A Finding Aid to the
William G. Braude Papers

Manuscript Collection No. 509
Collection Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>William G. Braude Papers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>1929-1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection Number</td>
<td>MS-509</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repository</td>
<td>The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creator</td>
<td>Braude, William G., 1907-1988</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extent</td>
<td>3.2 linear feet (8 Hollinger boxes)</td>
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<td>Language of the Material</td>
<td>English</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch

William Braude was born on 25 April 1907 in Telsiai, Lithuania, to Rabbi Isaac and Rachel (Halperin) Braude. The family immigrated to New York City in 1920 where Braude briefly attended yeshiva. A few months later the family moved again and Braude was educated in the public schools in Denver, Colorado and Dayton, Ohio.

Braude was ordained at Hebrew Union College in 1931. He accepted a pulpit at Temple Beth El, in Providence, Rhode Island, where he was to remain until his retirement in 1974. He then became Rabbi Emeritus. Although Braude remained a Reform rabbi he challenged his congregation to increase their ties with their Conservative and Orthodox counterparts and Jewish tradition. On Yom Kippur services in 1965, Braude pulled out a yarmulke and announced he would wear it as part of his commitment to the Jewish people. He had a strong commitment to Jewish education and the study of Hebrew and their Torah. He challenged his congregation to increase their ties with their Conservative and Orthodox counterparts and Jewish tradition.

Braude was keenly interested in issues of social justice. While a challenger of the ardent Zionists who viewed Israel as the panacea to the Jewish suffering, he also questioned the anti-Zionists. Braude ran in the early 1930s as a reform candidate for the school board. He championed black rights long before the sixties, and marched in Selma, Alabama with Martin Luther King. Yet, he was not a proponent of all civil rights legislation and many of his congregants disagreed with his conservative political stances.

William Braude died on 25 February 1988 following a long illness. He married Pearl Finkelstein on 19 June 1938 and had three children: Joel Isaac, Benjamin Meir and Daniel.

Scope and Content

The William G. Braude Papers contain the records of Braude's rabbinical and scholarly career. Braude served as rabbi at Temple Beth El in Providence, Rhode Island from 1932-1974. He had a great interest in promoting higher standards in Judaism- introducing a cantor, the study of Hebrew and the development of the Beth El library. The writings series contains Braude's drafts, notes and editorial correspondence relating to his two major multi-volume publications for the Yale Judaica series: A Translation of the Midrash on the Psalms and Pesitka Rabbi- An English Translation. There is also a file of other articles and sermons from Beth El arranged alphabetically by title and cover his career over several decades.

The correspondence series consists of Braude's correspondence with his fellow Hebrew Union College classmates and faculty. It gives a sense of a typical rabbi's schedule and conflicts between committee work and scholarly study. An extensive correspondence with Jacob Shankman, congregational rabbi at New Rochelle, New York details the typical life of a rabbi over several decades- from the pulpit to his personal life and involvement in the World Union for Progressive Judaism. The Norman Feldheim correspondence describes life as a chaplain in the Panama Canal in the 1930s and the I.M. Melamed file illustrates the experience of a fellow Lithuanian immigrant rabbi in Chicago, Illinois. The general correspondence file includes letters from Henry Englander, Julian Morgenstern, and Jacob Weinstein which are related to the activities of the college. Some correspondents are members of Braude's
congregation such as Sidney Ballon who followed Braude to Hebrew Union College. Most of the letters are written to Braude. The bulk of the correspondence is from 1932 to 1940 although the span dates of the series are 1932-1987. The span dates for the entire collection is 1930-1987.

**Arrangement**
The collection is arranged in two (2) series: A. Articles, Sermons and Writings; B. Correspondence.

**Terms of Access**
The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.

**Preferred Citation**
Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the William G. Braude Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-509. William G. Braude Papers. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Provenance**

**Processing Information**

**Index Terms**

Subjects
- Jews -- Rhode Island -- Providence / Midrash / Rabbinical literature / Rabbis

Personal Names

Corporate Names
- Hebrew Union College / Temple Beth-El (Providence, R.I.)

**Series A. Articles, Sermons and Writings, 1932-1981**

**Extent**
2.6 linear feet (6.5 Hollinger boxes)

**Scope and Content Note**
Consists of manuscript drafts and notes relating to Braude's writings. The majority of this series consists of drafts and notes for two major works: A Translation of the Midrash on the Psalms and Pesitka Rabbi: An English Translation. Both works were completed for the Yale Judaica series. There is also a folder of miscellaneous sermons and articles and an autobiography written by Braude in the mid-seventies.

**Arrangement**
A general writings file is followed by the notes on his two major works in chronological order.

**Box and Folder Listing**

Box 1. Folder 1. Articles, sermons, writings, 1932-1981
Box 1. Folder 2. Autobiography, undated
Box 1. Folder 3. A Translation of the Midrash on the Psalms.Introduction; dedication.
**Series B. Correspondence, 1930-1987, undated**

**Extent** 0.6 linear feet (1.5 Hollinger boxes)

**Scope and Content Note** Consists of Braude's correspondence with his rabbinical colleagues—especially those who were his classmates at Hebrew Union College. Of particular interest is the correspondence with Jacob Shankman, Director of the World Union for Progressive Judaism and congregational rabbi in New Rochelle, New York. The Norman Feldheim correspondence describes life as a chaplain in the Panama Canal in the 1930s.

**Arrangement** Arranged with a general correspondence file followed by an alphabetical file of correspondence by name.

**Box and Folder Listing**

- Box 7. Folder 4. Appelbaum, Saul B., 1934-1939
- Box 7. Folder 7. Feldheim, Norman (also spelled Feldheym), 1933-1938, undated
- Box 8. Folder 1. Lieberman, Morris, 1932-1938
Box 8. Folder 3. Liebman, Joshua Loth, 1936-1938, undated
Box 8. Folder 4. Melamed, I. M.
Box 8. Folder 5. Olan, Levi A., undated
Box 8. Folder 7. Rosenbloom, Jerome, 1936-1939, undated
Box 8. Folder 8. Shankman, Jacob, 1930-1967
Box 8. Folder 10. Shankman, Jacob, undated