

Jews of Missouri: An Ornament to Israel, by Mara W. Cohen Ioannides. Springfield, MO: Ozarks Studies Institute, 2021. 227 pp. Illustrations, map, notes, index. \$27.00 softcover.

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Jews of Missouri: An Ornament to Israel brings together a great deal of historical data on Jews in Missouri prior to World War I. The book's short introduction asserts the significance of Jews to Missouri history and notes the paucity of reliable academic sources on the state's Jewish past. The first chapter provides a brief overview of settlement in the Missouri territory and the history of the state through the late 1900s. The second chapter introduces United States Jewish history and the broad outlines of Jewish settlement in Missouri. Chapter 3 primarily focuses on four early Jewish families in Missouri, their migrations within and beyond the state, and their roles in the development of various towns and cities. The bulk of the text consists of an appendix, which contains brief histories of Jewish communities in Missouri, listed alphabetically by location. These range from succinct mentions of single families who owned small-town retail businesses to longer entries on the development of Jewish life in larger trading centers. Endnotes, references, and an index follow.

Jews of Missouri will serve as a useful reference for scholars working on Jewish history in the Midwest or in the rural United States because it identifies early and significant Jewish families in more than 50 Missouri towns and cities. Historians interested in local topics will also benefit from the information gathered in the book, which may help to raise the profile of Jewish communities in smaller towns. The endnotes and references will also prove helpful for anyone—including genealogists—interested in further details on specific individuals, families, or communities.