Welcome and Unwelcome: Jewish Refugee Industrialists on the Treforest Trading Estate, 1938-1941

By Emily Stanley

In April 1939, forty-nine of the seventy-eight businesses operating on the Treforest Trading Estate in South Wales had been established by Jewish refugees.[1] This essay will explore the relationship between refugee industrialists and native communities from the industrialists' arrival to the release of the industrialists who had been interned during the Second World War. Jewish refugee industrialists were celebrated because of the employment that they created, their contribution to the war effort and how they became part of the community. However, the threat of invasion in May and June 1940 led to nineteen industrialists from Treforest being interned.[2] Public opinion soon turned against internment leading to calls for them to be released.[3] While the experiences of Jewish refugee industrialists in Wales have begun to be explored by historians, their relationship with the Welsh communities they found themselves in has been largely overlooked.[4] Attitudes towards Jewish refugee industrialists were as diverse as the community itself between 1938 and 1941. Welsh people were not simply either sympathetic or hostile to Jewish refugee industrialists. They could be both at the same time. Nor were these attitudes fixed. They were complicated by nationality, global events, personal prejudices and sympathies. There was also a difference between how they were perceived as individuals and as part of the wider Jewish community in Britain. This is perhaps best summed up by the Mass Observation response of a Jewish man from Newport in 1939. He wrote, 'I find that while individual Jews are quite popular, Jews as a whole are not too well liked'.[5] As a result, Jewish refugee industrialists on the Treforest Trading Estate were both welcome and unwelcome.

The first settled Jewish community in South Wales emerged in Swansea in 1768. This was followed by Cardiff and Merthyr Tydfil by 1850.[6] At the end of the nineteenth century, Jewish people could be found across South Wales. This was due to the increase in heavy industry and Jewish immigration from Russia caused by the anti-Jewish riots after the assassination of Tzar Alexander II.[7] Jewish people have not generally been the subject of severe hostility in Wales. Their numbers were often small and they were rarely seen to be

[1] Anthony Glaser, 'Jewish Refugees and Jewish Refugee Industries', in *The Jews of South Wales*, ed. by Ursula R. Q. Henriques (University of Wales Press, 2013), pp. 177-204 (p. 191).
[2] Cai Parry-Jones, *The Jews of Wales: A History* (University of Wales Press, 2017), pp. 76-77.
[3] Rachel Pistol, 'Enemy Aliens: Internment and Deportation Policy in Great Britain, September 1939-June 1940', *Modern Italy,* 29.3 (2024), pp. 261-76 (pp. 270-71), doi:10.1017/mit.2024.23.
[4] Glaser, pp. 186-98; Parry-Jones, pp. 68-70 and 76-77.
[5] Mass Observation Online, DR 1983, reply to February 1939 Directive.
[6] Parry-Jones, pp. 19-20.
[7] Anthony Glaser and Ursula R. Q. Henriques, 'The Valleys Communities', in *The Jews of South Wales*, ed. by Ursula R. Q. Henriques (University of Wales Press, 2013), pp. 45-67 (pp. 47-48).

competing with Welsh people for employment or housing.[8] Furthermore, it is thought that the prevalence of Nonconformist denominations made Jewish people feel more welcome in Wales.[9] However, the hostility experienced by Jewish refugee industrialists during the Second World War was not the first time Jewish communities in Wales were made to feel unwelcome. The Anti-Jewish Riots of 1911 have dominated the historiography of Welsh Jewry.[10] Beginning on Saturday, 19 August 1911 in Tredegar, seven nights of rioting broke out.[11] On the first night alone, eighteen of the twenty Jewish-owned shops in Tredegar were attacked. Police and soldiers were deployed as more shops and homes (many of them Jewish-owned) were attacked by rioters.[12] It has been debated whether the riots were caused by antisemitism or economic problems.[13] The debate centres around whether Wales is a philosemitic or antisemitic nation. As the example of the refugee industrialists also shows, this binary is problematic because it is too simplistic.[14] Elements of both can be present at the same time. The riots of 1911 had several causes, including antisemitism and economic issues, which came together to spark violence.[15] Moreover, the historiography of Jewish people in Wales has focused on suffering and discrimination. While those need to be explored and recognised, there is so much more to the story of Wales's Jewish communities.[16] Losing nearly all their possessions, starting again in a new country and leaving family members behind was undoubtedly an extremely difficult experience.[17] But that is not the complete experience of the refugee industrialists who came to Treforest. It is also a story of survival, rebuilding and hope.

German Jews had been gradually excluded from public life since the Nazis came to power in 1933. For Austrian and Czech Jews, this process took place much faster.[18] Listening to Hitler's speeches on the radio and the arrival of German soldiers were among the factors that convinced refugee industrialists across Nazi-occupied territories that they needed to

[8] Ursula R. Q. Henriques, 'Introduction', in *The Jews of South Wales*, ed. by Ursula R. Q. Henriques (University of Wales Press, 2013), pp. 1-8 (pp. 6-7).
[9] Parry-Jones, pp. 23-24.
[10] Parry-Jones, p. 5.
[11] Robin Douglas, 'The Anti-Jewish Riots of 1911', *Welsh History Review*, 32.2 (2024), pp. 340-67 (pp. 340 and 343), doi:10.16922/whr.32.2.4.
[12] Douglas, pp. 344-46.
[13] Geoffrey Alderman, 'The Anti-Jewish Riots of August 1911 in South Wales: A Response', *Welsh History Review,* 20.3 (2001), pp. 565-71 (pp. 570-71); Colin Holmes, 'The Tredegar Riots of 1911: Anti-Jewish Disturbances in South Wales', *Welsh History Review*, 11.2 (1982), pp. 214-25 (p. 223); Parry-Jones, p. 89; W. D. Rubinstein, 'The Anti-Jewish Riots of 1911 in South Wales: A Re-Examination', *Welsh History Review,* 18.4 (1997), pp. 667-99 (p. 669).
[14] Parry-Jones, p. 89.
[15] Douglas, pp. 342 and 367.
[16] Parry-Jones, p. 5.
[17] Laraine Salamon, 'Trude Owen', *Bimah,* June 1996 <https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/1204911> [accessed 6 April 2026]; Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with Desidier Golten by Mike Hawkins, 17 March 2019.
[18] Martin Gilbert, *The Holocaust: The Human Tragedy* (RosettaBooks, 2014), pp. 55-56.

leave.[19] However, migrating to Britain was not an easy process. Due to high unemployment in Britain, the government prioritised accepting those who could financially support themselves or had skills that would benefit Britain.[20] For refugee industrialists, Britain's unemployment problem created an escape route. Unemployment was particularly high in areas which had seen its heavy industry decline, such as South Wales.[21] Kenneth O. Morgan described the creation of the Treforest Trading Estate as 'the most hopeful and constructive' idea of the Special Areas Commissioner (a position created by the Special Areas Act (1934)).[22] The estate was intended to attract businesses through financial incentives.[23] Despite this, British businesses were reluctant to come to South Wales because they thought that the workers would be unreliable and they were concerned about the connotations of operating in a Special Area.[24] Their prejudice offered refugee industrialists a lifeline. By February 1936, the Special Areas Commissioner was enquiring as to how refugee industrialists could be directed towards the Special Areas.[25] This process could begin before refugee industrialists had left their native countries. Des Golten, the son of Alexander Goldstein of Metal Products (Treforest) Ltd, remembered a British delegation coming to Prague to invite industrialists to set up factories in South Wales.[26] The Home Office strongly encouraged refugee industrialists to go to one of the four Special Areas.[27] A common theme amongst the memories of the children of refugee industrialists is that their parents were given the option of going to any of the Special Areas and they chose South Wales because it had the best travel links to London.[28] The financial incentives were available to them too, which would have been essential given that refugees had often had many of their assets

[19] Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with Desidier Golten by Mike Hawkins, 17 March 2019; Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with Gaby Koppel Brown by Laura Henley Harrison, 21 January 2022; Salamon, 'Trude Owen'.
[20] Anthony Grenville, *Jewish Refugees from Germany and Austria in Britain, 1933-1970: Their Image in AJR Information* (Vallentine Mitchell, 2010), p. 5.
[21] Parry-Jones, pp. 68-69.
[22] Kenneth O. Morgan, Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980 (Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 226.
[23] 'The Treforest Trading Estate', *The Times*, 25 March 1937, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CS220278905/GDCS?u=uows&sid=bookmark-GDCS&pg=13&xid=3cfface3> [accessed 6 April 2026].
[24] Leon Gooberman, *From Depression to Devolution: Economy and Government in Wales, 1934-2006* (University of Wales Press, 2017), p. 17; P. Malcolm Stewart, *Third Report of the Commissioner for the Special Areas (England and Wales)*, (London: 1936) <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=14680&groupid=95628&pgId=3d3f600f-3408-4930-9704-8f09961dfc8f&rsId=19CC7B7A40A> [accessed 6 April 2026].
[25] George Gillett, *Second Report of the Commissioner for the Special Areas (England and Wales),* (London: 1936) <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers/docview/t70.d75.1935-034029?accountid=14680> [accessed 6 April 2026].
[26] Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with Desidier Golten by Mike Hawkins, 17 March 2019.
[27] Glaser, p. 187.
[28] Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with Desidier Golten by Mike Hawkins, 17 March 2019; Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with Gaby Koppel Brown by Laura Henley Harrison, 21 January 2022; Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with George Schoenmann by Mike Hawkins, 20 September 2018.

confiscated by the Nazis.[29] Therefore, these refugee industrialists were not only welcome, they were invited, because it was believed that they could help solve Britain's unemployment problems.

At the end of 1936, 28.1 per cent of insured men in Wales were unemployed. In areas like Brynmawr and Ferndale, it was over 50 per cent.[30] The purpose of the Treforest Trading Estate was to bring new industries to the area to prove that economic recovery was possible and that South Wales had a reliable, hardworking workforce.[31] Refugee industrialists played a key role in this because they were willing to go where many British businesses were not, leading to over sixty per cent of businesses on the estate being owned by Jewish refugees.[32] Refugees often fled their homes with very little. The Schoenmann family of the General Paper and Box Manufacturing Company left Vienna with the equivalent of five pounds.[33] Yet, they brought their skills, experiences and connections. This would have been invaluable for a trading estate in its infancy.[34] Industrialists' applications were vetted to make sure that they would not become competitors for British businesses.[35] Consequently, they helped to diversify the economy by producing a variety of goods including leather gloves, paint and zips.[36] Their value was clearly recognised when there was 'Great rejoicing' at signs that production at the Chrome Leather Factory would soon begin in January 1938.[37] Likewise, there was outrage at Pembroke Borough Council and the Pembroke Chamber of Trade when a Czech glasses frame factory made an inquiry about establishing itself in Pembroke, but was directed to the Treforest Trading Estate by the Home Office. The Czech refugees were wanted because of the employment they could have created for local people.[38] Not everyone shared the councillors' enthusiasm for refugee factories. Enough people were suspicious of 'Foreigner's Ideas' on the estate to cause Douglas Duncan, the

[29] Tiffany H. L. Beebe, 'Rebuilding Communities: Refugee Industrialists in the "Special Areas" of Britain, 1934-1945' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Colorado, 2022), p. 3; Glaser, p. 198; Parry-Jones, p. 69.
[30] John Davies, *A History of Wales,* rev. edn (Penguin Books, 2007), p. 568.
[31] 'Treforest Trading Estate', *South Wales Daily Post*, 21 January 1938, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0004705/19380121/015/0015> [accessed 6 April 2026]; People's Collection Wales, *The Official Guide to Pontypridd and Treforest Trading Estate, Published by Pontypridd Urban District Council, Pontypridd, 1939* (2024) <https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/2188611> [accessed 6 April 2026].
[32] Gooberman, p. 19.
[33] Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with George Schoenmann by Mike Hawkins, 20 September 2018.
[34] Beebe, p. 56; Glaser, p. 186.
[35] Beebe, p. 117.
[36] Beebe, pp. 130-31; Glaser, p. 192.
[37] 'Upper Boat and District Jottings.', *Pontypridd Observer*, 15 January 1938, <https://britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19380115/073/0006> [accessed 6 April 2026].
[38] 'Pembroke "Left in Lurch" Protest', *Herald of Wales*, 13 April 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0004700/19400413/008/0008> [accessed 6 April 2026]; 'Pembroke Traders' Protest: Czech Factory for Treforest', *Herald of Wales*, 18 May 1940 <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0004700/19400518/002/0002> [accessed 6 April 2026].

estate's General Manager, to respond.[39] Duncan stressed that refugee industrialists were vetted and were an asset to Welsh industry.[40] What ideas exactly people objected to is unclear. Duncan's article illustrates that not everyone embraced refugee industries, but they had defenders as well. Thus, refugee industrialists were both welcome by some and unwelcome by others on the Treforest Trading Estate.

Refugee industrialists continued to prove that they could help Britain by supporting the war effort. This helped to give them a positive reputation. The outbreak of war posed a major threat to refugee businesses when supply lines and trade routes were cut off. Yet, for businesses able to adapt, the war offered great opportunities.[41] Jewish refugees had many reasons to support the British war effort and they were keen to prove their loyalty. For example, General Paper and Box Manufacturing (set up by Paul Schoenmann from Austria) had a toolroom which they used to make parts for Spitfire engines.[42] Refugee industrialists' contributions did not go unnoticed. Newspapers are incredibly useful because they can reveal information about local events that were not recorded elsewhere.[43] They reflected and shaped how contemporaries understood events.[44] This can be seen in the coverage of refugee industrialists. In May 1941, the *Pontypridd Observer* reported on a blood donation drive on the estate. It commented that 'There has been a wonderful response from the foreign refugees carrying on businesses and employed in the Estate, who have always shown the utmost readiness to assist the British war effort in every possible way'.[45] Refugee industrialists were clearly welcome in Treforest because they had earned themselves a positive reputation for their eagerness to support the war effort. The newspaper's comments demonstrate that this was not an isolated action, but part of a pattern of behaviour. However, not all newspapers were so welcoming to Jewish refugees. In May 1940, the *Herald of Wales* reported a number of 'humorous' stories about the National Savings Movement being promoted to immigrant communities. This included that refugees on the Treforest estate needed a German interpreter to understand what was being said.[46] Even though the article reports that the refugees were enthusiastic about the scheme, it

---

[39] Douglas A. Duncan, 'Developments at Treforest: Seven Persistent Criticisms – and Seven Replies', *Western Mail*, 9 January 1939, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0000104/19390109/487/0038?browse=true> [accessed 6 April 2026].

[40] Duncan, 'Developments at Treforest'.

[41] Beebe, p. 181.

[42] Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with George Schoenmann by Mike Hawkins, 20 September 2018.

[43] Denise Bates, *Historical Research Using British Newspapers* (Pen & Sword History, 2016), p. 55.

[44] Stephen Vella, 'Newspapers', in *Reading Primary Sources: The Interpretation of Texts from Nineteenth- and Twentieth-century History,* ed. by Miriam Dobson and Benjamin Ziemann (Routledge, 2009), pp. 192-208 (p. 192).

[45] 'Blood Transfusion Clinic.' *Pontypridd Observer*, 31 May 1941, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19410531/041/0003> [accessed 6 April 2026].

[46] 'Passing Pageant of Men and Affairs: Topical Gossip of the Week in Wales', *Herald of Wales,* 11 May 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0004700/19400511/003/0003> [accessed 6 April 2026].

mocks them because they needed an interpreter. For the industrialists who could read English, it must have felt unwelcoming and disheartening to read this kind of coverage. As a result, newspaper reporting highlights that refugee industrialists were both praised and disparaged because of their contributions to the British war effort.

Despite language and cultural barriers, refugee industrialists appear to have become a welcome part of the local community. Relationships between employers and employees were generally positive and constructive.[47] While newspapers rarely reported that industrialists were Jewish, and sometimes did not mention that they were refugees (this could be done on purpose by certain newspapers to prevent xenophobia or antisemitism), local people would have known because of the language difference.[48] Des Golten recalled that lots of languages were spoken on the estate between 1939 and the beginning of 1940, including Czech, German and Hungarian. This was because refugee employers and employees often spoke very little English when they first arrived.[49] Gaby Koppel, the step-granddaughter of Joachim Koppel (from Berlin) of Aero Zipp Fasteners Ltd., described the estate as 'a little enclave of […] continental businesses'.[50] Even so, their factories were not ostracised by locals because they were owned by immigrants. The factories and their owners became part of their local communities.[51] They had football and skittles teams just like British businesses on the estate.[52] An employee of Burlington Gloves (owned by Austrian Jewish refugees) wore a pair of gloves, given to her by her employers, on her wedding day.[53] These examples are a few of many reports that highlight the welcomed presence of refugee businesses in the community.[54] Anthony Glaser identified that these businesses likely had greater social importance (than more successful companies in areas of lower unemployment) because they were so desperately needed in South Wales.[55] This is not to say that refugee industrialists were never made to feel unwelcome. Even so, the increase in

[47] Beebe, p. 109
[48] Beebe, p. 133.
[49] Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with Desidier Golten by Mike Hawkins, 17 March 2019.
[50] Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with Gaby Koppel Brown by Laura Henley Harrison, 21 January 2022; Gaby Koppel, 'The Jewish Entrepreneurs who Helped Revive Post-war Wales', *Jewish Chronicle,* 27 February 2025, <https://www.thejc.com/life/the-jewish-entrepreneurs-who-helped-revive-post-war-wales-micsf98c> [accessed 6 April 2026].
[51] Beebe, p. 133.
[52] '"Draw" for Skittle Tournament (Troop Fund) Upper Boat Alley.', *Pontypridd Observer*, 1 June 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19400601/093/0006> [accessed 6 April 2026]; 'Trallwn Obituary', *Pontypridd Observer,* 14 June 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19410614/019/0002> [accessed 6 April 2026].
[53] 'Cilfynydd News', *Pontypridd Observer*, 13 January 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19400113/051/0004> [accessed 6 April 2026]
[54] Further examples: 'Upper Boat & District Jottings', *Pontypridd Observer,* 10 February 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19400210/070/0005> [accessed 6 April 2026]; 'Trallwen Obituary'; H. W. Samolewitz, 'Letter from Mr. H. W. Samolewitz', *Punch & Die,* October 1946, <https://www.jhasw.com/_files/ugd/530441_7d41c208de284264a61c386150f139bd.pdf> [accessed 6 April 2026].
[55] Glaser, p. 198

the Jewish population of South Wales did not cause a repeat of anything like the 1911 riots. This suggests that Jewish refugee industrialists were largely welcomed as part of the community.

The Second World War posed a serious threat to the relationship between Jewish refugee industrialists and the communities they lived and worked among. The outbreak of war marked the beginning of Czech refugees being treated differently to German and Austrian refugees. Czech refugees were friendly aliens. A Czech minister visited a number of Czech factories on the estate in December 1940. A director of the estate expressed the solidarity felt between the two countries and commented that 'relations between the directors of the estate and the Czech manufacturers had always been of a most cordial character'.[56] Their common enemy brought them together which made the Czech industrialists and politicians welcome in Treforest. Even though German and Austrian Jewish refugees also had a vested interest in Britain winning the war, this does not seem to have always been understood by contemporaries. Austrian and German Jewish refugees had initially been seen as 'victims of oppression'. After the outbreak of war, they became 'enemy aliens'.[57] Oral history interviews make opinions accessible that otherwise would have been lost, even if they are not interviews of the industrialists themselves.[58] Often interviews with people connected to the estate were conducted several decades after the events they were describing. Nevertheless, moments that are understood at the time to be significant are likely to be remembered long afterwards.[59] Dorothy Flemming, the niece of an industrialist, remembered becoming an enemy alien on her sixteenth birthday. She found the label 'enemy alien' more upsetting than the restrictions they had to abide by. Her schoolfriends assured her that it did not change the way they saw her.[60] Unfortunately, not everyone was so enlightened.[61] The change in status caused some to fear Austrian and German refugees in their area.[62] They were not seen as individuals but part of the wider population of Austrian and German nationals in Britain. Austrian and German Jewish refugees had already fled their homes because they were not even tolerated. From 1939, they were classed as enemies in

[56] 'Czech Minister at Trading Estate', *Pontypridd Observer,* 28 December 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19401228/023/0002> [accessed 6 April 2026].
[57] Parry-Jones, p. 75; Rachel Pistol, ''Heavy Is the Responsibility for All the Lives that Might Have Been Saved in the Pre-war Years': British Perceptions of Refugees 1933–1940', *European Judaism*, 50.2 (2017), pp. 42-49 (p. 45), doi:10.3167/ej.2017.500207.
[58] Daryl Leeworthy, 'The Secret Life of Us: 1984, the Miners' Strike and the Place of Biography in Writing History 'From Below', *European Review of History,* 19.5 (2012), pp. 825-46 (pp. 826-27), doi:10.1080/13507486.2012.719009.
[59] Alistair Thomson, 'Memory and Remembering in Oral History', in *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History,* ed. by Donald A. Ritchie (Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 78-95 (p. 84).
[60] Imperial War Museum, *Fleming, Dorothy (Oral History),* <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80016068> [accessed 6 April 2026].
[61] Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with George Schoenmann by Mike Hawkins, 20 September 2018.
[62] Beebe, p. 205; Parry-Jones, p. 77.

Britain too. Czech refugees remained welcome, but Austrian and German refugees were viewed with suspicion.

The threat of invasion caused a serious escalation in how unwelcome Jewish refugee industrialists were. Initially, most German and Austrians living in Britain were classed as Category C (meaning they were considered friendly).[63] This changed by May 1940 as it was thought that the only explanation for the speed at which Germany was able to invade Denmark, Norway, France and the Low Countries was the presence of a significant number of German spies in those countries (known as the 'Fifth Column').[64] The fear that Britain would be invaded led to calls for the mass internment of Austrian and Germans on the principle that it was better to intern innocent people, than risk allowing enemies to remain free. The policy was generally supported by the public.[65] Austrian and Germans were not welcome in Britain. Nineteen refugee industrialists from Treforest (a mixture of Jewish and non-Jewish people) were interned.[66] The fact that these industrialists had been welcomed to South Wales to create employment no longer seemed to matter. Franz and Betty Hausner, of Novel Textile Co. Ltd, were interned in separate camps on the Isle of Man. In a letter to Betty in December 1940, Franz wrote that he had never written anything 'dis-loyal to this country, although we have had so much to suffer without any obvious reason'.[67] In another letter, Franz wrote, 'There is no human feeling in the responsible person'.[68] From Franz's letters, it is clear that internment was a distressing ordeal. After a few months, public opinion began to turn against mass internment.[69] How welcome or unwelcome refugee industrialists were fluctuated depending on wider events. This made refugee industrialists vulnerable as it was often things beyond their control that affected how people treated them. Little distinction had been made by the authorities between Jewish and non-Jewish German and Austrian immigrants. Many in Wales struggled to make that distinction too.[70] Hence, the policy of mass internment was shaped by attitudes towards refugee industrialists, and refugees generally, and shaped attitudes towards them. This led to many treating them as unwelcome in Wales.

Ultimately, the Jewish refugee industrialists who came to Treforest to set up businesses between 1938 and 1941 were both welcome and unwelcome. They showed incredible determination and loyalty to South Wales. In 1973, 3881 people were employed

---

[63] Beebe, pp. 193-94.
[64] Beebe, pp. 197-98; Rachel Pistol, 'Enemy Alien and Refugee: Conflicting Identities in Great Britain during the Second World War', *University of Sussex Journal of Contemporary History,* 16 (2015), pp. 37-52 (p. 37).
[65] Pistol, 'Enemy Aliens: Internment and Deportation Policy in Great Britain', pp. 262 and 270.
[66] Parry-Jones, pp. 76-77.
[67] Their Finest Hour, *Betty and Franz Hausner's Stories as 'Enemy Aliens'* (2024), <https://portal.sds.ox.ac.uk/articles/online_resource/Betty_and_Franz_Hausner_s_Stories_as_Enemy_Aliens_/25923196?file=46646311> [accessed 6 April 2026].
[68] People's Collection Wales, *Letter written by Franz Hausner, interned at Mooragh Camp in Ramsey, in the Isle of Man, to his wife Betty, who was interned in Port Erin, Isle of Man, 27 November 1940* (2022), <https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/1862316> [accessed 6 April 2026].
[69] Pistol, 'Heavy is the Responsibility for All the Lives that Might Have Been Saved in the Pre-war Years', p. 47.
[70] Parry-Jones, p. 77.

by refugee businesses and their successors.[71] The historiography of Jewish people in Wales has a tendency to try to characterise Wales as either philosemitic or antisemitic. The historiography cannot truly reflect the experiences of Jewish people in Wales unless it embraces that they could be both welcome and unwelcome at the same time. The treatment of Jewish refugee industrialists is relevant nearly ninety years after they began arriving in Wales because it reflects themes present in contemporary debates about immigration. The policy of internment highlights how quickly public opinion about immigrants can shift dramatically which raises questions about how much it should inform immigration policy.[72] People who speak different languages or have a different culture are still sometimes seen as a problem or something to be feared.[73] Jewish refugee industrialists were welcome in Wales because they created jobs, contributed to the war effort and became part of the community. However, they could also be unwelcome because they were immigrants who had different ideas and spoke different languages. During the Second World War, Czech Jewish industrialists were friendly aliens, whereas Austrian and German Jewish industrialists were enemy aliens. The latter could become subject to internment. These experiences were extremely unpleasant. Furthermore, as little distinction was made between Jewish and non-Jewish immigrants, the public sometimes struggled to make that distinction too. This led to refugee industrialists being made to feel unwelcome once again. Therefore, Jewish refugee industrialists were both welcome and unwelcome in South Wales.

[71] Glaser, p. 195.
[72] Pistol, 'Heavy is the Responsibility for All the Lives that Might Have Been Saved in the Pre-war Years', p. 47.
[73] BBC, 'Nigel Farage: 'Broken Britain', national identity and lessons from Trump', *Political Thinking with Nick Robinson,* podcast, 14 February 2026, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m002rd9q> [accessed 4 April 2026]; Pistol, 'Heavy is the Responsibility for All the Lives that Might Have Been Saved in the Pre-war Years', p. 42.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

BBC, 'Nigel Farage: 'Broken Britain', national identity and lessons from Trump', *Political Thinking with Nick Robinson,* podcast, 14 February 2026, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m002rd9q> [accessed 4 April 2026]

'Blood Transfusion Clinic.' *Pontypridd Observer*, 31 May 1941, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19410531/041/0003> [accessed 6 April 2026]

'Czech Minister at Trading Estate', *Pontypridd Observer,* 28 December 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19401228/023/0002> [accessed 6 April 2026]

'Cilfynydd News', *Pontypridd Observer*, 13 January 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19400113/051/0004> [accessed 6 April 2026]

'"Draw" for Skittle Tournament (Troop Fund) Upper Boat Alley.', *Pontypridd Observer*, 1 June 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19400601/093/0006> [accessed 6 April 2026]

Duncan, Douglas A., 'Developments at Treforest: Seven Persistent Criticisms – and Seven Replies', *Western Mail*, 9 January 1939, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0000104/19390109/487/0038?browse=true> [accessed 6 April 2026]

Gillett, George, *Second Report of the Commissioner for the Special Areas (England and Wales),* (London: 1936) <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers/docview/t70.d75.1935-034029?accountid=14680> [accessed 6 April 2026]

Imperial War Museum, *Fleming, Dorothy (Oral History),* <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80016068> [accessed 6 April 2026]

Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with Desidier Golten by Mike Hawkins, 17 March 2019

Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with Gaby Koppel Brown by Laura Henley Harrison, 21 January 2022

Jewish History Association of South Wales, interview with George Schoenmann by Mike Hawkins, 20 September 2018

Koppel, Gaby, 'The Jewish Entrepreneurs who Helped Revive Post-war Wales', *Jewish Chronicle,* 27 February 2025, <https://www.thejc.com/life/the-jewish-entrepreneurs-who-helped-revive-post-war-wales-micsf98c> [accessed 6 April 2026]

Mass Observation Online, DR 1983, reply to February 1939 Directive

‘Passing Pageant of Men and Affairs: Topical Gossip of the Week in Wales’, *Herald of Wales,* 11 May 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0004700/19400511/003/0003> [accessed 6 April 2026]

‘Pembroke “Left in Lurch” Protest’, *Herald of Wales*, 13 April 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0004700/19400413/008/0008> [accessed 6 April 2026]

‘Pembroke Traders’ Protest: Czech Factory for Treforest’, *Herald of Wales*, 18 May 1940 <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0004700/19400518/002/0002> [accessed 6 April 2026]

People’s Collection Wales, *Letter written by Franz Hausner, interned at Mooragh Camp in Ramsey, in the Isle of Man, to his wife Betty, who was interned in Port Erin, Isle of Man, 27 November 1940* (2022), <https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/1862316> [accessed 6 April 2026]

People’s Collection Wales, *The Official Guide to Pontypridd and Treforest Trading Estate, Published by Pontypridd Urban District Council, Pontypridd, 1939* (2024) <https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/2188611> [accessed 6 April 2026]

Salamon, Laraine, ‘Trude Owen’, *Bimah,* June 1996 <https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/1204911> [accessed 6 April 2026]

Samolewitz, H. W. ‘Letter from Mr. H. W. Samolewitz’, *Punch & Die,* October 1946, <https://www.jhasw.com/_files/ugd/530441_7d41c208de284264a61c386150f139bd.pdf> [accessed 6 April 2026]

Stewart, P. Malcolm, *Third Report of the Commissioner for the Special Areas (England and Wales)*, (London: 1936) <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=14680&groupid=95628&pgId=3d3f600f-3408-4930-9704-8f09961dfc8f&rsId=19CC7B7A40A> [accessed 6 April 2026]

‘The Treforest Trading Estate’, *The Times*, 25 March 1937, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CS220278905/GDCS?u=uows&sid=bookmark-GDCS&pg=13&xid=3cfface3> [accessed 6 April 2026]

Their Finest Hour, *Betty and Franz Hausner’s Stories as ‘Enemy Aliens’* (2024), <https://portal.sds.ox.ac.uk/articles/online_resource/Betty_and_Franz_Hausner_s_Stories_as_Enemy_Aliens_/25923196?file=46646311> [accessed 6 April 2026]

‘Trallwn Obituary’, *Pontypridd Observer,* 14 June 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19410614/019/0002> [accessed 6 April 2026]

‘Treforest Trading Estate’, *South Wales Daily Post*, 21 January 1938, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0004705/19380121/015/0015> [accessed 6 April 2026]

‘Upper Boat and District Jottings.’, *Pontypridd Observer*, 15 January 1938, <https://britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19380115/073/0006> [accessed 6 April 2026]

‘Upper Boat & District Jottings’, *Pontypridd Observer,* 10 February 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002890/19400210/070/0005> [accessed 6 April 2026]

Secondary Literature

Alderman, Geoffrey, ‘The Anti-Jewish Riots of August 1911 in South Wales: A Response’, *Welsh History Review,* 20.3 (2001), pp. 565-71

Bates, Denise, *Historical Research Using British Newspapers* (Pen & Sword History, 2016)

Beebe, Tiffany H. L., ‘Rebuilding Communities: Refugee Industrialists in the “Special Areas” of Britain, 1934-1945’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Colorado, 2022)

Davies, John, *A History of Wales,* rev. edn (Penguin Books, 2007)

Douglas, Robin, ‘The Anti-Jewish Riots of 1911’, *Welsh History Review*, 32.2 (2024), pp. 340-67, doi:10.16922/whr.32.2.4

Gilbert, Martin, *The Holocaust: The Human Tragedy* (RosettaBooks, 2014)

Glaser, Anthony, 'Jewish Refugees and Jewish Refugee Industries', in *The Jews of South Wales*, ed. by Ursula R. Q. Henriques (University of Wales Press, 2013), pp. 177-204

Glaser, Anthony, and Ursula R. Q. Henriques, ‘The Valleys Communities’, in *The Jews of South Wales*, ed. by Ursula R. Q. Henriques (University of Wales Press, 2013), pp. 45-67

Gooberman, Leon, *From Depression to Devolution: Economy and Government in Wales, 1934-2006* (University of Wales Press, 2017)

Grenville, Anthony, *Jewish Refugees from Germany and Austria in Britain, 1933-1970: Their Image in AJR Information* (Vallentine Mitchell, 2010)

Henriques, Ursula R. Q., ‘Introduction’, in *The Jews of South Wales*, ed. by Ursula R. Q. Henriques (University of Wales Press, 2013), pp. 1-8

Holmes, Colin, ‘The Tredegar Riots of 1911: Anti-Jewish Disturbances in South Wales’, *Welsh History Review*, 11.2 (1982), pp. 214-25

Leeworthy, Daryl, ‘The Secret Life of Us: 1984, the Miners’ Strike and the Place of Biography in Writing History ‘From Below’, *European Review of History,* 19.5 (2012), pp. 825-46, doi:10.1080/13507486.2012.719009

Morgan, Kenneth O., *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980* (Oxford University Press, 1980)

Parry-Jones, Cai, *The Jews of Wales: A History* (University of Wales Press, 2017)

Pistol, Rachel, ‘Enemy Alien and Refugee: Conflicting Identities in Great Britain during the Second World War’, *University of Sussex Journal of Contemporary History,* 16 (2015), pp. 37-52

Pistol, Rachel, 'Enemy Aliens: Internment and Deportation Policy in Great Britain, September 1939-June 1940', *Modern Italy,* 29.3 (2024), pp. 261-76, doi:10.1017/mit.2024.23

Pistol, Rachel, ‘‘Heavy Is the Responsibility for All the Lives that Might Have Been Saved in the Pre-war Years’: British Perceptions of Refugees 1933–1940’, *European Judaism*, 50.2 (2017), pp. 42-49, doi:10.3167/ej.2017.500207

Rubinstein, W. D., ‘The Anti-Jewish Riots of 1911 in South Wales: A Re-Examination’, *Welsh History Review,* 18.4 (1997), pp. 667-99

Thomson, Alistair, ‘Memory and Remembering in Oral History’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History,* ed. by Donald A. Ritchie (Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 78-95

Vella, Stephen, ‘Newspapers’, in *Reading Primary Sources: The Interpretation of Texts from Nineteenth- and Twentieth-century History,* ed. by Miriam Dobson and Benjamin Ziemann (Routledge, 2009), pp. 192-208