



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

**A Finding Aid to the
Moses J. Gries Papers**

Manuscript Collection No. 53



Collection Summary

Title	Moses J. Gries Papers
Dates	1850-1934 (bulk 1890-1930)
Collection Number	MS-53
Repository	The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
Creator	Gries, Moses J., 1868-1918 Gries, Jacob Gries, Katharina
Extent	1.6 linear feet (4 Hollinger boxes)
Language of the Material	English

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch

Moses J. Gries was born in Newark, New Jersey on January 25, 1868, the son of Jacob and Katharina Frances Holzer Gries. In 1881 he was accepted into the Hebrew Union College. For the next eight years he participated in classes at HUC while also attending Hughes High School and McMicken College (now the University of Cincinnati). In 1889 Gries received a Bachelor of Letters degree from the University of Cincinnati and was ordained a rabbi at Hebrew Union College.

Gries began his rabbinical career at the Mizpah Congregation in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He remained there until the autumn of 1892 when he became rabbi of Cleveland's Tifereth Israel Congregation (The Temple) - a position he retained for the next 25 years.

Gries's association with Tifereth Israel Congregation was illustrious - both for the growth of the congregation and the development of radical Reform Judaism. Soon after assuming his post in Cleveland, Gries supervised the congregation's move from Huron Street into a new temple on the corner of Central and Fifth streets. During the 25 year period when Gries was rabbi the Temple's membership increased 500%. And at one point during his tenure, the Temple's sabbath school was the largest in the world.

Tifereth Israel Congregation, under the spiritual leadership of Rabbi Gries, embodied many of the radical Reform principals of the day: the Temple was one of the first to have women on the Board of Trustees, the Temple's services were held on Sunday, there was little Hebrew in the liturgy, and the Torah was not read from the scroll. Gries encouraged the Temple and its services to be open to all. He advocated that a temple be more than just a place for worship or religious instruction - he wanted it to become a center of all congregational and communal life. Thus Tifereth Israel Congregation became one of the first congregations to advocate and conduct an "open temple."

Gries was also involved in many other activities both locally and nationally. He was a charter member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and held many CCAR offices, including president (1913-1915). Gries was a founder and on the first Board of Trustees of Cleveland's Federation of Jewish Charities. He helped found and was first president of the Cleveland Council of Jewish Women (1893-1896). He founded the Jewish Religious Education Association of Ohio and was named its first president (1906-1908). He served as president of the Ohio Rabbinical Association and of the Cleveland Council Educational Alliance (1904). Gries was a member of the Hebrew Union College Board of Governors and the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Relief Committee. He participated in the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, the Excelsior Club, the City Club, and the local B'nai B'rith lodge. In 1910 Gries published the Jewish Community of Cleveland, a history of Cleveland's Jewry.

In 1916 Gries shocked his congregation by announcing his intention to retire in 1917, after his 25th anniversary at the Temple. In June 1917 Gries preached his last sermon at the Temple and then withdrew from active rabbinical life.

Moses J. Gries died on October 31, 1918 in Cleveland. He was survived by his wife, Frances Hays Gries, whom he married in June 1898, and his two sons, Robert Hays Gries (1900-1966) and Lincoln Hays Gries (b. 1905).

Scope and Content

Consists of correspondence, sermons and addresses, newspaper clippings, photographs, certificates and personal memorabilia which reflect Gries's rabbinical career and activities. Also included in the collection are correspondence and documents of Gries's parents.

Arrangement	Organized into four (4) series: A. Correspondence, 1891-1934); B. Documents and Memorabilia, 1850-1918; C. Newspaper Clippings, 1899-1919; D. Sermons and Addresses, 1893-1917.
Copies	Also available on microfilm.
Terms of Access	The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.
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Preferred Citation	Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Moses J. Gries Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows: [Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-53. Moses J. Gries Papers. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.
Provenance	Received from Lincoln H. Gries and Robert H. Gries, Cleveland, Ohio, 1948-1961.
Processing Information	Processed by M. Carolyn Dellenbach and Mark Cowett, February 1979.

Index Terms

Subjects	Jews -- Ohio -- Cleveland / Rabbis
Personal Names	Gries, Moses J., 1868-1918
Corporate Names	Central Conference of American Rabbis / Congregation Tifereth Israel (Cleveland, Ohio)
Media	Photographs / Sermons

Series A. Correspondence, 1891-1934

Extent 0.6 linear feet (1.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Contains correspondence between Gries and many well-known individuals concerning rabbinical, religious, political and personal concerns. Much of the material in this series consists of letters to Gries commenting on various occasions in his life and career. The correspondence after 1918 deals with various memorial tributes to Gries along with correspondence of Gries's son, Robert, concerning his father.

Arrangement The series is arranged chronologically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 1. Correspondence, 1891-1898 May

Box 1. Folder 2-3. Congratulatory letters upon the marriage of Moses J. Gries and Fannie Hays Gries, 1898 June

Box 1. Folder 4. Correspondence, 1899-1910

Box 1. Folder 5. Correspondence, 1911-1913

Box 1. Folder 6. Correspondence, 1914-1916

Box 1. Folder 7. Correspondence, 1917-1918 October

Box 1. Folder 8-9. Sympathy letters upon the death of Moses J. Gries, 1918 November

Box 2. Folder 1-2. Sympathy letters upon the death of Moses J. Gries, 1918 November

Box 2. Folder 3. Correspondence, 1918 December-1934

Box 2. Folder 4. Correspondence, undated

Series B. Documents and Memorabilia, 1850-1918

Extent 0.6 linear feet (1.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Contains certificates of membership and graduation, deeds, invitations, programs for events in which Gries participated, Gries's will along with various testimonial books presented to Gries or to his family. Also included in are photocopies of documents and correspondence of Gries's parents, Jacob and Katharina Gries, which trace their marriage (1851) and immigration from Hungary to the United States (1857). The originals of this material are located in the rare documents file of the American Jewish Archives.

Arrangement The material is arranged chronologically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 2. Folder 5. Correspondence and documents of Gries, Jacob and Katharina, parents of Moses J. Gries., 1850-1870

Box 2. Folder 6. Documents [Certificates, deeds, will, etc.], 1879-1918

Box 2. Folder 7-8. Invitations, programs, and other personal memorabilia undated.

Box 2. Folder 9. Tribute book from members of Tifereth Israel Congregation (Cleveland, Ohio), 1907

Box 2. Folder 10. Tribute book from members of Tifereth Israel Congregation (Cleveland, Ohio), 1912

Box 2. Folder 11. Tribute uniongrams from children of Tifereth Israel Congregation (Cleveland, Ohio) Sunday School, 1916

Box 2. Folder 12. Tribute book from the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1916

Box 3. Folder 1. Tribute book from members of Gries's confirmation classes, 1897(?) -1915

Box 3. Folder 2. Tribute book from Cleveland Council of Educational Alliance and Cleveland Council of Jewish Women, 1917

Box 3. Folder 3. Tribute book from children of Tifereth Israel Congregation (Cleveland, Ohio), 1917

Box 3. Folder 4. In memoriam book from Hebrew Union College Alumni Association, 1918

Box 3. Folder 5. In memoriam book for the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1918

Box 3. Folder 6. In memoriam book from members of Tifereth Israel Congregation (Cleveland, Ohio), 1918

Box 3. Folder 7. In memoriam book from the Cleveland Federation of Jewish Charities, 1918

Box 3. Folder 8. In memoriam book from the Cleveland Citizens Savings Bank and Trust Company, 1918

Box 3. Folder 9. In memoriam book from the Cleveland Council Educational Alliance and the Cleveland Council of Jewish Women, 1918

Box 3. Folder 10. In memoriam book from the Cleveland Educational League, 1918

Series C. Newspaper Clippings, 1899-1919

Extent 0.2 linear feet (0.5 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note Contains original and photocopies of newspaper clippings documenting Gries's activities and report on the subject and content of many of his sermons and addresses.

Arrangement The series is arranged chronologically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 4. Folder 1. Newspaper clippings, 1889-1899

Box 4. Folder 2. Newspaper clippings, 1901-1908

Box 4. Folder 3. Newspaper clippings, 1909-1916

Box 4. Folder 4. Newspaper clippings, 1917-1919

Box 4. Folder 5. Newspaper clippings, undated

Series D. Sermons and Addresses, 1893-1917

Extent 0.2 linear feet (0.5 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note Contains manuscript copies of many of Gries's sermons and addresses. Seen in these sermons are Gries's views on Reform Judaism, antisemitism, political and social reform, and international affairs.

Arrangement The sermons are arranged chronologically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 4. Folder 6. Sermons and addresses, 1893-1902

Box 4. Folder 7. Sermons and addresses, 1903-1905

Box 4. Folder 8. Sermons and addresses, 1906-1912

Box 4. Folder 9. Sermons and addresses, 1913-1917

Box 4. Folder 10. Sermons and addresses, undated



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Appendix to Series D. Sermons and Addresses

Note: This list presents an alphabetical list of the sermons and addresses in Series D of the MOSES J. GRIES PAPERS. Within the collection the sermons and addresses are chronologically arranged. Thus the dates following the name of the particular sermon or address will locate it within the Papers.

"America and Zion". 1904 October 30
"The American". 1904 November 27; undated
"Am I My Brother's Keeper?". 1902 December 7
"As Others See Us". 1893 November 12
"As We See Ourselves". 1893 November 5
"The At-Onement". 1908 October 4
Atonement services. 1902 October 10; 1905 October 9; 1908 October 4 and 5;
1912 September 20; 1913 October 10 and 11; undated
"Business and Men". 1903 December 27
Central Conference of American Rabbis to Executive Committee. 1914 May 8
President's address. 1915 June 29
Round table discussion. undated
"Chanukah and Christmas". 1902 December 28
"Chanukah or Christmas". 1906 December 23
"Charity". 1904 June 5
"Charity -- My Religion". 1905 October 9
"Children". 1902 November 16
"Christian and Jew". 1906 March 18
"Christianity's Debt to Judaism (reply to Dr. Bradley)". 1915 February 28
"Church and Minister". 1903 December 20
Cleveland Chamber of Commerce. 1913 March 9
on 51st anniversary. 1899 June 6
Cleveland -- Council Educational Alliance, dedication address. 1909 September 8
Cleveland -- Elks, memorial address. 1905 December 3
"Cleveland in 1903". 1903 January 4
"Cleveland -- The Ideal City?". 1913 February 25
Cleveland -- The Temple.
Gries's 10th anniversary address. 1902 November 23
Gries's 25th anniversary address. 1917
Cleveland -- Unity Church, Citizens Thanksgiving Service. 1902 November 30
"Co-Operation in Charities". 1896 December 30
"Crisis in Religion". 1908 February 16



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“The Faith by Which to Live”. undated
Feast of Tabernacles. 1902 October 19
Franklin, Benjamin. 1906 January 14
“The Future of the Temple”. 1902 November 29
“The Gods”. 1893 November 19
“Golden Rule of Judaism”. 1903 November 15
Hay, John. 1905
“Home and Parent”. 1903 December 13
“How to Love Thy Neighbor”. 1903 November 22
“How to Remember the Dead”. 1905 October 9
“Humanity in the Bible -- A Comparison and Contrast”. undated
“The Immigrant”. 1906 January 21; undated
“In Darkest Ghetto”. 1904 April 3
“In Darkest Ghetto and the Way Out”. 1904 April 10
Installation of Rabbi Wolsey. 1907 August 30
“Intelligent Service to God and State”. 1904 March 20
“In the Beginning--God”. 1903 November 1
“In the Image of God--Man”. 1903 November 8
“Israel's Destiny”. 1904 December 7
“Is the Bible the Word of God?”. 1912 October 6
“Is the World Growing Better?”. 1917 May 6
“The Jew and America”. 1905 November 26.
“The Jew in America”. 1904 April 17
“The Jew of History”. 1906 March 25
“A Jewish Message”. undated
“The Jewish Reformation”. 1909 November 14
“The Jew through the Centuries”. undated
“Jews and Russia”. 1905 November 19
“A Judaism for Free America”. 1910 October 3
“The Justification of the Radical”. 1893 December 17
“Life's Sacrifices and Service”. 1905 September 30
“The Life Worth Living”. 1917 May 13
Lincoln, Abraham. 1904 February 7; 1908 February 12; 1915 February 12
McKinley, William. 1901 September
“The Making of Public Opinion” 1916 January 23
“Men” 1902 November 2
“The Message of Judaism”. 1906 September 9
“The Message of Judaism to the Modern World”. 1902 October 16
“Message of the Jew”. 1902 October 19



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- "The Message of the New Year". 1905 September 29
"Message of the Old Year, 1905, to the New Year, 1906". 1905 December 31
"Modern Jewish Problems". 1914 February 22
"The Most Effective Sermon." CCAR round table discussion. undated
"My Religion -- God and Man." (farewell address to the Temple). 1917 May 20
National Council of Jewish Women. 1900 March 7
"The Need for Social Service". 1902 December 14
New Year services. 1905 September 29 and 30; 1910 October 3;
1911 September 21 and 22; 1913 October 1 and 2
"The Open Temple, Rabbi Gries and". undated
"The Out-Reaching Synagogue". 1907 October 27
"The Passover of Freedom". 1917 April 8
"Peace". 1905 January 8
"The Place of the Jew in the Modern World". 1911 September 21
"The President and the Czar". 1905 March 5
"Problems of America -- the Citizen". 1904 November 6
"Problems of America -- the Laborer". 1904 November 13
"The Problem of Judaism in America". 1917 April 29
"The Problem of the Jew in America". 1917 April 15
"Rabbi Gries and the Open Temple". undated
"The Religion of Israel". undated
"Remarks of Rabbi Gries on the Synod". undated
"Remember and Keep a Sabbath". 1904 January 3
"Righteousness Exalteth a Nation". 1910 November 8
"Right Living". 1908 October 5
"Russia and Her Jews". 1905 November 12
"The Sabbath School and the Unaffiliated." (address before the CCAR). undated
Schiff, Jacob (on his 70th birthday). 1917 January 14
"The Service of Synagogue and Church to the World". 1911 February 26
"Settlement Work Among Jews". 1902 May
"Shall We Remain Jews?". 1902 November 2
"A Solution for the Problem of Poverty." (address at the annual banquet of the
Brooklyn Federation of Jewish Charities). undated
"Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery". 1904 January 17
"Thou Shalt Not Covet". 1904 January 31
"True Social Service". 1902 December 21
"The Truth about Russia". 1906 February 4
"The Union [of American Hebrew Congregations]; Its Past and Its Future". 1907 January 15
"Washington and Lincoln". 1906 February 17



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- "What Does the World Think of Judaism?". 1917 April 1
- "What It Means to be a Citizen". 1903 October 25
- "What It Means to be a Jew". 1903 October 11
- "What It Means to be an American". 1903 October 18
- "What Jews Believe About God and Man". 1904 October 17
- "What Jews Believe About Life and Death". 1904 October 24
- "What Jews Believe About Sabbath and Sunday". 1904 December 11
- "What Jews of Today Believe". 1906 April 1
- "Will Anti-Jewish Prejudices Ever Cease?". 1906 March 11
- Wise, Isaac Mayer. undated
- Wolsey, Louis, installation. 1907 August 30
- "Women". 1902 November 9