

Samuel E. Goldfarb papers, 1912-1981

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Goldfarb, Samuel E. (Samuel Eliezer), 1891-1978
Title	Samuel E. Goldfarb papers
Dates	1912-1981 (inclusive) 1912 1981
Quantity	3.76 cubic feet (9 boxes, 2 sound cassettes, 10 phonodiscs)
Collection Number	2784
Summary	Papers and oral history of a composer and music director of Temple de Hirsch, Seattle, Washington
Repository	University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections Special Collections University of Washington Libraries Box 352900 Seattle, WA 98195-2900 Telephone: 206-543-1929 Fax: 206-543-1931 speccoll@uw.edu
Access Restrictions	The papers are open to all users.
Additional Reference Guides	The photographs that form part of this collection are described and indexed in A Guide to the Washington State Jewish Archives Photographs Collection, available in the Special Collections division of the University of Washington Libraries.
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was partially provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Biographical Note

Samuel E. Goldfarb was often called "the father of Jewish music in America." He was born in 1891 on the Lower East Side of New York City to a musical family. He sang as a choirboy in the synagogues and learned to read music from his older brother, Israel. Samuel Goldfarb studied music at Columbia University while he supported himself by playing piano in a nickelodeon and for a Yiddish vaudeville theater. After attending Columbia, Goldfarb did some composing, arranging, accompanying, and choir conducting. He spent a year in Reno, Nevada, from 1923 to 1924, where he played theater piano and organ and also played for parties and dances. While in Reno, he was appointed acting cantor at Temple Emanu-El, where he organized a choir. Goldfarb returned to New York in 1925 and decided to devote himself to Jewish music. He was appointed head of the music department of the Bureau of Jewish Education.

Goldfarb was a prolific composer of songs and other music. Together with his brother, Rabbi Israel Goldfarb, he composed hundreds of songs which are sung in Jewish schools. In 1925 the two brothers compiled the first American collection of Jewish songs, *The Jewish Songster*. This collection, in two volumes, was used in schools throughout the country and included some of Goldfarb's songs. The

[Samuel E. Goldfarb papers, 1912-1981](#)

<http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv69441>

brothers also compiled *Friday Evening Melodies*. Among Samuel Goldfarb's compositions are biblical operettas, the best known being "The Jews in Egypt" (1926), Bible songs, festival songs, and choral music. His most famous song is "The Dreidel," which is sung during Chanukah by children throughout the world.

In 1930 Samuel Goldfarb visited Seattle to attend a wedding and accepted the post of music director of Temple de Hirsch. Goldfarb built an impressive music program at Temple de Hirsch. Over the years he established three children's choirs and trained generations of children in music. In addition to the children's choirs, he directed the adult choirs, the graduate school glee club, the Sisterhood Chorus, the Professional High Holy Days Choir, and the Temple Quartet. Goldfarb also served as organist and conducted from the organ. Besides directing his choirs, he coached singers and taught Hebrew School classes. At times more than 1,200 adults and children were under his tutelage.

Outside of the temple, "Mr. G," as he was affectionately known, directed the Halevy Singers and the Sephardic Men's Choir. He also arranged music for Susan and Maurice Friedman's "Cavalcade of Jewish Music" and coached Maurice Friedman.

While at Temple de Hirsch, Goldfarb continued to compose and arrange music for use by his choirs. He also composed some secular music, such as "I See an America," a musical setting of a speech by Adlai Stevenson. This widely hailed work was performed in a choral arrangement by the Seattle Chorale in 1965.

At his 25th anniversary celebration at Temple de Hirsch in 1956, Goldfarb and his wife were presented with a trip to Europe and Israel. The Goldfarbs returned from Europe aboard the Andrea Doria and were rescued at sea after their ship collided with a Swedish vessel. In 1968 Goldfarb retired as music director at Temple de Hirsch. He died in Seattle in 1978.

Content Description

The papers document the life and work of Samuel E. Goldfarb. Accession No. 2784-001 contains an oral history interview from 1978 in which Goldfarb discusses his life and work, and also a small collection of letters, clippings, and ephemera. Accession No. 2784-003 is comprised largely of Goldfarb's compositions of sacred and secular vocal and instrumental music, and of songbooks composed or compiled by Goldfarb. This grouping of material also includes biographical information, correspondence, sound recordings, and other materials.

Use of the Collection

Restrictions on Use

The creator's literary rights have been transferred to the University of Washington Libraries.

Preferred Citation

Samuel E. Goldfarb Papers. Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries, Seattle, Washington.

Administrative Information

Arrangement

The collection is comprised of two accessions:

Accession No. 2784-001, Samuel E. Goldfarb papers, 1923-1978

Accession No. 2784-003, Samuel E. Goldfarb papers, 1912-1981

Acquisition Information

The bulk of the collection was a gift of Samuel Goldfarb's son, Michael Goldfarb, and Michael's brothers, January 16, 1984.

Processing Note

A small number of papers that were donated by Samuel Goldfarb in 1978 have been consolidated with Accession 2784-003. These consist of several letters, issues of the *Temple Tidings* newsletter, and newspaper clippings. A Workman's Circle membership certificate, Accession 2784-002, donated in 1982, is also included in Accession 2784-003.

The photographs included in Goldfarb's papers were relocated to the Washington State Jewish Archives Photograph Collection, PH Coll 650, in the Special Collections division, University of Washington Libraries, in May 1985 and April 1986.

Sheet music and 5 audio discs were transferred to the University of Washington Music Library on May 16, 1984. Nine songbooks and hymnals were transferred to the Music Library on March 29, 1985.

Separated Materials

Duplicate books, records, and music, as well as materials outside the collecting scope of the University of Washington Libraries were donated to Temple De Hirsch Sinai, Seattle.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Accession No. 2784-001: Samuel E. Goldfarb papers, 1923-1978

.04 cubic feet (2 sound cassettes)

Scope and Content: This group of material includes an oral history interview recorded on two audiocassettes, along with a transcript of the interview, letters, clippings, and ephemera, 1923-1978. The interview was conducted by Joseph Cohen and Meta Buttnick Kaplan on February 1, 1978.

Samuel Goldfarb describes his childhood in the Lower East Side of New York City. His family's lifestyle was strictly traditional. Goldfarb knew George Gershwin and Irving Berlin in Tin Pan Alley, where he played to demonstrate songs. Goldfarb also played for the Yiddish theater. He had a Jewish education and graduated from Columbia University. In 1930 he and his wife came to Seattle from Los Angeles to attend a wedding. In Seattle, Dr. Samuel Koch, rabbi of Temple de Hirsch, asked Goldfarb to serve as the temple's musical director. Goldfarb remained in the position until he retired in 1968.

Restrictions on Access: Open to all users.

Digital Content/Other Formats: [Listen to the audio recording and view the transcript](#) of this interview on the Libraries Digital Collections site.

Accession No. 2784-003: Samuel E. Goldfarb papers, 1912-1981

3.72 cubic feet (9 boxes) plus 10 phonodiscs

Arrangement: These papers have been arranged into five series:

- Biographical information
- Correspondence
- Music
- Other papers
- Subject series

Scope and Content: The bulk of these papers consists of music composed or arranged by Samuel Goldfarb and includes vocal music for religious holidays, secular vocal music, dramatic vocal works, and sacred and secular instrumental music. The music series also includes songbooks composed or arranged by Samuel Goldfarb, both individually and with his brother, Israel Goldfarb. The sound recordings feature music sung by the children's choir at Temple de Hirsch and music written or played by Goldfarb. Also included are speeches, writings, clippings, biographical information, correspondence, dramatic works, and ephemera.

Restrictions on Access: Open to all users.

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/ Folder	Accession	
1/1	2784-003 Biographical information	1950-1981
	Correspondence	
	Incoming letters	
Box/ Folder	Accession	
1/2	2784-003 A-F	1917-1978
1/3	2784-003 Goldfarb, Israel	1934-1963
1/4	2784-003 J-W	1923-1974, undated
Box/ Folder	Accession	
1/5	2784-003 Outgoing letters	1942-1972, undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
1/6	2784-003 General correspondence regarding Samuel Goldfarb	1956
Music		
Vocal music		
Sacred vocal music		
Box/ Folder	Accession	
1/7-8	2784-003 Sabbath	1936-1974, undated
1/9-10	2784-003 High Holy Days	1932-1970, undated
1/11	2784-003 Sukkos	1927-1964, undated
1/12	2784-003 Chanuka	1927-1968, undated
1/13	2784-003 Purim	1954-1967, undated
1/14	2784-003 Pesach	1919-1964, undated
1/15	2784-003 Shovuoth	1964, undated
2/1-2/2	2784-003 Holidays (general)	1934-1971, undated
2/3	2784-003 Bar mitzvah	undated
2/4-6	2784-003 Various occasions	1925-1972, undated
2/7	2784-003 "The Jewish Calendar in Song"	1935, 1967
Box- folder:Oversize		

Container(s)	Description	Dates
9/1	2784-003 Bible songs	1925-1926, undated
9/2	2784-003 Sunday school songs	undated
Box/ Folder		
2/8-3/1	2784-003 Partbooks - New York	1912-1930, undated
3/2-3	2784-003 Partbooks - Seattle	1931-1960, undated
Box/ Folder	Accession	
3/4	2784-003 Secular vocal music	1927-1967, undated
3/5	2784-003 Yiddish vocal music	1925-1966, undated
Vocal music-dramatic works		
Box/ Folder	Accession	
4/1	2784-003 "The Crumb Conspiracy"	undated
4/2	2784-003 "Freedom"	1917-1919
4/3	2784-003 "The Golden Staff"	1923
4/3	2784-003 "I See an America" <u>General Notes:</u> See also: Subject series	
Box- folder:Oversize		
9/3	2784-003 "Israel Thru the Ages"	1934

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/ Folder		
4/4	2784-003 "The Jews in Egypt"	1926
4/5	2784-003 "The Living Hagaddah"	1967
4/6	2784-003 "The Maccabees"	1914-1919
4/7	2784-003 "Man's Search for Freedom"	1964
Box/ Folder	Accession	
4/8	2784-003 Pedagogical material on vocal technique	undated
Vocal and instrumental music		
Box/ Folder	Accession	
4/9	2784-003 "Hark, My Beloved"	1958
Instrumental music		
Sacred instrumental music		
Box/ Folder	Accession	
4/10	2784-003 Tisha B'Av	1928, undated
4/11	2784-003 Miscellaneous	1951-1965, undated
Secular instrumental music		
Box/ Folder	Accession	
4/12	2784-003 "Ballet Valse" Opus 1	undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
4/13	2784-003 Miscellaneous	1916-1934, undated
Box/ Folder	Accession	
4/14	2784-003 Student compositions	1916
4/15	2784-003 Sketches	1970-1974, undated
	Published music <u>Scope and Content:</u> Songbooks composed or compiled by Samuel and Israel Goldfarb.	
Samuel Goldfarb		
Box/ Folder	Accession	
4/16	2784-003 <i>Avodat Israel Sabbath Eve Service</i>	1953
4/16	2784-003 <i>Beloved Jewish Songs</i>	1965
4/16	2784-003 <i>The Bible Story in Song</i>	1926
4/16	2784-003 <i>Jewish Songs, Part 1</i>	1925
4/16	2784-003 <i>Popular Jewish Melodies, Part 1</i>	1927
4/16	2784-003 <i>Popular Jewish Melodies, Part 2</i>	1927
4/16	2784-003 <i>Songs...for the Temple and Religion School</i>	undated
Samuel and Israel Goldfarb		
Box/ Folder	Accession	
4/17	2784-003 <i>Friday Evening Melodies</i>	1957
4/17	2784-003 <i>Jewish Community Songster</i>	1934

Container(s)	Description	Dates
4/17	2784-003 <i>The Pocket Songster</i>	1929
4/17	2784-003 <i>Selected Jewish Songs for Members of the Armed Forces</i>	1943
4/17	2784-003 <i>Synagogue Melodies for the High Holy Days</i>	1961
<i>The Jewish Songster</i>		
Box/ Folder	Accession	
5/1	2784-003 1st edition, song texts only	1918
5/1	2784-003 4th revised edition, part I	1925
5/1	2784-003 7th revised edition, part I, song texts only	1929
5/2	2784-003 7th revised edition, part II	
Box/ Folder	Accession	
5/3	2784-003 <i>The New Jewish Song Book</i>	1965
Israel Goldfarb		
Box/ Folder	Accession	
5/4	2784-003 <i>Sabbath in the Home</i>	1953
5/4	2784-003 <i>Song and Praise for Sabbath Eve</i> <u>Scope and Content:</u> 3rd and 9th editions and supplement to the 3rd edition.	1925, 1943
5/5	2784-003 <i>Avodath Yisro-el</i>	1946
5/5	2784-003 <i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i>	1962
Sound recordings <u>Digital Content/Other Formats:</u> CD-ROM copies are available for listening.		

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box	Accession	
Disc Recordings Box 3	2784-003 Temple de Hirsch Children's Choir - "En Kelohai-Nu" and "An Only Kid"	1946
Disc Recordings Box 3	2784-003 Temple de Hirsch Children's Choir - "Hodu Ladanoi," "Chad Gadyo," and "Da-Yai-Nu"	1946
Disc Recordings Box 3	2784-003 Temple de Hirsch Children's Choir - "The Spring Tide of the Year," "God of Might," and "Kiddush"	1946
Disc Recordings Box 3	2784-003 "Mood Moderne," composed and played by Goldfarb	undated
Disc Recordings Box 3	2784-003 Piano solo played by Goldfarb	undated
Disc Recordings Box 3	2784-003 "I See an America," music by Goldfarb	undated
Disc Recordings Box 3	2784-003 Children's Choir - Sabbath songs and "Kedusha"	undated
Disc Recordings Box 3	2784-003 "Kol Nidrei" sung by Yossele (Joseph) Rosenblatt	undated
Disc Recordings Box 3	2784-003 Shofar service by Goldfarb	undated
Disc Recordings Box 3	2784-003 Evening service	undated
<i>Other papers</i>		

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/ Folder	Accession	
6/1	2784-003 Libretto: "Joseph the Dreamer"	undated
	Speeches and writings of Goldfarb	
Box/ Folder	Accession	
6/2-8	2784-003 Miscellaneous	1916-1970, undated
7/1	2784-003 Instruction curricula for Hebrew schools	1966, undated
	Speeches and writings of others	
Box/ Folder	Accession	
7/2	2784-003 Bar Mitzvah speeches (Goldfarb, instructor)	1935-1970, undated
7/3	2784-003 Miscellaneous	1927-1969, undated
Box/ Folder	Accession	
7/4	2784-003 Notes - program plans	1964-1973, undated
7/5	2784-003 Itineraries	1955-1962, undated
	Membership lists	
Box/ Folder	Accession	
7/6	2784-003 Junior Choir	1961-1967
7/7	2784-003 Sisterhood Choral Group	undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/ Folder	Accession	
7/8	2784-003 Lists	1956-1956, undated
7/9	2784-003 Legal document	1949
7/10	2784-003 Programs	1928-1979
7/11	2784-003 Prayerbook- <i>Prayers for the New Year</i>	1937
7/12	2784-003 <i>The Torch</i> yearbook, Temple de Hirsch Religion School	1953
7/13	2784-003 <i>Temple Tidings</i> newsletters	1950-1968
7/14-7/15	2784-003 Clippings	1923-1978, undated
8/1	2784-003 Ephemera	1927-1979, undated

Subject series

Box/ Folder	Accession	
8/2	2784-003 "Come Let Us Sing" (L'Chu N'Rah N'Nah) - proposed book	1970
8/3	2784-003 Halevy Singers	1931-1936, undated
8/4-8/5	2784-003 "I See an America"	1963-1971, undated
8/6	2784-003 20th anniversary with Temple de Hirsch	1950
8/7-8	2784-003 25th anniversary with Temple de Hirsch	1955
8/9	2784-003 35th anniversary with Temple de Hirsch	1965
8/10	2784-003 Retirement	1968

Container(s)	Description	Dates
8/11	2784-003 80th birthday	1971
8/12	2784-003 Golden wedding anniversary of Earl H. and Billie Spero	1972

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Children's songs
 Choral conductors--Washington (State)--Seattle--Archives
 Choral conductors--Washington (State)--Seattle--Interviews
 Dramatic music
 Instrumental music
 Jewish American composers--Washington (State)--Seattle--Archives
 Jewish American composers--Washington (State)--Seattle--Interviews
 Jews--United States--Music
 Jews--Washington (State)--Seattle--Archives
 Jews--Washington (State)--Seattle--Interviews
 Music teachers--Washington (State)--Seattle--Archives
 Music teachers--Washington (State)--Seattle--Interviews
 Music--Instruction and study--Juvenile
 Music--Instruction and study--Washington (State)--Seattle
 Sacred vocal music
 Songs
 Synagogue music
 Vocal music

Personal Names :

Goldfarb, Israel, 1879-1967
 Goldfarb, Samuel E. (Samuel Eliezer), 1891-1978--Archives
 Goldfarb, Samuel E. (Samuel Eliezer), 1891-1978--Interviews

Corporate Names :

Temple de Hirsch (Seattle, Wash.)

Form or Genre Terms :

Clippings (Books, newspapers, etc.)
 correspondence
 ephemera
 oral histories
 Sheet music
 Songbooks
 Sound recordings
 Speeches, addresses, etc
 transcripts
 writings

Other Creators :

Corporate Names :

Washington State Jewish Archives (University of Washington)

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Personal Papers/Corporate Records (University of Washington)

Other Creators :

Corporate Names :

Washington State Jewish Archives (University of Washington)

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