



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

**A Finding Aid to the
Jacob Kestin Shankman Papers
Manuscript Collection No. 693**



Collection Summary

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| Title | Jacob Kestin Shankman Papers |
| Dates | 1920-1983 |
| Collection Number | MS-693 |
| Repository | The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives |
| Creator | Shankman, Jacob K. |
| Extent | 4.4 linear feet (11 Hollinger boxes) |
| Language of the Material | English |

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch

Jacob Kestin Shankman was born on October 22, 1904 in Chelsea, Massachusetts to Isaac and Dina Shankman. At the age of 14 he was admitted to Harvard University where he received a bachelor's degree in 1923 and a master's degree in 1925. In 1930 Shankman graduated from Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he was ordained as a rabbi. During his studies at HUC, Shankman served as president of the student body and awarded honors for having the highest scholastic record.

Shankman began his rabbinical career at Berith Sholom in Troy, New York before coming to Temple Israel in New Rochelle, New York in 1937. After twenty years at Temple Israel Shankman was granted life tenure in November of 1957. In 1962, the Temple moved from their synagogue on Webster Avenue to their current location at 1000 Pinebrook, a move encouraged and lobbied for by Shankman.

During World War II, Shankman took leave from Temple Israel to serve as a chaplain with the U.S. Naval Reserve from 1943-1946. He rose to the rank of Lieutenant Commander and remained interested in the military chaplaincy throughout his life.

Shankman was involved with the New Rochelle Council of Social Agencies, Community Chest, Salvation Army, Red Cross, Council for Unity, PTA and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He served as President of the Association of Reform Rabbis of New York, the Westchester Council of Rabbis, and the Alumni Association of Hebrew Union College.

As a member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, Shankman served as a member of its executive board, its Commission on Ceremonies, and as chairman of its Committees on Church and State, Relations of Rabbis and Congregations, Meditations and Ethics. He was the American director of the World Union for Progressive Judaism from 1957-1964, being chairman of the American board at the same time. In 1959, he became chairman of the World Union's Executive Committee.

Shankman was included in Who's Who in America and the Encyclopaedia Judaica. He wrote a history of Temple Israel, a history of his mother's family--the Kestins—to the 1400s, and was published in numerous periodicals including American Judaism, Liberal Judaism, and The Jewish Layman.

In 1937, he married Miriam Frankenstein. Together they had two daughters: Judith and Diane, as well as one son Michael.

Jacob K. Shankman died on February 6th, 1986.

Scope and Content

The collection is comprised of materials collected by Jacob Shankman over the course of his rabbinical career. The nearprint contains biographical material and photographs of the rabbi. There is also one box of correspondence — both personal and professional — that chronicles Shankman's continued involvement with HUC-JIR and professional organizations such as the Central Conference on American Rabbis and the World Union for Progressive Judaism.

Sermons over the course of Shankman's tenure at Temple Israel, as well as those given while he was a chaplain in the U.S. Naval Reserve, can be found among Shankman's other writings. Shankman was a prolific reader and his readings often led to private meditations and notes that would transform into sermons. A substantial portion of the writings is Shankman's own notes and drafts or articles and sermons. Much of the material in this portion of the collection is not dated, though researchers should be able to surmise dates from the newsclippings and articles on which Shankman began his initial writings. Whenever possible, sermons and writings are put into chronological order. When this is not possible, the sermons and writings have been put into order by title, with untitled material — including Shankman's poetry — placed at the end of the series.

An extensive portion of the collection is dedicated to the day-to-day functions of Temple Israel in its various forms, as well as material covering Shankman's active participation in professional organizations and his life-long interest in military chaplaincy.

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| Arrangement | The collection is divided into five (5) series: A. Correspondence and Nearprint; B. Sermons, Writings, Poetry, and Meditations; C. Confirmation Class Notes, Sermons, and Scrapbooks; D. Professional Development and Chaplaincy Involvement; E. Temple Israel (New Rochelle, N.Y.). |
| Terms of Access | The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply. |
| Preferred Citation | Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Jacob Kestin Shankman Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows: [Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-693. Jacob Kestin Shankman Papers. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio. |
| Provenance | Received from Miriam Shankman, New Rochelle, N.Y., 1986 and Sue Shankman, Cincinnati, Ohio, June 2001. |
| Processing Information | Processed by Jeff Brown and Rachel M. Howse, February 2003. |

Index Terms

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| Subjects | Emigration and immigration / Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945) / Jewish refugees / Jews -- New York (State) -- New Rochelle / Rabbis / Religion in the public schools |
| Personal Names | Braude, William G. (William Gordon), 1907-1988 / Shankman, Jacob K. |
| Corporate Names | Central Conference of American Rabbis / Temple Israel of New Rochelle (New Rochelle, N.Y.) / World Union for Progressive Judaism |
| Media | Sermons |

Series A. Correspondence and Nearprint, 1928-1983

Extent 0.8 linear feet (2 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Consists of correspondence, biographical information, newsclippings, and materials relating to Shankman's community activism, as well as two scripts of radio and television broadcasts.

Arrangement The papers are arranged initially by correspondent or subject and then chronologically within the corresponding files.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 1. General correspondence, A-Z.

Box 1. Folder 2. Braude, William G., 1928-1983

Box 1. Folder 3. British closing of Palestine (telegrams), 1938

Box 1. Folder 4. Chaplaincy correspondence, 1941-1960

Box 1. Folder 5. Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1942-1976, undated

Box 1. Folder 6. German refugees, 1938-1942

Box 1. Folder 7. Liebman, Joshua Loth, 1934-1937

Box 1. Folder 8. Prayer in schools New York state, 1951-1952

Box 1. Folder 9. Raizen, Charles and Patricia, 1955-1959

Box 1. Folder 10. Rosett, Louis, 1937-1938

Box 1. Folder 11. Congratulatory letters on 30th anniversary of Shankman as ordained rabbi, 1960

Box 1. Folder 12. Shankman, Jacob K., 1936-1982

Box 1. Folder 13. Silver, Samuel, 1953
Box 1. Folder 14. Wohl, Samuel, 1930-1939
Box 1. Folder 15. World Union for Progressive Judaism, 1955-1981
Box 2. Folder 1. Nearprint.
Box 2. Folder 2. Photographs.
Box 2. Folder 3. Community activism.
Box 2. Folder 4. Sachs, Nelly Agnon, S.Y. Nobel Prize articles and interviews.
Box 2. Folder 5. Television and radio appearances.
Box 2. Folder 6. Periodicals.

Series B. Sermons, Writings, Poetry, and Meditations, 1930-1972

Extent 2.2 linear feet (5.5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Contains the sermons, personal notes and meditations, poetry, and writings of Rabbi Shankman over the course of his career. Often what would start as a meditation would lead to the drafting of a sermon or article and researchers of Shankman's papers will find the occasional overlap.

Arrangement The material is in chronological and subject order.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 3. Folder 1. Sermons and notes, 1930-1931
Box 3. Folder 2. Sermons and notes, 1931-1932
Box 3. Folder 3. Sermons and notes, 1932-1933
Box 3. Folder 4. Sermons and notes, 1933-1934
Box 3. Folder 5. Sermons and notes, 1934-1935
Box 3. Folder 6. Adler, Cyrus. Sermon, 1941
Box 3. Folder 7. Looking Forward to Life Post-World War II, 1941
Box 3. Folder 8. World War II sermons, 1942
Box 3. Folder 9. 1,000 Years After the Death of Saadra Gaon, 1942
Box 3. Folder 10. Dragonseed, 1942
Box 3. Folder 11. Jews and The Saturday Evening Post series sermons, 1942
Box 3. Folder 12. Norwegian Resistance to Nazis sermons, 1942
Box 3. Folder 13. Sermons and notes, 1946
Box 3. Folder 14. Sermons and notes, 1947
Box 4. Folder 1-3. Sermons and notes, 1947
Box 4. Folder 4. Sermons and notes, 1948
Box 4. Folder 5. Purim sermons.
Box 4. Folder 6. Pageant of Light sermon.
Box 4. Folder 7. Prayers and Prayerbooks of Jews sermon.
Box 4. Folder 8. The Psalms.

Box 4. Folder 9. Notes for Shabbat sermons, undated

Box 4. Folder 10. Miscellaneous sermons and notes.

Box 5. Folder 1. High Holy Day sermons and notes, undated

Box 5. Folder 2. Antisemitism in America.

Box 5. Folder 3. Bridge Between the Generations.

Box 5. Folder 4. The Deputy reactions and meditations.

Box 5. Folder 5. Gentleman's Agreement reactions.

Box 5. Folder 6. God Issues and Meditations.

Box 5. Folder 7. Reactions to the Holocaust.

Box 5. Folder 8. Meditations on intergroup relations.

Box 5. Folder 9. Meditations on intermarriage, 1944-1970

Box 5. Folder 10. Isaac M. Wise: American and Jew, 1941

Box 5. Folder 11. Meditations on Israel.

Box 6. Folder 1. Meditations on Judaism and Christ, 1937-1956

Box 6. Folder 2. Judaism and a Better World.

Box 6. Folder 3. Meditations and sermon on Love Story (both the film and the novel), 1971

Box 6. Folder 4. Lessons of Religion.

Box 6. Folder 5. Notes and interpretations on Mendlesohn's Elyah and Athalia.

Box 6. Folder 6. The Moon is Down meditation and sermon.

Box 6. Folder 7. Post Pearl Harbor sermon and reflections.

Box 6. Folder 8. Thoughts on Propaganda.

Box 6. Folder 9. Thoughts on race relations.

Box 6. Folder 10. Reform Judaism is Dangerous.

Box 6. Folder 11. Samson and Delilah (an opera).

Box 6. Folder 12. Wishnick family notes, reflections and poetry.

Box 6. Folder 13-14. Miscellaneous writings, 1925-1965

Box 7. Folder 1-2. Miscellaneous writings, 1967-1972, undated

Box 7. Folder 3-5. Poetry, undated

Box 7. Folder 6. Miscellaneous notes and reflections.

Box 7. Folder 7. Drafts of sermons and notes.

Box 8. Folder 1. Eichmann, Adolf.

Box 8. Folder 2. Six-Day War.

Box 8. Folder 3. Soviet Jews.

Series C. Confirmation Class Notes, Sermons, and Scrapbooks, 1920-1979

Extent 0.2 linear feet (0.5 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note Contains Shankman's confirmation class lists, notes, and sermons, as well as a scrapbook presented to him by the students of his 1938 confirmation class.

Arrangement The series is arranged chronologically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 8. Folder 4-10. Confirmation notes and sermons, 1920-1979, undated

Series D. Professional Development and Chaplaincy Involvement, 1943-1979

Extent 0.8 linear feet (2 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Deals with Shankman's involvement in various professional organizations such as the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the World Union for Progressive Judaism. Also included are Shankman's notes and papers regarding his role as a chaplain in the United States Naval Reserve from 1943-1946 and the interest he maintained in the military chaplaincy throughout the remainder of his career.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 9. Folder 1. American Jewish Committee.

Box 9. Folder 2. Anti-Defamation League Denver budgets, 1977-1979

Box 9. Folder 3. Kudan, Harold L./Herbert Bronstein controversy.

Box 9. Folder 4. Changing Role of the Rabbi (Central Conference of American Rabbis 75th anniversary speech).

Box 9. Folder 5. Jewish Community Relations Committee.

Box 9. Folder 6. World Union for Progressive Judaism Speeches made as president.

Box 9. Folder 7. World Union for Progressive Judaism Miscellaneous material.

Box 10. Folder 1. Facing the War Post-Peace.

Box 10. Folder 2. War and peace meditations.

Box 10. Folder 3-5. Chaplaincy, 1943-1960

Series E. Temple Israel (New Rochelle, N.Y.), 1932-1968

Extent 0.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note Contains material authored or collected by Shankman during his career at Temple Israel in New Rochelle, New Jersey. There are several documents illustrating Shankman's interest in the musical programs conducted at the Temple, as well as public relations material used at various times by the congregation.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 11. Folder 1. Temple Israel annual reports.

Box 11. Folder 2. Early history of Temple Israel, 1932

Box 11. Folder 3. Temple Israel Choral Club.

Box 11. Folder 4. Musical programming, 1946-1959

Box 11. Folder 5. Temple social events.

Box 11. Folder 6. 30th anniversary as rabbi at Temple Israel, 1968

Box 11. Folder 7. Temple Israel (New Rochelle, N.Y.) anniversary.

Box 11. Folder 8. Temple Israel Heritage The House That Jacob Built, 1973

Box 11. Folder 9. Miscellaneous information.

Box 11. Folder 10. Transition to Pinebrook.

Box 11. Folder 11. Pinebrook consecration.

Box 11. Folder 12. Retirement and transition.

Box 11. Folder 13. Temple Israel and Pinebrook public relations.