



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
**AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES**

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**A Finding Aid to the  
Bernard J. Bamberger Papers  
Manuscript Collection No. 660**



## Collection Summary

<b>Title</b>	Bernard Jacob Bamberger Papers
<b>Dates</b>	1909-1979
<b>Collection Number</b>	MS-660
<b>Repository</b>	The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
<b>Creator</b>	Bamberger, Bernard J. (Bernard Jacob), 1904-1980
<b>Extent</b>	1.2 linear feet (3 Hollinger boxes)
<b>Language of the Material</b>	English

## Administrative Information

### Biographical Sketch

Bernard Bamberger's rabbinate was a rare one, in that he excelled simultaneously as a pastor for his own congregation, and as a respected academic. After growing up in Baltimore, Maryland (under the watchful eye of Rabbi William Rosenau) Bamberger graduated with an A.B. from Johns Hopkins University in 1923. Rosenau vouched for Bamberger's skills, and so Bamberger was able to spend his time at the Hebrew Union College concentrating on advanced studies. He received ordination there in 1926, and his Doctorate of Divinity (at the time, equivalent to a Ph. D.) in 1929. Concurrent to his D.D. courses, he served as rabbi to Temple Israel of Lafayette, Indiana. From 1929-1944, he served as rabbi at Temple Beth Emeth in Albany, New York.

In 1944, Bamberger accepted a call to serve as rabbi of Congregation Shaaray Tefila in New York City. During his tenure there (1944-1970), he oversaw the congregation's historic move from the West Side of Manhattan to the East Side.

Bamberger's chief interest lay in work outside of the congregation, serving and leading the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) and translating the Bible (formalized through his work with the Jewish Publication Society).

From the early 1940's, Bamberger showed an interest in participating in the activities of the CCAR, the nation's organization of Reform rabbis (which publishes material and suggests guidelines for Reform Jews in America). During his early years, he sat as a member of the CCAR's Liturgy Committee, eventually chairing it. Following his term as chair, he was nominated to serve as vice president of the entire Conference for the two year term running from 1957 to 1959. CCAR tradition dictates that the vice president becomes president at the end of his/her time as VP. Thus, Bamberger served as CCAR president from 1959-1961. He oversaw landmark CCAR decisions, such as the implementation of the rabbinic placement system. Additionally, he used the president's 'bully pulpit' to preach on the civil rights movement of the early 1960s. After his term as president ended, Bamberger remained active in the politics of the Reform movement. He continued to serve as an advisor to the Liturgy Committee, and was a part of the Conference's activities (c. 1967-1973) in improving the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

And yet, all this was not enough to keep Bamberger intellectually satisfied. His pursuits in academia concentrated on the Bible, and its translation into English. Bamberger was also a part of the Jewish Publication Society's inter-denominational Committee to Translate the Bible from the committee's inception in 1949 through the late 1970's. His contributions to the new JPS translation, a text that has become an integral part of the religious and academic life of English speakers in the contemporary Jewish world, will continue to have an impact on future generations.

In addition to Bamberger's roles in the CCAR and the JPS, he served as president of the Synagogue Council of America (1950-1951) and of the World Union for Progressive Judaism (1970-1972). Additionally, he was a member of the Society of Biblical Literature and the Rabbinical Alumni Association of the Hebrew Union College.

His books include *Proselytism in the Talmudic Period* (1939, 1968), *Fallen Angels* (1952), *The Bible: A Modern Jewish Approach* (1956) and *Search for Jewish Theology* (1978). He is also the author of the commentary to the Book of Leviticus which appears in the UAHC's *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*. Bamberger's most popular work was *Story of Judaism* (1964).

Bamberger passed away in 1980. He was survived by his wife Pat (Edith Kraus), and his two sons Henry (also a Reform rabbi) and David.

### Scope and Content

Records consist primarily of minutes, correspondence, manuscripts, and publicity.

<b>Arrangement</b>	The collection is arranged into two (2) series: A. General Files; B. Central Conference of American Rabbis.
<b>Terms of Access</b>	The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.
<b>Preferred Citation</b>	Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Bernard J. Bamberger Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:  [Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-660. Bernard J. Bamberger Papers. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.
<b>Provenance</b>	Received from Henry Bamberger, New York, N.Y., May 2000.
<b>Processing Information</b>	Processed by Jeff Brown, July 2002.

## Index Terms

<b>Subjects</b>	Jewish scholars / Rabbis
<b>Personal Names</b>	Bamberger, Bernard J. (Bernard Jacob), 1904-1980
<b>Corporate Names</b>	Central Conference of American Rabbis / Jewish Publication Society of America / Union of American Hebrew Congregations

## Series A. General Files, circa 1877-1993

**Extent** 0.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

**Scope and Content Note** Most of the documentation appears in the form of correspondence. This series contains all material in the Bernard J. Bamberger Papers which is unrelated to the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

**Arrangement** The material is arranged alphabetically by subject designation.

## Box and Folder Listing

- Box 1. Folder 1. Albany, New York. Jewish community, 1940
- Box 1. Folder 2. American Jewish Committee/Jewish Welfare Board, 1948
- Box 1. Folder 3. Bamberger, Bernard. Military service at John Hopkins University, 1921
- Box 1. Folder 4. B'nai B'rith Supreme Lodge Spirituality convention, 1956
- Box 1. Folder 5. Congregation Beth Emeth (Albany, N.Y.) confirmation class, 1934
- Box 1. Folder 6. Congregation Shaary Tefila (New York, N.Y.) anniversary dinner dance, 1964
- Box 1. Folder 7. Congregation Shaary Tefila (New York, N.Y.) correspondence, 1944
- Box 1. Folder 8. Congregation Shaary Tefila (New York, N.Y.) move/merger files, 1959
- Box 1. Folder 9. Congregation Shaary Tefila (New York, N.Y.) move. Publicity, 1959
- Box 1. Folder 10. Cronbach, Abraham, 1926-1955
- Box 1. Folder 11. Growth and Development of the American Jewish Community lecture, 1961
- Box 1. Folder 12. Jewish Publication Society articles on Bible translation, 1975-1979
- Box 1. Folder 13. Jewish Publication Society correspondence, meeting notes, 1949-1972

- Box 1. Folder 14. Jewish Publication Society public relations, 1963-1965
- Box 1. Folder 15. Jewish Publication Society translation notes, undated
- Box 1. Folder 16. Levin, Benjamin Szold, 1955-1957
- Box 1. Folder 17. Manuscripts, writings, 1909-1957
- Box 1. Folder 18. Manuscripts, writings (academic), undated
- Box 1. Folder 19. Manuscripts, writings (homiletics), undated
- Box 1. Folder 20. Marcus, Jacob Rader, 1947-1961
- Box 1. Folder 21. McIntosh, Mavis. Beacon Press, 1951-1959
- Box 1. Folder 22. Miscellaneous correspondence, 1927-1965
- Box 1. Folder 23. Montagu, Lily. World Union for Progressive Judaism, 1958-1961
- Box 1. Folder 24. Morgenstern, Julian, 1934-1965
- Box 1. Folder 25. Political personalities, 1934-1965
- Box 1. Folder 26. Pulpit searches, 1934-1950
- Box 1. Folder 27. Responsa, 1967
- Box 1. Folder 28. Scholars correspondence (includes Lauterbach, Jacob; Elbogen, Ismar; Solveithcik; Rosenau, William; Heschel, Abraham J.), 1935-1964
- Box 1. Folder 29. Union of American Hebrew Congregations correspondence. Financial independence of Hebrew Union College, 1962
- Box 1. Folder 30. Union of American Hebrew Congregations Torah commentary, 1970

## **Series B. Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1936-1975**

**Extent** 0.8 linear feet (2 Hollinger boxes)

**Scope and Content Note** These papers deal with the subjects that Bamberger was most active or most interested in - namely, the work of the Liturgy Committee and a Special Committee that was formed by the Conference to deal with the perceived flaws of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion during the late 1960s and early 1970s

**Arrangement** Material is arranged alphabetically by subject designation. In cases where there are multiple folders attributed to a single subject, material is arranged chronologically.

### **Box and Folder Listing**

- Box 2. Folder 1. Accreditation. National Association of Temple Administrators, 1960
- Box 2. Folder 2. Admission to the Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1961
- Box 2. Folder 3. Association for a Progressive Reform Judaism. Inter-marriage, 1973-1975
- Box 2. Folder 4. Book of Essays. Hebrew Union College 70th anniversary, 1945-1949
- Box 2. Folder 5. Columbus Platform. Samuel Schulman draft, 1936-1937
- Box 2. Folder 6. Committee descriptions, 1959
- Box 2. Folder 7. Controversial daily services at conventions, 1961
- Box 2. Folder 8. Controversial establishment of Religious Action Center, 1961
- Box 2. Folder 9. Freedom Riders; King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1961
- Box 2. Folder 10. Future of the Rabbinate and Curriculum/Administration of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1940-1967

Box 2. Folder 11. Future of the Rabbinate and Curriculum/Administration of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1968

Box 2. Folder 12. Future of the Rabbinate and Curriculum/Administration of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1969

Box 2. Folder 13. Future of the Rabbinate and Curriculum/Administration of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1972

Box 2. Folder 14. Future of the Rabbinate and Curriculum/Administration of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1973

Box 2. Folder 15. Future of the Rabbinate and Curriculum/Administration of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1974

Box 2. Folder 16. Future of the Rabbinate and Curriculum/Administration of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, undated

Box 2. Folder 17. General correspondence, meetings, 1940-1942

Box 2. Folder 18. General correspondence, meetings, 1953-1958

Box 2. Folder 19. General correspondence, meetings, 1959-1960

Box 2. Folder 20. General correspondence, meetings, 1961

Box 2. Folder 21. General correspondence, meetings, 1963

Box 2. Folder 22. General correspondence, meetings, 1968-1969

Box 3. Folder 1. Hebrew pronunciation (Ashkenazaic to Sephardic shift), 1964

Box 3. Folder 2. Hebrew Union College, 1948-1953

Box 3. Folder 3. Jewish day schools, 1962-1963

Box 3. Folder 4. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, 1950

Box 3. Folder 5. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, 1951

Box 3. Folder 6. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, 1952

Box 3. Folder 7. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, 1953

Box 3. Folder 8. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, 1954

Box 3. Folder 9. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, 1955

Box 3. Folder 10. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, 1956

Box 3. Folder 11. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, 1957

Box 3. Folder 12. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, 1958

Box 3. Folder 13. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, 1959-1960

Box 3. Folder 14. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, 1961

Box 3. Folder 15. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, 1967

Box 3. Folder 16. Liturgy Committee correspondence, meetings, undated

Box 3. Folder 17. Missionary work, 1950-1960

Box 3. Folder 18. New York State Civil War Centennial Commission episode, 1961

Box 3. Folder 19. Partnership with Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1960

Box 3. Folder 20. Presidency, public appearances, 1958-1961

Box 3. Folder 21. Regionalization, 1960

Box 3. Folder 22. Role of cantors, 1961

Box 3. Folder 23. Special committee on rabbinic placement, 1960-1963

Box 3. Folder 24. United States Census. Bureau of Statistics, 1960