



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

**A Finding Aid to the
Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel
(Elkins Park, Pa.) Records**

Manuscript Collection No. 551



Collection Summary

Title	Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel (Elkins Park, Pa.) Records
Dates	1847-1952
Collection Number	MS-551
Repository	The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
Creator	Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel (Elkins Park, Pa.)
Extent	2.4 linear feet (6 Hollinger boxes)
Language of the Material	English, German, and Hebrew

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch Keneseth Israel was organized in March 1847, as the fourth Orthodox synagogue of Philadelphia. They rented a hall, purchased a cemetery and hired the services of Rev. B.H. Gotthelf who acted as rabbi, cantor and congregational secretary.

Keneseh Israel moved towards reform early in its existence. The congregation introduced the Hamburg Reform Prayer Book in the early 1850s and disbanded the custom of having members read from the Torah. An early rabbi, David Einhorn, grew impatient with Isaac Mayer Wise for Wise's slow pace of reform. The next rabbi, Dr. Samuel Hirsch, abolished the wearing of hats. Keneseth Israel continued as a progressive congregation and a significant member of the Reform movement. The congregation also has a strong commitment to religious education, going back to the founding of their religious school in 1849.

Senior rabbis at the congregation have included: Solomon Deutsch (1857-1860), David Einhorn (1861-1866), Samuel Hirsch (1866-1886), Joseph Krauskopf (1887-1823), William Fineshriber (1923-1949), Bertram Korn (1949-1979), Simeon J. Maslin (1979-1997), Bradley Bleefeld (1997-2000) and Lance J. Sussman (2001-).

Scope and Content Minutes (including English translations), biographical sketches of members, genealogies, and other materials relating to the Jewish communities in Philadelphia and Elkins Park.

Copies Minutes (1847-1944) from Congregation Keneseth Israel have been microfilmed (MF-90; MF-3617) and are available via interlibrary loan.

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

Preferred Citation Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel (Elkins Park, Pa.) Records and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-551. Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel (Elkins Park, Pa.) Records. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Provenance Received from Phyllis Sichel, Elkins Park, Pa., November 1997.

Processing Information Processed by Melinda K. McMartin, June 2001.

Index Terms

Subjects	Jews -- Pennsylvania -- Elkins Park / Jews -- Pennsylvania -- Philadelphia / Synagogues -- Organization and administration / Synagogues -- Pennsylvania -- Philadelphia
Corporate Names	Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel (Elkins Park, Pa.)
Media	Biographies / Genealogies / Minutes

Series A. Minutes, 1847-1901

Extent 2 linear feet (5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Contains a photostat copy of the original minute book, followed by a typed English

translation.

Box and Folder Listing

- Box 1. Folder Minutes [German, photostat], 1847-1860
- Box 2. Folder Minutes [German, photostat], 1860-1876
- Box 3. Folder Minutes [German, photostat], 1876-1887
- Box 4. Folder Minutes [German, photostat], 1887-1901
- Box 5. Folder 1. Minutes [English transcription], 1847-1857 January
- Box 5. Folder 2. Minutes [English transcription], 1857 February-1860 December
- Box 5. Folder 3. Minutes [English transcription], 1861 March-1863 December
- Box 5. Folder 4. Minutes [English transcription], 1864 January-1867 September
- Box 5. Folder 5. Minutes [English transcription], 1867 October-1872 July
- Box 5. Folder 6. Minutes [English transcription], 1877 September-1880 May
- Box 5. Folder 7. Minutes [English transcription], 1880 July-1883 October
- Box 5. Folder 8. Minutes [English transcription], 1883 November-1887 April

Series B. Biographical/Family Records, 1922-1944

Extent 0.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note Consists of short biographical sketches and copies of documents compiled by a 1951 confirmation class working on the history of the congregation.

Arrangement The series is arranged alphabetically by name.

Box and Folder Listing

- Box 6. Folder 1. Philadelphia genealogy. Miscellaneous documents.
- Box 6. Folder 2. Bacharach, Diane.
- Box 6. Folder 3. Berg, Barbara.
- Box 6. Folder 4. Bernheim, Ann.
- Box 6. Folder 5. Blumstein, Leslie.
- Box 6. Folder 6. Brandeis, William.
- Box 6. Folder 7. Chanders, Richard H.
- Box 6. Folder 8. Gellman, Samuel.
- Box 6. Folder 9. Goldberg, Francis.
- Box 6. Folder 10. Goldman, Bertram.
- Box 6. Folder 11. Goldsmith, Richard.
- Box 6. Folder 12. Himmelreich, Nancy.
- Box 6. Folder 13. Hofman, Stephen Jay.
- Box 6. Folder 14. Kaufmann, Walter J.
- Box 6. Folder 15. Lazarus, Stanley.

Box 6. Folder 16. Miller, Sylvester.

Box 6. Folder 17. Printz, Jerome.

Box 6. Folder 18. Rice, Richard W.

Box 6. Folder 19. Rich, Theodore Gottlieb Jr.

Box 6. Folder 20. Rosenau, Ferdinand.

Box 6. Folder 21. Seltzer, Benjamin.

Box 6. Folder 22. Sprafkin, Riva.

Box 6. Folder 23. Tandler, Albert S.

Box 6. Folder 24. Winston, Leonard.

Box 6. Folder 25. Wolf, Kay.