern close to his heart. Thus an independent biography affirms that several Jews were "led to Christ through his efforts."³¹ The subsequent events of his life are not known, nor how and when he died. It is known that his son became a minister.³²

Years later, Freshman's interest in the conversion of his people is borne out by a small item in 1882 in the *Jewish Messenger* of New York indicating that "Freshman" had proposed to begin a Hebrew Christian movement there.³³ This was the work of his son, Jacob Freshman, who had moved to the city in 1881 and began a mission in the city.³⁴ Evidently his work bore fruit as he dedicated the "Hebrew Christian Church" on October 11, 1885, billing it as the "First Hebrew Christian Church in America."³⁵ Though it was a viable work in 1888, Jacob Freshman wrote to Rev. William McLarin in Canada requesting financial assistance for Samuel Fries who was about to graduate from Union Seminary in New York in spring

³¹Sean O'Sullivan, "Rabbi Charles Freshman" *Good News: The Magazine with a Message, Special Rabbis' Edition* (Johannesburg: Good News Society, n.d.), p. 47.

³²Freshman, op. cit., p. 12.

³³A.S. Isaacs, ed. "Love's Labor Lost," *Jewish Messenger* (Jan. 6, 1882), quoted by David Rome, *Jacob's Opponents* (Montreal: CJC, 1986), p. 35.

³⁴Mitchell Glaser, "A Survey of the History of Missions to the Jews in New York City 1900-1930," *LCJE Bulletin*, Issue 38, (Nov. 1994), p. 16.

³⁵Eichhorn, op. cit., p. 163.

of the next year.³⁶ Tellingly, the last words of this letter are: "The struggle is really very great for me to do all I wish to do in bringing my Jewish Brethren to Christ."³⁷ Ultimately the mission was incorporated as part of the New York City Mission.³⁸

If Jacob Freshman did not get this overwhelming concern for evangelizing the Jewish people from his parents, it would be difficult to account for. His labours were widespread, and he organized bands to "pray and labor for the salvation of his brethren" in Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, Toronto, and Montreal.³⁹ According to Glaser, the mission that J. Freshman started was eventually instrumental in winning Leopold Cohn over to Christianity.⁴⁰ Leopold Cohn in turn established a mission which would become the most significant in American history. A.E. Thompson, writing in 1902, thus stated that through him "[t]he foundation was being laid for a great work in America which others have commenced to

³⁶Jacob Freshman, *Letter to Rev. Wm. McLarin, DD*, (New York: Hebrew Christian Church, 17 Mark's Place), Dec. 8, 1888. If Freshman did convert Fries, his work must be given credit. Fries had studied for seven years in the Jewish Theological Seminary of Breslau and Berlin and officiated in American Synagogues prior to his conversion.

³⁷*Ibid.*

³⁸Glaser, *op. cit.*

³⁹A.E. Thompson, *A Century of Jewish Missions* (Chicago: Revell, 1902), p. 237.

⁴⁰Mitchell Glaser, "A Survey of the History of Missions to the Jews in New York City 1900-1930," Paper presented to the *Lausanne Committee on Jewish Evangelism*, April, 1994.

build."⁴¹

B. Jacob Meier Hirschfelder (1819-1902)

The second notable Jewish believer for whom records exist in the mid-nineteenth century is Jacob Meier Hirschfelder. Speisman describes him as one of only three German-Jewish Toronto residents in the 1840's.⁴² Like Freshman he was European born. Unlike Freshman, he was an Anglican. There is no record of his conversion in Canada, so it is not known where he was converted.⁴³ In surviving records, he always appears as one with an established identity as a believer who saw himself as part of the Church. Hirschfelder first came to Canada in 1837 and lived either in Montreal or Quebec City until 1842.⁴⁴ Presumably just before moving to Toronto, when he was a youth of only twenty-two years, he advertised in the *Toronto Patriot* of August 8,

⁴¹Ibid. It is worth noting that "Dr. Jacob Freshman...died in poverty and was buried in the pauper's grave near Buffalo." Arnold G. Fruchtenbuaum, "History of the American Board of Missions to the Jews 1894-1917," A Special Report prepared for Martin Meyer Rosen Department of Missionary Training and Recruiting, American Board of Missions to the Jews (Charlotte, NC: ABMJ, 1968), p. 19.

⁴²Stephen A. Speisman, *The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979), p. 15.

⁴³There are some hints, but no firm evidence that he may have been converted in Canada. Mel Starkman, "A Meshumad at the University of Toronto," *Journal of the Canadian Jewish Historical Society*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (October 1981), p. 88, n. Speisman states that the circumstances, place and date of his conversion remain a mystery. Speisman, op. cit., p. 15.

⁴⁴Moir, op. cit., p. 3.

1841. There he offered instruction in Hebrew and German.⁴⁵ His abilities even at that young age must have been notable. By 1844 he was appointed as a lecturer in Oriental languages at King's College, and soon he was a fixture upon the scene of Canadian Biblical Studies.

Unfortunately, a "total lack of private papers" hinders our knowledge of Hirschfelder's person.⁴⁶ It is known, however, that he was "somewhat of a bon vivant in the cultural circles of early Victorian Toronto."⁴⁷ He had both notable and intellectual friends. It is also known that his wife's name was Marjory Anne Smith, and that she was a "Montreal Belle," indications that she was not Jewish.⁴⁸

The fact that Hirschfelder was well versed in several Semitic languages suggests that his training in Europe was that of an educated, *haskalah* Jew. No one has yet been able to locate any record of the school at Eslinger where he claimed to have received his education.⁴⁹ Thus it may be that his education was of a more religious than secular bent, and possibly via Jewish institutions. However, his academic career in Canada is well documented, and he produced a

⁴⁵Starkman, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p. 72.

considerable number of publications.⁵⁰

Hirschfelder was not one to avoid issues. Whereas few Canadian teachers of biblical languages in that period published, he was not afraid to enter the academic fray,⁵¹ as his publications attest. Further, his views did not go unnoticed. In 1874, the same year that Hirschfelder published on the issue of creation, John Marshall, a Judge in Nova Scotia, wrote an impassioned rebuttal. It appears that Hirschfelder was a proponent of the "Gap" theory. Marshall, evidently not a Hebrew student himself, criticized Hirschfelder for his "vanity" in presuming to criticize several instances of mistranslations in the English Bible - putting "himself above the eminent translators."⁵² Far from

⁵⁰These are as follows: *A Key To German Conversation*, (Toronto: Rowsell, 1845), 95 pp.; *An Essay on the Spirit and Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry*, (1855), 37 pp.; *The Scriptures Defended: Being a Reply to Bishop Colenso's Book on the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua*, (Toronto: Henry Rowsell, 1863), 215 pp.; *The Creation Being Two Lectures on the Mosaic Account of the Creation as Recorded in Genesis I* (Toronto: Rowell & Hutchison, 1876), 75 pp.; *The Immortality of the Soul Being a Critical Investigation of the Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul as set forth in the Old Testament* (Toronto: Rowell & Hutchison, 1876), 58 pp.; *A Wife to Her Sister: Being a treatise in which the question so long and warmly discussed wife's sister is prohibited under the Mosaic law, is, in a clear and precise manner, placed before the English reader* (Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison, 1878), 39 pp.; *Biblical Expositor and People's Commentary* (Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchinson, 1882-1885), 2 Vol., Vol. 1, 315 pp., Vol. 2, 611 pp. See Starkman, op. cit., for mention of these works.

⁵¹Moir, op. cit., p. 4.

⁵²John G. Marshall, *Review and Refutation of Lectures by Professor J.M. Hirschfelder, of University College, Toronto, on Creation* (Halifax: MacNab, 1874), p. 6. The "Gap Theory" holds that Genesis 1:1-2 represent a long time span before the six days of creation starting in Genesis 1:3ff. It

being lax in his esteem of Scripture, however, by his critique of Bishop Colenso's inflammatory work Hirschfelder proved his commitment to its authority.⁵³ In this his concerns converged with those of the conservative Judge Marshall.⁵⁴

Hirschfelder valued his intellectual heritage as a Jew. Well acquainted with the documents of Judaism, he held them in high regard and did not hide his familiarity with them. According to the private papers of one of his students, his library included "the celebrated 18 volumes and a number of interesting Jewish works."⁵⁵ Although writing to a Christian audience in his attack upon Colenso, Hirschfelder did not hesitate to draw upon his resources. Thus he quotes not only Maimonides, but also Ibn Ezra, David Kimchi, Solomon Jarchi, Moses Ben Nachman, and Isaac Aberbanel, along with scholars of the Christian faith.⁵⁶ This leads to two conjectures: One is that he was secure in his faith and knew that his

attempts to reconcile evidence of vast geologic ages with creationism.

⁵³In his two volume refutation (see Hirschfelder, *The Scriptures Defended*, op. cit.) Hirschfelder attacks the "heretical work from so eminent a prelate" (p. iii).

⁵⁴Judge Marshall, *A Full Review and Exposure of Bishop Colenso's Profane Fictions and Fallacies, in Part II of His Work, "The Pentateuch Examined"* (London: Freeman, 1864). It is interesting that David Rome, a well known Jewish historian in Montreal, in speaking of the "storm that arose" over Colenso's work lists many refutations, including Marshall's, but maintains silence regarding Hirschfelder. See David Rome, *The Early Jewish Presence in Canada, A Book Lovers Ramble through Jewish Canadiana* (Montreal: JPL, 1971), p. 43.

⁵⁵Starkman, op. cit., p. 80. Starkman comments in note 49 that the Talmud was published in 18 volumes in that day.

attention to Jewish sources would not call his faith into question. The second is that he still respected those sources, and was in some part asserting his Jewish heritage by using them. The latter point has some credibility, for they are referred to in Hirschfelder's sarcastic question: ". . . had the host of eminent modern Jewish commentators their wits, not to have seen those terrible things in the five books of Moses which Dr. Colenso seems to have discovered?"⁵⁷

Hirschfelder was clearly one who identified himself both culturally and religiously with Christianity and Christian culture. There is no evidence that he had any concern with proselytizing the Jewish community nor maintaining relations with it. Rather, the impression one has is that Hirschfelder had a lot to gain academically by professing Christianity, and actually did quite well for himself as a professor whereas he would not have done so without converting. Nevertheless he did not disdain his Jewishness. Thus in some ways he remains an enigma.

C. Bishop Isaac Hellmuth (1820-1901)

The third Jewish believer to be discussed is Isaac

⁵⁶Hirschfelder, *The Scriptures Defended*, op. cit., pp. 23, 25.

⁵⁷The writer does not wish to overdraw this line of thought however. At this very time Europe was waking up to the value of Jewish interpretations for Christian theologians, especially in Germany, under the influence of Franz Delitzsch who had both an academic and missiological interest in the Jews. See Siegfried Wagner and Arnulf Baumann, "Franz Delitzsch, Scholar and Missionary," *Mishkan*, (Jerusalem: UCCI), Issue 14, 1991, pp. 46-55.

Hellmuth, the first Bishop of Huron (Dec. 14, 1820 - May 29, 1901). Born in Eastern Europe, near Warsaw, he did not grow up poor or without a thorough Jewish upbringing.⁵⁸ His heritage accounts for much of his abilities and understanding of Judaism, as His father was "a Rabbi 'of a highly respected Jewish family. Claims were made for a descent traced from the house of Judah and the Royal House of David.'" ⁵⁹

Through the agency of Dr. S. Neuman, a Hebrew Christian and missionary with the LSPCJ, Hellmuth became a believer while studying at the University of Breslau.⁶⁰ There he was (as might be expected) promptly turned out of his home and disowned. In England he was greatly encouraged by Hugh McNeile, a strong evangelical, and one of the first Anglican clergymen to accept premillennialism. Thus Hellmuth inherited a keen Evangelicalism, for which he became well

⁵⁸James W. Talman, *"Western" - 1878-1953; being the history of the origins and development of the University of Western Ontario* (London: U. of Western Ontario, 1953), p. 5.

⁵⁹J.B. Richardson, *A Jubilee Memorial* (London, Ont.: Diocese of Huron, 1907), p. 78. quoted by A.H. Crowfoot, *This Dreamer: Life of Isaac Hellmuth, Second Bishop of Huron* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1963), p. 2. It should be noted that claims to Davidic ancestry are generally to be taken with a pinch of salt due to the desirability of the claim and the lack of means to prove it.

⁶⁰William T. Gidney, *The History of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews, From 1809 to 1908* (London: LSPCJ, 1908), pp. 167, 583. See also Jacob Gartenhaus, *Famous Hebrew Christians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), p. 91. This account is contradicted by Richardson's who credits Hellmuth's conversion to Mr. Berling, "a missionary supported by the Basel branch of the Society for the conversion of the Jews." Richardson, op. cit., p. 2.

known.⁶¹ After a time in England, which was for him a place of refuge, he came to Canada in 1844.⁶²

Hellmuth had a strong desire to present the Gospel to other Jews. In what amounts to the first indication of any Hebrew Christian community in Canada, Crowfoot records that "He came to know some Jewish Christians in Montreal, and they convinced him that there was a rich harvest in Canada's growing metropolis and that he was the man to reap it."⁶³ In 1846 Hellmuth was ordained a Deacon and "Priest in the Church of God." In reference to this event Bishop George Mountain said, "He hoped to lead the Jews of Montreal to a knowledge of the Messiah."⁶⁴

Beginning what was to be an illustrious career in the Anglican church, in the same year (1846) Hellmuth took a position as Vice Principal and Professor of Hebrew and Rabbinical Literature at Bishop's College in Lennoxville, Quebec. This position he held until 1854.⁶⁵ Thereafter he became the General Superintendent of the Colonial and Continental Church Society in British North America, a post

⁶¹Crowfoot, op. cit., p. 12.

⁶²Talman, op. cit. It should be noted that Talman incorrectly by Hellmuth's own testimony gives the place of Hellmuth's conversion as England, on the same page.

⁶³A.H. Crowfoot, op. cit., p. 6.

⁶⁴John Irwin Cooper, *The Blessed Communion: The Origins and History of the Diocese of Montreal, 1760-1960*, (Archives Committee: Montreal, 1960), p. 170.

⁶⁵Owsley Robert Rowley, *The Anglican Episcopate of Canada and Newfoundland* (Milwaukee: Moorehouse, 1928), p. 53.

which he held until 1861.⁶⁶ Subsequently during that year, the first Bishop of Huron, Bishop Cronyn, found that Hellmuth was unemployed.⁶⁷ Using his opportunity, he persuaded Hellmuth to undertake the "campaign for funds for the establishment and endowment of his [Cronyn's] projected college."⁶⁸ The fundraising effort was quite successful, and on December 2, 1863 the College was formally opened without any debts incurred.⁶⁹ The then Archdeacon Hellmuth thus became part of the first staff, beginning classes in January 1864. There he contributed as only a Jewish believer could,

'especially in the Hebrew language and literature; . . . he was well versed, not only in the Hebrew scriptures, but also in talmudic and Cabalistic lore, and was always quoting a lot of ...learned and mystical Jews of the Middle Ages....'⁷⁰

The school did not prosper financially, however, particularly in the economically depressed mid 1870's.⁷¹

Hellmuth continued to serve the Anglican Church of Canada, becoming Cronyn's successor as the second Bishop of Huron in 1871.⁷² Far from losing all interest in his Jewish

⁶⁶Spencer Ervin, *The Political and Ecclesiastical History of the Anglican Church of Canada* (Ambler, Pa.: Trinity, 1967), p. 85.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 85.

⁶⁸Talman, op. cit., p. 5.

⁶⁹Talman, op. cit., p. 7.

⁷⁰Crowfoot, op. cit., p. 34, quoting G.J. Low, *A Parson's Ponderings*, (Toronto: William Brigg, 1908), p. 158.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 10-11.

⁷²Brown, op. cit., p. 46.

brethren, and despite his many other activities, Hellmuth stirred up much interest in the LSPCJ and its Canadian Auxiliary.⁷³ He was thus counted as one of the influential patrons of the society's first halting steps in its noteworthy efforts to evangelize Canadian Jews.⁷⁴

The central Canadian bishopric was of great importance in the Anglican church. While in this post he

furthered a plan initiated by the faculty and graduates of [the financially troubled] Huron College to found a University of which the College would be a part, to meet the needs of the western counties, now rapidly increasing in population.⁷⁵

Thus Hellmuth was the key facilitator in establishing both Huron College and the University of Western Ontario. As Bishop he resided in London, Ontario, until his unexpected resignation in 1883, for the sake of his wife's health, to become Coadjutor Bishop of Hull. Shortly after the death of his wife on May 21, 1884 he moved to England and died at the age of 81 on May 29, 1901 at Somerset.⁷⁶

Throughout his life, Hellmuth's sympathies never departed from the Jewish people. While he was in London, England, in 1877, the *Dominion Churchman* reported that he "delivered a lecture in the city hall, on the restoration of

⁷³A.F. Burt, *Our Montreal Mission* (London, England: Operative Jewish Converts Institution, 1903), p. 4.

⁷⁴Gidney, *History*, op. cit., pp. 325-326. Hellmuth was officially on the roll as a vice-patron as of 1872.

⁷⁵Ervin, op. cit., p. 85.

⁷⁶Rowley, op. cit. pp. 53-55, also Crowfoot, op. cit., p. 77.

the Jews to their own Land, with special reference to Jerusalem."⁷⁷ The following comment demonstrates that his concern for Israel was perceived as distinct from the typical interest in Israel among Evangelical clergy of the era:

He believes in the restoration of the Jews to the fatherland, at no distant period. A belief in this he firmly maintains in common with other Jews, whether believing that the Messiah has come or is yet to come to restore the kingdom to Israel.⁷⁸

Isaac Hellmuth clearly did not seek to conceal his heritage. His encouragement of and influence upon the LSPCJ upon his final return to England is well documented.⁷⁹ He associated with and influenced other Jewish believers and cannot have failed to impart a significant degree of self-respect and reinforce to them the legitimacy of maintaining their cultural distinctiveness within the Church.

IV. FIRST EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS

Jewish immigration to Canada, a "trickle" since the conquest of the French in 1760, accelerated slightly after 1840.⁸⁰ Interest in reaching Canada's small but growing Jewish population was increasing in the early to mid nineteenth century. This was in part due to the impetus of

⁷⁷*Dominion Churchman*, Vol. III, No. 16 (April 19, 1877), p. 187.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*

⁷⁹Gidney, *History*, op. cit., pp. 328, 501, 503-504, 507, 583.

⁸⁰Bernard L. Vigod, *The Jews in Canada* (St. Johns, N.B.: Univ. of N.B., 1984), p. 4.

the French Revolution, which had created an enduring enthusiasm for Jewish evangelism. Not only were the British influential upon Canadians in this regard, but also the Americans (themselves influenced in part by the British), not the least through the influential American Society for Meliorating the conditions of the Jews.⁸¹ In part also, the motivation to evangelize Jews was due to the challenge they posed to Canada's homogeneity. This to some degree made them visible targets for proselytizing.⁸²

Nevertheless, at the beginning of this period Canadian interest in evangelizing Jews was not widespread and had a greater international than domestic focus. Thus missions to Jews in Palestine (due to popular eschatological expectations) and other places in the growing British Empire were popular at the expense of potential mission fields in Canada. This was reasonable, for a census in 1846 recorded only twelve Jews in Toronto, although the figure probably does not include some of the wives, children, and those who did not profess their faith.⁸³

⁸¹Founded in 1816, the American Society had as its first missionary the same J.C.F. Frey who had founded the LSPCJ in 1809. See Lorman Ratner, "Conversion of the Jews and Pre-Civil War Reform," *American Quarterly*, Vol. 13, Issue 1 (1916), p. 43.

⁸²R. Gruneir, "The Hebrew-Christian Mission in Toronto," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 1 (1977), p. 18. Grunier presents a one-sided case, omitting more charitable evangelistic impulses on the part of the church.

⁸³Stephen A. Speisman, *The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1979), p. 15.

A. LSPCJ

Despite the small number of Jews in Toronto, an LSPCJ Auxiliary Association was established in 1847, reportedly by James Cohen, who had been sent from England for the purpose.⁸⁴ This auxiliary "contributed greatly" to the society's funds.⁸⁵ It did not primarily seek to reach Canadian Jews, but to support the international work.

The British suspected that Canadian Jews were in themselves a potential mission field however. Thus in 1863:

A new departure was made . . . by sending a deputation to the United States and Canada in order to plead the cause of the Society, in the person of the Rev. Buchan Wright, a former secretary. He preached in Halifax and St. John, New Brunswick, on his way out, and spoke at crowded meetings . . . and preached or lectured at Hamilton, London, Montreal, Quebec, Toronto and other cities, and formed Associations.⁸⁶

While this did not immediately result in a permanent mission to the Jews in Canada, evidently interest in reaching the country's increasing Jewish population was growing.

Presumably after this date, "Early in the century," the auxiliary did become active in evangelism, for

Reports were sent in of some conversions; among which the baptism of Henry Abram Joseph, ...and of Myers David Rosenberg and his son, who had emigrated from Prussia in 1846, are best known.⁸⁷

⁸⁴Eichhorn, op. cit., pp. 93-94.

⁸⁵Gidney, *The History*, op. cit., p. 619.

⁸⁶Ibid., pp. 323-324.

⁸⁷Burt, A.F., *Our Montreal Mission: Carried on by Rev. I.T. Trebitsch* (Montreal: LSPCJ, 1902), p. 7. This account is unfortunately suspect, for according to Eichhorn's reading

However, an actual mission with permanent staff dedicated to evangelizing the Jews of Toronto was not started until almost half a century later.

B. Presbyterian Missions to the Jews

Missionary excitement was not confined only to England, and the LSPCJ was not the only influence on Canadian churches. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was also stirred up on behalf of the people of Israel by Mr. Woodrow in 1838, igniting the enthusiasm of the General Assembly.⁸⁸ Looking back eighty years later Rohold recorded that "the wave of enthusiasm quickly crossed the ocean, and swept the Presbyterian congregations in Canada."⁸⁹ Thus there occurred a remarkable spirit of common endeavour as the Presbyterian churches in Canada took up collections to aid the Jewish missions of the Church of Scotland. This collection continued from 1840-1855.⁹⁰ Thus the "first Canadian missionary society, devoted primarily to the conversion of Jews" was organized in 1840.⁹¹ The interest in evangelizing Jews was not a fleeting one. In 1851 it is recorded that Henry Wilkes (1805-1886) "pastor of the

of *Jewish Era*, April, 1912, pp. 49-57, H.A. Joseph was baptized in 1803.

⁸⁸John Dunlop, *Memories of Gospel Triumphs among the Jews during the Victorian Era* (London: Partridge, 1894), p. 11.

⁸⁹Sabeti B. Rohold, *Missions to the Jews. Historical Sketch. The Story of Our Church's In Israel*. (Toronto: Christian Synagogue, 1918) p. 4.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*

Congregationalist Zion Church in Montreal, rose to address his flock with a sermon entitled 'Jesus, the divine Messiah: An Address to the Jews.'"⁹² Interestingly, his motivation was not characteristically eschatological, but rather based on Romans 11:15.⁹³ In 1856 the Synod of the Canadian Presbyterian Church appointed a "Jewish and Foreign Mission Committee, to take the necessary steps for the founding of a Mission to the Jews in Jerusalem."⁹⁴

Presbyterian interest in evangelizing Jews was piqued by the same "wave of enthusiasm" that was spurred by Mr. Woodrow in Scotland in 1838.⁹⁵ As a result the

. . . Synod in connection with that Church in Canada in 1840 resolved to take special collections, in aid of the Jewish Missions of the Church of Scotland. These collections continued until 1855, when the members of the Church desired to have a Jewish Mission of their own.⁹⁶

Predictably for the times, this mission was to the Jews in Jerusalem, not Canada. However, as Jerusalem was already

⁹¹Eichhorn, op. cit., p. 76.

⁹²Richard Menkis, "A Missionary Sermon to the Jews in Mid-Nineteenth Century Montreal: Text and Contexts," *The Frank Talmage Memorial*, ed. Barry Walfish (Haifa: Haifa U. Press, 1993), Vol. 1., p. 333.

⁹³Ibid., p. 343. Romans 11:15 reads: "For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them be*, but life from the dead?" (KJV). Menkis suggests that Wilkes was motivated to Jewish evangelism partly by the arrival of the energetic Rabbi Abraham de Sola to Montreal in 1847.

⁹⁴Eichhorn, op. cit.

⁹⁵Sabeti B. Rohold, *Missions to the Jews. Historical Sketch. The Story of Our Church's In Israel.* (Toronto: Christian Synagogue, 1918) p. 4. See also Ch. 1 this thesis.

overrun by many other missions, a Jewish believer was sent as a missionary to Monastir, in European Turkey on January 22, 1860, becoming the first foreign missionary of the Canadian Presbyterian Church.⁹⁷

This believer was Ephraim Menachem Epstein, who, after receiving a Master of Divinity degree in 1856 from Andover Theological Seminary, had studied medicine in New York, graduating in 1859.⁹⁸ Subsequently "ordained to the ministry by the Presbytery of Kingston on October 6th, 1859,"⁹⁹ he completed his medical training there before going to Turkey as a medical missionary to the Jews.¹⁰⁰ While he resigned after merely two years due to his inability to learn the language,¹⁰¹ this is evidence that evangelistic attention was paid to the Jewish people by Presbyterians, even if this was not done through the agency of a mission in Canada. Notably, Epstein was described by Sabeti Rohold as that "remarkable converted Jew, Professor Ephraim Menachem Epstein" who "enjoyed many honors."¹⁰²

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 5.

⁹⁸Ralph R. Tingley, "Ephraim Menachem Epstein: Educator, Pastor, Physician, Surgeon" *American Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. IX, No. 3 (September, 1990), p. 132.

⁹⁹Rohold, *Historical Sketch*, op. cit., p. 5.

¹⁰⁰Tingley, op. cit.

¹⁰¹Gruneir, op. cit., p. 19.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 5.

V. CONCLUSION

Long before the LSPCJ, the British Jews Society, or the Presbyterian Church hired on permanent staff in Canada, the existence of Jewish believers in the colonies is known. Their story begins with the converts to Catholicism in the French colonies. Following them appeared isolated yet significant Jewish believers in Protestant churches. With the stories of these men, there comes the realization that there were also a number of other Jewish Christians in Canada. In Isaac Hellmuth's case at least, it is clear that he knew of and associated with other Jewish believers. Thus the embryonic beginning of Canadian Hebrew Christian community is apparent.

Charles Freshman, Jacob Meier Hirschfelder, and Isaac Hellmuth each made a significant contribution to the life of the Canadian church. The latter two made significant contributions to Canadian education. Whatever Hebrew Christians had in common, it did not preclude their full involvement in church life. They did not consider themselves separate in any way from the rest of the church. They did remember their ethnic heritage and desired that other Jews should share their faith.

In what would become an increasing factor in the life of Canadian Jewish believers, as the Jewish population in Canada increased, so did Evangelical interest in missions for their evangelization. This occurred at the same time that Freshman, Hirschfelder, and Hellmuth were significant

contributors to the Canadian Church.

Chapter Three: New Evangelistic Efforts from Confederation (1867-1917)

I. INTRODUCTION

The later years of the nineteenth century brought about a new phase in the church's endeavours to reach the Jewish people with the Gospel. Previously, the effort had been conducted in an haphazard and ad hoc manner. Hebrew Christianity was centered about a few prominent persons, and they were the ones most active in evangelizing Jews. During their lifetimes missions to the Jews, often relying heavily upon Jewish believers themselves to supply the missionary posts, became the foci of community for Jewish believers. The events of this next period preceding World War I were to have a lasting effect upon the character of this community until the present day.

The concern of Canadian Jewish believers to reach their brethren in new ways began to take a form very much akin to that of Charles Freshman's son Jacob's mission in New York.¹

¹Jacob Freshman, *Letter to Rev. Wm. McLarin, DD*, (New York: Hebrew Christian Church, 17 Mark's Place), Dec. 8,

Developments in missiology at this time were leading to an acceptance of the "three self" approach to missions. This approach endeavored to establish congregations among those being missionized. The aim was that these congregations become self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing.² This approach very often was characterized by an honest attempt to couch the Gospel in culturally understandable terms and institutions. Ultimately the goal was the "euthanasia of mission." Populations that had viable, expanding churches in their midst would no longer need the presence of foreign missions.³

Such an approach befitted the times and aspirations of Hebrew Christians of the day. None presented the arguments for a new order of things more memorably than Mark Levy, of London, England. In addresses delivered in New York (1900) and Maryland (1903), Levy, who was prominent in the international Hebrew Christian movement, pled for the Jews on the basis of I Cor. 9:20: "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew."⁴ His plea, which bears repeating - as it sheds light on the

1888. As suggested by the work's name, it seems that this was an attempt to reach the Jewish people in an indigenous manner.

²Rufus Anderson, *Foreign Missions: Their Relations and Claims*, (New York: Scribner, 1869), pp. 109-117. Universally recognised as the most important mission theorist in American history, Anderson (1796-1880) promoted the three self theory during the nineteenth century. Donald M. Lewis, "Anderson, Rufus," Unpublished article, 1994.

³Donald M. Lewis, ed., *The Blackwell Dictionary of Evangelical Biography: 1730-1860*, s.v. "Venn, Henry" (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995).

development of Canadian missions to the Jews - is as follows:

We argue for absolute freedom and not for compulsion, and urgently appeal to all Christians to proclaim the Apostolic fact that "Hebrew Christians are not required to leave their homes or synagogues, but are entitled, under the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, if they so desire, to admit their male children into the covenant of Abraham, and to observe any other of the rites and ceremonies of their fathers, not done away with by Christ and His Apostles or the primitive Church; provided only, it is clearly understood, that neither Jew nor Gentile can be saved by works of the law, but only through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. "For there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv:12).⁵

Jewish missions had received a lasting impetus that showed no signs of waning. Particularly in the 1870's there were "literary reverberations in Canada of the interest of Gentile Britishers in a restoration of Jews to their homeland."⁶ Whereas previous missions had been informal and sporadic, new efforts were of a permanent nature. The interest of Canadian Christians in evangelizing Canadian Jews grew with the rapid increase in Canadian Jewry.

Previously largely Sephardic in composition, the Jewish community swelled with thousands of Russian immigrants following the pogroms of 1881 subsequent to the assassination of Czar Alexander III. The majority of these settled in Montreal and Toronto. In 1871 there were reportedly only 1,233 Jews in Canada whereas by 1911 the number had grown to

⁴Mark Levy, *Arguments for the Scriptural Method of Preaching the Gospel to the Jews* (Publisher Unknown, 1903).

⁵Ibid., p. 13.

74,760.⁷ Increasingly, Jews found themselves domiciled in chiefly Protestant regions of the country. This would result in a greater number of converts to Protestant churches. However, Jews who were fleeing centuries of persecution in Russia were not liable to be friendly to missionaries. Evangelism was typically seen as an attempt to erode the freedoms they enjoyed in their new home, and an infringement upon Jewish rights to worship as Jews.

The missionaries were prepared for resistance, for indifference, but not for this intense resentment which they met from the Jews. Immigrant Jews in these years were fleeing Christian Russia for their very lives, for the preservation of their being, and for their identity. As they saw it, the preaching of the missionaries came as a challenge to defend that for which they had sacrificed so much during many centuries.⁸ Thus it is not surprising that riots sometimes ensued as the missionaries, often without regard to these sensitivities, carried on their activities.

Three significant missionary enterprises were initiated in Canada during this period: one by the LSPCJ, a second by the Anglican diocese of Toronto, and the third by the Presbyterian Church. Thus there are three streams of mission

⁶Michael Brown, *Jew or Juif? Jews, French Canadians, and Anglo-Canadians, 1759-1914* (New York: JPS, 1987), p. 18.

⁷Bernard L. Vigod, *The Jews in Canada* (St. Johns, N.B.: Univ. of N.B., 1984).

⁸David Rome, *Jacob's Opponents, The Immigration Story II* (Montreal: CJC, 1986), p. 3.

work to be discussed in their turn. Other works were also undertaken in this time period will also be briefly discussed.

II. THE LSPCJ

The French revolution had raised popular interest in Canada concerning the role of the Jews in prophetic events. Although the Revolution was but a dim memory, ongoing current events were keeping this interest alive.⁹ As seen in the last chapter, the LSPCJ was the most notable result of this interest. While it was most active in Toronto, it was also active nation wide.

A. Toronto

Following the visit of the Reverend Buchan Wright from England in 1863, a work of the LSPCJ was formally begun in Toronto, suggesting that the earlier auxiliary (est. in 1847) had lapsed into inactivity. Interest in the work of the LSPCJ picked up and increased. According to the LSPCJ's historian William Gidney, Canada became a generous contributor to the international evangelistic effort.¹⁰ A key

⁹T.S. Ellerby, *Some Particulars Respecting the Persecution of the Jews in Russia and the Great Evangelical Movement of Rabinovitz* (Toronto: LSPCJ, 1891), p. 5. Ellerby notes in reference to the persecutions in Russia that "They have awakened a world-wide attention to Jewish questions, and caused people to think of the Jews as a prophetic people, preserved as by miracle, and destined for some great purpose divinely reserved."

¹⁰William T. Gidney, *The History of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews: From 1809 to 1908* (London: LSPCJ, 1908), p. 619.

method of fundraising was the taking of a voluntary Good Friday collection, often in connection with sermons preached on behalf of "God's ancient people."¹¹

From 1882 the work of the LSPCJ in Canada was spearheaded by Johnstone Vicars¹² who tirelessly laboured until his death to interest his fellow Anglicans in the work to reach the Jews. Vicars' brother had spent his short life as the LSPCJ's missionary in Baghdad, and Vicars' desires were to give himself to such a work also.¹³ A Good Friday sermon published by him demonstrates his great sympathy for the Jewish people. Nevertheless, in what appears typical for the time, the sermon also serves to illustrate why Gentiles did not make the best of missionaries to the Jews. Vicars used uncomplimentary stereotypes of Jews and Judaism. Thus he refers to the Jews in the tract as his late sister-in-law's "perverted, persecuted and perishing people" (she was a Jew

¹¹Johnstone Vicars, *Report*, (Toronto: LSPCJ, Diocese of Toronto), June 30, 1885.

¹²Burt, *Our Montreal Mission*, op. cit., p. 4. The following information was passed on to the writer by Dr. Donald M. Lewis: "Johnstone Vicars was an ordained Anglican minister who went to Newfoundland from England in 1852 to work as the superintendent of the evangelical Colonial Church and School Society's work in Newfoundland. It appears that he left the colony in 1856 and returned to England, but then worked for the same society in the Dioceses of Huron from 1857. Here he would have been under the supervision of Isaac Hellmuth who undoubtedly served to increase his interest in the evangelism of Jews. Cf. H.A. Seegmiller, "The Colonial and Continental Church Society in Eastern Canada," (Doctor of Divinity Thesis, General Synod of Nova Scotia, 1966), pp. 75, 84, 96-97, 110, 121 and 489.

It is reasonable to suppose that Vicars assumed leadership of the LSPCJ effort upon Mrs. Hellmuth's declining health, which resulted in her death in 1884, precluding Isaac Hellmuth's full participation.

who had converted to Christianity).¹⁴ Such ill chosen terminology suggests that in Johnstone's day, despite benevolent intentions, even those most dedicated to Jewish evangelism held attitudes that in themselves were an obstacle to success.

Considering this it is no wonder that in this time period Jewish believers became prominent as the most effective missionaries to their own. In an 1889 appeal, such are referred to as "Special Agents" able to speak the language of the Jews and understand their ways.¹⁵ A knowledge of Yiddish, European Jewish culture and Jewish concerns and sensibilities was vital, especially as so many Jews were very recent immigrants.

Fruit for the society's labours are not spoken of often before the turn of the century. Not until between 1892 and 1896 was the first formal evangelistic work of the Society begun in Toronto, under the Rev. J.J. Hill. This was accomplished by the appointment of Rev. Johnstone Vicars' daughter as lady missionary in 1895, whom Rev. Hill subsequently married.¹⁶

A year later, in 1896, Mrs. Hill was obliged to give up

¹³Vicars, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

¹⁴Johnstone Vicars, *An Appeal to Christian Friends of the Society and of the Jews by the Secretary*, (Toronto: LSPCJ, Diocese of Toronto), July 17, 1885.

¹⁵T.S. Ellerby, *An Appeal*, (Toronto: LSPCJ, Diocese of Toronto), March 23, 1889, pp. 3-6.

the work upon her husband's death. She was unfortunately able to report only a very difficult and discouraging work. It may be because of this as well as the smallness of Canada's Jewish population, which still only numbered 2,393 as of the 1881 census, that the work fell by the wayside for a number of years.¹⁷ Thus international concerns once again took the fore as attention was diverted to the persecution of Jews in Europe and the corresponding emigration to Canada, America, and Palestine. Throughout the 1889 appeal mentioned above it is evident that the international work of the LSPCJ and the hope of an "alteration of feeling in the minds of Jews, even in the Synagogue itself" were basic motivations to Christian philanthropy.¹⁸

B. Canada Wide

In 1895, the same year that Miss Vicars began her work with Rev. J.J. Hill for the LSPCJ in Toronto, "a deputation was sent from England [by the LSPCJ] to inspect the whole Dominion" and spent several months traversing the entire

¹⁶Burt, *Montreal*, op. cit., p. 6. Also re. the marriage of Rev. Hill to Miss Vicars see Gidney, op. cit., p. 619.

¹⁷Burt, *Montreal*, op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁸Ellerby, op. cit., p. 3. This point is borne out by the fact that the Anglican Church itself (as distinct from the LSPCJ) was able to point to significantly increased interest and revenues after Bishop Blythe was appointed to reach Jews within the Turkish Empire and Jerusalem itself. Cayley, *Report for 1890*, Parochial Missions to the Jews Fund (Toronto), 1890.

country.¹⁹ The deputation was apparently warmly received and noted that Montreal was the most suitable and promising place for missionary endeavour. The Jewish population of Montreal at that time was estimated at between twelve to fifteen thousand Jews.²⁰ Being the first stop on the East Coast for many new immigrants, Montreal had a large transient population. Canada's Jewish population was growing exponentially. However, to avoid conflict with the Presbyterian work in the city, the LSPCJ did not take action until 1901 when the Presbyterian missionary, Rev. J. McCarter, resigned.

Upon his resignation, the LSPCJ (by what gives the appearance of being a very cordial agreement) took over the work from the Presbytery.²¹ This "new" work, undertaken amidst an awakening concern for Canada's Jews, was begun in Montreal in April 1902. Significantly, the society retained the services of Rev. Ignatius Timotheus Trebitsch who had previously worked in the Presbyterian mission. Thus in December 1902 Trebitsch was ordained to the work by the Archbishop of Montreal.²² The centre of this work "was a

¹⁹Burt, A.F. *The Montreal Jewish Mission*, op. cit., p. 8.

²⁰Ibid. Right from the start of this publication it is clear that the Montreal mission is in bad need of funds.

²¹Ibid., p. 12.

²²Burt, A.F. *Lent 1903 Letter* (Montreal: LSPCJ, 1903).

mission house and hall near the Jewish quarter."²³ Unlike the stable work later begun in Toronto, however, this work was to have a troubled history.

In its early days the mission apparently prospered under the leadership of Rev. I.T. Trebitsch, a Jewish believer of Hungarian descent whose father had been a "wealthy and zealous Rabbi".²⁴ Although an extremely unstable and ultimately self centered individual, Trebitsch was also very capable in whatever he set his mind to do.²⁵ Since he had previously assisted the Presbyterian mission in the same city, the work was guaranteed continuity. Thus it is no

²³Gidney, op. cit., p. 619. Publications by the mission denote its address as 374 LaGauchetierre St.

²⁴Burt, A.F. *The Montreal Jewish Mission*, op. cit., p. 13.

²⁵David Lampe and Laszlo Szenasi, *The Self-Made Villain: A Biography of I. T. Trebitsch-Lincoln* (London: Cassell, 1961), have written a thorough account of Trebitsch-Lincoln's tragic and kaleidoscopic career. He arrived in Montreal from Europe in April 1900 (p. 12), receiving a diploma from McGill seminary in 1901 (p. 14). On December 21, 1902, a Christian for barely three years, he was ordained a deacon of the Anglican Church (p. 17). In 1904 back in London England he was licensed as a curate for one year in "Appledore with Ebony, Kent." (p. 19). At this he lasted only until autumn before leaving for Hampton, to live on a small inheritance (p. 22). In 1910 he became the Liberal MP for Darlington, using his remarkable skills as a communicator (pp. 32-35). Later in the United States he became a persistent illegal immigrant (p. 45 ff), and eventually a Buddhist teacher by name of Chao Kung (p. 183), abandoning his wife, faith as a Christian, and even his son who was sadly executed for murder in England (pp. 186-189). In May 1931, he was ordained as the Venerable Chao Kung near Peking (p. 195). In 1934 he passed through Canada, travelling through Vancouver on the 25th of April. There he was interviewed most unfavourably by a reporter of the *Vancouver Sun* (pp. 196 ff). Unable ever to return to Europe from China after his later return (via deportation from England) due to his bad credit and lack of funds (p. 199), he died on October 4, 1943 in a hospital at Shanghai (p. 204), with his death reported world-wide.

surprise that as soon as 1903 the mission was able to report that it was greatly cheered by its success, describing two recent converts who apparently were expected to join the Anglican Church.²⁶ In the same year Rev. Trebitsch, whose health had "broken" under the strain of the work,²⁷ was superseded by Mr. D.J. Neugewirtz. Soon after a larger hall was needed in which to conduct meetings, a fertile field having been found in the large numbers of immigrant Russian Jews, some of whom had previously heard the Gospel at the society's outreach in Rotterdam. It was not long before eleven Jews had been baptized.²⁸

Rev. Neugewirtz continued the work meanwhile, expanding it to Ottawa as well as Montreal. Hopes ran high as reports came in of a "great change that has come over the attitude of the Jewish mind towards the Person and teaching of Jesus Christ."²⁹ Nevertheless, in the same report quoted, only two are told to have professed conversion. The work progressed steadily, so that in 1911 the mission employed two missionaries, both Mr. Neugewirtz and Mr. B.S. Rosenthal as well as a colporteur. "Encouraging results" are spoken of, as activities progressed among Jewish immigrants who came

²⁶Burt, *Lent*, 1903, op. cit., p. 3.

²⁷Ibid. This is possibly a cover-up, in light of Trebitsch's demonstrated character.

²⁸Gidney, op. cit., p. 620.

²⁹*Report for the Year 1906-1907* (London: LSPCJ, 1907), p. 120.

mostly from Russia and Romania.³⁰ One source mentions a congregational work in Montreal under Neugewirtz called the "Hebrew Christian Church" which faltered in 1940 when its founder left Montreal.³¹

The branch mission in Ottawa was an important field of endeavour for the Montreal missionaries, and demonstrated their vigour. This work seems to have been most avidly pursued by the society's colporteur, who distributed more tracts in 1911 than there were Jews in the city.³² Even more than in Montreal, there was a vigorous reaction from the Jewish community, seeking to counteract the missionaries. This may well have been due to the very effectiveness of the mission's outreach, as it was reported that even "Spies [who] came to learn the methods of the mission . . . themselves often became enquirers."³³

As a result of the LSPCJ's activities in Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa, three major centres of Canadian Jewry, it is evident that it had a part in developing the small Canadian population of Jewish believers. Nevertheless, it is hard to find any trace of direct results from this work that continue to the present. This may indicate that the Society

³⁰*One Hundred & Third Missionary Report* (London: LSPCJ, 1911), p. 113.

³¹Ben Volman, "Messianic Jewish History: An Overview," Toronto: n.p., 1990.

³²*One Hundred & Fourth Missionary Report* (London: LSPCJ, 1912), p. 101.

³³*Ibid.*

encouraged full assimilation into Christian culture. The works in Montreal and Ottawa have left no traces behind. However, the work begun in Toronto at the end of this time held great promise, and bore fruit in the notable endeavors of the Anglican Church.

III. THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

Despite a long history of publishing their case for evangelizing the Jew and diligent fundraising to that end, it was not until 1909 that the Anglican Church of Canada actually began to seriously attempt a Toronto outreach, instructing the Diocesan Mission Board to

...take up and deal with the question of "The work among the Jews" in the city of Toronto and to take such steps as may be thought proper to prosecute mission work actively among the Jews in our city, in cooperation with other religious bodies engaged in this work or otherwise, as may seem best.³⁴

Finally, a work was begun on January 22, 1912,³⁵ years after the LSPCJ had begun outreaches in Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto itself. It was established by the Diocese of Toronto, and not the Anglican Church as a whole. Significantly, one of the Church's most competent workers was involved in the work: it was opened "under the auspices of the Rev. D. T. Owen, (sic) the future Archbishop and Primate

³⁴*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto, Fifty-Seventh Session, 1909* (Toronto: Parker, 1909), p. 77.

³⁵Speisman, op. cit., p. 133. See also Gruneir, op. cit., p. 25.

of All Canada."³⁶ The director Paul L. Berman, a Jewish believer, reported "goodly attendances" as early as 1913,³⁷ and by the early years of World War I the mission boasted a night school, dispensary, home and hospital visitation programs, mother's meetings, Sunday School classes, and occasional open air meetings.³⁸

Nevertheless, for some reason the diocese did not continue to manage the mission by itself. In 1915 an Anglican synodical sub-committee recommended significant changes which led to the mission being placed under the direction of the Anglican LSPCJ. This coincided with the loss of the mission's chairman, D.T. Owen, who left for another diocese. Whether directly as a result or not, Berman was removed and replaced with a "Gentile minister of the highest capabilities" in 1915.³⁹ As part of the restructuring, in 1916 the Mission leased property at 91 Bellevue Avenue. In this new location, near the Jewish market complex developing in the Kensington area, the mission adopted the name Nathanael Institute and took the motto "Come

³⁶Anglican Diocese of Toronto Archives, *Christian-Jewish Dialogue* (Toronto: c. 1970), p. 3.

³⁷Paul R. Berman, "Church of England Mission to the Jews in Toronto" *The New Era: A Monthly Missionary Review*. (Toronto: Church of England, May 1913), Vol. XI, No. 5.

³⁸Speisman, op. cit., p. 134.

³⁹This was Rev. D.B. Langford, "Report of the Committee on Jewish Work" *Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1915*, (Toronto: Parker, 1915), p. 264.

and See."⁴⁰ Whatever issues the church and the LSPCJ had with Berman and his staff, his loss would be keenly felt however. In the next year's annual report, it was noted that because the missionaries were Gentiles, the year had been "largely one of laying sound foundations."⁴¹

The new foundations laid, the Institute was destined to become one of the most auspicious centres of Hebrew Christian life in the country until the 1960's. This was doubtless due to the fact that the work received significant support and dedicated volunteers, including a number of medical doctors who supplemented its adequate staff.

IV. THE PRESBYTERIAN MISSION

Much more than the LSPCJ, the Presbyterian Church of Canada played a significant role in the early development of Hebrew Christianity in Canada. In 1886, John Dunlop of the (undenominational) British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews (founded by Bonar and McCheyne in 1842) visited North America and raised considerable interest in Jewish Missions among Toronto churches.⁴²

⁴⁰Ibid. See also Gruneir, op. cit., p. 26.

⁴¹*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1916*, "Report of the Committee on Jewish Work" (Toronto: Parker, 1916), p. 250.

⁴²John Dunlop, *Memories of Gospel Triumphs among the Jews during the Victorian Era* (London: Partridge, 1894), pp. 469-470.

A. Toronto

The most notable mission of the Presbyterians in Canada is without a doubt that which was established in Toronto. Following Dunlop's visit to Toronto, and possibly as a result in Dunlop's opinion regarding its feasibility, the Toronto Mission to Israel was established under the direction of William Mortimer Clark, Q.C., by 1894.⁴³ The fate of this mission is not known and it is likely that the primary focus of the church for many years remained on converting Jews abroad. Eventually, the emphasis on evangelizing Canadian Jews was revived about 1907. At that time the General Assembly, meeting in Montreal, decided "to commence a mission to the Hebrew people in Toronto, with the privilege of extending the work elsewhere in Canada as the circumstances may warrant."⁴⁴ Events began to move quickly, and the next year saw the opening of a mission at 156 Teraulay St. (now Bay St.) "in the heart of the Toronto Jewish Community."⁴⁵ The "exceptional Mr. Shabbetai (sic) Benjamin Rohold" was recruited from Glasgow to become Superintendent of the mission.⁴⁶

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Presbyterian Church in Canada Board of Foreign Missions. *Records re: missions to the Jews, 1888-1920*, p. 8.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 8.

⁴⁶Sabeti Rohold, *Letter to J.M.A. Scott* (Glasgow) 21 January, 1908. This letter reveals that Rohold had previously been in control of the Bonar Memorial Mission in Glasgow, and felt that he was leaving it in good condition. The fact that he forwarded a number of his books to Toronto

In the years he served as superintendent in Toronto, Rohold (1876-1931) became one of Canada's most influential Jewish believers of all time among the country's Hebrew Christians. This was helped by the fact that he was a steady writer. His works include *Historical Sketch: The Story of our Church's Interest in Israel*. This work, published in May 1918 at the "Hebrew Christian Synagogue" on its tenth anniversary, is clearly written from the perspective of one who fully identifies himself racially and ethnically with his own people. In a similar vein, he wrote a sociologically oriented study, *The Jews in Canada*, in 1913.⁴⁷ Other works were designed to educate Gentiles concerning Jews and Judaism and to prompt evangelistic concern.⁴⁸

rather than any other objects, shows his scholarly bent. Paul R. Dekar gives a précis of Rohold's qualifications: "Son of a Jerusalem rabbi, Rohold received the best rabbinical education available in Jerusalem. He became a respected Talmudic scholar and went to England to continue his education. There, at the age of twenty-three he was converted to Christianity after a period of crisis concerning Biblical passages which refer to the promised Messiah. His personality was such that, unlike many Jewish converts to Christianity, he maintained friendly relations with Jews." Paul R. Dekar, "From Jewish Mission to Inner City Mission," *Canadian Protestant and Catholic Missions, 1820s-1960s, Toronto Studies in Religion*, Vol. 3, ed. Donald Weibe (New York: Lang, 1988), pp. 247-248.

⁴⁷Sabeti B. Rohold, *The Jews in Canada* (Toronto: Board of Home Missions, 1913).

⁴⁸Thus he wrote *Modern Developments in Judaism* (Toronto: Jewish Mission, 1910) and in the same year the pointed tract, *"Is the Soul of a Jew worth \$5,000?"* (Toronto: Jewish Mission, 1910). (This work was no doubt titled in response, one of many responses by various persons, to a charge first levelled in *Punch* in 1843 and from that time onward "copied continually" as mentioned in "Hebrew Christian Alliance," *The Scattered Nation*, June 1, 1869, p. 158). In 1914, again writing to the same audience, he penned a small book entitled *Are Missions to the Jews a Failure? A Study of Official Judaism and Christian Mission* (Toronto, Women's Missionary

Far from being merely a writer and student of his people, Rohold played an active part in presenting the Gospel creatively and wholeheartedly. Rohold was concerned that the salvation of his people not be dependent upon their becoming christianized in a cultural sense. Thus the mission was termed a "Christian Synagogue" and he made it clear that acceptance of the Gospel did not abolish a Jew's Jewishness. This approach did not win him great popularity with the Jewish community at large. The Christian and Jewish faiths could not be reconciled so easily. Thus he was criticized by the *Canadian Jewish Times* in 1913 as follows: "All Rohold's phrases about not wanting Jews to become Christians, but to remain Jews and open their souls to the Gospel, is (sic) sheer hypocrisy," ⁴⁹

In its early years the mission had an exceptionally wide range of programs designed "to reach effectively the home and life of the whole Jewish family."⁵⁰ These programs were very much formed in light of the condition of Canadian Jewry at the time. This was especially true of programs that provided a free dispensary and assistance in finding employment.⁵¹ Many Jews were poor, very often sick. As new immigrants they

Society, 1914). A year later, as the war progressed he demonstrated his continued careful observation of the state of his people in *The War and the Jew*, (Toronto: Macmillan, 1915).

⁴⁹*Canadian Jewish Times* (Toronto), Vol. XVI, No. 27 (June 13, 1913), p. 2.

⁵⁰Rohold, *Historical Sketch*, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

were struggling to adapt to conditions in a new society.

The mission's programs and constituency grew rapidly in the early years, the mission clearly finding adequate funds for its wide range of operations. As the Teraulay St. facilities became extremely cramped and unhealthy, property was purchased at the corner of Elm and Elizabeth Streets. Thus in 1912 the corner stone was laid for a new mission facility that would have a long and illustrious history. One of the speakers at that occasion was Dr. Scott,⁵² after whom the mission would eventually be named.⁵³

During Rohold's leadership, the mission continued to enjoy significant success. Under his tutelage grew a small community of Jewish believers, among whom was Morris Zeidman, a Polish Jew born on the Jewish feast of Shavuoth (Pentecost) in 1894. Like many Jewish youth in Poland at that time, he had been actively involved in a socialist youth organization and faced official disapprobation. Whether because of the threats of the authorities or the disapproval of his father, Zeidman emigrated to Canada in 1912.⁵⁴ It was there that he became interested in the teachings of the New Testament and "intrigued by the message in Hebrew in the window of the Christian Synagogue . . . went in to enquire further." Soon he adopted the Christian faith and eventually entered Knox

⁵²Ibid., p. 14.

⁵³Scott Mission, *Who, When? Where? A brief history of the Scott Mission* (Toronto: Scott Mission, 1986), p. 1.

College after which he received ordination.⁵⁵

Zeidman was one of many Hebrew Christians associated with Rohold's mission. In 1914 when a special (the first) communion was held at the "Hebrew Christian Synagogue," Rohold was able to count "114 Hebrew Christians and friends who participated in the service."⁵⁶ This was only the beginning. Only one year later the Hebrew Christians of the city presented a petition through the agency of Dr. J. McPherson Scott to the Presbytery of Toronto, "asking permission to organize themselves into a Hebrew Christian congregation."⁵⁷ It is quite possible that their motivation came from the well publicized example of the Messianic Movement in Kishinev, which had received international attention under Joseph Rabinowitz in the last fifteen years of the nineteenth century.⁵⁸

The petition was passed unanimously, evidencing a high degree of trust by the Presbytery in the stability and quality of the Hebrew Christian community. Nevertheless, Rohold by virtue of his influential position was obliged to

⁵⁴Alex Zeidman, *Good and Faithful Servant: The Biography of Morris Zeidman* (Burlington: Crown, 1990), p. 12.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 13, 19. Following some intervening years after Rohold, Zeidman took over in 1926.

⁵⁶Rohold, *Historical Sketch*, op. cit., p. 15.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 16.

⁵⁸For a history of this movement, the most authoritative work is by Kai Kjaer-Hansen, *Joseph Rabinowitz and the Messianic Movement; the Herzl of Jewish Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).

answer some telling questions for the sake of the Christian community. These were:

(1) Have you anything peculiar in your 'Christian Synagogue'? (2) Are you advocating what is called the 'Messianic Judaism'? (3) Have you created a middle wall of partition?⁵⁹

To all these questions Rohold answered in the negative. In the writer's estimation this demonstrates that the Synagogue was (1) Presbyterian in form, (2) theologically acceptable by the standard of Presbyterian doctrine, and (3) liable to see itself as part of the Church, not distinct from Gentile congregations.

Further, Rohold indicated that the missionary staff had much to do with the operation of the Synagogue. Certainly, the congregation served not only to bridge cultural, but also language barriers.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, only a minority of Jewish believers in Toronto considered themselves members of this congregation. In 1914 there was a membership of 32 in full communion.⁶¹

The work of the mission continued until the First World War was in full swing. The War brought two significant

⁵⁹Rohold, *Historical Sketch*, op. cit., p. 16.

⁶⁰I am indebted for this observation to John VanderSluis, "Current Mission Trends and in Particular Jewish Missions," (Toronto: n.p., 1992), p. 12.

⁶¹Presbyterian Church in Canada, *Board of Foreign Missions Records*. op. cit., p. 10.

changes with it. First, Jewish immigration ceased,⁶² and secondly, so many of the mission's volunteers volunteered for military service that the work suffered in both Toronto and Winnipeg.⁶³ Thus the early days of Presbyterian effort in Toronto sputtered during these years.

B. Canada Wide

Montreal, the second centre of Jewish Population in Canada, received early attention from the Presbyterian Church. Mission work there was initiated by the Rev. J. McCarter, a Presbyterian minister. When he was forced to resign from the Jewish Mission in 1892, the Presbyterian church itself became formally involved and "appointed Mr. G.A. Newmark as its Missionary to the Jews in Montreal." Mr. Richard Glauber, a believing Jew from Hamburg, was appointed as his assistant.⁶⁴

A handbill published by Newmark gives insight into the Montreal Jewish culture at this time. Written in both Yiddish and English, it offers free English instruction to Jews with a short address "about the MESSIAH" soon after. Clearly the missionaries were seeking to meet the Jewish populace at their point of need, also offering "religious

⁶²Irving Abella and Harold Troper, in *None is Too Many* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1983), document this thoroughly.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴*Records*, op. cit., p. 6. Newmark was himself a Jewish believer. R. Gruneir, "The Hebrew Christian Mission in Toronto," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 1, (1977).

meetings" in the "Jewish Mission Hall on Craig Street, 662 1/2."⁶⁵

Nevertheless, this arrangement was an unhappy one and in May of 1895 the church, discouraged and disheartened by a lack of success, abandoned the work. Here McCarter stepped in again, resuming the work that he had abandoned a few years previously.⁶⁶ In this he used his own funds and those of about two hundred supporters to continue as best as he could. Largely, as time progressed the actual labours fell into the hands of Rev. Trebitsch, a Hebrew Christian who had "some qualifications to which I [McCarter] can lay no claim."⁶⁷ McCarter persevered until the end of 1901, when he found the work at a crisis, the demands being far more than he could manage. At that point in an impassioned address to the Presbytery he again attempted to interest it in taking over the mission, with or without his contributory efforts.⁶⁸

It appears that McCarter's address did not have the desired effect, for he was impelled to carry out his threat to turn elsewhere for help if the church did not. Thus it is that only four months later the LSPCJ took over the mission

⁶⁵Undated Handbill, signed "G. A. Newmark Missionary to the Jews."

⁶⁶Ignatius T. Trebitsch, *Our Montreal Mission* (Montreal: LSPCJ, 1903), p. 11.

⁶⁷McCarter, J. Hand-written address "*For the Presbytery of Montreal*" (Montreal: 10 Dec., 1901).

⁶⁸Ibid. McCarter clearly alludes to the view of the Presbytery that he is unfit for the work that he is doing. The impression he gives is that he feels betrayed by the

work in Montreal, as recorded earlier in this chapter. Following this, Presbyterian efforts to evangelize the Jewish community in Montreal lapsed until 1914 when a new mission was organized with a decidedly evangelistic thrust.⁶⁹

Winnipeg was the third civic centre to which the Presbyterian church turned its attention. Despite its remote location, in 1910 Winnipeg had a Jewish population of 13,000 Jews, and Rohold was sent there on April 10, on deputation for the Mission committee to look over the situation and evaluate the feasibility of establishing a Jewish mission.⁷⁰ The Presbytery soon saw the "importance and desirability of inaugurating work" there, and in 1911 Mr. and Mrs. Hugo Spitzer, who had previously worked for the London City Mission in England, were appointed as missionaries.⁷¹ Significantly, they, as with so many missionaries of the time, were Jews. Not only that, but they were in active association with other Jewish believers through the Hebrew Christian Alliance in England.⁷²

The reaction of the Jewish community in Winnipeg was

Presbytery who are making excuses for their lack of enthusiasm regarding the work.

⁶⁹*Records*, op. cit., p. 11.

⁷⁰Rohold, *Historical Sketch*, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, p. 13. Also see *Records*, op. cit., p. 9. Hugo Spitzer converted to Christianity in 1899, through the Mildmay Mission, per an undated newsletter in the *Western Canada Mission to the Jews Historical Scrapbook*.

⁷²*Ibid.*, In the *Scrapbook*, a Hebrew Christian Alliance and Prayer Union bulletin announces "A Farewell Meeting" for Mr. & Mrs. Hugo Spitzer to be held on Friday February 10, 1911.

antagonistic and aggressive. It was a community unfamiliar with the presence of missionaries, and very threatened by them. The situation became so uncomfortable that the Spitzers quickly had to resort to the law to maintain the peace at their meetings.⁷³ This situation did not last for long though. The Spitzers were soon able to report that opposition had "gradually given way to a feeling of respect and confidence on the part of many Jews."⁷⁴

Like Rohold, the Spitzers were liable to express their faith in a way consonant with their Jewish heritage. This was true in both their personal lives and the way in which they propagated their message. Thus the mission centre at 215 Jarvis Avenue was strategically placed within a Jewish district⁷⁵ as was its model in Toronto. In an accommodation to both Jewish and Christian communities, its sign read "Jewish Mission" in English and "**LARSY YNBL XYWMH TROWB TYB**" in Hebrew. Amidst diminishing controversy the small mission began to gain hearers, arousing a more sober form of

⁷³J. McScott, *Letter to Hugo Spitzer* (Toronto) April 24, 1911. "I am satisfied that you are taking your work there very seriously and the somewhat serious and distressing opposition will in the end, do you no harm. . . . I think you have been wise in the patience you have shewn in the case and altogether likely now since these men have been punished for disturbing your meeting, the trouble will end." Cp. *Winnipeg Free Press, Tribune, and Telegram*, all dated April 21, 1911, and filed in the *Scrapbook*.

⁷⁴*Records*, op. cit., p. 9. "Prof. Baird" in an address noted just months later that "True, at the commencement of our work, we experienced boisterous opposition, but their attitude toward the mission and its missionaries has changed most remarkable." *Winnipeg Free Press*, September 25, 1912.

⁷⁵*Winnipeg Free Press*, May 8, 1912.

opposition. On March 11, 1911, Rev. J.K. Levin of the Dagmar St. Synagogue wrote to the *Free Press* seeking to dissuade the Spitzers' supporters. In that letter he mentioned that there were "four large and one little" Israelites converted.⁷⁶ Another report noted "several" converts within the first year.⁷⁷ By 1915, the work had expanded to the extent that larger facilities were required.⁷⁸

The mission work in Winnipeg eventually developed a large and diverse program. It apparently won enough converts to maintain the enthusiasm of its supporters. Nevertheless, there is no record of any kind of Hebrew Christian community in the city. While there is the probable circumstance of close relationships between Jewish believers around the persons of the Spitzers, it is also likely that full assimilation into the Presbyterian church was the rule rather than the exception.

V. OTHER WORKS AND EVENTS

While the Presbyterian, Anglican, and LSPCJ (also Anglican) missions were most prominent on the Canadian Jewish missions scene, there were other notable endeavours. As with the other missions, it is possible to trace their activities and infer somewhat of the Hebrew Christianity of many of their missionaries. It is difficult to trace any other

⁷⁶*Winnipeg Free Press*, March 11, 1911.

⁷⁷*The Presbyterian*, May 16, 1912.

development of Hebrew Christian community, except so far as Hebrew Christian missionaries corresponded together, and references to the number of Hebrew Christians and converts in the cities were made.

A. Missionary Endeavours

Evangelistic works were begun before the First World War in Toronto and Hamilton. These missions were both organized on a non-denominational basis. Together they point to the existence of Jewish believers across the country, assuming that they had any success at all.

In Toronto, the Toronto Jewish Mission was formed in 1894. Largely supported by a few wealthy individuals, as Christian denominations were largely unenthusiastic about the work, the mission became an interdenominational entity.⁷⁹ Indirectly, this mission began as a concern of a women's group in 1888.⁸⁰ This group was one of those established by Jacob Freshman years before, and its increased activity in establishing the mission was no doubt aided by Christian response to the increasing visibility of Toronto's growing Jewish community.⁸¹ This visibility was a result of the immigration of Eastern European Jews whose lifestyles were

⁷⁸Winnipeg Free Press, May 20, 1915.

⁷⁹Toronto Synod Archives, *Christian-Jewish Dialogue*. (Toronto: Unpublished, c. 1970), p. 1.

⁸⁰Toronto Jewish Mission: 1894-1984 (Toronto: TJM, 1984), p. 2.

noticeably different from their Anglophone counterparts.⁸²

When Henry Singer, himself a Hebrew Christian, came from Detroit to lead the work in 1896 the effects were widely felt in the Jewish community. Singer had been converted just years before through the agency of a "Mission House" in Boston.⁸³ "Fluent in Yiddish and highly personable" he aggressively carried on a program of visitation and street preaching in Jewish districts.⁸⁴ His activities were noticed by the Jewish community, and he became the target of keen (sometimes violent) opposition.⁸⁵ This had been the case with Rohold also, and the two often frequented the same preaching sites. While there is no record that the two actively cooperated in this tactic, it is likely that having much in common as Hebrew Christians, they did consort with each other.⁸⁶

As has often been the case with missions that have ventured to maintain a high profile, the response in terms of

⁸¹A. E. Thompson, *A Century of Jewish Missions* (Chicago: Revell, 1902), p. 245.

⁸²Speisman, op. cit., p. 131.

⁸³A.E. Thompson, op. cit., pp. 240-241.

⁸⁴Speisman, op. cit., p. 131.

⁸⁵Rome, op. cit., pp. 22-23. Rome says nothing to support Gruneir's provocative assertion that Singer was a "rabid 'Jew Baiter.'" Gruneir, op. cit., p. 19

⁸⁶Speisman, op. cit., pp. 134, 138, mentions of each of the two that they were wont to preach at the corner of Elizabeth and Agnes (now Dundas) where the senior orthodox rabbi of the city resided.

interested hearers was quite notable.⁸⁷ The controversy undoubtedly gave the missionaries a noticeable amount of publicity, and to them were attracted a number of Toronto's highly transient Jewish community. Recently displaced from Europe, these new immigrants, while often angry at evangelistic activity that targeted them, were also often curious about it. Thus in 1913 the *Jewish Times* "reported that large numbers of Jews were attending the missions,"⁸⁸ undoubtedly including the Toronto Jewish Mission. This is corroborated by Singer's assertion in the mission's annual report of 1913 that "81 Hebrews confessed a belief in Jesus." though the number seems inordinately high.⁸⁹

Hamilton, just miles southwest of Toronto, also had a sizable Jewish community. The first evidence of Hebrew Christians is from Charles Freshman, appointed to a Methodist church there in June 1860, who reported in September of that year that he had converted one Jewish person.⁹⁰ In 1867, his son Jacob took over his father's pulpit, assuring for a short

⁸⁷In 1909 it is reported that Singer held 421 meetings with an aggregate total of approximately 21,000 Jewish persons in attendance. Even counting the crowds that gathered in opposition to him at some of his 88 street meetings, this is a significant number. *Toronto Jewish Mission*, op. cit., p. 4.

⁸⁸Speisman, op. cit., pp. 138-139.

⁸⁹Gruneir, op. cit., p. 20, is right to question this figure. Although it appears exaggerated, there may be some basis for it.

⁹⁰Eichhorn, op. cit., p. 107.

time a continued Hebrew Christian presence.⁹¹ Following this the city of Hamilton for decades experienced the influence of Hebrew Christians through organized missions. As in the case of the Toronto Jewish Mission, the formal outreach to Jews in Hamilton began as a Gentile concern for Jewish salvation. Thus in 1892, under Anglican auspices a small work was begun.⁹² In 1899 the then formalized Christian Friends of Hamilton invited Mr. Singer to minister there to Jewish People. With the permission of the Toronto Jewish Mission for whom he worked, Singer periodically employed himself with visitation and speaking engagements there.⁹³ Carried on largely among recent immigrants the activities were very much similar to those in Toronto although on a smaller scale. The Anglican church continued to sponsor the mission until 1919.⁹⁴ At that time the Rev. Canon Spencer, who had taken leadership of the mission, was compelled to retire "for physical reasons."⁹⁵ Significantly, it is noted that he left behind a fearless "little flock."⁹⁶ This suggests a number of Jewish believers in some form of association with each other: that

⁹¹Ibid., p. 107.

⁹²Paul Fodor, *100th Anniversary Address*, (Hamilton: Hamilton Friends of Israel video, 1992).

⁹³Toronto Jewish Mission, op. cit., p. 4. See also Jean Mackay, *Triumphs of His Grace: Memoirs of Gospel Triumphs Among the Jewish people in Hamilton, Ontario Canada 1892-1974*. (sic.) 1st. ed. 1944, 2nd. ed. (Caledonia: Acts Books, 1978), p. 7.

⁹⁴Fodor, op. cit.

⁹⁵Mackay, op. cit., p. 7.

is, an Hebrew Christian community.

B. Jewish Believers

As a "movement" Canadian Hebrew Christianity was primarily centered in Toronto before the First World War. As a significant number of Jews became believers, the concept of a Hebrew-Christian congregation became feasible. This became a reality due to Rohold and the various missionaries under his direction in the Christian Synagogue. While the congregation did not represent the majority of the Jewish believers in Toronto, another activity of Rohold's likely did. The Hebrew Christian Alliance of America was fast taking form and Rohold took a leading role in its development, the most significant sign of developing Hebrew Christian community in its day. In that community he appeared as "a leader, a kind of senior statesman."⁹⁷

In Europe, a Hebrew Christian Alliance had been formed in 1867. Its members, far from being eccentrics, included such notable Hebrew Christians as Adolph Saphir and Alfred Edersheim.⁹⁸ This Alliance would prove an example and motivation towards the formation of the American Alliance in the early 1900's. Hebrew Christianity in Canada prior to this time was no doubt in a nascent form. An interesting bit

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Robert I. Winer, *The Calling: The History of the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America, 1915-1990* (Philadelphia: MJAA, 1990), p. 7.

of evidence points to the presence of other Jewish believers in Canada. Sir John A. MacDonald wrote in 1888 of "The late George Benjamin of Belleville [who] was a Jew, though I believe he had become a Christian. His son is now in one of the public departments . . ."⁹⁹

Rohold was elected on April 7, 1915 as the Alliance's first president. In a 1916 address to the second general conference of the Alliance, Rohold suggested that Hebrew Christian community had existed in an unorganized fashion before the Alliance's formation, which he says "was the result of long aspiration." That was indeed true, for "in America an American Hebrew Christian Association was formed in New York in 1855, but we have no record of its history."¹⁰⁰ Further, Rohold pointed to the fact that for many Hebrew Christians, assimilation was the natural order of the day, and they did not share these aspirations. The following is an excerpt:

The HCAA undoubtedly existed for a long time, but only in the hearts and minds of Hebrew Christians; and only in such of them to whom the burden of Israel's peculiar and momentous condition was a true reality, and who not only had in their hearts the burden to win their brethren and reconcile them with their Messiah. . . . They also realized the true condition of the Hebrew Christians and what ails them; yet they felt the seeming hopelessness of their condition; but at

⁹⁸"Hebrew Christian Alliance," *The Scattered Nation*, June 1, 1868, p. 157.

⁹⁹Arthur Daniel Hart, ed., *The Jew in Canada* (Toronto: Jewish Pub., 1926), p. 69.

¹⁰⁰Harcourt Samuel, "History of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance," *Mishkan* (Jerusalem: UCCI, 1991), Vol. 1, p. 74.

the same time they beheld the vision of a HCAA, the powerful force . . . to awaken Israel from their nineteen hundred year sleep.¹⁰¹

Sharing much in common with the larger numbers of Jewish believers in the United States, Canadian Jewish believers had a significant role to play in both their own destiny and that of their American counterparts. The vision of the HCAA was owned on both sides of the border. The Alliance was destined to become an important focal point of Canadian Hebrew Christian life.

VI. CONCLUSION

The years from Confederation to the First World War were a time of great numerical growth for Canadian Jewry. As converts were made, Hebrew Christianity became less centered upon a few prominent persons and increasingly revolved about the missions. At the beginning of Confederation, all three of the prominent Hebrew Christians who emerged prior to it were still active. Hellmuth actively encouraged the emerging missions, and Freshman documented his own concern to preach to other Jews. Freshman's son carried this missionary endeavour to New York.

Later it is Sabeti Rohold who stands out at the end of the period as the one who made the greatest impact and left the largest literary heritage. It was to a large degree his personal influence that set the tone for Canadian missions and their approach. He combined an aggressive evangelistic

¹⁰¹Winer, op. cit., p. 13.

effort with a strong affirmation of the Jewish cultural and biblical heritage as compatible with Christian faith. Such efforts, employed by various missionaries, often met with strong opposition as they frequently offended Jewish sensibilities and fears.

The period prior to World War I saw a significant growth in organized missionary efforts to evangelize the Jews. Most of the missionaries employed for the purpose were Hebrew Christians, and in seeking to persuade their constituents of the Gospel they sought to portray it in cultural terms which they shared in common with the Jewish community. This was consonant with current trends in missiology. Jewish believers were encouraged to affirm their continuing Jewishness, and in some cases an attempt was made to develop indigenous forms of Hebrew Christian worship. Despite these attempts, however, typically Jewish believers continued to assimilate into the Canadian church as a whole.

Chapter Four: Transition to Hebrew Christianity (1918-1960)

I. INTRODUCTION

For Jews, World War I brought with it abolition of the Pale of Settlement, a territory within the western bounds of czarist Russia to which Russian Jews were virtually confined. This "resulted in a great turning away from traditional thought and ways. Some turned to communism, some to nominal Christianity, and some found true faith in Christ."¹ In this environment, Christian missions evangelizing the Jews continued to expand their activities and influence.

Many Russian Jews emigrated to the new world. By 1921 the Canadian Jewish population had swelled to 126,196, by the 1931 census, there were 156,726.² During this same period, the number of Jews by ethnic origin but not religion increased from 999 to 1375. In 1931, 1276 of the 1375

¹Harcourt Samuel, "History of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance," *Mishkan* (Jerusalem: UCCI, 1991), Vol. 1, p. 75.

²Louis Rosenberg, *Canada's Jews, A Social and Economic Study of the Jews in Canada* (Montreal, CJC, 1939), p. 113.

professed the Christian religion.³ These statistics may reflect the increasing number of Jewish believers in Canada. With numerical strength came a growing interest among Jewish believers in the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America as a means to facilitate their association. Unlike the missions, the Alliance was an autonomous organization constituted, led, and largely financed by believing Jews.

World War II, the Holocaust, and the establishment of the State of Israel affected the self-consciousness of Jews worldwide. Canadian Jews who held to the tenets of Christian faith also began to develop their own self-consciousness. Centered in Toronto, the Hebrew Christian Alliance became an enduring feature of Canadian Hebrew Christian life.

II. MISSIONS AND HEBREW CHRISTIANITY

Despite the growth of the "Alliance," missions continued to maintain their leadership role among Jewish believers. They were influential in the emerging Hebrew Christian community for two reasons. First, they employed those Jewish believers who were themselves most concerned with the conversion of other Jews. These Jewish believers became key figures in the emerging community. Second, the missions were located in urban centres with significant Jewish populations, and had numerous resources such as meeting facilities at their disposal.

In Montreal little happened during these years, despite

³Ibid.

the fact that it had the largest Jewish community in the country, with 42,667 Jews in 1921.⁴ In 1915 a Presbyterian mission to the Jews was re-established there under Rev. Elias Newman.⁵ There Henry Bregman, who had once been a rabbi, worked for a year and a half from the autumn of 1921.⁶

In Winnipeg, which had Canada's third largest Jewish community at 14,390 in 1921,⁷ the mission established under the supervision of Toronto's Scott Mission continued. Vancouver in its turn became the home of an independent non-denominational mission to its rapidly growing Jewish community.⁸

A. Toronto Mission Developments

The centre of Canadian Hebrew Christianity was undoubtedly Toronto, which had Canada's second largest Jewish community, numbering 34,377 in 1921.⁹ To a large degree this was due to the intense missionary effort Jews of the city were subjected to. Being an Anglophone city, it was a much more accessible mission field than Montreal for the Anglican

⁴Arthur Daniel Hart, ed., *The Jew in Canada* (Toronto: Jewish Pub., 1926), Figures taken from the Sixth Census of Canada, Vol. 1, Parts II and III, p. 496.

⁵Elias Newman, "Tenth Anniversary of Jewish Missions in Canada," *The Presbyterian*, June 28, 1917.

⁶Henry Bregman, *A Rabbi's Quest for the Truth* (Toronto: Beth Dor'she 'Emeth, n.d.), p. 29.

⁷Hart, op. cit., p. 496.

⁸In 1921, the beginning of the period surveyed in this chapter. Vancouver had only 14,390 Jews by 1960. Hart, op. cit., p. 496.

and Presbyterian denominations which were themselves by and large Anglophone. Three missions were established in Toronto for the sole purpose of evangelizing the Jewish community. These were the Nathanael Institute, the Hebrew Christian Synagogue, and the Toronto Jewish Mission. In addition Henry Bregman, a Jewish believer who had worked in a Montreal mission for a year and a half from the autumn of 1921, established Beth Dor'she 'Emeth / **TMA YWRD TB** (House of Seekers after Truth), which by its name indicates that it followed a congregational model. For its hymnal it had a collection called *Hymns For Jewish Work* by Oswald J. Smith, transliterated by Henry Bregman, presumably into Yiddish.¹⁰ This was a mission to the Jews sponsored by Oswald J. Smith, in Toronto. Bregman lived in Toronto until his death.¹¹

1. The Nathanael Institute

The Nathanael Institute quite arguably became the most influential centre of Hebrew Christian life in Toronto after the First World War. Established by the Anglican church following years of missionary effort by the LSPCJ, it maintained a continuous presence until the 1960's. Nevertheless, immediately after World War One it declined in viability as an effective mission organization for a number

⁹Hart, op. cit., p. 496.

¹⁰Henry Bregman, *M'Avduth L'Cheruth (From Bondage to Freedom)* (Toronto: Beth Dor'shê 'Emeth, n.d.), p. 1.

¹¹Hart, op. cit., pp. 29-31. The date of his death is not known.

of years.

Under leadership of a Gentile director from 1915, in 1917 the assistance of a Hebrew-Christian who could preach in Yiddish was sought.¹² One was not readily found though, and the Hebrew Christian community associated with Nathanael Institute remained small. Average attendance in 1917 at the Sunday school was 19 Jews, either believers or enquirers, and eight Christian workers.¹³

By 1920 Nathanael Institute was "making every effort" to put the "work on a permanent footing and in line with methods that have shown results in other institutions"¹⁴ (presumably referring to the other missions in Toronto). These steps had some gratifying results. As seen in the annual reports, attendance and participation in Nathanael Institute's classes increased notably over the following years. The same reports also exhibit a disturbing trend however, as their lines reveal Canadian Christian antipathy to the Jews. Approaching the early 1930's, comments regarding Christian prejudices versus the Jews increasingly become mentioned as a handicap to the work. By 1931 the Institute suggested that there were a number of Jews who might believe in "Jesus as the Messiah"

¹²*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1917*, (Toronto: Parker, 1917), p. 212.

¹³*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1918*, (Toronto: Parker, 1918), p. 236.

but remained secret believers. This was because baptism meant estrangement from the Jewish community, yet far too often the fellowship of Christian people was also denied them even after baptism.¹⁵ As Canadian Jewish believers were thus reminded of their Jewishness by the Church itself, it was inevitable that they should view themselves increasingly as a distinct group.

By 1931 Nathanael Institute was finally able to include a Hebrew Christian missionary on the staff.¹⁶ Morris Kaminsky, a Canadian born Jew, first appears in the 1932 Synod records as a part time worker who had been a Christian for twelve years.¹⁷ The Institute found that all their hopes for him were "well founded" and the presence of a Hebrew Christian among those they were seeking to convert increased "the attendance and loyalty of our people."¹⁸ In part this may have been due to his ability to speak Yiddish.¹⁹ This happy arrangement continued throughout Kaminsky's studies at Wycliffe College and he was made a full time staff member

¹⁴*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1924*, (Toronto: Parker, 1924), p. 196.

¹⁵*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1931*, (Toronto: Parker, 1931), p. 161.

¹⁶Malvern Jacobs, "I Remember..." *The Menorah*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Spring 1995), p. 4.

¹⁷*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1932*, (Toronto: Parker, 1932), p. 169.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 169-170.

upon his ordination in 1935.²⁰

Kaminsky became central to the Institute's work later that year upon the superintendent Rev. F.J. Nicholson's resignation and replacement by Rev. J.E. Ward. The resulting reorganization of the Institute had Mr. and Mrs. Kaminsky move their home into the Institute facility and "take charge of the actual work there."²¹ A different attitude to the work now prevailed. Previous reports frequently spoke in the context of hopes for the widespread conversion of the Jews, bringing to mind the eschatological hopes raised by the French Revolution. In contrast, Kaminsky's reports vibrate with a personal concern for individuals. With this new focus the work continued to prosper. Thus in 1939 Kaminsky was made superintendent of the Nathanael Institute, "ably assisted by his wife [and] doing a most effective and encouraging work."²²

Under Kaminsky's direction the Institute began to conduct baptisms. In its surviving Baptismal register, it records as its first entry the baptism of Edward Daniel Brotsky, baptized in St. Stephen's parish, on the ninth of

¹⁹Ibid., p. 171.

²⁰*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1936*, (Toronto: Parker, 1936), p. 148.

²¹*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1937*, (Toronto: Parker, 1937), p. 134.

September, 1938. Also baptized in St. Stephen's was Morris Paul Chernoff, on 26th of March, 1939.²³ Both of these men, and the entire Chernoff family, were to have an immense impact on not only Canadian Hebrew Christianity, but also American. Edward Brotsky, who attended Toronto Bible College at Kaminskys' expense went on to run a storefront mission to the Jews of Toronto from 1944-1947. In 1947 he moved to Winnipeg to help the Spitzers, and when arrangements did not work out there he entered the pastorate.²⁴

Whereas it would have been tempting for the Institute to claim large numbers of converts in order to secure liberal financing from the church, the mission did not do so, indicating that the numbers were in fact small. Nevertheless, size did not affect the viability or strength of the Hebrew Christian community's identity under Kaminsky's leadership. In 1949 Morris Kaminsky was able to report "a little flock of Hebrew Christians in Toronto."²⁵

²²*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1940*, (Toronto: Parker, 1940), p. 155.

²³Morris Kaminsky, *Nathanael Institute Baptismal Register*, begun by Morris Kaminsky. To be found in the Church of England archives, Toronto. Per a personal interview with Doris Nixon, 24 March, 1992, Chernoff became critical of the Kaminsky's for "not being Evangelical enough, not preaching about the blood enough." He eventually left Canada in 1946.

²⁴Edward Brotsky, Interview, 25-3-93 by Daniel Nessim. The mission in Toronto was called *Bethel House* and was sponsored by "The Women's Missionary Society, Regular Baptists of Canada."

²⁵Morris Kaminsky, *Letter to F.J. Nicholson* (Toronto: 21 February, 1949). Malvern Jacobs names "Marty Chernoff,

In 1945 the Institute was appointed "Canadian Headquarters for the International Hebrew Christian Alliance" with Rev. Jacob Pelz as secretary.²⁶ In effect, this suggests that the centre of Hebrew Christian life in Toronto was not focused solely on the American Alliance and the Hebrew Christian Synagogue founded by Rohold but was multifaceted and widespread. The International Alliance, with its traditional role of fostering national alliances would have been a support and resource to the American Alliance. Thus the existence of different Alliances in Toronto evidences strength in numbers and organizing capacity in Toronto's Hebrew Christian community.²⁷

In 1949 Kaminsky tendered his resignation, later to withdraw it, only to tender it again in 1955. From Toronto he moved to his wife's home town, accepting an invitation to "work in Chicago at Peniel and Aedus Community Centers (sic)."²⁸ At a special meeting on 21 October 1955, this resignation was accepted and the name of Dr. Jocz suggested

Edward Brotsky, Doris Nixon, Harwood Peltz, Ross Goodall, and myself, among others..." as those who gathered around the Kaminskys. *The Menorah*, op. cit., p. 5.

²⁶*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1942*, (Toronto: Parker, 1942), p. 164.

²⁷The International Alliance maintains branches in various countries with significant numbers of Jewish believers as a separate, co-ordinating but non-competing entity to the national alliances.

²⁸Morris Kaminsky, *Letter to F.J. Nicholson* (Toronto: 11 April, 1949), and *Letter to Fellow-Members of The Toronto Diocesan Committee on Missions to Jews* (15 September, 1955). Peniel Centre was the outreach of Adat haTikvah, formerly The

as a replacement.²⁹

With Dr. Jocz's 1957 appointment as Morris Kaminsky's successor, a new era for Toronto's Hebrew Christian community began to emerge. As Kaminsky's successor, Dr. Jocz became heir to "a small Jewish Congregation meeting on the premises."³⁰ Nevertheless, in the year he arrived, he had to report that "our weakest work is among adults."³¹ Presumably this was due at least in part to the discontinuity of leadership following Kaminsky's resignation.³²

Hired in part because he was less than a "militant 'evangelical,'"³³ Jocz was an appropriate candidate for a church re-evaluating its commitment to Jewish evangelism. Thus Jocz's leadership in evangelizing Jews was quickly undercut by theological and missiological changes in the Anglican church. In part this theological change was brought about by exposure to European theology which he himself helped introduce. His was a short employment, and his

First Hebrew Christian Church, Presbyterian, in Chicago. Malvern Jacobs, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

²⁹Toronto Diocesan Committee on Mission to the Jews, *Minutes of Special Meeting* (Toronto: 21 October, 1955).

³⁰Elizabeth Louise Myers, *The Literary Legacy of Jacob Jocz* (Pasadena: Master's thesis for Fuller Theological Seminary, June, 1989), p. 21.

³¹*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1957*, (Toronto: Parker, 1957), p. 169.

³²Morris Kaminsky, in contrast to Jocz, was "the athletic type, not a scholar." Personal interview with Doris Nixon, 24 March, 1992.

³³Anglican Diocese of Toronto Archives, *Christian-Jewish Dialogue* (Toronto: n.p., c. 1970), p. 13.

resignation in 1960 paved the way for a fundamental transformation of the mission. Thus Jocz's tenure at the Institute, against his will, initiated a period of transition that eventually distanced Nathanael Institute from Jewish believers.

2. The Hebrew Christian Synagogue

One of the outstanding results of Rohold's work in Toronto was the establishment of the Hebrew Christian Synagogue in June, 1913.³⁴ This was at the time the only institution of its kind in North America.³⁵ In 1918 Sabeti Rohold summarized the Hebrew Christian Synagogue's accomplishments:

It has pleased God to show us some visible fruit of our labors. We have been privileged to listen to the testimony of hundreds of Jews confessing faith in Christ and to witness the baptism of forty-two, adults and children.³⁶

In the same year J. McPherson Scott, the mission's key patron, evaluated the mission as being "one of the most ably conducted and most successful Missions to the Jews on this continent," having "a vigorous Hebrew Christian congregation. There are twenty-five names on its honor (sic.) roll."³⁷ The

³⁴Jacob Gartenhaus, *Famous Hebrew Christians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), p. 155.

³⁵Ibid., p. 156, quoting the minutes of the Presbytery.

³⁶Rohold, *Historical Sketch*, op. cit., p. 20.

³⁷J. McPherson Scott, "The Jew Today," *The Presbyterian and Westminster*, Aug. 22, 1918, p. 172. Scott was one of the missions great supporters, and it would eventually bear his

Synagogue remained under the direction of Sabeti Rohold until 1920, when he left "to do special work in Palestine under the British Jews Society" (sic).³⁸ 1920 was also the year that Rev. J. McPherson Scott died. He had long been a key supporter of the mission and subsequently the Hebrew Christian Synagogue was renamed after him as The Scott Institute.

Morris Zeidman, a Polish Jewish believer converted under the ministry of Rohold, had been associated with the Synagogue since 1919.³⁹ In 1921 he began studying for ordination in the Presbyterian Church of Canada at Toronto's Knox College. Although his studies were interrupted by illness and hampered by a lack of command of the English language, he persevered and graduated with a Bachelor of Divinity in 1926.⁴⁰ In the same year he both became the superintendent of The Scott Institute and married Annie Martin, whom he had initially met as she taught English to new immigrants in the "Synagogue" when it was under Rohold's

name. His evaluation is doubtless subject to personal bias, yet is in harmony with the rest of the evidence.

³⁸Presbyterian Church in Canada Board of Foreign Missions, *Records re: missions to the Jews, 1888-1920* (1979), p. 10.

³⁹Paul R. Dekar, "From Jewish Mission to Inner City Mission: The Scott Mission and its Antecedents in Toronto, 1908 to 1964," *Toronto Studies in Religion*, Vol. 3, Donald Wiebe, ed. (New York: Lang, 1987), p. 253.

⁴⁰Alex Zeidman, *Good and Faithful Servant: The Biography of Morris Zeidman* (Burlington: Crown, 1990), p. 14.

supervision.⁴¹

Like Rohold, Zeidman did not limit his role to evangelizing the Jewish community, but also sought to educate the Church. Early on he stated his aim as being "to interpret Jewish problems and life to Gentile Christians and help the Canadian Church to avoid the heresy of Marcion."⁴² This remained true until his death in 1964.⁴³ As director, Zeidman restored to the mission its emphasis on Jewish evangelization.

Within the Jewish community, Zeidman evidently gained a hearing among a significant number. One visitor reported a Sunday School at which about seventy Jewish children attended, "with the knowledge and consent of their parents." Even more remarkably the same account mentions a church service held in "Hebrew" (certainly Yiddish), at which 125-150 were in attendance.⁴⁴ There is no reason to doubt this account, and even if only a minority of these were actually Jewish believers (the others being Jewish unbelievers), it confirms the existence of a significant and enduring Jewish believing community. This was the core of a Hebrew Christian

⁴¹Ibid., p. 18.

⁴²Ibid., p. 20. Marcion was excommunicated by Rome in 144 C.E. for his views that the God of the Old Testament was vengeful and only concerned for the Jewish people in contrast with Jesus, who is a God of grace and love for all.

⁴³Dekar, op. cit., 246.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 24, taken from an account written by Dr. A. S. Reid in the initial issue of *the Hebrew Evangelist*, November 1931.

community that viewed itself as a distinct entity with its own needs, desiring for itself an autonomous congregation with a pastor of Jewish origin.⁴⁵ To meet this need, in 1928 Zeidman "won approval to organize the [Jewish] congregation on a self-supporting basis as part of the Presbytery of Toronto rather than under the home mission board."⁴⁶ Thus was born the first autonomous and self-sustaining Hebrew-Christian congregation in Canada, and Toronto's second Hebrew-Christian congregation after the Hebrew-Christian Synagogue.⁴⁷

Alfred Wiener is one notable convert who associated with Zeidman. Wiener adopted faith in Jesus Christ in Buchenwald early in the war. Miraculously, he was released from the concentration camp on the cognizance of a sponsor in New York, and in 1940 he was one of the very few Jews allowed to emigrate to Canada during the war. Held in an interment camp in Farnham, Quebec, he was a member of a group that formed a "Jewish Christian" camp community under the leadership of Abram Poljak.⁴⁸

Hebrew Christianity as a movement was now without doubt

⁴⁵Dekar, op. cit., p. 253

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 254.

⁴⁷It is not clear to what extent this was a continuation of Rohold's Hebrew-Christian congregation, as Gruneir claims that when Rohold left Canada in 1920 the congregation died. R. Gruneir, "The Hebrew-Christian Mission in Toronto," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 1 (1977), p. 25.

⁴⁸Alfred H. Wiener, *My Way to Life: the Testimony of a Jewish Seeker for Truth* (A.H. Wiener, 1972), p. 64.

a reality in the Dominion of Canada. In what would remain a consistent aspiration among many Hebrew Christians, Zeidman called for

a strong and virile Hebrew-Christian Church that will be self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating: A Hebrew-Christian Church that will give a newer and fuller meaning of the Church of Christ to the Western world, and interpret Him in the terms of the primitive Jewish disciples who walked and talked with Jesus on the Judean road.⁴⁹

This congregation survived until Zeidman's death in 1964, when the few remaining Hebrew Christians dispersed to other congregations throughout the city.⁵⁰

One aspect of Zeidman's approach to evangelism was to gain a hearing for his teachings through serving the needs of disadvantaged Jews. This was not due to a strategy aimed at taking advantage of immigrant's physical needs in order to make converts. Rather it flowed out of genuine humanitarian concern for all people. Thus throughout the depression years the activities of the mission broadened as it sought to help people of all origins with food and medical assistance. Rather than decrease, this had the effect of increasing the mission's stature in the Jewish community.⁵¹ The mission became known throughout the city for its aid programs, particularly evidenced by an address of appreciation

⁴⁹Dekar, op. cit., p. 255.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 262. As a point of interest, Morris Zeidman's daughter mentions that the noted CBC journalist and news host Barbara Fromme's husband was "connected with the mission" at one time. Personal interview with Mrs. Maureen Zeidman Topp, March 26, 1992.

delivered by the mayor of Toronto in 1935.⁵²

By the 1960's, a better established Jewish community was no longer in need of material assistance. The nature of the mission as a ministry to the disadvantaged made it a notable part of the Toronto church scene. Gradually the social outreach of the mission overtook its original function as a mission primarily concerned with preaching the Gospel to Jews. It is not surprising then that Zeidman's son Alex, who succeeded him in leading the mission, was not primarily concerned with evangelizing Jews.⁵³

3. The Toronto Jewish Mission

The Toronto Jewish Mission, with Henry Singer at the helm, continued to be active following World War I. Nevertheless, by 1919, following a change of location and consequent lack of success, the Singers left to establish a new mission in Detroit.⁵⁴ They were succeeded in the mission by another Jewish believer, Isaac Finestone, who remained until 1926 before leaving to lead a Jewish mission in Ottawa.⁵⁵

⁵¹Interview with Maureen Zeidman Topp, March, 1992.

⁵²Zeidman, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

⁵³Dekar, op. cit., p. 262.

⁵⁴*Toronto Jewish Mission, 1894-1984: Great is Thy Faithfulness* (Toronto: New Covenant House, 1984), p. 6. Speisman erroneously implies that the mission closed at this point. Stephen A. Speisman, *The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937* (Toronto: McLelland & Stewart, 1979), p. 314.

⁵⁵*Toronto Jewish Mission*, op. cit., p. 6.

"A New Era" began in 1933 under the leadership of Earl Bruneau.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, mission literature does not speak of any number of Hebrew Christians at all, suggesting that no community existed in direct contact with the Bruneaus or their predecessors.

B. CANADA WIDE MISSION DEVELOPMENTS

1. Hamilton Friends of Israel

In the same time period, the group in Hamilton, in part formed through the agency of Henry Singer, was held together through the agency of volunteer female missionaries.⁵⁷ In 1933, the same year the Bruneaus took over the Toronto Jewish Mission, it took the step of naming itself "The Hamilton Friends of Israel."⁵⁸ In the ensuing years, as it continued under the leadership of Don and Jean Mackay there is no record of a Hebrew-Christian community in Hamilton.

Nevertheless, through a night school teaching English to new immigrants, and constant association with and support of Jewish concerns, the missionaries had wide contacts among the Jewish community. Often speakers bringing devotional lectures to the night school were Hebrew Christians.⁵⁹ By

⁵⁶Toronto, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

⁵⁷D.H. (Jean) Mackay, *Triumphs of His Grace: Memoirs of Gospel Triumphs among the Jewish People in Hamilton, Ontario Canada 1892-1974*, 1944: 1st. ed. (Hamilton: Acts, 1978), pp. 7ff.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 14.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 23.

1940 however the night schools declined in importance as immigration became closed to Jews.⁶⁰ This did not destroy the mission's effectiveness, however, for on one notable occasion in 1944, attendance was measured at 62 Jews and 32 Gentiles.⁶¹ It is not known how many of the Jews were believers.

2. Messianic Witness (Winnipeg)

The Jewish mission in Winnipeg remained under the leadership of Hugo Spitzer following the second World War. Even before the war was over, Spitzer hopefully expressed hope that Winnipeg, like Toronto, might soon have a Hebrew-Christian congregation of its own, citing "the fact that a number of Hebrews have found and accepted Jesus as their Messiah and Saviour."⁶² In fact, his wife was not averse to "most emphatically" making it clear that "Gentilizing the Jews was by no means the object of the missionaries (sic) who were trying to Christianize them."⁶³ By the spring of 1920 the couple was able to make this assertion freely, as they severed the mission's ties with the Presbyterian church, desiring a "free hand."

The new mission, "Western Canada United Mission to the Jews" (WCMJ) was undenominational and supported wholly by

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 25.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 50.

⁶²Hugo Spitzer, "The Jewish Mission in Winnipeg," *The Presbyterian*, Nov. 16, 1916.

⁶³"Missionary Work Among the Jews." Clipping from *Winnipeg Free Press*, in *Messianic Witness* scrapbook, c. 1917.

voluntary contributions.⁶⁴ Whereas had a denominational church been in control it may have desired converts to join its membership, the Spitzers rather were able to allow converts the right of free choice in their affiliation. This doubtless gave the Jewish believers a greater opportunity to retain their cultural identity and affiliation with each other rather than follow the path of total and immediate assimilation. The Presbyterian mission also continued after the Spitzers' resignation, but no longer played the key role in Winnipeg's Hebrew Christian Community as did WCMJ.

WCMJ, led by the Spitzers, is found in the Spring of 1944 aggressively combating anti-Semitism in Christian churches in all four of the most western provinces.⁶⁵ As a Jew, Spitzer keenly felt the need for this emphasis towards the end of World War Two with its institutionalized anti-Semitism, and this is reflected in the mission's newsletters and advertisements.⁶⁶ Concurrently, in April of 1944 Spitzer

⁶⁴"Rev. Hugo Spitzer," news clipping in Messianic Witness historical scrapbook, c. 1922. See also "Western Canada United Mission to the Jews," *The Friend of Israel*, 15 Nov., 1920. The new address was 158 Aitken St., Winnipeg.

⁶⁵Clippings of various advertisements are recorded in the *Messianic Witness* historical scrapbook. Titled "Anti-Semitism Is Anti-Christian" these ads were run e.g. in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, June 3, 1944; *The Albertan*, June 10, 1944; the *Regina Leader Post* on June 10, 1944; and the *Vancouver Province*, May 28, 1944. Spitzer also conducted summer missionary visits to the three provinces. Hugo Spitzer, *Mission Work Among the Jews in Western Canada*, (Winnipeg: WCMJ), undated. p. 6.

⁶⁶Canada's anti-Semitism as it affected Jewish immigration during the war years is fully documented by Irving Abella and Harold Troper, in *None is Too Many* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1983).

claimed a "trend of the Jews toward Christ."⁶⁷ The Spitzers continued their involvement with Winnipeg's Hebrew Christian community and were also active in the Hebrew Christian Alliance. Thus they travelled as far as Charlotte, North Carolina in 1946 to participate in the thirty-first annual meeting of the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America.⁶⁸

In 1947 Ed Brotsky, a Jew who had become a believer in Toronto in the early 1930's came to help the Spitzers in Winnipeg. At the Kaminskys' expense he had attended Toronto Bible College in 1938. Towards the 1960's one of Spitzer's protégés, Mr. Harry Flumbaum, friend of Isabelle Lewis in Vancouver, took over the work of the mission from him upon his retirement.

3. Calgary, Edmonton

Edward Brotsky, who had consistently sought to evangelize Jews in Canada and abroad via radio broadcasts, founded the Hebrew Christian Witness in Calgary in 1951. He has remained associated with HCW to the present day. Brotsky's approach was to affirm to Jews that they might retain their Jewish culture and identity while accepting Jesus as their Messiah. While various services were held,

⁶⁷Hugo Spitzer, "Jewish Youth: Where Are They Going?" News clipping in *Messianic Witness* historical scrapbook. April 1944.

⁶⁸Undocumented news clipping with photo of Spitzer with other Alliance notables, referring to the occasion being the Alliance's 31st annual conference is evidence of this. The 31st. annual conference was held in Charlotte. See the *Messianic Witness* Historical Scrapbook.

however, the number of Jews in attendance was small.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, except for one short period he actively led the Calgary mission until 1967.⁷⁰

4. Bible Testimony Fellowship (Vancouver)

Vancouver, situated on the west coast of Canada, was the last major centre of Canadian Jewry to receive attention from missions evangelizing the Jews. This is not surprising for as late as 1921, British Columbia had only 2.4 percent of Canada's Jewish population.⁷¹ The community was growing however, so that by the 1930's there were enough Jews to warrant a mission to them. Well after and independent of developments in the East, a missionary outreach to Vancouver Jews began informally in 1929 through the efforts of one Gentile Christian.⁷² This first missionary effort was placed under the direction of a Jewish believer by name of M. Rosenberg. Located above a grocery store at 146 Broadway Street, its office was accessible from the back lane only. It did not leave many surviving records.⁷³

⁶⁹Edward Brotsky, op. cit.

⁷⁰Edward Brotsky, op. cit. This was a nine month sabbatical that he took to visit and study Dr. Lawrence Duff-Forbes' approach to contextualizing Christianity for Jews in Hollywood, California, in 1951.

⁷¹Rosenberg, op. cit., p. 113.

⁷²Frederick W. Metzger, "Bible Testimony Fellowship," *Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism Bulletin* (Denmark: LCJE), Issue 34, Nov. 1993, p. 32.

⁷³All the evidence that the writer has for this mission is a receipt for ten dollars donated by a W.R. Clogg dated 22 Nov. 1931.

Years later, much the same way as in Hamilton, a few women catalyzed the church into forming a mission. Eventually a formal advisory board was established on an interdenominational basis and the mission incorporated as "Bible Testimony Fellowship" in 1942.⁷⁴ As in Toronto, members of the Presbyterian Church of Canada played a significant role in the establishment and operation of the mission. In time the mission purchased a house at 4249 Osler Street, close to the geographical centre of the Jewish community. Early work involved attempts to evangelize children, with some success, yet this practice was put to an end within a few years due to opposition from Jewish community leaders. Future years yielded few conversions and the mission continued under Gentile leadership. Thus there is no record of Hebrew Christian community during this era. Only a small number of Hebrew Christians, such as the Lewis and Levinson families, were known and befriended by the missionary staff.

III. THE EMERGING HEBREW CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

In general, Canadian Hebrew Christianity was fostered by the missions. However, theirs was not the only contribution, for by far the most significant development in Hebrew Christianity was the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America, in which Canadians took a leading role. It is with this organization that a survey of Hebrew Christianity in Canada following World War One rightly concludes.

⁷⁴Ibid.

A. Hebrew Christian Congregationalism

Missions to the Jews in Canada were not afraid of the desire of Hebrew Christians to worship together at the turn of the century. Perhaps inspired by the example of the Kishinev Messianic movement, missions themselves sponsored two Hebrew Christian congregations in Toronto. What is known of these is discussed earlier in this chapter.

B. The Hebrew Christian Alliance

Following World War One, Jewish believers began to see themselves as comprising a viable community. While their opinions on church polity and their relationship to Judaism varied, they were drawn to each other by common cultural bonds. Whereas many of their key members were missionaries, it was at the Alliance that they associated on an equal footing as Jews.

To a large degree Canadian Jewish believers were first drawn into formal association through the efforts of Sabeti Rohold, a man of "considerable organizing power."⁷⁵ This was facilitated by his position as director of Toronto's "Hebrew Christian Synagogue." As mentioned in the previous chapter, Sabeti Rohold was elected on April 7, 1915, as the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America's first president. He retained that post from the Society's inception until 1921 when he

⁷⁵Exley, Frank J., *"Our Heart's Desire": The Story of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews* (London: F.J. Exley, 1942), p. 55.

emigrated back to Palestine where he had been born.⁷⁶

The objects of the constitution of the Alliance indicate its unabashedly evangelical nature. Rohold, a missionary himself embodied the Alliance's goal to be in itself a facilitator of missions to the Jewish people. It may thus be observed that Canadian Hebrew Christianity was forged around missionary goals.

The Alliance was intended to be a fully autonomous Jewish organization. Its constitution was formed with three objects in view. These were formulated with regard to fellow Hebrew Christians, the rest of the Jewish community, and the Evangelical Christian community. As purposes, they were stated as follows:

1. To encourage and strengthen Hebrew Christians and to deepen their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To propagate more widely the gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus, by strengthening existing Jewish Missions, and fostering all other agencies to that end.
3. To provide for evangelical Christian churches of America an authoritative and reliable channel how best to serve the cause of Jewish evangelization.⁷⁷

These objects were complemented by the by-law that limited membership to "Hebrew Christians, their wives or husbands,

⁷⁶Robert Winer, *The Calling: The History of the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America 1915-1990* (Philadelphia: MJAA, 1990), p. 14.

⁷⁷Winer, *ibid.*, p. 94. Winer unfortunately, for the sake of his apologetic purposes, has substituted "Jesus Christ" with the more contemporary Yeshua the Messiah, and "Jesus" with Yeshua. This makes his history somewhat inaccurate, despite his acknowledgement of this practice (p. 3).

and their descendants, who believe in the Lord Jesus as a personal saviour"78

The result of these objects and by-law was to define the nature of the Alliance as both a thoroughly Jewish and a thoroughly Christian organization. This denoted the self-perception of Jewish believers in Canada at the time and was in line with the policies of Alliances world-wide. It is worth noting that Jewishness, as defined by these by-laws is a product of descent, and not adherence to Judaism, with its traditional repudiation of Christian doctrine.

More so than the First World War, the Second had a profound effect on the Jewish psyche. Like the Jewish community as a whole, Jewish believers were profoundly affected by the Holocaust. The subsequent creation of the State of Israel only reinforced the cultural ties they had with each other. Thus the Alliance continued to prosper in Canada.

IV. CONCLUSION

Missions to the Jews found the period following World War One until the 1960's to be comparatively fruitful and rewarding, with a significant number of Jews claiming Jesus as their Messiah. World War II, the Holocaust, and the establishment of the State of Israel enhanced the self-consciousness of Jewish believers. It is during this period

Nevertheless, it is rather a painless effort to reconstruct the original text from his altered version, as has been done.

that they began to form real communities, with organizations, activities, and ideals of their own. Hebrew Christian leaders, usually in the employ of the missions, used their opportunity to foster a nascent "messianic" identity among Jewish believers. By participation and leadership in the International and American Hebrew Christian Alliances, the establishment of Jewish Christian congregations, and activism on behalf of Jewish concerns such as immigrant aid and anti-Semitism they asserted the Hebrew Christian's right to retain his identity as a Jew. Thus during this critical period, Hebrew Christianity developed beyond the self-awareness and concerns of individual Hebrew Christians into a true community, most developed in Toronto.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 96.

Chapter Five: Independence, Growth and Diversification (1960 to the Present)

I. INTRODUCTION

The 1960's brought many changes to the growing Hebrew Christian community of Canada. Under the leadership of numerous individuals, it began to form its own social consciousness and develop into a multi-faceted movement with numerous autonomous congregations across the country, many social associations, and an enduring trans-denominational Alliance. As the movement gained new dimensions and characteristics, many Jewish believers began to repudiate the term "Hebrew Christian." In its place the term "Messianic" or "Messianic Jew" became more common.¹ Jewish-Christian congregationalism gained adherents, and Hebraic terminology, along with a measure of Yiddishkeit was embraced to a large degree.²

¹Because of the significance of this terminological shift in Canada, it has been treated more in depth in Appendix A.

²Whereas previously the term "Christ" as a Greek equivalent to Messiah has always been used sparingly by

At the same time, many Canadian churches began to adopt a negative stance towards evangelizing Jews. Heavily influenced by theological liberalism and neo-orthodoxy, denominational mission organizations increasingly emphasized dialogue over direct evangelism. The theology of Barth and Niebuhr had a marked influence, due to their wide appeal. Barth repudiated evangelism in favour of dialogue with the Jewish community, and expressed the view that the only means which the Church must use to discharge its responsibility to the Jews is to "make the Synagogue jealous,"³ *i.e.* win Israel as a whole to Christ by acknowledging it as the root from which the Church has sprung. Niebuhr in turn held to a "two covenant" view, that Jews and Christians can best find God within the terms of their own religious heritage,⁴ thus obviating the need for Christian evangelism to Jews.

For such reasons both Anglican and Presbyterian missions began to forsake traditional evangelism of Jews. This left a widening field to such independent missions as the American Board of Missions to the Jews (ABMJ, later called Chosen People Ministries) and Jews for Jesus. Such were supported by Evangelicals, who continued to assert that Jews needed to

missionaries aware of Jewish sensitivities, now "Jesus" is named "Yeshua", along with many other semantic changes. See numerous articles in *Mishkan* but particularly Walter Riggans, "Image and Reality: the Use of Jewish Symbolism by Messianic Jews," *Mishkan* No. 19, 2/1993.

³Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1956), Vol. IV, Part 3, Second Half, p. 878.

"know Jesus Christ."⁵ Meanwhile, Canada's Hebrew Christian grew increasingly independent of all, even these Jewish run, missions.

II. MISSIONS AND HEBREW CHRISTIANITY

A. Toronto Mission Developments

Three missions were influential in Hebrew Christianity and active in Toronto at the beginning of the 1960's. Their role then was still significant. Later, however, their role in the community diminished. These missions were the Nathanael Institute, the Scott Mission, and the Toronto Jewish Mission.

Two new missions established themselves in Toronto later on during this final period. Both were based in the USA, founded by Jewish believers, largely staffed by Jewish believers, and aggressively evangelistic. These were Jews for Jesus and Chosen People Ministries.

1. Nathanael Institute

As director of the Institute from 1957 on Jacob Jocz had made a significant contribution to the formation of Toronto's Hebrew Christian community. After his resignation in 1960 the momentum he had established at the Institute carried on for a time. Thus it was reported by the Institute in 1961

⁴Reinhold Niebuhr, *Pious and Secular America* (New York: Scribners, 1958), p. 108.

that "many" Hebrew Christians, . . . would travel ten or twelve miles to meet at the Institute.⁶ A number of Jewish believers who would later play significant roles in Toronto's developing Messianic movement were associated with the mission at this time, among them Malvern Jacobs, Ed Brotsky, Doris Nixon, and others.⁷

Early in the 1960's, however, the Institute began to suffer a decline in its role as a centre for Hebrew Christian community. Three factors brought this about. First and foremost was Jocz's resignation to take a teaching post at Wycliffe College. Secondly, the Jewish community had largely moved from the neighbourhood of the Institute.⁸ Thirdly, the Institutes' evangelical approach came into disfavour in the Anglican church, and over the next few years the missionary activities of the Institute were terminated. Indeed, Jocz had found that "every remedy he proposed [for the mission's problems with location and finances] was blocked by members of his board or diocesan officials or both."⁹ Thus in 1962 the Institute was renamed "The Christian-Jewish Dialogue of

⁵George Stevens, "The Gospel and the Jew," *Christianity Today*, Vol. 4, No. 13 (March 28, 1960), p. 9.

⁶*Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1961*, (Toronto: Parker, 1961), p. 157.

⁷Personal interview with Doris Nixon, 24 March, 1992.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Elizabeth Louise Myers, *The Literary Legacy of Jacob Jocz* (Pasadena: Master's thesis for Fuller Theological Seminary, June, 1989), p. 21.

the Anglican Church of Canada," signaling its adoption of a new approach to "evangelism."¹⁰ Hebrew Christians, many of whom had suffered alienation from their families and Jewish community as a result of their belief in Jesus as Messiah, and desired a more pro-active approach to presenting Jesus to the Jewish community, gravitated away from the mission.¹¹

2. The Scott Mission

The Scott mission, under Morris Zeidman, maintained its significant role in Toronto's Hebrew Christian community during the early 1960's. Being an independent mission, the trend towards dialogue instead of evangelism did not affect Zeidman's work.¹² Thus the community associated with him continued until his death in 1964. In October of that year however the "last service of the old Hebrew-Christian congregation took place. While the Mission continued to thrive, it increasingly turned away from Jewish evangelism and towards social programs for the city's poor. The few remaining Hebrew Christians thereafter joined various

¹⁰Archives, op. cit., p. 15, and *Journal of the Incorporated Synod of the Church of England in Canada in the Diocese of Toronto 1962*, (Toronto: Parker, 1962), p. 223.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 14-16. Jocz himself was aware of the potential for dialogue. An article of his points out that "Dialogue is essential for human encounter, but witness is the expression of personal faith. For the believing Christian the two are inseparable and mean the same thing." "The Jewish-Christian Dialogue: A Theological Assessment," *Mishkan* (Jerusalem: UCCI, 1985), Issue 3, p. 12.

¹²Personal interview with Mrs. Maureen Zeidman Topp at the Scott Mission, 26 March, 1992.

congregations around the city."¹³ This signaled the continued transfer of Canada's Hebrew-Christian community from dependence upon the missions to greater autonomy.

3. Toronto Jewish Mission

The Toronto Jewish Mission, led by Charles Bruneau, came under the leadership of Ernst Loewy in 1966, with the Bruneaus remaining as missionaries until their retirement in 1971.¹⁴ Under Loewy, a Jewish believer, numerous changes were instituted. Interestingly, nothing is said of a Hebrew Christian community associated with him in the mission's published history,¹⁵ yet he was a key figure in the Hebrew Christian Alliance of Canada.

It is apparent that Loewy strove to present Christianity to Jews within a Jewish cultural context. This may be deduced from the Jewish tone of his terminology. The mission facility became the "New Covenant House," and a telephone message line the "Messianic Forum".¹⁶ Nevertheless, Loewy (as many other Hebrew Christians) harboured a deep distrust of the growing Messianic Jewish movement, and adamantly opposed

¹³Paul R. Dekar, "From Jewish Mission to Inner City Mission: The Scott Mission and its Antecedents in Toronto, 1908 to 1964," *Toronto Studies in Religion*, Vol. 3. Donald Wiebe, ed. (New York: Lang, 1987), p. 262.

¹⁴*Toronto Jewish Mission: 1894-1984* (Toronto: TJM, 1984), pp. 9-10. Ernst Loewy, *The Personal Testimony of Ernst Loewy* (Toronto: Toronto Jewish Mission, n.d.), states that the year of this transition was 1964.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, *Toronto Jewish Mission*, pp. 9-10.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 10.

it. This position had a long term cost however, for as more and more Hebrew Christians did reconcile themselves to the existence of Messianic Judaism, the mission's stance became increasingly out of touch with the community's sentiments. Thus as the Messianic movement grew, the Jewish believing community as a whole eventually dropped its association with the mission.¹⁷

4. Jews for Jesus

Founded by Moishe Rosen in 1970, Jews for Jesus grew rapidly, attaining national (USA) attention in *Time Magazine* (US edition only) in 1972.¹⁸ Staffed and directed largely by Jewish believers, Jews for Jesus encourages Jews to believe in Jesus and retain their Jewish identity. From its inception it has been an evangelistic organization with the trademark of forthright and innovative approaches to evangelism.

One of the changes on the mission scene in the 1970's was the establishment of a Toronto branch of Jews for Jesus in 1976. At that time, partly under the initiative of some Toronto Jewish believers (most notably Leslie Jacobs and

¹⁷Conversations by the author of this article with Malvern Jacobs and Ed Brotsky, as well as board members of the mission have made it clear that the mission continues to eschew Messianic Judaism. A conversation with Joel Chernoff, General Secretary of the MJAA on 19 Feb. 1995 also made it clear that Loewy opposed Messianic Judaism in the 1970s.

¹⁸"Jews for Jesus," *Time*, June 12, 1972, pp. 66-67., and Moishe Rosen, *Jews for Jesus* (Old Tappan: Revell, 1974), p. 63.

Sharon Bloom),¹⁹ an increasing level of Jews for Jesus involvement led to the full time posting of Rachmiel Silverman in 1980, to be replaced in 1981 by Steve Cohen.²⁰

Jews for Jesus has not taken a leading role among Canadian Jewish believers. This is largely due to the fact that it is at heart an evangelistic organization. Nevertheless, until 1992, first under Steve Cohen and then Baruch Goldstein, Jews for Jesus did conduct a weekly congregational type of meeting on Friday nights. In 1995 the mission continued to sponsor monthly "Celebration of Y'shua" fellowship meetings as well as other events. Both Hebrew Christians and Messianic Jews in Canada have benefited from *Mishpochah* (family), a newsletter sent by 1995 to about 350 Jewish believers nation-wide.²¹

5. Chosen People Ministries

A second American mission to the Jews, the American Board of Missions to the Jews (ABMJ), also established a branch in Toronto in the 1970's. Currently known as Chosen People Ministries (CPM), it was originally established as The Williamsburg Mission by convert Leopold Cohn in 1894. In Toronto, CPM established a branch under the leadership of Leslie Jacobs, the son of a Messianic Jew who was baptized by

¹⁹Moishe Rosen, Executive Director of Jews for Jesus, in e-mail to Daniel Nessim 26 Jan., 1996.

²⁰Moishe Rosen, Executive Director of Jews for Jesus, in e-mail to Daniel Nessim 19 Jan., 1996.

Morris Kaminsky in 1947. Jacobs established a congregation called Beth Sar Shalom, leading CPM's Toronto branch in the 1980's, before turning back to traditional Judaism. The congregation remains under the leadership of CPM to the present day. Currently, due to the influx of many Russian Jews who have immigrated to Canada, the congregation has gained a large number of Russian Jews as members.

B. Canada Wide Mission Developments

Whereas the years after 1960 were ones of decreasing influence among Hebrew Christians for the missions in Toronto, across the rest of the Dominion missions were becoming more prominent in their role of fostering Hebrew Christianity. By the 1980's this changed as the Messianic Movement gained momentum across the country. As in Toronto, Messianic Judaism became the focal point for the community of Jewish Believers in city after city. Thus the missions were supplanted in their preeminent role among Jewish believers and the formation of their community.

1. Eastern Canada

Missionaries from Chosen People Ministries (American Board of Missions to the Jews), particularly Winnie Mariner, had been active in Montreal for a number of years in the 1970's and 1980's. By their activities they effectively established a nucleus for Hebrew Christian association

²¹Karol Joseph, Jews for Jesus Canadian Director, in e-mail to Daniel Nessim 17 Jan., 1996.

especially in the formation of Bible studies.²²

In Hamilton, the mission Friends of Israel came under the leadership of Jewish Holocaust survivor Paul Fodor and his Gentile wife Trudi in 1973.²³ Reflecting the trend of missions away from actively evangelizing the Canadian Jew, Fodor facilitated a transition from a "conversionist" to a "broader evangelical" goal for the mission.²⁴ Certainly with his firm evangelical underpinnings Fodor could not be construed as eschewing evangelism. Thus in reality, his new approach was related to Fodors' sponsorship of a Messianic Congregation, to be discussed later. It may be surmised that evangelization was found to be most effective when done by the congregants rather than through the Fodor's efforts alone.

2. Western Canada.

In Western Canada, missions did not lose their important role as quickly as in the East. In Winnipeg, the mission established by the Spitzers continued its activities in the 1960's, first under the leadership of Harry Flumbaums and then under Elvin Ensign, following the former's decease. In

²²Personal interview with Hanan Itescu, 22 March, 1992.

²³Jean Mackay, *Triumphs of His Grace: Memoirs of Gospel Triumphs Among the Jewish people in Hamilton, Ontario Canada 1892-1974* (sic.) 1st. ed. 1944, 2nd. ed. (Caledonia: Acts Books, 1978), p. 81.

²⁴Kohn, Rachael L.E. "Praising the Lord and Penetrating the Community: Transition and Dual Leadership Functions in a Contemporary Hebrew Christian Group," *Sociological Analysis*, Vol. 45, No. 1, (1984), p. 33.

that time growth of the Jewish Believing community was slow. Notwithstanding, attempts have been made by believers in the city to establish a Messianic congregation.²⁵

Bible Testimony Fellowship, which had operated in Vancouver since 1942, amalgamated with Christian Witness to Israel in 1965 for financial reasons. The following years brought a series of workers from Great Britain. First the Newton family and Betty Chadwick, then in 1966 the Gutteridge family. None of these appointments prospered, however, and the Hebrew-Christian community remained minute.

Significant advances began to be made there in 1969, when Elias and Judith Nessim, both Hebrew Christians, came from London, England, to direct the mission. Over the next twenty years the number of Hebrew-Christians in the city gradually increased, and the Nessims worked to foster a sense of community among them. This created friction with the mission board of directors however, thus in 1987 Nessim broke off his affiliation with CWI. At the root of this decision was Nessim's endorsement of Hebrew Christian congregationalism and assertion of a Jew's right to maintain his culture and heritage following conversion.²⁶ Within a few years the congregation begun at this juncture adopted both Messianic terminology and worship styles. Members described

²⁵Per the writer's conversation with Elvin Ensign, December, 1995.

²⁶Thus when the Nessims announced their new independence to supporters, they stated that one of their aims would be to

themselves as both Hebrew Christians or Messianic Jews. By January of 1988 the congregation had some fifteen to twenty members.²⁷ Thus the move of Canadian Jewish Believers away from the leadership of missions in general was exemplified by events in Vancouver.

III. THE EMERGING MESSIANIC MOVEMENT

As the missions declined in influence, Jewish believers increasingly used their own resources to develop their communities. As Volman states:

Now a new emphasis, the consequence of years of mission work, has emerged onto the Canadian church scene: a dynamic ethnic congregational movement that crosses denominational lines.²⁸

Hebrew Christianity grudgingly made room for the much more organized and high profile Messianic Judaism. As a result, where Messianic congregations were established, they often took a significant role in creating a milieu in which Hebrew Christians could meet on occasion. Messianic Jews, motivated by a desire to maintain their Jewish culture, increased their association with one another and worked towards the establishment of Messianic congregations. By 1994 serious talks were already under way exploring the possibility of an association of Canadian Messianic

"assist in the formation of an indigenous Hebrew Christian testimony." Nessim Prayer Letter, 9 Sept., 1987.

²⁷Nessim Prayer Letter, January, 1988.

²⁸Ben Volman, "Messianic Jewish Congregations: A new dimension of the church in Canada," *Faith Today* (November/December, 1992), p. 30.

congregations. The years since 1960 were significantly impacted by key personalities, the Messianic Alliance of Canada, and an increasing number of Messianic congregations.

A. Personalities

The history of Hebrew Christianity and Messianic Judaism has since the 1960's been replete with a wide variety of leaders and committed personages. Of these the writer has selected four, notable for their long term influence and contribution.

1. Jakob Jocz

Dr. Jocz became one of the most prominent Jewish believers in Canada during the sixties and seventies. Having lived in England prior to the invitation to direct Nathanael Institute, he had already made significant contributions to Hebrew Christianity. While in England he was elected president of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance.²⁹ He retained this post for a number of years after moving to Toronto, and was widely traveled, being known to Hebrew Christian leaders worldwide.

As a theologian and thinker, Jocz had a decisive impact on the Canadian Hebrew-Christian movement. Ordained in the Anglican Church, he aspired to be given a church which could become a center for Hebrew Christianity in a Jewish

²⁹Arthur F. Glasser, "The Legacy of Jakob Jocz," (n.d., n.p.), p. 6.

neighbourhood.³⁰ This hope was never realized. Following his years of service at Nathanael, Jocz occupied the Chair of Systematic Theology at Wycliffe College in Toronto. From this vantage he continued to associate with, and doubtless have an influence upon, Jewish believers who are influential in Toronto to this day.³¹

Jocz is credited with having written six major works. Two are of great significance to Hebrew Christianity. The first, written in 1949 as his doctoral thesis at the University of Edinburgh, is *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*.³² The second, completed in 1981 was written because "no work on the Jewish people and Jesus Christ is complete without accounting for the presence of Jewish Christians wedged in between the Church and their own people."³³ The concern Jocz breathed throughout his works is epitomized in his statement that "the task of [world] evangelism hinges on Jewish missions."³⁴

³⁰Personal interview with Mrs. Jakob (Joan Celia) Jocz, March 27, 1992.

³¹Jocz interview, op. cit. Among such believers by name are Malvern Jacobs, Ed. Brotsky, and Doris Nixon.

³²Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ: The Relationship between Church and Synagogue* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1949).

³³Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ after Auschwitz: A Study in the Controversy between Church and Synagogue* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), p. 12.

³⁴Jakob Jocz, "Jewish Missions in Relation to Universalism," *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, eds. Carl F. Henry and W. Stanley Mooneyham (Minneapolis: World Wide Press, 1967), p. 188.

2. Malvern Jacobs

Malvern Jacobs was one of the many Jews associated with the Nathanael Institute when it was led by Morris Kaminsky. Baptized by him in 1947, Jacobs has since made a significant contribution to the development of Messianic Judaism in Toronto. Active in seeking to present Christianity in a positive way to the Jewish community, he initiated an autonomous mission called Adath Sar Shalom, and led a congregation that eventually merged with Melech Yisrael. His son, Leslie Jacobs, was mentioned in connection with Chosen People Ministries. In 1979, Leslie became one of the first charter officers of the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations as secretary.³⁵

3. Martin Chernoff

Martin Chernoff deserves mention not because of his direct participation on the Canadian scene but due to his influence on the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America, which represented both Canadian and American Jewish Believers until the Canadian Alliance was formed in 1975. As an expatriate living in Cincinnati, Chernoff

was one of the most important people in the process of change that the HCAA was undergoing. He was fully supportive of the Messianic Movement while maintaining a position on the Executive Committee of the Alliance which he served from 1967-1979. His influence was

³⁵David A. Rausch, *Messianic Judaism: Its History, Theology, and Polity* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1982), p. 191. The UMJC was founded by both Canadian and American congregations.

strengthened when he became President of the Alliance from 1971-1975.³⁶

Thus Chernoff indirectly served to reinforce the Toronto tradition of Jewish congregationalism. His support of Messianic Judaism with its congregational emphasis was initially resisted in Canada however, and is discussed below.

4. Ed Brotsky

Dr. Edward Brotsky, according to his own account, lived in Calgary until 1967. There he unsuccessfully attempted to establish a Messianic Congregation.³⁷ In 1968 he moved to the States and served with the American Baptist Convention as "Director of Judeo-Christian Relations." In 1976 Brotsky returned to Toronto and revived the "Hebrew Christian Witness," picking up where Rachmiel Frydland had left off. It was his work that helped lay the foundations for Congregation Melech Yisrael. Presently, Brotsky has sought to contribute to the education of the Canadian Church in matters of Judaica. Thus Malvern Jacobs and Brotsky together form the core of Canada Christian College's Department of Jewish Studies. In 1991, the small Toronto college included in its offerings nine courses taught by either Brotsky or

³⁶Robert I. Winer, *The Calling: The History of the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America 1915-1990*. (Wynnewood, PA: MJAA, 1990), p. 48.

³⁷Edward Brotsky, personal interview, 25 March, 1992, by Daniel Nessim.

Jacobs.³⁸

B. The Hebrew Christian/Messianic Jewish Alliance

The years following 1960 were years of rapid change and development for the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America. Martin Chernoff, a Canadian baptized on 26 March, 1939 by Morris Kaminsky of Toronto's Nathanael Institute, "was one of the most important people in the process of change that the HCAA was undergoing. . . . His influence was strengthened when he became President of the Alliance from 1971-1975."³⁹ Sheriff's Canadian experience was influential on him, and he fostered developments that affected Hebrew Christians and Messianic Jews throughout the United States and Canada.

Despite the presence of a Canadian in the Alliance's top post, the Toronto branch, led by Ernst Loewy, voted on 1 December 1973 to form an independent Alliance to be known as the Hebrew Christian Alliance of Canada (HCAA).⁴⁰ This step was taken with the approval of the International Alliance. Minutes of the Branch's 19 September 1973 meeting show that the concept of a Canadian Alliance was endorsed twice by Harcourt Samuel, Executive Secretary of the London based

³⁸"The Department of Jewish Studies," Brochure, Canada Christian College (Toronto, 1991).

³⁹Winer, Robert I. *The Calling: The History of the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America 1915-1990* (Wynnewood: MJAA, 1990), p. 48.

⁴⁰Loewy, Ernst. Newsletter to Hebrew Christian Alliance constituents, February, 1974.

International Alliance in 1965 and again in 1973.⁴¹ Ernst Loewy became the Canadian Alliance's first president.

Loewy successfully argued that the creation of a Canadian Alliance would correct the anomalous situation of one nation's Hebrew Christian Community being part of another nation's Alliance, and be a natural recognition of the cultural differences between Canada and the United States.⁴² At heart however was the issue of Messianic Judaism, which the American Alliance was embracing. Loewy and other Canadians, being very wary of it, strongly opposed what was seen as a foreign influence on Canadian Hebrew Christianity. Thus on 16 March, 1974, the Canadian "Alliance was inaugurated and its Constitution and Rules adopted."⁴³

The new independence did not end American influence. In 1975, the HCAA voted to change its name to the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA),⁴⁴ signaling its formal acceptance of the ideals of Messianic Judaism. The leaders of the American Alliance, with a missionary zeal to share their new emphases and policies, influenced a number of

⁴¹Hebrew Christian Alliance Executive Meeting, Minutes 19 September, 1973.

⁴²Ernst Loewy, Personal Notes, kept in HCAC files with meeting minutes, 19 September, 1973.

⁴³HCAC, Newsletter, Spring 1974.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 50. In an era following the tremendous influx of young Jewish believers into the Hebrew Christian community, this symbolised the new majority of Jewish believers' aspiration to be considered Jews regardless of their faith in Jesus. Thus the term Messianic Jew downplayed "Christianity" in favour of their identity as Jews who believe that Jesus is the Messiah.

Canadian Hebrew Christians and caused significant friction with the Canadian leadership. Resistant to rapid change, and concerned to fulfill its role as the representative of the majority of Canadian Hebrew Christians, the Canadian Alliance met with Lawrence (Larry) Rich, the General Secretary of the American Alliance. In clear terms, the tone of the Canadian's communication was

We reject all outside or inside pressures however subtle or indirect, to stampede us into positions or actions for which we are not ready.⁴⁵

Largely this position was championed by Ernst Loewy and the Toronto Jewish Mission, which he directed.⁴⁶ Unfortunately, the split between Canadian Hebrew Christianity and Messianic Judaism continued. Nevertheless, the Americans had anticipated what would soon be a worldwide trend, which Canada too would follow.

In 1983 the Toronto Branch, still the only branch of the HCAC, took active steps toward reconciliation. At the New Horizons tower, a neutral venue, on the 14th of May a "Forum on Jewish Ministries" was held. Although one member of the Alliance resigned simply at the prospect of the meeting, it appears to mark a turning point in the Alliance, with significant participation from across the spectrum of the

⁴⁵HCAC Toronto Branch Executive letter to "Our Friends and fellow believers who are officers of the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America," July 26, 1976.

⁴⁶Most important business of the Alliance was conducted at New Covenant House, the centre funded by the Toronto Jewish Mission.

Jewish believers.⁴⁷ Eventually, in 1990, now under the Presidency of Elias Nessim, the Alliance changed its name to The Messianic Jewish Alliance of Canada (MJAC) by democratic process.⁴⁸ At this point the Alliance was truly becoming a national body, grappling with the difficulties of representing all Canadian Jewish believers whether Hebrew Christian or Messianic.

Although there was still a measure of dissatisfaction with the endorsement of Messianic Judaism, the MJAC has continued to grow until the present time, currently under the presidency of Mark Neugebauer of Toronto. While not adding any new branches other than one that existed in Edmonton for a few years in the 1980's, it has continued to gain credibility as the unifying force among and representative of Canadian Hebrew Christians and Messianic Jews. By 1994 the Alliance, although having no paid staff, had a two year income of almost \$18,000.⁴⁹

C. Messianic Congregations

The Alliance did not endorse Messianic Terminology in a vacuum. Messianic Congregationalism in Canada was a growing force since the 1970's. By the 1990's, many cities that had

⁴⁷HCAC Toronto Branch, Minutes of Forum on Jewish Ministries at the New Horizons Tower, 14 May, 1983.

⁴⁸MJAC Letter to MJAC membership, December, 1990. The Name of the Alliance is also *Alliance Canadienne des Juifs-Messianique*.

never even had a sustained missionary effort aimed at the conversion of Jews had fledgling Messianic congregations. A growing sense of community developed among congregations nationwide.

1. Toronto

Toronto, ever the center of developments among Canadian Jewish believers, became the home of numerous Messianic congregations, of which a complete listing is not feasible. This was accompanied by a growth in the number of Jewish believers, Messianic leaders estimating that about 1000 live in the Toronto area.

A major development in the growing Hebrew Christian community in Toronto was the establishment of Congregation Melech Yisrael (CMY). Firmly in the tradition of Messianic Judaism, Melech Yisrael was the second fully autonomous Hebrew Christian congregation in Canadian History. Melech Yisrael resulted when two small Messianic congregations, one pastored by Malvern Jacobs, and the other led by Hans Vanderwerff, merged. The group led by Jacobs, established in the 1960's under the auspices of Nathanael Institute, by itself had 25-50 members in attendance.⁵⁰ Thus there is a clear line of development from Nathanael Institute to Melech Yisrael today.

⁴⁹"Financial Statement to Biennial Conference, May 1, 1992 - April 30, 1994," Messianic Jewish Alliance of Canada, 30 April, 1994.

⁵⁰Personal interview with Malvern Jacobs, 20 March, 1992.

As a Congregation of Jews with faith in Jesus as the Messiah, CMY was able to address issues that had always been a thorn in the side of Canadian Jewish believers. Jews normally are buried in their own community cemeteries, according to Jewish law. However, Hebrew-Christians and Messianic Jews had always been excluded from burial in the same cemeteries even if the rest of their families were buried there. On November 4, 1979, Malvern Jacobs was able to present to the congregation the option of purchasing plots in a special section of a local Jewish cemetery.⁵¹ This event signaled the growing acceptance of the Messianic movement among certain segments of the traditional Jewish community, and provided a polemic for the existence of Messianic congregations. At this time CMY was meeting in the Muir Park Hotel.

Led by Ed Brotsky, Melech Yisrael eventually reverted to Hans Vanderwerff's leadership. Melech Yisrael grew to play a leading role in Toronto's Messianic community, owning its own synagogue, and being the largest and oldest Messianic congregation in the city. Not without opposition in the Jewish community, the congregation received city-wide publicity in a *Toronto Star* article in 1980. In that article, the congregation was accused by Rabbi Immanuel Schochet of "trying to convert Jewish youth under false

⁵¹Congregation Melech Yisrael meeting notes, November 4, 1979.

pretenses."⁵² In 1992, Hans Vanderwerff resigned from CMY. Since then, largely due to difficulties in finding suitable leadership, CMY has suffered a significant decline in attendance (to approximately 40) according to verbal reports received at the time this thesis was being completed.

2. Canada Wide

In Canada as a whole, events followed much the same trends evident in Toronto, although with a time delay of a decade or more. Thus Hebrew Christianity gradually made room for Messianic Jews and Messianic congregationalism.

a) Eastern Canada

By the 1990's Hamilton became the center for "a congregation of Jews and Gentiles, who share the good news, that Yeshua (this Jesus), is the Messiah of Israel."⁵³ Fodor, the leader of this congregation and its spokesperson to the Christian community helped begin the congregation in October, 1980. Begun with a core of four families, within a year attendance was "approximately 20 parents, and 15 children."⁵⁴ In 1984, however, the last year for which the writer was able to find reliable information, almost all these members were

⁵²"Jews Protest Christian Recruiters," *Toronto Star*, 19 January, 1980, p. G4.

⁵³Paul Fodor, Transcribed message from video of address to supporters of Hamilton Friends of Israel, (Spring 1992).

⁵⁴Kohn, op. cit., p. 34.

Gentile.⁵⁵

Ottawa, despite a long history of missionary efforts like Montreal, did not have a Congregation of Jewish believers until 1991. Not the outgrowth of any particular previous ministry, this congregation predominately considers itself Hebrew Christian rather than Messianic. Presently about twenty Jewish believers attend.

1987 was a significant year in Montreal. In that year a Messianic congregation was established by Hanan and Haya Itescu.⁵⁶ In 1986 Alan Gilman, endorsed by Zion Messianic Fellowship of Vancouver, came to Montreal and spent a number of years developing and participating in the Messianic community. After he left the city in 1991 to return to Vancouver, others established Kehilat she'ar Yashuv in 1992, a Messianic congregation that continues today, taking the place of the previous congregation.

b) Western Canada

In Vancouver, little if any Hebrew Christian community existed prior to 1960. At least three families, Lewis, Charles, and Levinson, were Hebrew Christians, but their

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 35, n. 11. This highlights a significant development: the adoption of Messianic worship forms by Gentiles. This development is outside of the thesis being considered here.

⁵⁶Coincidentally, the Itescus attended St. Stephen's Anglican Church in Lachine, prior to starting their congregation. It is not known if they were aware that the church they attended was started by the Chaplain Rev. Stevens who was so concerned with preaching the Gospel to Jews in the early nineteenth century.

association was limited.⁵⁷ In 1987, a number of Jewish believers in Vancouver established Zion Messianic Fellowship (ZMF), an autonomous society for Hebrew Christians and Messianic Jews, unallied with any single church or denomination.⁵⁸ During the same years Kehillath Zion, a Messianic congregation, was established by the Gilmans, Nessims, and other Messianic Jews. This congregation today numbers in the fifties, over half of whom are Jews. In Vancouver the growth of Messianic Judaism did not provoke a violent response. It gained enough attention however to prompt a front page article in the *Vancouver Sun* titled "Christian inroads worry Jews."⁵⁹

In Edmonton, despite its far Western location and small Jewish population, Congregation Beit Mashiach was established earlier than other congregations were in cities with far greater Jewish populations. In 1984 the Upshaw and Velie families began the congregation which now numbers about forty members and is affiliated with the American based Union of

⁵⁷Personal interview with Florence Edge and Florence Ceiley, March, 1994. Fellowship nights were held by the mission in the 1950s and 1960s to bring Jewish believers and unbelievers together.

⁵⁸*Constitution of Zion Messianic Fellowship*, 6 January, 1987. The purposes of the society stated in the Constitution are "To advance the Christian faith, in accordance with scripture, within the Jewish cultural context. To proclaim Yeshua (Jesus) as the Messiah and the doctrine of salvation by faith. To provide fellowship to members and adherents. To relieve poverty and provide for help for those in need. To support the nation of Israel. To advance education according to scriptural standards."

⁵⁹Lisa Fitterman, "Christian inroads worry Jews," *The Vancouver Sun*, Vol. 96, No. 203, 30 June, 1983, Sec. A, p. 1.

Messianic Jewish Congregations.

Calgary, where Brotsky had lived years before, also became home to a Messianic Congregation, Beth Shechinah, in 1993 when the Upshaws moved from Edmonton to establish the congregation there.

3. Opposition to Messianic Judaism

Jewish believers in Canada have often been opposed in their beliefs and practices by the Jewish community as a whole. This was particularly true in the early part of the century in Toronto and Winnipeg. After the 1960's, due to the increasing visibility of Messianic Judaism both in the Church and the Jewish community, an upsurge of concern ensued. Strong opposition was less visible from Hebrew Christians than from the Jewish community as a whole. Opposition was accompanied by increased coverage of Messianic Judaism in the press, and the formation of a group to counter Christian missionaries and win Jews back to Judaism. A significant opponent of Congregation Melech Yisrael was Rabbi Immanuel Schochet, who frequently appeared in newspaper articles in 1980 protesting Melech Yisrael's teachings.⁶⁰

A significant series of events in this regard is the saga of Julius Ciss. Well remembered among members of Melech Yisrael, he is a Jew who converted to Messianic Judaism and

⁶⁰See "Charismatics upset Jewish Activists," *Globe & Mail*, 12 January, 1980, Sec. E, p. 15; "Jews Protest Christian Recruiters," *Toronto Star*, 19 January, 1980, Sec. G, p. 4; and a letter by the rabbi himself, "Missionary group

joined the congregation. A glowing personal testimony subsequently appeared in *The North Bay Nugget* in March of 1979.⁶¹ He later appears in the *Globe & Mail* defending Melech Yisrael from "Jewish Activists".⁶² This sets the stage for a dramatic shift, as by 1991 he is cited in the *Canadian Jewish News* as a leading Jewish opponent to Messianic Judaism.⁶³

Opposition was not always lawful, either. In 1974 Leslie Jacobs, Chosen People Ministries' Toronto leader, stood amidst "the shambles which was his office . . . furniture smashed, tape recordings, films, pamphlets and files strewn about the room."⁶⁴ There was little doubt for Jacobs that the vandalism had been done by the missionaries' opponents in fulfillment of numerous threats.

IV. CONCLUSION

Moving out of the cradle of church missions, Jewish believers since 1960 have become increasingly self assertive. While traditional missions largely bowed out of the endeavour to evangelize Jews, Jewish believers have taken their fate into their own hands as evidenced by changes in the MJAC and

used deception rabbi protests," *Toronto Star*, 12 April, 1980, Sec. H, p. 8.

⁶¹"Spiritual Change for Better," *The North Bay Nugget*, 24 March, 1979.

⁶²"Charismatics upset Jewish Activists," *Globe & Mail*, 12 January, 1980, Sec. E, p. 15.

⁶³Ron Csillag, "Messianic courses cause for concern," *The Canadian Jewish News*, 28 November, 1991.

a growing congregational movement. They have counted among themselves both significant scholars, as Jocz, and visionary missionaries, as Brotsky. Once again, after a lull of decades, the movement has become significant enough to warrant active opposition on the part of certain members of the Jewish community.

Since the 1960's Jewish believers have diverged along ideological grounds. In the place of a very homogeneous Hebrew Christianity, Messianic Judaism and Messianic Jews have taken the center stage. This is due to the higher degree of organization that is inherent in a movement comprised of congregations. Hebrew Christians, who may be greater in number than Messianic Jews, have a looser degree of association and cooperation.

The great advance among Jewish believers in Canada since the 1960's has been this very diversity. The challenge for the new Canadian Alliance has been to straddle the divide and represent all Jewish believers fairly. Rather than a sign of weakness, this diversity is a sign of the growing strength in the movement.

⁶⁴"Phone calls, a letter, and then SMASH," *Toronto Sun*, 26 November, 1974, p. 1.

CONCLUSION

It has been the purpose of this thesis to examine and recount the history of Jewish believers in Canada. From the first Jewish believers in early Canadian history, a trail has unfolded to the present. In the eighteenth century, the trail was often obscured and patchy. Beginning with the French Revolution, however, intense preoccupation with prophecy resulted in an accompanying interest in evangelizing the Jew to hasten the return of Christ. With greater missionary activity in Europe, and the subsequent immigration of converts to Canada, the trail becomes increasingly clear. Thus in the nineteenth century three Jewish believers became significant contributors to Canadian Christianity. Tellingly, all three retained an interest in their Jewish heritage. The foundation laid by these early believers encouraged nascent Hebrew Christianity. This was fostered in large part by the London Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Among the Jews, Anglican, and Presbyterian missions.

By the early twentieth century, enough believers lived in Toronto to justify the existence of Hebrew Christian congregations, under the arm of church missions. During this time also, the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America was founded, with strong support from Canadian believers.

The twentieth century has been one of increasing growth, in both numbers and diversity, among Jewish believers. Hebrew Christianity, fostered by Christian missions which were often directed by Jewish believers, began an inexorable spread across the country. By 1960 every major centre of Jewish population had some Jewish believers who kept in touch with each other. Usually this was through the agency of the missions. However, by the 1960's, in response to theological trends in the church, missions began to lose their leadership position among Hebrew Christians. Concurrently, Messianic Judaism, almost forgotten since the beginning of the century, was growing in influence. Thus Messianic Judaism naturally assumed the leadership role among Jewish believers.

Messianic Judaism, espousing a congregational ideal, rapidly spread across the country. While not necessarily representing a majority of Jewish believers, congregations in each city have provided natural centres for the movement. It is thus clear that the movement of Jewish believers in Canada cannot be given a fixed date of origination. Rather, it has grown and developed over time to where it is today. That it is a *bona fide* movement is evident. The Messianic Jewish Alliance of Canada and the various Messianic Congregations

presently form the centre of community for Jewish believers. While diverse, the community of Jewish believers has in common a desire to retain its Jewish heritage amid the context of its adherence to New Testament faith.

APPENDIX A Terminology Describing Canadian Jewish Believers

I. INTRODUCTION

Jews who believe in Jesus have traditionally been called either Hebrew Christians, Jewish Christians, or simply "Christians." Other terms have also been used from time to time, but never so widely as beginning with the Messianic movement of the 1960's. The term "Messianic," while not originating then, certainly gained currency as never before. In Canada, where Messianic Judaism and Hebrew Christianity are facing similar issues as elsewhere in the world, friction has occurred between the two, evidencing a distinction. It is the purpose of this appendix to clarify both the term "Hebrew Christian" and the ever more popular term "Messianic Jew" as used by Jewish believers in Canada, and particularly as used in this thesis.

II. THE PROBLEM OF LABELS

Two factors determine the terms by which Jews who believe in Jesus choose to call themselves. The first is

cultural, a result of the existential paradox which Jewish believers find themselves living, and the second historical.

The primary factor determining the use of terminology describing Jewish believers is related to the existential paradox within which they find themselves. While Jewish believers generally do not see their faith as inherently paradoxical, the fact is that one becomes alienated from Jewish community life for believing in the Jewish Messiah. Jewish believers thus find themselves caught in a difficult conundrum. First, their belief in Jesus as the Messiah has alienated them from their own community and made it difficult to maintain their Jewish culture and associations. Secondly, their undeniable Jewishness has made them a sort of peculiarity in an overwhelmingly Gentile church, which has often required them to become Christian not only in faith, but also in culture. Christian culture in this situation becomes identified with whatever the predominant Gentile culture is. Thus the Jewish believer is torn. Compounding this is the fact that for many the term Hebrew Christian is an oxymoron. As Fruchtenbaum states,

In the common view, the term *Hebrew Christian* is a contradiction.a Hebrew Christian is a Jew who believes that Jesus Christ is his Messiah. By faith Hebrew Christians align themselves with other believers in Christ whether Jews or Gentiles, but nationally they identify themselves with the Jewish people.¹

Historically, a number of terms have been used to

describe Jewish Believers in Canada. The term "Jewish Christian" does not occur often in Canadian documents, but that the term "Hebrew Christian" has a long history is shown by the name of The Hebrew Christian Synagogue. That the term "Messianic" was also known is evidenced by Rohold's comments denying his espousal of it.² Clearly, whatever Messianic Judaism was perceived to be, it was considered suspect by Rohold's supervisors. According to Fruchtenbaum,

For most of the Jewish-Christian history in this century, the terms Hebrew/Jewish Christian and Messianic Jews were used interchangeably and without any real distinction. Only in the 70's did various factions develop in the Jewish-Christian movement so that one may now distinguish between Hebrew/Jewish Christians and Messianic Jews, though there is no agreement as to just where that line should be drawn.³

It is possible that this held true in the States, but Rohold's opposition to it indicates that in Canada the term Messianic was controversial. It was not until the 1970s that a significant number of Canadians began to change their terminology and praxis. To a large degree this was due to the influence of the growing Messianic movement in the States. Nevertheless, as in Rohold's day, the issue was

¹Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Hebrew Christianity: Its Theology, History, and Philosophy* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974), pp. 12-13.

²Sabeti B. Rohold, *Missions to the Jews. Historical Sketch. The Story of Our Church's Interest In Israel*. (Toronto: Christian Synagogue, 1918), p. 16. No doubt Rohold was at the Hebrew Christian Alliance conference in 1917 where "Messianic Judaism" was a subject of great debate. See David A. Rausch, *Messianic Judaism: Its History, Theology, and Polity* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1982), pp. 32-40.

fraught with controversy.

III. DEFINITIONS AND USAGE: HEBREW-CHRISTIAN OR MESSIANIC?

Since the 1970s, many Canadian Jewish believers have espoused Messianic Judaism and its terminology. For them the term Messianic Jew is an assertion that their existence is not best described by the term Hebrew Christian. What the term Messianic means, however, is determined by who is using the terminology. No one definition has universal acceptance. The definitions used fall into three categories: the Theological, the Cultural, and the Congregational.

Theologically, Messianic Jews often view their faith on the basis that the early church was primarily Jewish in character. Furthermore, with their assertion of Jewish culture, they see themselves as re-establishing a link to the earliest church. Christianity is thus seen as merely the Gentile expression of adherence to the common gospel preached by the apostles. Thus Goble asserts idealistically:

Messianic Judaism, when it accommodates itself culturally to Gentiles, is properly called "Christianity."⁴

When used in this sense, Messianic Judaism describes primitive Christianity as well as contemporary belief among Jews in Jesus as the Messiah. It sees modern Messianic Judaism as the re-vitalisation, or resurrection, of early

³Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Quest for a Messianic Theology," *Mishkan*, 2 (Winter 1985), p. 1.

Jewish Christianity — this despite the fact that Jewish culture and religious practice have developed considerably over the millennia. Theologically, Messianic Judaism is therefore an heir of early Jewish Christianity in the eyes of its adherents.

Culturally, Messianic is a term attributed to those Jews who believe in Jesus and seek to maintain (or return to) their Jewish cultural heritage. Thus Stern, writing from Jerusalem, describes as Messianic "a person who was born Jewish or converted to Judaism, who is a 'genuine believer' in Yeshua, and who acknowledges his Jewishness."⁵ Indeed, in the early part of this century, before the modern messianic movement, this was the predominant understanding. Messianic Jews reportedly felt that by "'observing Jewish ceremonies and customs' they would demonstrate their 'national continuity' and win the Jews."⁶

There are difficulties with the cultural definition of the Messianic Jew. Some of those who call themselves by other designations would likely strenuously assert that they too value their Jewishness and observe some customs. Therefore some would loosely define all Christians of Jewish descent as Messianic. But this ignores the fact that some such believers no longer consider themselves Jews in any more

⁴Philip E. Goble, *Everything You Need to Grow a Messianic Synagogue* (Pasadena: William Carey, 1974), p. 3.

⁵David Stern, *Messianic Jewish Manifesto* (Jerusalem: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1988), p.20.

than a racial sense.

The cultural definition of who is Messianic and who is not then becomes subject to interpretation. Fieldsend frames the issue against an historical backdrop, saying

my own perspective is that the difference between Messianic Judaism and Hebrew Christianity is real, but it is one of natural development rather than fundamental.⁷

However, though Messianic Judaism may have been fostered and developed by Hebrew Christians, it is clear that Messianic Judaism is now a cultural development distinct from Hebrew Christianity.

A line has to be drawn between the two. Thus Stern (see above) has numerous caveats following his definition of the term "Messianic," and continues to say

This includes those who call themselves Hebrew Christians But a narrower definition would exclude them by calling Messianic Jews only those who wish to live a demonstratively Jewish lifestyle, that is, a Messianic life within the framework of *Torah*.⁸

He thus alludes to the fact that Messianic terminology is not always a reliable indicator of a person's faith or praxis. Further, it raises the issue as to what constitutes a "demonstrably Jewish lifestyle." Where the line should be drawn is not clear.

The third type of definition used is Congregational. Rausch in one of the earlier and best studies on the topic

⁶Rausch, op. cit., p. 34.

⁷John Fieldsend, *Messianic Jews: Challenging Church and Synagogue* (Kent, UK: Monarch, 1993), p. 10.

encapsulates the issue by saying "The Messianic congregation is truly the 'distinctive' of the Messianic Jew."⁹ As Jewish life is to a large degree communal in nature, and Jewish culture is most easily fostered within Jewish community, Messianic congregations are the logical outgrowth of a believers' desire to assert his or her Jewishness. It is through the establishment of Messianic congregations that the forces of assimilation can best be stayed. The congregational definition provides an objective standard, being membership in a Messianic congregation.

Such congregations are best seen as an indigenous movement,¹⁰ "one in faith with their Gentile brothers and sisters, and yet maintaining congregational autonomy and independence."¹¹ They are the Jewish believer's assertion of his Jewishness in not only a personal but also a communal way. The problem of what constitutes "Messianic" is thus transferred from being based on the individual's practice to the congregation's practice. Here too there are variances. One is due to different cultural practices. Some congregations are more "churchy", others more like Reform, or like Orthodox congregations. Another variance is a significant percentage of Gentile participation. Noting that

⁸Ibid., p.20.

⁹Rausch, op. cit., p. 90.

¹⁰Some argue that the proper perspective is to see Gentile Christianity as an indigenous sub-movement(s) in the true Jewish religion that recognizes Jesus as the Messiah.

the term "Messianic" does not mean that only Jews belong to these congregations, Schiffman states:

This term refers to believers involved in Messianic congregations, Jewish or Gentile. Messianic *Jews* are those in Messianic congregations who are of Jewish descent. Messianic refers to that expression of the biblical faith which expresses itself in a Jewish manner.¹²

Thus Messianic congregations are comprised not only of Messianic Jews, but also Messianic Gentiles, those who prefer to practice Christian faith in a Jewish cultural context.

The congregational definition of Messianic Judaism, or who is a Messianic Jew, does not define what "Jewish" is in the context of New Testament faith. Neither does it include all who would apply the term "Messianic" to themselves. Neither does it include the Jewish Believer who may struggle to maintain his culture but be unable to join a Messianic congregation.

IV. CONCLUSION

Definitions of Hebrew Christianity and Messianic Judaism: Historical; Cultural; and Congregational, all struggle with difficulties related to the identity of the Jewish believer. Historically, it is clear that in the early Church much of Jewish Christianity was congregational in nature, and remained within the cultural framework of Judaism. Culturally, it is likely that within Messianic

¹¹Ibid., p. 9.

congregations the Jewish believer has the best support for his Jewish lifestyle and culture. It is the Congregational definition, however, that best provides a clear, objective, and easily observable standard for historical study. Furthermore, the other types of definitions do not conflict with it.

The terminology of the congregational movement both unites Messianic Jews with each other and distinguishes them from Hebrew Christians. As seen in chapter five, particularly in Toronto, terminology has caused division between some of those who see themselves as "Hebrew Christians" and those who see themselves as "Messianic Jews." Despite this, it is clear that at heart both Hebrew Christians and Messianic Jews value their Jewishness, which also binds them together. Messianic terminology demarcates one of the most telling changes in the landscape surrounding Jews who believe in Jesus since 1960: their increasing congregationalism.

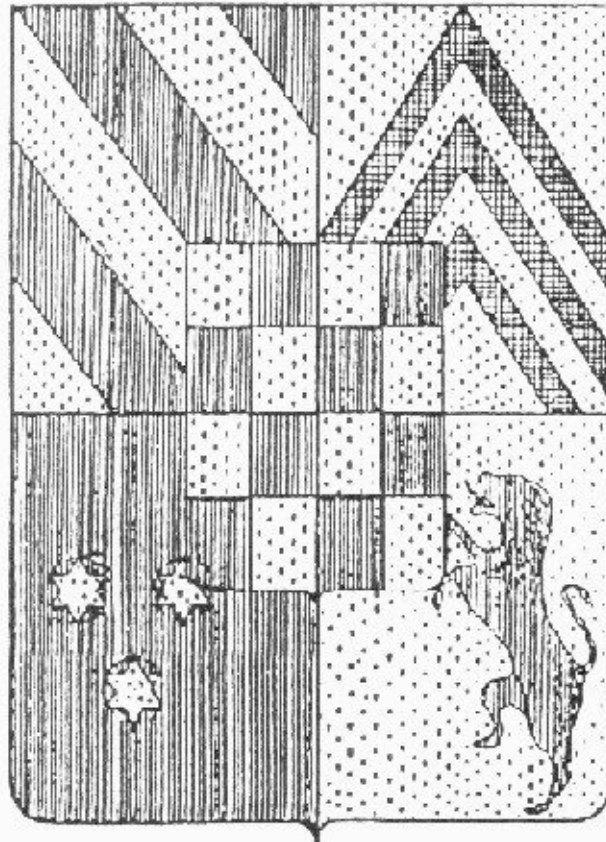
For the purpose of this study, therefore, Hebrew Christians are Jews who have embraced New Testament Christianity and practice their faith within the context of the established church. In turn, Messianic Jews are those Jews who, while embracing New Testament Christianity, have sought to remain within the Jewish community and assert their Jewish identity by worshipping in communities of faith that

¹²Michael Schiffman, *Return of the Remnant: The Rebirth of Messianic Judaism* (Baltimore: Lederer, 1992), p. 5.

to varying degrees emphasize Jewish worship forms and cultural expressions.

APPENDIX B
Illustrations

I. Coat of Arms of Henri de Lévy



The name "de Lévy", or "de Lévis" is closely associated with various periods in the history of Canada. . . .

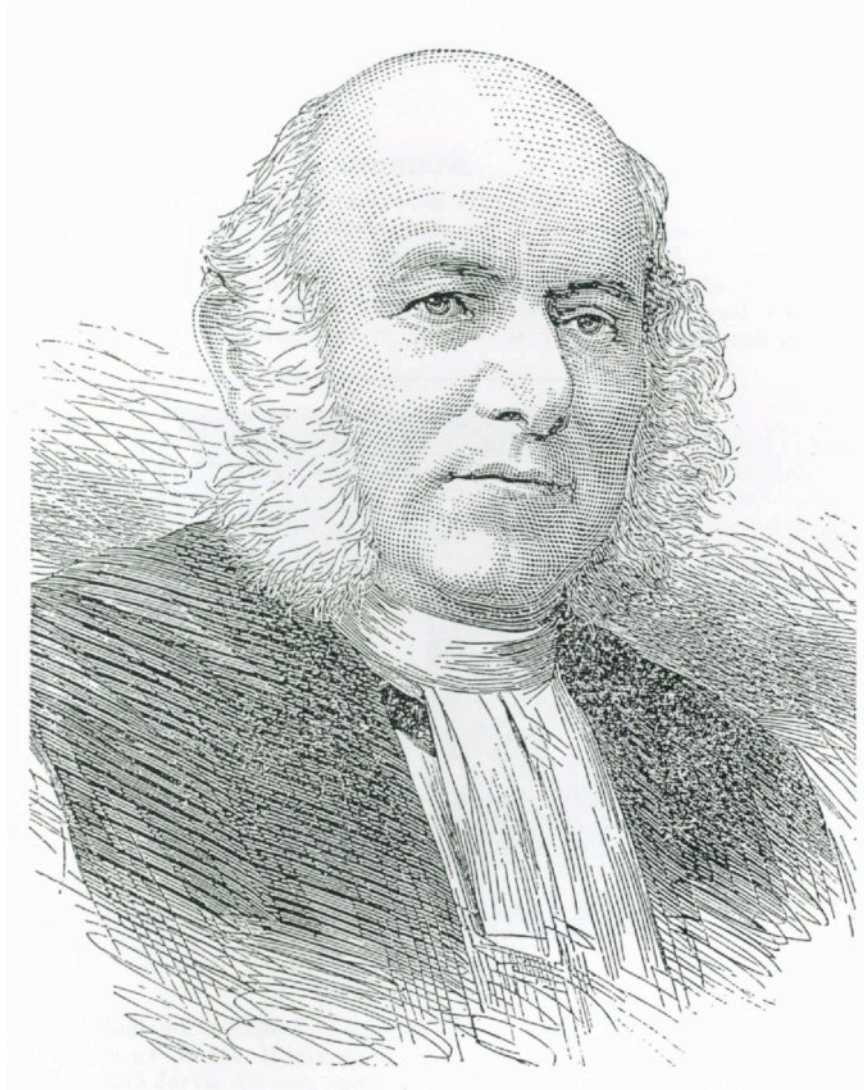
Around these circumstances was built the legend that the representative of the French King in Canada, although a descendant of a highly aristocratic family, had yet some connection with Jews. Those who have endeavored to study the matter, trying to distinguish the real from the legendary, have not gotten beyond the stage of conjecture or speculation regarding the various versions of the story, all of which, however, reveal the same mythical background of de Lévy's Jewish origin. Particular color is attached to the legend by the story which relates that in the family chapel of the de Lévy's in France there was a picture representing the Virgin Mary and one of the de Lévy's standing before her with uncovered head and hat in hand. "Cover your head, cousin,"

the Virgin is supposed to have urged him, according to the inscription below the picture. To which he is supposed to have replied: "I am more comfortable this way, cousin." Another version of the same legend has it that Mary says to de Lévy: "Be seated, cousin". To which the answer is supposed to have been: "No, cousin, I am standing for my convenience."

Of unique interest, too, is the presence on the coat of arms of the Duke of Ventadour of three stars which differ from the usual form and which look very strikingly like "Mogen Davids." This remarkable fact must be considered in conjunction with the rest of the facts concerning him and which invest him with a strange mysticism.¹

¹The entire text and illustration above were taken from Arthur Daniel Hart, ed. *The Jew in Canada* (Toronto: Jewish Pub., 1926), p. 2, which quotes *Le Moniteur Universel* (Paris), 19 décembre 1881. and Max J. Kohler in *Publications of American Jewish Historical Society*, Vol. IV., p. 87.

II. The Right Reverend Isaac Hellmuth, D.D.



The Right Reverend Isaac Hellmuth, D.D.²

²A.H. Crowfoot, *This Dreamer: Life of Isaac Hellmuth, Second Bishop of Huron* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1963),

III. Winnipeg Mission Premises

WINNIPEG.

Since the close of the Church year, a Mission to the Jews in Winnipeg has been opened. On March 31st, just three years after the commencement of work in Toronto, the Mission to the Jews in Winnipeg was inaugurated. While the report of this new work will find place properly in next year's Annual Statement, it may now be announced that Mr. Hugo Spitzer and Mrs. Spitzer, formerly in Jewish Mission work in



Winnipeg Mission Premises

London, England, accepted the invitation of the Committee and are now in charge of the Winnipeg work. Suitable premises have been secured at 215 Jarvis Avenue, and a satisfactory start has been made.

Winnipeg Mission Premises, First Annual Report, 1911, with Mr. & Mrs. Spitzer and others at entrance. This type of storefront mission was typical for its day.

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