



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

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**A Finding Aid to the  
United Order of True Sisters Records  
Manuscript Collection No. 638**

## Collection Summary

<b>Title</b>	United Order of True Sisters Records, 1864-1979
<b>Collection Number</b>	MS-638
<b>Repository</b>	The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
<b>Creator</b>	United Order of True Sisters
<b>Extent</b>	5.8 linear feet (9 Hollinger boxes, 1 small Hollinger box, and 2 oversize boxes)
<b>Language of the Material</b>	English and German

## Administrative Information

<b>Biographical Sketch</b>	<p>The Unabhängiger Orden des Treue Schwestern or the United Order of True Sisters (UOTS) was founded in 1846 by a dozen women led by Henrietta Bruckmann, wife of New York physician Dr. Phillip Bruckmann. In order to strengthen the credibility of the group, Henrietta sought the support of her husband as well as Temple Emanu-El associate rabbi, the Rev. Dr. Leo Merzbacher, and Dr. James Mitchels, an early B'nai B'rith leader. The original members of the order all belonged to Temple Emanu-El. They were of German Jewish ancestry and formed this secret order devoted to charity.</p> <p>The UOTS followed the typical organization of the time period, with written constitutions and by-laws adopted by the membership. Their objectives were "to unite its members in sisterly affection and esteem" in addition to charitable work. Their male advisors helped them to develop the first installation ceremony. Rituals and degrees were also formalized and published. In 1883, the publication of the newsletter, The Echo began. This publication gave information about the different activities of the chapters, the charity recipients, and details of the ritualized ceremonies.</p> <p>The UOTS has retained the Jewish, if not German, part of their identity. In 1892, the first English speaking chapter was formed. In 1918, the last chapter meeting in German was conducted. The UOTS's chief charitable concerns now have to do with cancer and cancer treatment centers.</p> <p>Growth in the number of chapters continues, although the overall membership has declined since 1945. The first chapter was the Immanuel Lodge #1 (so named because its membership consisted of members of the Emanu-El congregation), and in 1851 the UOTS created the national Grand Lodge. Immanuel was the first chapter to sign the Grand Lodge charter. Philadelphia also opened a lodge in 1851 and, in 1874, Johanna Lodge No. 9 became the first Midwestern chapter, located in Chicago, Illinois. In the early 1960s, the United Order formalized its commitment to expansion by creating a National Expansion chairman for membership. As recently as 1978, a new chapter was formed in Suffolk County, New York.</p>
<b>Scope and Content</b>	The United Order of True Sisters Records describe the governance and activities of the fraternal organization between 1864-1979. The collection contains executive minutes, convention records, programs, publications, ritual books, financial records and photographs.
<b>Arrangement</b>	Organized in six (6) series: A. Constitutions; B. Annual Meeting of the Grand Lodge/National Conventions; C. Financial Records; D. Publications; E. Ritual Books and Prayers; F. Programs and Photographs.
<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 United Order of True Sisters Records and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:  [Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-638. United Order of True Sisters Records. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.
<b>Provenance</b>	Received from Rita Lipkin, president of the United Order True Sisters, Albany, N.Y., October 1999.
<b>Processing Information</b>	Processed by Melinda K. McMartin, November 1999.

## Index Terms

<b>Subjects</b>	Jewish women / Jews -- Societies, etc.
<b>Corporate Names</b>	United Order True Sisters

## Series A. Constitutions, 1855-1894

**Scope and Content Note** Consists of a handwritten copy of the first constitution and the roll-call vote accepting it. The constitution was later used as a membership book and contains a listing of members, chapters, and some addresses.

### Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 1. Constitution with membership rolls having various dates, 1855-1894

## Series B. Annual Meeting of the Grand Lodge/National Conventions, 1864-1979

**Extent** 2.4 linear feet (6 Hollinger boxes)

**Scope and Content Note** Consists of minutes of meetings of the Grand Lodge (national organization). Minutes prior to 1894 are in German. There is a break in the series between 1922 and 1940. After this time, the series contains the programs and addresses of the national convention in addition to the minutes of the Grand Lodge.

**Arrangement** The series is arranged chronologically.

### Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 2. Grand Lodge meeting minutes [German], 1864-1876

Box 1. Folder 3. Minutes, 1876-1880 January

Box 1. Folder 4. Minutes, 1876 March-1880 January

Box 1. Folder 5. Minutes, 1880 December-1885 December

Box 1. Folder 6. Minutes, 1885 December-1896 December

Box 2. Folder 1. Minutes, 1907 January-1916 January

Box 2. Folder 2. Minutes, 1916 February-1922 March

Box 2. Folder 3. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1940

Box 2. Folder 4. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1941

Box 2. Folder 5. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1942

Box 2. Folder 6. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1943

Box 2. Folder 7. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1946

Box 2. Folder 8. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1947

Box 2. Folder 9. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1948

Box 2. Folder 10. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1949

Box 3. Folder 1. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1950

Box 3. Folder 2. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1951

Box 3. Folder 3. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1952

Box 3. Folder 4. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1953

Box 3. Folder 5. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1953

Box 3. Folder 6. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1954  
Box 3. Folder 7. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1955  
Box 3. Folder 8. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1956  
Box 3. Folder 9. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1957  
Box 4. Folder 1. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1958  
Box 4. Folder 2. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1959  
Box 4. Folder 3. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1960  
Box 4. Folder 4. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1961  
Box 4. Folder 5. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1962  
Box 4. Folder 6. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1963  
Box 4. Folder 7. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1964  
Box 4. Folder 8. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1965  
Box 5. Folder 1. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1966  
Box 5. Folder 2. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1967  
Box 5. Folder 3. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1968  
Box 5. Folder 4. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1969  
Box 5. Folder 5. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1970  
Box 5. Folder 6. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1971  
Box 5. Folder 7. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1972  
Box 6. Folder 1. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1973  
Box 6. Folder 2. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1975  
Box 6. Folder 3. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1977  
Box 6. Folder 4. Meeting program and convention minutes, 1979

## **Series C. Financial Records, 1927-1951**

**Extent** 0.5 linear feet (0.5 oversize box)

**Scope and Content Note** Consists of a board of subscribers book which contains information concerning financial donors to the national headquarters of the UOTS, known as "the clubhouse."

### **Box and Folder Listing**

Box X-404. Folder 1. Board of subscriber books [names, addresses, amounts], 1927-1951

## **Series D. Publications, 1884-1975**

**Extent** 2.3 linear feet (2 Hollinger boxes, 1.5 oversize box)

**Scope and Content Note** Consists of the run of The Echo, the official newsletter of the United Order. The publication varies from monthly to three times yearly. Reports of the meeting of the Grand Lodge in an abbreviated fashion are included.

**Arrangement** This series is arranged chronologically.

### **Box and Folder Listing**

Box X-404. Folder 2. The Echo [German], 1884-1905

Box X-405. Folder 1-3. The Echo, 1906-1924

Box 7. Folder 1-7. The Echo, 1931-1951

Box 8. Folder 1-10. The Echo, 1952-1975 November

## **Series E. Ritual Books and Prayers, 1895-1953**

**Extent** 0.2 linear feet (0.5 Hollinger box)

**Scope and Content Note** Consists of ritual books, manuals of degrees, prayers for the death of a sister, and lodge installation services. Earlier material is in both German and English.

**Arrangement** The series is arranged chronologically.

### **Box and Folder Listing**

Box 9. Folder 1. Manual of degrees, 1895

Box 9. Folder 2. Ritual book [German], 1901

Box 9. Folder 3. Ritual book/Manual of degrees, 1913

Box 9. Folder 4. Ritual book, 1947

Box 9. Folder 5. Ritual book, 1953

Box 9. Folder 6. Prayers for the death of a sister [German and English], undated

Box 9. Folder 7. Installation of lodge service, undated

## **Series F. Programs and Photographs, 1939-1971**

**Extent** .4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

**Scope and Content Note** Contains anniversary programs and photographs. Of special interest is a scrapbook of photographs from the 1945 convention.

### **Box and Folder Listing**

Box 9. Folder 8. True Sisters Day at World Fair program, 1939

Box 9. Folder 9. Anniversary programs, 1931-1971

Box 9. Folder 10. Photos of 115th anniversary activity, circa 1960

Box 10. Folder 1. Scrapbook of photos [mostly from Grand Lodge meeting and convention], 1945