

Shalom Ireland – A Social History of the Jews in Modern Ireland  
by Ray Rivlin.  
Gill and Macmillan 2003.

Ray Rivlin is to be congratulated for a highly entertaining and deliciously anecdotal social history of the Jews of Ireland. From its intimate origins in Clanbrassil Street, Ray Rivlin traces the development of Irish Jewry into almost every sphere of the national life of Eire, painting thumb nail portraits of the leading figures in the community, and especially those who achieved prominence in their chosen field.

An 'outsider' reading the chapters will find much to inform and amuse, though a lack of insider knowledge will prevent any assessment of the accuracy of all the information that has been advanced by the author. This reviewer has heard cavils from a number of insiders about the accuracy of certain details, and can also vouch for the mistaken spelling of a relative whose name appears on p. 118 as Middleboro (sic). It is to be hoped that Ms Rivlin will invite her readers to notify her of such details so that corrections can be made for the paperback edition when it appears.

It is also to be hoped that the inexplicable omission of any real detail concerning Dublin's long established Progressive Synagogue, to which many prominent Irish Jews have belonged, will be rectified at that time.

These points apart, however, this is a valuable addition to the histories now in existence of the Jewish communities of the British Isles.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh