



## Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and  
The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

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

Series VI: Speaking Engagements, 1917-1964.

---

Reel  
190

Box  
72

Folder  
60

Brown University (Providence, Rhode Island), 1929-1930.



PRESIDENT'S OFFICE  
BROWN UNIVERSITY  
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

November 26, 1929.

Rabbi Abba H. Silver,  
The Temple,  
East 105th St.,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Rabbi Silver:

I want to ask of you a very special favor. You may or may not remember that I was present at a meeting in the Temple Berith Kodesh in Rochester when you gave an admirable address there at a joint dinner for Jews and Christians some years ago. I have very appreciative memories of that address.

As you may perhaps know, I entered five months ago on my term of service as President of Brown. I am exceedingly desirous that the first year should bring as much of inspiration to the University as possible. We have chapel services in Sayles Hall three mornings a week at 9:00 o'clock; on Tuesday for Freshmen, on Wednesday for Sophomores and on Thursday for Seniors and Juniors. We have to divide it in this way because, alas, we have no auditorium directly in connection with the University sufficiently large to accommodate the entire undergraduate body.

In addition to the chapel services I am planning assemblies of the entire Faculty and undergraduate men students six times a year. These will be held either in the First Baptist Church or the Central Congregational Church. The first one was held on the morning of Wednesday, November 13th, with Dean Willard L. Sperry of the Theological School in Harvard University as speaker. His theme was: "Belonging to Our World" and was an exceedingly strong presentation of the value of religion. You understand, of course, that our student body is made up of men of all shades of religious belief, including some who count themselves agnostics and perhaps a very few who reckon themselves as atheists. My impression is that the last named class is very small, though there are many who are groping after light and a still larger number who are practically indifferent to the claims of religion upon them.

The assemblies are held at 9:05 o'clock and the exercises are concluded at 10:00 o'clock in ample time for the men to get to the 10:25 class appointments. The address is supposed to be just about thirty-five minutes in length, and on account of the limitation in time must not be more than forty minutes.

I am anxious to have for these assemblies the very best men in the country in their sane and constructive appeal to the undergraduate mind and heart. I deem them of the very highest potential value to the life of the University. The next assembly is to be held on December 11, 1929, and the speaker will be Dean Charles W. Gilkey of the University of Chicago.



We have our March assembly on Wednesday, March 19th, or Thursday, March 20th - preferably on Thursday, March 20th. I am eager to have you come to give the address upon that occasion. We are looking, of course, for a message which is free from controversial aspects and which will minister directly to the moral, religious and intellectual life of the University. You will know what we want. I would expect to give you a fine congregation, and the possibility of service to the cause of sane morality, scholarship and citizenship is practically unlimited. Please do not say No unless it is absolutely impossible for you to come on either date - preferably the one which I have indicated. I have named two, in order to give a little elasticity to your schedule. We would be able to pay an honorarium of \$100. I know that this is by no means an adequate honorarium, but this is an experiment and I am somewhat limited as to funds.

If you come, Mrs. Barbour and I would be very glad to have you as a guest in our home for the night before the address. We could then go together to the assembly, which will be held in one of the two meeting places to which I have referred. It would be a real gain to me if I could have an answer from you as nearly as possible by return mail and I trust with all my heart that it will be an acceptance.

With cordial regard and best wishes to you in your always important work,

Very sincerely yours,

*Clarence A. Barbour*

Clarence A. Barbour.



Dec. 3d, 1929.

Mr. Clarence A. Barbour,  
President, Brown University,  
Providence, R. I.

My dear Mr. Barbour:-

Permit me to thank you for your  
kind letter of November 26th.

I appreciate very much your  
thoughtfulness in inviting me to address an assembly  
of the under-graduates of Brown. I shall make every  
effort to be with you on Thursday, March 20th, 1930.

I shall bear in mind what you  
say as to the subject matter of these assembly lectures.

I do not know just when I will  
arrive in Providence. Should I arrive on Wednesday,  
March 19th I shall be most happy to avail myself of Mrs.  
Barbour's and your proffered hospitality to be your  
guest. It is likely however, that I shall arrive early  
Thursday morning. In that case I shall come straight to  
the University.

With kindest regards and looking  
forward with pleasure to our meeting again, permit me  
to remain

Very sincerely yours,

AHS/IR



PRESIDENT'S OFFICE  
BROWN UNIVERSITY  
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

December 5, 1929.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,  
The Temple,  
East 105th Street at Ansel Road,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Thank you very much for your gracious letter of December 3rd. I am delighted to know that you will expect to be with us for the Brown University Assembly on Thursday, March 20, 1930. I trust that you will be able to arrive on Wednesday, March 19th, so that Mrs. Barbour and I may have the pleasure and satisfaction of having you as a guest in our home. In any case we shall do all in our power to make your visit to Providence an agreeable one to you.

I will communicate with you as the time approaches as to details of the Assembly, but I am already announcing the fact of your coming and the date. Later I shall be very glad to have your topic. As I think I have already written you the December Assembly will be addressed by Dean Charles Whitney Gilkey of the University of Chicago, the January Assembly by Professor William Lyon Phelps of Yale, and the February Assembly by Dr. S. Parkes Cadman of New York. The speaker at the November Assembly was Dean Willard L. Sperry of Harvard. These speakers are given wide and attentive hearing.

With best wishes for you in your exceedingly important work,

Very sincerely yours,

*Clarence A. Barbour*

Clarence A. Barbour



PRESIDENT'S OFFICE  
BROWN UNIVERSITY  
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

February 11, 1930.

Dear Rabbi Silver:

We are looking with the utmost anticipation to your coming to us for the Brown Assembly of Thursday, March 20, 1930. You will address thirteen hundred undergraduate men and probably seventy-five or more members of the Faculty. It is an academic function so that Faculty and the speaker have been accustomed to wearing academic garb.

I am conveying to you a very urgent invitation on the part of the Brown Union, which is our very effective organization for the cultivation of the social life of the students, that you come to us if possible the day before, perhaps toward the close of the afternoon, and let the Union arrange for you a tea, say from five to six o'clock on Wednesday, which would bring you into direct touch with a goodly number of the Faculty and the student body in a social way. Dr. William Lyon Phelps of Yale did this when he came, and I know that he felt that it was abundantly worth while. It was a very delightful occasion. He spoke briefly and informally at that time using, I remember, as the substance of what he said an afternoon tea in the rooms of James M. Barrie where Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Shaw were present.

Mrs. Barbour and I would be delighted to have you in our home over night on Wednesday as our guest. Please let me know whether this would be a possible arrangement for you. I think it would add in a very real way to your own enjoyment of your visit and to our profit in your coming.

With cordial and constant regard,

Very sincerely yours,

*Clarence A. Barbour*

Clarence A. Barbour

Rabbi Abba H. Silver,  
The Temple,  
East 105th Street,  
Cleveland, Ohio.



card

Feb. 21st, 1930

Dr. Clarence A. Barbour,  
Brown University,  
Providence, R. I.

My dear Dr. Barbour:-

Thank you very much for your letter  
of February 11th.

I appreciate very much the invitation  
of the Brown Union to be with them on the day preceeding  
my address before the University Assembly. Nothing  
preventing, I shall leave Cleveland on the evening of  
Tuesday, the 18th and will arrive in Providence some  
time Wednesday morning or early noon. I shall be very  
happy to avail myself of the kind hospitality of your  
home which Mrs. Barbour and you so graciously extend  
to me.

With kindest regards, permit me to remain

Very sincerely yours,

AHS/IR



PRESIDENT'S OFFICE  
BROWN UNIVERSITY  
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

March 3, 1930.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,  
The Temple,  
East 105th Street,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Thank you very much for your gracious letter of February 21st. I have taken much pleasure in communicating to Mr. Nelson Jones, Manager of the Brown Union, the fact that you are planning to arrive here in time to accept the hospitality of the Union on Wednesday afternoon, March 19th. They are planning a reception by undergraduates and a group of members of the Faculty at four-thirty o'clock for an hour or a little more. Please come at once to our home, 180 Hope Street, upon your arrival in Providence, and make this your headquarters. Those in charge of the afternoon tea would be glad to have you follow the custom of the hour and speak informally some eight or ten minutes on any theme which you may choose, not in the way of a set address, but an informal talk on literature, on travel, or on any other theme which you may choose.

The Assembly comes on the following morning at nine o'clock, and of course we will go together from my home.

We are eagerly looking forward to your coming, and announcements of it are already being made. I dare to believe that you will have a very enjoyable time, and I know that we shall derive both pleasure and profit from your presence here.

We were both in Washington on a day of this present week, unless I mistake, but we were both following hard our own program.

With cordial regard,

Very sincerely yours,

*Clarence A. Barbour*  
Clarence A. Barbour



PRESIDENT'S OFFICE  
BROWN UNIVERSITY  
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

SPECIAL DELIVERY

March 10, 1930.

Rabbi Abba H. Silver,  
The Temple,  
East 105th St.,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Rabbi Silver:

In announcing your coming it would be a very real advantage to us if we could announce your topic. The fact that you are to be here has already been spread abroad on the campus, but we do some intensive advertising as the date approaches. You will remember, I am sure, that the service is supposed to minister to the moral and religious life of the campus, and that the student body is made up of men of all faiths and of some who do not know whether or not they have any religious faith. They will be glad to have a strong and constructive message from you. The four men who have spoken already, with their themes, are:

Dean Sperry of Harvard	"Belonging to Our World"
Dean Gilkey of Chicago	"Imponderables in Education"
Professor Phelps of Yale	"The Courage of Ignorance"
Dr. Cadman of New York	"The Right Use of the Imagination"

It would be a real favor if you could wire me collect at your convenience.

According to your latest letter you are planning to arrive in Providence some time about noon on Wednesday, March 19th, and you will remember that we are planning a reception for you in the Brown Union at 4:30 o'clock in the afternoon. This will last for about one hour. We would be glad to have you speak in an informal way for perhaps ten minutes on any theme which you may choose. Professor Phelps spoke in description of an afternoon tea which he had with Bernard Shaw and Sir James M. Barrie. That meeting, of course, is much more informal than is the assembly of Thursday morning.

When you come to Providence please take a taxi and come directly to our residence at 180 Hope Street.

With cordial regard,

Very sincerely yours,

*Clarence A. Barbour*  
Clarence A. Barbour.



Founded in 1866

# BROWN DAILY HERALD

Made a Daily in 1891

H. O. WERNER, Editor-in-Chief  
J. E. McFADDEN, Managing Editor  
T. J. MONTIGEL, Managing Editor

MEMBER INTERCOLLEGIATE NEWS ASSOCIATION



Rockefeller Hall

Brown University

N. H. GOLDSTEIN, Business Manager  
H. I. BROWN, Adv. Manager  
H. B. TILLMAN, Circulation Manager

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

March 12, 1930

Rabbi A. H. Silver,  
The Temple,  
East 105th Street,  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Sir:

Would it be possible for you to furnish the Brown Daily Herald with a cut of yourself to be used in connection with the publicity which we will carry during the coming week concerning your visit and talk here at Brown. ✓

We shall use the information which is listed in "Who's Who" of course, but should there be any other information which you think would be of especial interest to the students here at Brown who are going to meet and hear you, I should appreciate it if you would forward that information to me at your earliest convenience. We plan to run stories on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, with a cut on Tuesday, if that can be had.

I should like to arrange for an interview with you for a very few minutes immediately following your reception which will be held at the Brown Union the afternoon before you address the student body.

Would you please address me personally at 57 Waterman Street, Providence, R. I., in relation to the above matters. Thank you! )

Yours very truly,

*Paul E. Monahan.*

Paul E. Monahan  
Associate Editor



THE ASSOCIATED ALUMNI  
BROWN UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
ALFRED H. GURNEY

JOHN HAY LIBRARY  
PROVIDENCE, R. I.

March 12, 1930

Dear Dr. Silver:-

Will you please mail me at once a photograph of yourself, suitable for reproduction in the newspapers? I have charge of the academic news of the University, and I want the photograph to use in connection with your appearance before the student body next week. It will be a pleasure, I am sure, to have you as the guest of the University.

Truly yours,

*Att Gurney*

010  
3/14/30



March 14th, 1930

Mr. Paul E. Monahan,  
Brown Daily Herald  
Providence, R. I.

My dear Mr. Monahan:-

Permit me to thank you for  
your letter of March 12th.

Under separate cover my  
secretary is sending you my photograph which you have  
requested.

I shall be most happy to see  
you after the reception at the Brown Union.

With kindest regards, permit  
me to remain

Very sincerely yours,

AHS/IR

O/C 3/14/30



WIRE

March 17th, 1930

DR. CLARENCE A. BARBOUR  
BROWN UNIVERSITY  
PROVIDENCE R. I.

SUBJECT OF MY ADDRESS QUOTE HOW SHALL WE MEASURE LIFE QUOTE  
WILL ARRIVE ONE THIRTY ONE WEDNESDAY FROM WORCESTER MASSACHUSETTS  
KINDEST REGARDS

A. H. SILVER





OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
ALFRED H. GURNEY

THE ASSOCIATED ALUMNI  
BROWN UNIVERSITY

JOHN HAY LIBRARY  
PROVIDENCE, R.I.

March 20, 1930.

Dear Dr. Silver:-

Thank you very much for the photograph which you were good enough to send at my request. I am sorry that it was not possible for me to attend the convocation at which you spoke, but I know that it was a privilege to have you at Brown.

Truly yours,

*Alfred H. Gurney*  
Alumni Secretary.

Rabbi A.H. Silver.