

THE WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

REGISTER: Cleveland Jewish History Sources
MSS. NO.: 4621

Processor: Louis Rosenblum
Editor: John J. Grabowski
Date: October 2, 1992

Cleveland Jewish History Sources, is a database assembled between 1954 and 1956, by the American Jewish History Center (AJHC) of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, to support a planned volume on the history of Cleveland, Ohio, Jewry. This intention was belatedly realized with the publication of Lloyd P. Gartner's History of the Jews of Cleveland (Cleveland: Western Reserve Historical Society and Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, 1978, 1987).

Sources for this data base, which cover the span from the early 19th century to the middle of the 20th, were researched by one team at the AJHC in New York City and another in Cleveland. AJHC researchers culled Cleveland-related information from the national Anglo-Jewish press; Cleveland researchers, Jack Herman (Rabbi, Community Temple) and Judah Rubinstein (subsequently, Research Director, Cleveland Jewish Federation), extracted information from local sources -- the general press, the Anglo-Jewish press and Jewish communal records.

Cleveland Jewish History Sources, 1819-1956, consists of over 16,000 index cards containing information about Cleveland's Jewish community that was obtained primarily from newspapers. These cards have been arranged into fourteen broad categories: Arts; Charities; Clubs and Societies, Various; Community Services; Economic Life; Education; Political Affairs; Population; Sermons and Lectures; Social Life; Synagogues; Synagogue Related; Umbrella Organizations, and Zionism. Within these categories, primary and sometimes secondary sub-headings are arranged alphabetically and then chronologically. As prescribed by the AJHC, each research finding was typed on 4x6, unruled index cards and described in the following top-down order: top left, the city and chronological period; top right, topical classification; single line description of the finding; excerpt(s) from the finding. In many instances, the researchers stapled to the card photocopies of pertinent portions of the source material. The collection, however, contains exceptions to this general procedure: a number of 3x5 cards with handwritten entries (evidently, unprocessed research findings) and a number of 4x6 cards with attached paper negative photocopy, i.e., white-on-black and mirror-image text.

This collection is of value to history and social science scholars interested in a wide variety of topics within American Jewish History in general and the history of the Jewish community of Cleveland, Ohio, in particular. For example, the collection provides a glimpse of the plethora of clubs and societies that catered to interests ranging from social to cultural to philanthropic. Of note, in this regard, are the files on the B'nai B'rith -- a fraternal and mutual aid society -- and its philanthropic offspring, the Jewish Orphan Asylum. Under the category of "Political Affairs", are to be found items on Jewish involvement in city and ward politics, including such colorful figures as "Czar" Harry Bernstein of the 16th Ward. The growth of involvement of women in community affairs during the latter part of the 19th century is well represented in the collection, particularly in the files on the Cleveland Council of Jewish Women, the Council Educational Alliance, and the Council Religious Schools. The file on "Sermons and Lectures" provides insights into the religious, intellectual, and social concerns of the period. Of particular interest to genealogists are the categories of "Population", which contains information concerning early Jewish residents, and of "Social Life", which includes information about marriages and divorces.

For additional information concerning the creation and implementation of this database as well as about the writing of History of the Jews of Cleveland, the researcher should consult The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland Records, Mss. 4563 Container 5.

An audio tape of an interview with Judah Rubinstein concerning the work he and others did for the American Jewish History Center to produce the Cleveland Jewish History Sources, has been removed to the Audio-Visual Collection.

Provenance: Judah Rubinstein, 1988.

Number of Containers: 15 Oversize Volumes: 0 Oversize Folders: 0

Size: 15.0 linear feet/4.5 linear meters.

Number of Microfilm Reels:

Restrictions: The microfilm edition of this collection is available to the serious scholar.

Container

1

ARTS

Music, 1862-1956.
Theater, 1855-1930.
Miscellaneous, 1864-1910.

CHARITIES

Aid for local immigrants, 1881-1939.
Aid for Jews overseas, 1854-1936.
Chesed Shel Emeth (Burial Society), 1904-1906.
Cleveland Charities, Jewish participation, 1881-1904.
Federation of Jewish Charities/Jewish Welfare Federation/
Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, 1892-1930.
(See also Jewish Community Council.)

Container

2

_____, 1931-1955.
Hebrew Free Loan Society, 1880-1931.
Hebrew Relief Association, 1880-1953.
Hebrew Shelter Home, 1891-1944.
Nationality relief societies, 1870-1920
Miscellaneous, 1885-1945.

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES, VARIOUS

Fraternal Organizations

B'nai B'rith, 1853-1953.

Container

3

Free Sons of Israel, 1873-1887.
Keshar Shel Barzel, 1871-1899.
Knights of Pythias, 1889-1929.
Sons of Benjamin, 1881-1899.
Miscellaneous, 1884-1915.

Literary Societies

Cleveland Literary Union, 1875-1885.
Hebrew Literary Association, 1866-1908.
Lincoln Literary Society, 1909-1925.
Young Men's Hebrew Literary Society, 1860-1867.
Young Men's Jewish Association, 1876-1904.
Miscellaneous, 1864-1945.

Mutual Aid Societies

Brisker and Grodner Society, 1911-1915
Miscellaneous, 1884-1953.

Container (cont'd)

3

Nationality Societies

Hungarian Benevolent Union, 1882-1924.
Hungarian Societies, 1887-1891.

Social and Special Interest Clubs

Excelsior Club, 1876-1931.
Miscellaneous, 1896-1939.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Child Care

I.O.B.B. (International Order of B'nai B'rith), Jewish
Orphan Asylum/Bellefaire, 1859-1879.

Container

4

_____, 1880-1956.
Jewish Infant Orphan Home, 1899-1921.
Jewish Day Nursery, 1922-1945.
Orthodox Jewish Orphan Home, 1919-ca. 1955.
Miscellaneous, 1920-1945.

Medical

Community facilities, Jewish involvement, 1892-1916.
Jewish Women's Hospital Society, 1892-1916.
Mt. Sinai Hospital, 1892-1955.

Container

5

Old Age Homes

K.S.B. (Keshet Shel Barzel)/Montefiore Home for the Aged,
1880-1945.
Orthodox Jewish Home for the Aged, 1906-1929.

Recreational and Cultural Activities

Camp Wise, 1907-1955.
Jewish Community Centers, 1928-1955.
Workman's Circle, 1937-1945.
Miscellaneous, 1925-1945.

Social Services

Cleveland Council of Jewish Women, 1894-1921.

Container

6 Cleveland Council of Jewish Women, 1922-1956.
 Council Educational Alliance, 1899-1953.
 Jewish Social Service Bureau/Jewish Family Service
 Association, 1924-1955. (See also Charities, Hebrew
 Relief Association.)

Jewish Young Adult Bureau, 1939-1948.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Businesses, 1847-1886.

Container

7 _____, 1887-1945.

Labor, 1880-1948.
 Newspapers, 1856-1924.
 Professions, 1878-1945.

EDUCATION

Container

8 Bureau of Jewish Education, 1924-1955.
 Congregational and other schools, 1847-1955.
 Council Religious Schools/United Jewish Religious Schools,
 1896-1955.
 Hebrew Schools, 1885-1955.
 Jewish libraries, 1895-1899.
 Jewish teachers and pupils in public schools, 1854-1915.
 Montefiore Hebrew Free School/Talmud Torah/Cleveland
 Hebrew Schools, 1885-1955.
 Surveys and policies, 1935-1955.

POLITICAL AFFAIRS

Jewish affairs, Cleveland, 1857-1884.

Container

9 _____, 1885-1889.
 _____, 1890-1924.
 Jewish affairs, Ohio, 1884-1929.
 _____, overseas, 1820-1909.
 _____, United States, 1819-1927.
 Jewish response to events overseas, 1884-1918.
 Local civic affairs, Jewish involvement, 1871-1945.
 Non-Jewish attitudes and actions, 1830-1934.

Container

10

POPULATION

Demographics, 1852-1949.
 Early Jewish residents, individuals (arranged
 alphabetically), 1839-1929.
 _____, lists, 1860-1910.
Immigration, Jewish, 1846-1932.
 _____, General, 1878-1913.

SERMONS AND LECTURES

Sermons and lectures, 1876-1889.

Container

11

_____, 1890-1925.

SOCIAL LIFE

Common Folk, 1868-1911.
 High Society, 1881-1956.
 Marriages and Divorces, 1856-1906.

SYNAGOGUES

Adath Jeshurun (Lake Shore Jewish Center), ca. 1940.
 Agudath Achim, ca. 1940
 Agudath B'nai Israel Anshe Sfad, ca. 1940.
 Agudath Israel Anshe Romania, 1914.
 Ahavath Israel, ca. 1940.
 Ahavath Zion, ca. 1940.
 Anshe Chesed, (a.k.a. Euclid Avenue Temple and Fairmount
 Temple), 1842-1886.

Container

12

_____, 1887-1930.
 Anshe Emeth, (merged with Beth Tephilah; a.k.a. Cleveland
 Jewish Center and Park Synagogue), 1879-1945.
 Anshe Maariv, 1858.
 Anshe Marmarasher B'nai Jacob, 1931-ca. 1940.
 Berg Street Kehilla, 1883.
 Beth El, 1884.
 Beth Haknesseth Anshe Grodno, 1907-ca. 1940.
 Beth Hamidrash Anshe Galicia, 1922-ca. 1940.
 Beth Hamidrash Hagodol Beth Israel, 1890-ca. 1940.
 Beth Israel Chebra Kadisha Polish Congregation, 1888-1890.
 Beth Tephilah (merged with Anshe Emeth), 1913-ca. 1938.
 B'nai Israel, 1919-1927.
 B'nai Jacob Kol Israel (a.k.a. Kinsman Jewish Center),
 1938-1941.
 B'nai Jeshurun (a.k.a. Heights Temple), 1880-1912.

Container

13

B'nai Jeshurun, 1913-1933.
 Boruch El Chesed, 1889.
 Chevra Kadisha (a.k.a. Bohemian Chevra Kadisha
 Congregation and Chevra Kadisha Temple Israel),
 1864-1918.
 Chebas Jerusalem, 1924-ca. 1940.
 Community Temple (a.k.a. Beth Am), 1933-ca. 1940.
 Gates of Hope (Shaaray Tikvah), 1942-1950.
 Heights Jewish Center (a.k.a. Heights Orthodox
 Congregation), ca. 1940.
 Kineseth Israel, 1893-ca. 1940.
 Miskon Yisroel, ca. 1940.
 Nussach Ari, 1906.
 N'vai Zedek, ca. 1940.
 Oer Chodosh Anshe Sfard, 1920-ca. 1940.
 Ohaveh Emanuah, 1894-1921.
 Oheb Zedek (Hungarian), 1883-1884.
 Oheb Zedek of Newburgh, 1909.
 Ohel Jabneh, ca. 1940.
 Ohel Jacob, ca. 1940.
 Ohev Zedek (a.k.a. Taylor Road Synagogue), 1904-1945.
 Shaarei Torah, ca. 1940.
 Sharith Israel, ca. 1940.
 Sherith Jacob, ca. 1940.
 Sherith Jacob Chevra T'hilen, ca. 1940.
 Shomre Hadath (I), 1880.
 Shomre Hadath (II), 1928-ca. 1940.
 Shomre Shabos, 1906-1940.
 Tetiver Ahavas Achim Anshe Sfard, ca. 1940.
 Tifereth Israel (a.k.a. The Temple), 1850-1894.

Container

14

_____, 1895-1956.
 Tifereth Israel Anshe Sfard, ca. 1940.
 United Synagogues of Mt. Pleasant, 1933.
 Zemach Zedek, ca. 1940.
 Miscellaneous, 1845-1926.

SYNAGOGUE RELATED

Cemeteries, 1857-1929.
 Intercongregational affairs, local, 1859-1926.
 _____, national, 1855-1927.

Container

15

Religious life, 1849-1915.

UMBRELLA ORGANIZATIONS

Jewish Community Council, 1933-1952.
 Union of Jewish Organizations, 1906-1909.
 Miscellaneous, 1883-1945.

ZIONISM

Zionism, 1891-1945.