

## **MS 2539 Birmingham Hebrew Educational Aid and Clothing Society, 1826-1997**

### **Administrative History**

The Birmingham Hebrew Educational Aid and Clothing Society was founded in 1851, starting life as the Book and Clothing Society. Minutes of a meeting held on 12 May 1901 include a copy of a letter from the Society to their first President, Moseley Myers, congratulating him 'on the completion by this institution of 50 years of useful work in the community'.

### **Laws**

The Society's Laws were revised in 1898 and list its objectives as follows:

- a) to assist the Education given to children attending the Congregational Schools, by providing books and materials, and granting an annual subsidy for the furtherance of Hebrew and Religious Education;
- b) to pay the fees of any child willing to attend Evening Continuation Classes for the purpose of Technical or other education;
- c) to provide clothing and boots to all deserving children;
- d) to pay the salary of the Instructor in physical Exercises and to pay the cost of sending Girls to the Cookery, and other desirable classes and the boys to the Technical School;
- e) to supplement the salary paid to Pupil Teachers, and to assist them in becoming duly-qualified Teachers, on the recommendation of the School Committee;
- f) to pay the Fees and provide the Books for children of the Hebrew School who are able to gain admission to the Grammar School or any Secondary School;
- g) to make an annual grant in aid of the Sabbath and Sunday Classes;
- h) to apprentice boys and girls learning the School and pay premiums for the learning trades when required and to undertake any duties which can assist our poor to a higher education;
- i) to undertake any duties which can assist our poor to a higher Education.

### **Structure**

The government of the Society was vested in a Committee of twelve, elected by the membership at the Annual General Meeting. At the first meeting following the AGM, the Committee elects a President, Treasurer, and Finance Committee. The Finance Committee looks after the financial position of the society, passes accounts, and audits the annual balance sheet. The Society maintained close links with the Birmingham Hebrew Congregation: from 11 December 1898, the President and Treasurer of the Society were included as ex-officio members of the School Committee and from 21 April 1901, the President and Treasurer of the Congregation, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the School Committee and the Minister of the Hebrew Congregation were ex-officio members of the Hebrew Educational Aid Society Committee.

In 1896, a sub-committee, named the Apprenticing sub-committee or the Apprenticeship Committee, was set up to arrange apprenticeships for girls. Members included the Executive of the Society and invitations were issued to 'several ladies'.

In 1922, the Society merged with the Birmingham Hebrew Board of Guardians, the Birmingham Hebrew Philanthropic Society, and the Ladies' Benevolent Association to form the Birmingham Jewish United Benevolent Board, later called the Birmingham Jewish Welfare Board. Creator of the material: Birmingham Hebrew Educational Aid and Clothing Society

Only one minute book survives, dating from 1871-1901. Subjects discussed in the meetings include making arrangements to apprentice children to businesses in the city; organizing the Annual Benefit Concert, held at one of the theatres in the city; buying books for the Birmingham Hebrew School and subsidising teachers' pay; and giving grants to children to pay college and university fees. The minutes also list the names of children who have applied for boots and clothing. Microfilm copies of two volumes of Birmingham Hebrew Educational Aid Society minutes, dating from January 1854-October 1875 and July 1901-January 1922 are catalogued as MS 1678/3.

This is one of several collections deposited by the Birmingham Hebrew Congregation. Most of the material deposited relates to Singers Hill Synagogue (JA), but there is also a small collection of records from the New Synagogue, Park Road (JB), which merged with Singers Hill in 1997. The archive also contains records of the Birmingham Jewish Arts Society (MS 2520), Birmingham Youth Council (MS 2522), Young Israel Council (MS 2523), Birmingham Shechita Board (MS 2529), Birmingham Hebrew Educational Aid Society (MS 2539), and the personal papers of the historian Zoe Josephs (MS 2524). The personal papers of Dorothy Gillman (MS 2525) and Constance Davis (MS 2526) were also deposited by the Congregation.

Other collections held by Birmingham City Archives which may be of interest include Birmingham and District War Refugees Fund (MS 652), which includes minute books, registration forms, and correspondence, and may include information about Jewish refugees; records of Henry Yeoville Thomason (MS 1460), which include architectural drawings of Singers Hill Synagogue; personal papers of CB Lander (1904-1989), including family papers about naturalization, Jewish friends, and Jewish affairs and history (MS 1515); microfilms of minutes of the Birmingham Hebrew Philanthropic Society, the Birmingham Hebrew Educational Aid and Clothing Society, the Ladies Benevolent Board, and the Board of Guardians (MS 1678); and papers of Dr Carl Chinn (MS 1902), which contain some material about the Jewish community in Birmingham, including several autobiographies.

Birmingham Central Library Local Studies and History holds material about the Jewish community including a set of Birmingham Hebrew Congregation Yearbooks, 1913-1971; an Order of Service held to celebrate the opening of the Birmingham Hebrew School at St Luke's Rd, Edgbaston, May 1, 1932.

Access: Open.  
Condition: Good.  
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