



## Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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### **MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.**

Series V: Writings, 1909-1963, undated.

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Tribute to Samuel Goldhamer on 30th anniversary as  
Executive Director, Jewish Welfare Federation, Cleveland,  
1937.

TRIBUTE PAID TO MR. SAMUEL GOLDHAMER ON THE OCCASION OF HIS THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE JEWISH WELFARE FEDERATION OF CLEVELAND ON FEBRUARY 4, 1937, BY RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER.

Mr. Samuel Goldhamer is, this year, completing thirty years of association with the Jewish Welfare Federation as its Executive Director.

Much has happened since 1907, when Mr. Goldhamer, as a young man, first came to the Federation. The Cleveland Jewish community has changed in these years both in size and complexion. What was a community of 25,000 souls has in these years nearly quadrupled itself. Stirring world affairs swept over our communal life bringing to us new tasks and new responsibilities. The scope of Jewish social service has broadened materially through these years and its outlook and technique have undergone radical changes. In all these years, Mr. Goldhamer met the new and increasing responsibilities of his office as they presented themselves with a fine capacity, courage and intelligent adaptability. He moved with the times and at times led the movements. He was never content to stay in the rut of a comfortable bureaucrat. He was not precipitant but deliberate and progressive. He knew when to apply the brakes and when to move full steam ahead.

Whether as in the earlier years the problem was that of building up necessary communal agencies and co-ordinating them, training our people into the habit of adequate and intelligent giving and caring for the immigrant poor, or whether as in the post-war years, the problem was that of organizing campaigns on a large scale, to help our war-ridden brethren across the sea, or whether as in recent years, the problem was that of integrating our communal life into organized unity of planning and action, Mr. Goldhamer was never found wanting either in the intelligent grasp of the problem or in a practical approach to its solution or in devotion and enthusiasm which made for success.

Mr. Goldhamer has, at all times, been self-effacing. He has never craved publicity - that morbid obsession of so many people in public life. He did the work. Others frequently got the credit. He did not mind a bit.

They say of the British Empire that "its incorruptible spinal column" is not its Parliament, its Cabinet members or governing officials but its remarkable civil service, its permanent staff, - the trained men, out of the lime-light, behind the scenes, who carry on year after year the great policies and traditions of the Empire, regardless of the shift and change of parties and governments.

Through all the changes which have taken place in the life of the Federation in the last thirty years, through the succession of presidents, officers and boards of trustees, Mr. Samuel Goldhamer has remained the permanent head who faithfully, tactfully and unostentatiously carried on its work.

He is honored among his fellow social workers throughout the land. They turn to him for counsel and guidance. He is honored and respected in our own community - and this is indeed a great tribute to a man after thirty years in public life, particularly in a Jewish community which has, like all Jewish communities, had its full share of controversies and conflicts which frequently found their way to the offices of the Federation.

Mr. Goldhamer has made many friends. This is a tribute to character even more than to ability. His friends wish to remember him to-night. They requested me to present to you, Mr. Goldhamer, in their name and through them; in the name of all your friends in this community, this token. It is a timepiece.

Time marches on for you, for all of us - but time only deepens real affections and mellows true friendships. You have become closer to us through these passing years and we shall move forward with you into the oncoming years, happy in our fellowship, confident in your leadership.