AN INVENTORY
TO THE ISRAEL SOLOMONS MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION
(1601-1918)

Prepared by Leo Lichtenberg, NEH Manuscript Processor
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Note to Researchers

Provenance

The ISRAEL SOLOMONS MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION was acquired by the Hebrew Union College Library in 1924.¹

Statistics

ISRAEL SOLOMONS MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

Linear feet of shelf space occupied: 3.
Number of containers: 5 Manuscript boxes.
Approximate number of items: 800.
Processed by: Leo Lichtenberg.
Date completed: 1976.

Access and Citations

The ISRAEL SOLOMONS MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION is open to researchers deemed qualified by the Librarian. The original manuscript collection is available in the Klaub Library of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio. A suggested form for at least the first citation is:


Acknowledgements

The inventory of the ISRAEL SOLOMONS MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION was made possible under a project supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C.

BIODRPHICAL SKETCH

The only discovered biographical information on Israel Solomons is presented here:

Mr. Solomons, who was a step-brother of Dr. J. Snowman, was educated at the Jews' College School. His interest in Anglo-Jewish history was first aroused by receiving as a prize, Picciotto's 'Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History.' His attention was attracted by a print of the Great Synagogue in a bookseller's window, and this laid the foundation of a remarkable and unique collection of prints, engravings, and portraits of Anglo-Jewish subjects. Mr. Solomons made the acquaintance of the late Alfred Newman who had similar tastes, and he enlisted Mr. Solomons' interest in the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition, held in 1887, to which he contributed some fifty items. With great industry, Mr. Solomons brought together a fine library of Jewish books containing many rarities, which, like his fellow collector, Mr. E. Adler, he recently sold to America. One of Mr. Solomons' specialties was of Jewish book-plates, of which he had a very extensive collection, and on which he contributed a monograph to the journal of the Ex Libris Society. He was a member of the Executive of the Jewish Historical Society, to the transactions of which he contributed several interesting papers, notably on Lord George Gordon, the Naturalisation Bill, and Anglo-Jewish caricatures. He took a great interest in the Jewish Exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, to which he made important contributions. Mr. Solomons became a member of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation, to which he presented a unique portrait of Haham Nieto, and helped to investigate the old records and tombstones. He contributed several illustrations to Mr. Albert Hyamson's 'Anglo-Jewish History,' and revised the proofs of Mr. Sokolow's 'History of Zionism.'

Mr. Solomons was a keen orthodox Jew and had a horror of shams and hypocrisy. He was active in bringing to the notice of the Ecclesiastical Authorities flagrant breaches of religious proprieties on the part of officials and institutions supposed to uphold orthodox observance, and he took a leading part in the institution of the Kashruth Commission.

Of a somewhat shy disposition, he did not court the limelight and was not well-known beyond a small circle of intimates, but he was generally respected for his piety and scholarship. His contributions to Anglo-Jewish history were substantial and he will be much missed in learned circles in the community.

2 The Jewish Chronicle (London), 20 July 1923, p. 11.
The ISRAEL SOLOMONS MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION is a remarkably diverse collection consisting of letters, autographs, genealogies, receipts, lists, bonds, tickets, deeds, literary manuscripts, notes, certificates, documents, minutes, etc. It deals with Anglo-Jewry. The largest number of documents originates in the nineteenth century; a smaller amount comes from the first two decades of the twentieth century.

Of the multitude of English localities outside of London, Lynn occurs most frequently and Hart Jones, one of the Lynn community's leaders stands out as a frequent recipient of correspondence. Furthermore, there is correspondence to places in the British West Indies.

A large number of synagogues in the London area is mentioned as well as the "United Synagogue" which emerged during the period covered by the ISRAEL SOLOMONS COLLECTION.

In the genealogical tables, the names of Goldsmid, Montefiore, and Rothschild are the most famous ones. Aside from these names, the autographs of Grace Aguilar, Judah P. Benjamin, Isaac D'Israeli, and Israel Zangwill are outstanding. Benjamin Levy, who died at the beginning of the eighteenth century, is particularly noticeable because his estate had not yet been settled a hundred years after his death. There are repeated references to Chief-Rabbis Solomon Hirsche1, Nathan Marcus Adler and his son Hermann as well as to Haham David Nieto and Haham Moses Gaster.

Finally, Israel Solomons is generously represented in the collection. Even though some of his own letters are preserved, he appears predominantly as a recipient of correspondence. The majority of letters and postal cards addressed to him come from Amsterdam and are signed by J.S. Da Silva Rosa.

Note: According to Dr. Israel O. Lehman of the Klau Library, the many small explanatory notes attached to the archival sheets of the ISRAEL SOLOMONS MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION are the work of Dr. Michael Wilensky (1877-1955) who came to Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1935, and cataloged the manuscripts in the Library.

Published material on Israel Solomons: "The Romance of Book-Collecting. Interview for The Jewish Chronicle with Mr. Israel Solomons," The Jewish Chronicle, August 30, 1907 (=Ellul 17, 5667), pp. 14-16.
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