A Finding Aid to the
Abraham Cronbach Papers

Manuscript Collection No. 9
Collection Summary

Title: Abraham Cronbach Papers
Collection Number: MS-9
Repository: The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
Creator: Cronbach, Abraham, 1882-1965
Extent: 4 linear feet (10 Hollinger boxes)
Language of the Material: English

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch

Abraham Cronbach was born on February 16, 1882, the son of German immigrants, Marcus and Hannah (Itzig) Cronbach. He grew up in Indianapolis, where his father was a notions store retailer. In September 1898, Cronbach entered Hebrew Union College where, in conjunction with the University of Cincinnati, he studied for his bachelor’s degree while training for the rabbinate. In 1902 he graduated from the University of Cincinnati and four years later (in 1906) he was ordained as rabbi.

Cronbach began his rabbinical career at the Reform congregation of Temple Beth El in South Bend, Indiana. Although he had assumed a pulpit immediately upon his ordination, he maintained his interest in education and his ties with Hebrew Union College. In 1910 he was called upon to give the eulogy for Ephraim Feldman, a professor at the College. In 1911, he spent a year abroad studying at the University of Cambridge (England) and the Hochschule (Lehranstift) fuer die Wissenschaft des Judentums. (Berlin) and in 1915 he received the Doctor of Divinity degree from Hebrew Union College.

Rabbi Cronbach resigned his pulpit in South Bend in 1915 and for the next seven years served in three different rabbinical capacities: from 1915 through 1917 he worked with the Free Synagogue in New York City; from 1917 through 1919 he was rabbi at the Akron (Ohio) Hebrew Congregation; and from 1919 through 1922 he served as institutional chaplain for the Chicago Federation of Synagogues.

In December 1920, Cronbach delivered a series of lectures on chaplaincy procedures at Hebrew Union College ("The Ministry of the Jewish By-Ways." Hebrew Union College Monthly, January - April, 1921). In 1922, Cronbach was appointed a professor of social studies at Hebrew Union College, where he remained for the rest of his life.

As a professor at H.U.C. Cronbach participated in the civic activities of Cincinnati as well as activities on the H.U.C. campus. He was an active member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and he participated in Cincinnati’s Jewish Fellowship House and the Cincinnati Big Brother’s Association. In 1939, Cronbach became secretary to the Board of Editors of the Hebrew Union College Annual.

As a result of World War I, Cronbach became an ardent pacifist and throughout his career, he arduously worked for pacifist causes. In 1923, he helped found the Peace Heroes Memorial Society. whose national headquarters was in Cincinnati. Dr. Cronbach served as national secretary and, as such, was instrumental in establishing Memorial Day services around the country in honor of the heroes of industry, maternity, pacifism, etc. The services were an annual event in Cincinnati from 1923 through 1941.

In 1924, Cronbach sought to establish a specifically Jewish pacifist organization. A "Pledge for Jewish Pacifists" was sent out and although at least fifteen signed pledges were returned, including ones from Max Heller and Jacob Weinstein, a formally structured organization never developed.

Rabbi Cronbach’s pacifist activities increased with the threat and advent of World War II. In 1935, he called for a conference between Nazis and Jews in Philadelphia for the purpose of reconciliation. In that same year he worked with the American Friends Service Committee to raise $5000 for an Austrian Relief Fund which was to aid persecuted Austrians as well as German Jews and Nazis who had fled to Austria from Hitler’s Germany. Throughout the war, Cronbach supported conscientious objectors and, in 1942, he helped found the Jewish Peace Fellowship, which he described as a "religious organization of Jewish persons who believe war to be as futile as it is fiendish." Immediately after the Allied victory. Cronbach addressed letters to Jewish organizations (the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Conference, and the
American Jewish Congress) asking that they not seek punishment of Nazi war criminals.

In 1952, Cronbach became a Sponsor of the Committee to Secure Justice in the Rosenberg Case and for the next two years he worked diligently for the Committee. Cronbach carried on an active letter-writing campaign, urging others to help secure clemency for the Rosenbergs and, on June 16, 1953, he met with President Eisenhower to beseech him to pardon the Rosenbergs. When this attempt failed, Cronbach addressed those at the Rosenberg's funeral (June 21), asking them not to lose heart at their defeat. Cronbach continued to work with the Committee throughout 1956 to secure justice for Martin Sobell and to bring out the complete truth in the Rosenberg trial.

Professor Cronbach retired from active teaching in 1950, becoming Emeritus Professor of Social Studies at Hebrew Union College. Thereafter he devoted much of his time to writing, and he published several books (Realities of Religion, Stories of Bible Stories, Reform Movement in Judaism) and numerous articles ("Patriotism of Peace," "Jewish Pioneering in American Social Work," "Judaism and Humanism").

Cronbach married Rose Hentil on October 7, 1917. They adopted a daughter, Marion, in 1923. Abraham Cronbach died on April 2, 1965 in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Scope and Content

The collection contains correspondence, manuscripts, reports, minutes, newscippings and miscellaneous items relating to Cronbach's publications, his rabbinical career, his activities at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, and his involvement with various Jewish and pacifistic societies and organizations.

Arrangement

Organized into three (3) series: A. Correspondence, 1902-1965; B. Manuscripts and Publications, 1913-1963; C. Miscellaneous, 1911-1957.

Terms of Access

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Preferred Citation

Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Abraham Cronbach Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Abraham Cronbach Papers, MS-9, Box [#], Folder [#]. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Provenance

Received from Abraham and Rose Cronbach, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1949-1973. In July 1985, Maurice Davis, White Plains, N.Y., donated an additional supplement of material to the American Jewish Archives.

Processing Information

Processed by M. Carolyn Dellenbach, February 1977.

Index Terms

Subjects
Jewish college teachers / Jewish educators / Jews -- Ohio -- Cincinnati / Pacifists / Peace movements / Rabbis / Reform Judaism / Social service

Personal Names
Cronbach, Abraham, 1882-1965

Corporate Names
Hebrew Union College. Faculty

Media
Minutes

Series A. Correspondence, 1902-1965

Extent
2.6 linear feet (6.5 Hollinger boxes)

Arrangement
This series is divided into two (2) subseries: 1. General and 2. Personal.

**Subseries 1. General, 1907-1965**

**Extent** 2.2 linear feet (5.5 Hollinger boxes)

**Scope and Content Note** The subseries contains correspondence along with reports, minutes and subject-related nearprint, relating to Cronbach’s rabbinate and professorial career and his activities with Jewish and pacifistic organizations. Among the significant correspondents in this subseries are: Mary Antin, Clarence Darrow, John Dewey, Ismar Elbogen, Nelson Glueck, Emil G. Hirsch, Cordell Hull, Carl G. Jung, Horace M. Kallen, Kaufmann Kohler, Lily H. Montagu, Julian Morgenstern, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Murray Seasongood and Stephen S. Wise. Of special interest are the "Rosenberg/Sobell espionage cases" files, which trace the fight for their clemency. These files also contain the responses to Cronbach’s numerous letters urging others to join in the fight.

**Arrangement** The subseries is arranged alphabetically by correspondent or subject of correspondence with a chronological sub-arrangement.

**Box and Folder Listing**

- Box 1. Folder 1. A, General, 1924-1964
- Box 1. Folder 2. Abrahams, Israel, 1911-1915
- Box 1. Folder 3. Adler, Felix, 1916-1929
- Box 1. Folder 4. Akron, Ohio - Akron Hebrew Congregation, 1917-1919
- Box 1. Folder 5. American Council for Judaism, 1943-1965
- Box 1. Folder 6. American Friends Service Committee, 1932-1947
- Box 1. Folder 8. Arnold, Thurman W., 1934-1938
- Box 1. Folder 10. Bergmann, Hugo, 1927-1933
- Box 1. Folder 12. C, General, 1917-1963
- Box 1. Folder 13. Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1922-1942
- Box 1. Folder 15. Chicago Federation of Synagogues [correspondence, reports], 1920-1922
- Box 1. Folder 16. Cincinnati, Ohio. General, 1936-1964
- Box 1. Folder 17. Cincinnati, Ohio. Jewish Community House, 1924-1927
- Box 1. Folder 18. Clinchy, Everett, 1934-1936
- Box 1. Folder 20. Cronbach, Joseph J., 1938
- Box 1. Folder 22. D, General, 1924-1952
Box 1. Folder 23. Darrow, Clarence, 1931 March 1
Box 1. Folder 24. Dewey, John, 1933, 1941, 1951
Box 2. Folder 1. E, General, 1916-1964
Box 2. Folder 2. Elbogen, Ismar, 1922-1924, 1940-1942
Box 2. Folder 3. Ellis, Anna, 1940-1941
Box 2. Folder 4. Ethical codes, 1944-1952, undated
Box 2. Folder 5. F, General, 1917-1965
Box 2. Folder 7. Feldman, Ephraim, 1903-1910
Box 2. Folder 8. Fichman, David, 1917, 1924
Box 2. Folder 10. Friedland, N., 1929-1941
Box 2. Folder 14. Greenebaum, Simon, 1907, 1909
Box 2. Folder 15. Grossfield, Avery J., 1940-1950
Box 2. Folder 17. H, General, 1917-1965
Box 2. Folder 18. Hebrew Union College Annual, 1943-1962
Box 2. Folder 19. Helder, Jacob, 1931-1932, 1948
Box 2. Folder 21. I, General, 1931-1945
Box 2. Folder 22. Israel, Edward L., 1926-1933
Box 2. Folder 23. J, General, 1917-1940
Box 2. Folder 24. Jewish Peace Fellowship. [correspondence, nearprint], 1942-1964
Box 2. Folder 25. Jewish Peace Fellowship - Cincinnati Chapter [correspondence, minutes, lists], 1942-1965
Box 2. Folder 27. Kallen, Horace M., 1927-1939, 1957
Box 3. Folder 1. L, General, 1908-1964
Box 3. Folder 2. Lipman, Eugene J., 1945-1957
Box 3. Folder 4. Mayer, Eli, 1917-1918
Box 3. Folder 6. Monroe, Louisiana - Congregation B'nai Israel, 1917
Box 3. Folder 7. Morgenstern, Julian, 1922-1'957
Box 3. Folder 8. N-O, General, 1924-1961
Subseries 2. Personal, 1902-1965

Extent 0.2 linear feet (0.5 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note The subseries contains letters to Cronbach from his family, congratulatory letters and telegrams on Cronbach's 75th and 80th birthdays, and miscellaneous items.

Arrangement The subseries is arranged chronologically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 6. Folder 10. Personal, 1902-1917
Box 6. Folder 12. Congratulatory letters, telegrams and addresses on his eightieth birthday, 1962
Box 7. Folder 1. Miscellaneous [certificates, resolutions, records].

Series B. Manuscripts and Publications, 1913-1963

Extent 1.2 linear feet (3 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note The series consists of the manuscript, typescript and published copies of many of Cronbach's writings such as theses, addresses, essays and sermons.

Arrangement The series is arranged chronologically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 7. Folder 2. "Fasting on the Day of Atonement", 1903
Box 7. Folder 4. "Socialism from a Jewish Point of View", 1913
Box 7. Folder 5. "Socialism from a Jewish Point of View", 1913
Box 7. Folder 6. "Socialism from a Jewish Point of View", 1913
Box 7. Folder 7. "Socialism from a Jewish Point of View", 1913
Box 7. Folder 8. Manuscripts and publications, 1914-1922
Box 8. Folder 1. Manuscripts and publications, 1923-1924
Box 8. Folder 2. Manuscripts and publications, 1926-1927
Box 8. Folder 3. Manuscripts and publications, 1928-1929
Box 8. Folder 4. Manuscripts and publications, 1930
Box 8. Folder 5. Manuscripts and publications, 1931-1939
Box 8. Folder 6. Manuscripts and publications, 1936-1939
Box 8. Folder 7. Manuscripts and publications, 1940-1948
Box 8. Folder 8. Manuscripts and publications, 1952-1953
Box 9. Folder 7. Manuscripts and publications, undated
Box 9. Folder 8. Manuscripts and publications, undated
Box 10. Folder 1. Manuscripts and publications, undated
Box 10. Folder 2. Prayers, 1926-1960, undated

Series C. Miscellaneous, 1911-1957

Extent 0.2 linear feet (0.5 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note The series contains two folders of material from Hebrew Union College doctoral students (scrapbook and rabbinic thesis) and six folders of pamphlets, magazines, articles and newscutings of special interest to Cronbach.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 10. Folder 5. Nearprint, 1911-1964, undated
Box 10. Folder 7. Nearprint, 1911-1964, undated
Box 10. Folder 8. Nearprint, 1911-1964, undated
Note: The following list represents a selective guide to the significant subjects and correspondents within the ABRAHAM CRONBACH PAPERS. References are to boxes and folders, e.g. 2/7 = Box 2, Folder 7. This list should be used in conjunction with the Box and Folder List of this inventory.

American Council for Judaism 4/8
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Billikopf, Jacob 1/9
Bjerre, Paul 1/9
Black, Hugo 1/9
Brann, Marcus 1/9
Brill, Abraham Arden 1/9
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Cincinnati, Ohio - Robert Krohn Livingston Memorial Camp 3/1
Cohen, Morris R. 1/12
Conference between Nazis and Jews (1935) 1/18; 2/6
Conscientious objectors 1/6; 2/24
Douglas, William O. 1/22
Fram, Leon 2/5
Glueck, Nelson 2/11
Hirsch, Emil Gustav 2/17
Holmes, John Haynes 3/10,12
Hull, Cordell 2/17
Hurwitz, Henry 3/5
Jacobson Temple organ, obtaining for HUC 2/10
Jung, Carl G. 2/23
### MS-9: Abraham Cronbach Papers

#### Subject Tracings

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<td>Kohler, Kaufmann</td>
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<td>Leopold, Nathan F., Jr.</td>
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<td>Mark, Alexander</td>
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<td>Montagu, Lily H.</td>
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<td>Philipson, David</td>
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<td>Pickett, Clarence E.</td>
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<td>Reform Judaism</td>
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<td>Roosevelt, Franklin D.</td>
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<td>School of Jewish Studies (New York, N.Y.)</td>
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<td>Schultz, Benjamin</td>
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<td>Seasongood, Murray</td>
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<td>Silver, Abba Hillel</td>
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<td>South Bend, Indiana - Temple Beth El</td>
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<td>Union of American Hebrew Congregations</td>
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<td>Zielonka, David L.</td>
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