Ray Frank Litman (1864/5?-1948)

Papers, 1871-1957

*P-46

2 manuscript boxes
.5 linear feet

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ray Frank Litman
(1864/5?-1948)

Rachel ("Ray") Frank Litman was born in San Francisco in 1864 or 1865 to an Orthodox Jewish family descended from the Gaon of Vilna. Educated in public schools, she graduated from Sacramento High School and attended the University of California at Berkeley. She taught in Nevada for six years and then returned to Oakland, CA to give private lessons in literature and elocution and to write for periodicals. She was soon asked to teach Sabbath School classes at a local synagogue (where she often drew an adult audience as well), and when the rabbi of the congregation resigned, she became the superintendent of the school.

As a correspondent for some San Francisco and Oakland papers, Frank visited the Pacific Northwest in 1890, where she began to earn her media reputation as a "girl rabbi." The story, as told by her husband, is that while visiting Spokane Falls on the eve of the High Holidays, Frank discovered that the town had no synagogue or Rosh Hashanah services. Calling on one of the wealthier Jews in the town, she was told that if she would deliver the sermon, services would be held. She agreed, and the services, held at the Opera House, drew a large crowd. In the audience was a "Christian gentleman" who was so impressed by Frank's sermon that he offered to donate a site for a synagogue if the town's Jews would undertake the building of it. Frank remained in Spokane until the end of Yom Kippur, asked by the Jews of the town to stay to deliver a sermon at Kol Nidre services.

In 1893, Frank visited Cincinnati, where she took some courses in Jewish ethics and philosophy at Hebrew Union College. Visiting Chicago later that year, she delivered the opening prayer at the Jewish section of the Congress of Religions at the Chicago World's Fair, where she also read a paper on "Woman in the Synagogue."

Frank met her future husband, Simon Litman, in Munich in 1899. From 1900 to 1901 she attended the Zurich Polytechnikum, where she took courses in German literature and economics. She married Litman on August 14, 1901. The Litmans soon moved to the United States, where Simon Litman pursued a career as a university professor, teaching at the University of California, Berkeley and then at the University of Illinois, where Ray led informal discussion groups in Jewish history, organized the local synagogue's first sisterhood, and helped to found the local chapter of Hadassah. She continued to lecture and teach until her death in 1948.

References:
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The papers of Ray Frank Litman contain information pertaining to the life of a woman who was often referred to as a "girl rabbi" or "the first woman rabbi." The collection contains articles written by RFL, a journalist, as well as numerous newspaper clippings detailing her travels and lectures at synagogues around the United States. Also included is correspondence with figures such as Nina Davis Salaman, Marion and Lily Montagu, Charlotte Perkins Stetson (who later became Charlotte Perkins Gilman, the famous American feminist), Ambrose Bierce, David Phillipson, Israel Zangwill, and Abram Sachar (the first president of Brandeis University).

The collection is valuable to researchers studying the history of women in the rabbinate (although RFL herself refused to allow anyone to call her a rabbi, and although she was never ordained, contemporary American Jewish feminists often cite her as a predecessor of today's female rabbis), Jews of California, Illinois, and the Pacific Northwest.

Of special interest is RFL's correspondence with Nina Davis Salaman, Charlotte Perkins Stetson (later Charlotte Perkins Gilman), the sermon RFL delivered on Yom Kippur at Spokane Falls (includes discussion of women's role in Judaism), and articles by and about RFL about her role as a female preacher: "Why I Preach" (1894), "Jewesses of Today" (includes her views on women's rights), "If I Were a Rebitzen" (1890), "If I Were a Rabbi (What I Would Not Do)" (1890).

The collection contains correspondence, newspaper articles by and about RFL, a typescript biography of Nina Davis Salaman by RFL, a scrapbook, printed annual reports, manuscript and typed sermons and speeches by RFL, manuscript and typescript essays by RFL, a typewritten paper about the women of California, published essays, stories, sermons and poems by RFL, manuscript poems and a book by RFL, programs of events where RFL spoke, visiting cards, the passenger list of a ship on which RFL sailed, a school prize given to RFL, transcripts, a certificate of appreciation for RFL, a published memoir of RFL (1957) written by her husband, and a pencil sketch of Litman done by artist Maud Ball.

The collection contains 450 items, all in English, organized by correspondent or subject.
BOX LIST

Box 1
Letters from Ambrose Bierce to RFL, May 1895-Jan. 1900 and n.d.
Newspaper articles by A. Bierce about RFL, 1895
Letter of introduction to Mr. Chamberlain from A. Bierce for RFL, 1898
Letters from Pauline Slater to RFL, 1927-1930
Letters from Nina Davis Salaman to RFL, 1899-1924
Typescript biography (obituary) of N. D. Salaman by RFL, and newspaper clipping
2 letters to Dr. A. L. Sachar about Litmans
Letters from RFL to Charlotte Perkins Stetson, and to S. T. Willis about her autobiography
Part of an autograph book
Report of Sinai Sisterhood, Champaign-Urbana
Manuscript sermon and speech by RFL
Manuscript essay in reply to Henry van Dyke's article, "Is the World Growing Better?"
Letters from children (relatives)
Letters from people requesting RFL to lecture, and acknowledging delivery
Letters addressed mainly to Prof. S. Litman regarding wife's health and sympathy letters
Letter from Israel Zangwill, regarding Art and Life, 1897
Typewritten paper by Faith Yarknarf
Typescript essays by RFL
Published biographical material clippings about RFL
Printed Material: Articles written by RFL
Printed Material: Sermons of RFL
Manuscript poems of RFL
Manuscript copy of a book Walter McCormick: A Story of the West by RFL
2 poems

Box 2
Scrapbook
Programs
Miscellaneous
Clippings regarding invitation to Nevada by the Governor
Certificate of appreciation from Bible Class - Oakland, CA
Clippings about RFL
Clippings regarding lecture "Heart Throbs of Israel"
Newspaper articles regarding general matters

*Ray Frank Litman: A Memoir* by Simon Litman, 1957

Pencil sketch of RFL by artist Maud Ball, 1899, and small photograph of Ball inscribed to Litman, c.1905.
ITEM LISTING

**Box 1**

*Letters from Ambrose Bierce to RFL*

- May 1895-Jan 1900 (plus some n.d.)

*Newspaper articles by A. Bierce about RFL*

- *San Francisco Examiner*, Nov 18, 1895 (says she's a good speaker because she makes one forget about "the New Woman," whom the author doesn't like)
- July 25, 1897 (discusses Ray Frank Day in Portland)
- *San Francisco Progress.[ive?]*, Oct 1895

*Letter of introduction to Mr. Chamberlain from A. Bierce for RFL*

- 5/11/98
- To a Mr. Chamberlain of London
- Includes also a letter to RFL from AB, 1895?

*Letters from Mrs. Pauline Slater to RFL*

- 1927? - thanking her for books she sent/gave to her children
- 1929? – thank-you note for hospitality in CA
- Mar., 1930 - again, thank-you for hospitality in CA

*Letters from Nina Davis Salaman to RFL*

[NDS was an Anglo-Jewish woman who translated Hebrew poems, prayers and books (incl. Machzor and poems of Judah Halevi) and wrote her own poetry]

1899-1924

- 1/25/99: NDS talks about going to a lecture by Claude Montefiore on English Jews' responsibility to anti-Semitism in Europe
- Also mentions Zangwill in passing
- 3/19/99: mentions Zangwill and a book she has written
- 4/20/99: mentions RFL's ideal of becoming "a wooden woman with a stone heart"
- Mentions article about RFL in April issue of "Israel": formerly "Young Israel"
- Mentions Passover, Shevuoth, etc.
- 8/19/99: mentions Women's Congress and CJW: "certainly if the C of J W does not justify its existence it would be better if it were not represented. But if we are to be represented at all, how else can it be but as Jews? It seems to me that the other religions are not represented because the members of them have all a country of their own and are called Americans or Frenchmen or Germans; but though we have only a religion, we are still a nation; and isn't it better that we should be represented as such though we can only call ourselves Jews?"
- 9/15/99: New Year's greetings, discussion about the way she observed Yom Kippur
- Also mentions Dreyfus case
- 10/31/99: mentions that English women are thinking of starting an org. along the lines of the "American" Jewish Women's Council, starting w/ a reading circle.
- 8/17/00: mentions the Zionist Congress
- 12/25/00: mentions that the Montaguses were asking after her (RFL)
- 1/14/03?: mentions that theLitmans were thinking of adopting a child
- 3/6/11: her husband is a scientist, working on a new project: "the inheritance of Jewish characteristics in appearance"
- 11/3/20: info. about English Jews and views of Palestine (they're friends w/ Herbert Samuel & family)

Typescript biography (obituary) of N.D. Salaman by RFL, and Newspaper Clipping

a. Biography/obituary (seems to be for a newspaper article, written at the U. of Illinois)
   - Speaks about her achievements as a Jewish woman
   - Calls her a Talmid Chacham
   - And says that the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain called her one as well at her funeral
   - Good biographical detail of her life and work, including list of many of the pieces she published and the journals they were published in (Jewish Chronicle, JQR, Menorah)
   - Compares her to Emma Lazarus

b. "Dr. Jung Eulogizes Miss Solomon [sic] at Memorial Service"
   - Memorial service at U. Illinois
   - Dr. Moses Jung
   - RFL was in charge of the memorial service: Jung, Prof. Zeitlin and Dr. A.L. Sachar

2 letters to Dr. A. L. Sachar about Litmans

- For a dinner commemorating the 25th anniversary of Prof. Litman's connection with U. of Illinois

  - By David Kinley, 4/22/33
    - On RFL: "May I add that towards Mrs. Litman, as well as towards her husband, I have always had a feeling of warm personal regard. It has been very obvious to me that she has been to her husband a true helppmeet so that, without in any way disparaging his own efforts, I may say that his success in no small measure is due to her."

  - By Charles M. Thompson, Dean, College of Commerce and Business Administration, U. Illinois, 4/22/33
    - On RFL: "Mrs. Litman has not only been a great source of inspiration to me, but her life has been a constant source of wonderment. Her grasp of public affairs, her keen sympathy with men and women of the everyday world, and her idealism mark her as a woman greatly out of the ordinary."

Letters from RFL to Charlotte Perkins Stetson, and to S.T. Willis about her autobiography

All manuscript letters

- Oakland, 9/14/94, to Charlotte Perkins Stetson, in response to a letter (response to letter of 9/7/94 - see below, #14)
  - "...thanks for the kind things said of myself and for the noble hopes for all women..."
  - Stetson asked her to join the PCWPA
"I endeavor to shape my actions by my highest desires, believing desire to be the first and innermost principle of development. This development is either regressive or progressive, but ever comes from the same cause desire, and by it we grow like gods or devils."

"In relation to what you have said concerning women, the necessity for organized alliance etc. I agree with you, but as to the method I am not so sure you are right. It has often occurred to me, always from experience, that we oftentimes encourage, always unknowingly, the very things we decry in the opposite sex. We appear to be conquerors whereas it is the case of Hercules at Lerna (?) over again; we cut off the head of one serpent and two spring from the wound. You are a brave woman, apparently standing in no fear of the modern hydra, but tell me, do you really believe that the old way of burying the midmost (?) snake alive is and should be our way? Can woman by retaining in herself certain desires even though she bury them under a (?) thousand noble acts, can she really bring about this ideal state? After earnest study of men and motives, the latter seem to me most potent for the race, the men ever outgrowths not of the act, but of that which prompts the act."

"...after much hard thinking I am well convinced that comparatively I know nothing and less than that about myself. I smile, with tears just back of the smile when I hear myself termed a 'modern Deborah' (for I know that the fly crawling over my paper, undaunted by my big questions, is possessed of powers beyond me, and who shall say that any part of my knowledge may not at some time have been part of his possessions)."

"For I, a daughter of Judah, have come down the ages over all sorts of ways beautiful and terrible, and to-day stand at the cross roads of civilization, at a place where the centuries glide into each other, and thus know that their wedding proves out continuity - our divinity. Less than a fly in power, yet divine am I, a creature of inconsistencies, but in this is the stamp of my Maker, and it is enough; for there are times when something wells up within me, something before which men and mountains - all that is - dwarfs before my vision - because heaps of sand with which I can build or play as I list (?). I have chosen to build. With such as God has given me, I have girded on mine armour to fight prejudice, no matter what its form, to help establish Justice the heir of heaven and earth. How I shall come from the combat I do not know. I have flung my glove more times that I care to remember in the fall of my adversaries; but as they are mine opponents only because they oppose all, I have no fear of being unhorsed. As to where the conflict will eventually lead me, I do not know but am assured it is alright. I ask for no reward, but have a mighty desire for peace. See what a deal I have written of one who, all told, would sooner forget than remember herself."

- Oakland, 12/15/96, to Rev. S. T. Willis

- In response to his request for information about her; she doesn't like to write about herself or give photographs, but "so much erroneous matter has been published concerning me in papers all over the world, that I confess to being pleased that you will print me truthfully."

- Autobiographical info: on parents, upbringing, views on Jews, why she became involved in Jewish causes, jobs she has held (teaching, superintendent of Hebrew schools, journalist)

- On her speaking career: "While in Spokane, I was asked to address the Jews of the city, who, owing to differences of opinion concerning the minor forms of Jewish ceremony were unorganized and without a synagogue. It so happened that the holy days were at hand, and I was urged to talk on the even of the Day of Atonement, the most sacred day of the Jews. This I did, speaking in the opera house, the churches of the city, having a few weeks before been laid in ashes by the great fire. The idea of a woman preaching to the Jews on that evening was so novel that it brought together a large audience of Jews and Christians. The result was the formation of a permanent congregation, a wealthy Christian offering to donate the ground whereon the build a synagogue. This as I understand it was the first instance of a woman preaching to the Jews on the Day of Atonement, in fact, the first instance of a woman preaching at any time to an audience of both men and women. The affair caused much interest and comment, and I was urged to study
for the pulpit; but I was interested in the Jew and Judaism for other than theological reasons, an
interest greatly increased by the various denominations of Christianity splitting into factions
because of doctrinal differences."
- So she became a journalist - "."...and whenever an article libelous to the Jews appeared it became
my business and my pleasure to explain away its prejudice. I think I may say that my
predominant thought at this time was to do battle for the Jew whenever prejudice was his foe."
- But realized the Jews needed reformation as well
- Became a special student of philosophy at U. Cal. so that she could figure out her own beliefs
- 1892, entered theological college in Cincinnati [Hebrew Union College] "to learn more of the
philosophy of Judaism, and was the first woman to take that special work at the college."
- Stayed a year, didn't intend to study for rabbinate - "ordination is not essential to preachers, or,
better yet, to teachers"
- Before Cincinnati, she lectured throughout Pacific Coast on Jewish topics
- Then lectured in the East as well
- After participating in Parliament of Religions at the Congress of Jewish Women, she "preached
in various synagogues and churches."
- In Chicago, someone proposed that she accept a pulpit there
- "Last year, I officiated throughout the entire holiday season for one of the oldest orthodox
congregations on the coast, at Victoria, B.C."
- "With few exceptions, the rabbis have welcomed me as a co-worker, and aided me when they
could. As for the Jewish people, they have been invariably kind and interested."
Part of an autograph book

- With messages from Rebecca Alexander, Rosa Alexander, Emile Dreyfous (Oakland, 7/13/93), Becca
Henderson, J. Lloyd Jones, M. (?) Rosalie Jones, Dollie Rosenstock (with painting), Mrs. L.J.
Rosenstock, Josephine Taylor, Nellie Treat

Report of Sinai Sisterhood, Champaign-Urbana

- On activities of 1925, handwritten
- Related to Hillel Foundation, worked with students
- RFL was Chairman on Religion
- Mission is to combat religious apathy: "Our greatest problem is therefore - to convert ability for material
matters into enlightened enthusiasm for spiritual progress."
- Mentions the memorial service for Nina Salaman as highlight of activities
- Over the summer, RFL started having services on Shabbat morning, held at various homes, attended by
women

Ms. sermon and speech by RFL

- Sermon (to a group of women)
  - "Think you that religion was born with this or that race or nation? Think you that the Eternal
favored this or that tribe? No, no, no!"
  - Jesus - "came to impress upon the people that it was not enough the law was, but that it must be
lived, neither adding to it nor taking from it, exemplifying this by all he said and did."
  - "Mark the result. Tighter grew the grasp of theological tyranny, choking all that differed from it.
Rankest injustice supplanted justice, fiercest hate killed love; and so the war waged on through
centuries."
  - Quick history of religion, religious intolerance, darkness of ignorance that ended with Locke &
Renaissance
- In this, the age of science, people need to recognize that God made humans (who discovered science)
- Don't mistake science for God

- Speech, given by RFL as the presiding officer of the Sisterhood for the Sinai congregation (most likely)
  - "Women have always been such an important element in fostering Judaism that its development and influence may be largely measured by their attitude towards the synagogue."
  - "But a new strength has manifested itself amongst our people and from all over the earth a reawakened Jewish consciousness is taking up the liturgical refrain"
  - Calls the synagogue a Temple
  - Includes list of committees of Sisterhood

Manuscript essay in reply to Henry van Dyke's Article, "Is the World Growing Better?"

- Her view is pessimistic

Letters from children (relatives)

- From her niece Gertrude Berg, n.d.
- From Gertrude, Oct. 16, 1889
- From her niece Ruth Berg, n.d.
- From her nephew William Berg, Sept. 4, 1890
  - With New Year's wishes
- From her brother, Aron (?), Feb. 26, 1890
- From Gertrude, Feb. 26, 1890
  - "I go to Sabbath [school?] three times a week."
- From William, Feb. 27, 1890
- From William, Oct. 17, no year (probably 1889)
  - "I fasted a whole day on Yom Kipper [sic] and did not find it so hard."
- From her sister Rosa, Sept. 11, 1890
  - With New Year's wishes
- From Gert, 1889
  - "My essay got the highest marking at Hebrew school."
- From Ruth, n.d.
- From Will, April 5, 1886
- From Ruth, n.d.
  - She got Christmas presents
- From Ruth, n.d.
- From Gertrude, Aug. 2, 1889
- From Ruth, Jan. 13, 1890
- From Ruth
- From Ruth
- From Gertrude, 7/25/89(?)

Letters from people requesting RFL to lecture, and acknowledging delivery

- 8/21/94, from C.P. Stetson
  - Asking her to be a member of the PCWPA
- 9/7/94, from C.P. Stetson
- Discussing the need for women to organize
- And asking her to join their organization (rather passionately)
- 3/13/36, from Mrs. Roger Adams
- On RFL's membership renewal in "the League"
- 1/26/99, from Nettie Adler (England)
- 12/27/99, from Nettie Adler
- Mentions starting a study circle "after the plan of the American Council of Jewish Women"
- 12/25/00, from Nettie Adler
- "Oh dear! What a blessing work is, and how blessed we women are, who though we may spend our lives alone can yet keep our ideals intact and can be satisfied with nothing but what response to our hunger for the highest. If we spend our lives alone, at least we keep our self Respect and I don't think that with work, one is alone."
- 4/2/01, from Nettie Adler
- Half of a letter, n.d., from Nettie Adler
- 7/1/00, from Nettie Adler
- 1/27/25, from Isaac Landman, ed., American Hebrew
- Want to run her as a "Jewish Woman Headliner"
- N.d. from Mrs. Joseph Cullen Blair
- Enjoyed meeting her
- 6/4/32, from B'nai Abraham Temple Sisterhood, IL
- Thank you
- 9/19/28, from Abe Sachar (Hillel at U. of IL)
- Asking her to be a hostess at a tea for Jewish girls on campus and to speak to them
- 7/29/98, from Annie Francis Briggs (friend)
- 9/21/99, from Annie Francis Briggs
- 10/31/85, from Minnie Louis of the Board of the Hebrew Technical School for girls
- Asking her to add her signature to an "Autograph Apron" to be auctioned/sold at a fundraiser
- 9/14/93, from Joseph Stolz (Chicago)
- Asking her to "occupy my pulpit" on Sat. Sept 23
- "I am sure that I grant you the privilege of preaching most heartily for I think there is need for Jewish women in the pulpit, and I am sure also that a large Congregation would be delighted to hear you."
- 9/15/93, from Nathaniel Rubinkam, Pastor, University Congregational Church
- Asking her to speak for his congregation Sunday evening, along with a man from Syria who will speak on the "Religions of Today in the Holy Land"
- 3/27/95, from Minnie Gaden, Sect'y of Woman's Congress Assoc., CA
- Asking her to speak at a program on "The Home" and its relation to human progress
- 8/26/95, from Landsberg, Sect'y, Congregation Emanu_El (Oakland, CA)
- "cordially invite you here an and officiate for us during the Holidays to revive Judaism in this place which has sadly been neglected since we have been without a Rabbi."
- 8/28/95, from M. Mennases, Sect'y, Cong. Rophim [?] Ahuim, Stockton, CA
- "extend to you a [sic] invitation to address our Jewish Community, for the purpose of trying to stimulate them, to interest themselves more, in behalf of bringing up our rising generation in the religion of our fathers, as I am sorry to state that the Jewish religion here, has been neglected to a great extend [sic]."
- 1/3/98, from Ina Coolbrith [?]
- Clearing up some misconception about IC's job and $
"I like the story that you sent me very much. I sent it up to the printers yesterday, and I hope you will get proof promptly. I do want true stories of adventure very much, it is so much easier to get hold of such stories for boys and yet girls enjoy them just as much, but then the lives of girls are so much more restricted, and adventure is on the whole rare with them."

- 4/27/17, from Celia Levy, Pres, Council of Jewish Women, Chicago Section
  - Thanks for a speech

- 7/14/18, from Alma D. Cowen, 2nd VP, Council of Jewish Women, Chicago Section
  - Inviting her to speak again
  - Pencil, handwritten reply on back from RFL, saying that she would like to speak on "Awakened Jewry and the War"

- 12/12/94, from Mabel Clare Crafts
  - Friendship letter

- 11/21/95, from Jacob?
  - Asking her again to be principal of the projected Jews' Free School

- 2/18/23, from Pauline Hess, of Emanu_El, the Jewish Congregation of the West, CA
  - Thanking her for info on "The Jewesses of Our Day" and asking her for bio. info on herself

- 11/6/98, from Marian Montagu
  - Inviting her to "the girls' club"

- 11/9/98, from Marian Montagu
  - Inviting her to tea, thanking her for speaking

- 3/24/01, from Lily Montagu
  - Discussing her work, their shared struggle against indifference, her book

- 11/15/35, from "the Honorable Mrs. Franklin" (H. Franklin)
  - Inviting her to a formal dinner

- 1/2/00, from Louis G[Y?]udelrod [?]
  - He's an artist

- 1/29/96, from Walter Blackburn Harte, conductor of The Fly Leaf, Boston, MA
  - On the reputation of journalists
  - On the New Woman
    - Greatest moral force of today, intelligent, broadened horizons

- 12/30/98, A. Hutchinson of The Windsor Magazine
  - Rejecting "the bulk" of her ms. for publication, but encouraging

- 1/6/99, A. Hutchinson of The Windsor Magazine

- 1/3/00, from G. Keith Johnston
  - On being an author

- N.d. from Emily Marion Kerris

- 8/12/35, from Dr. Paul Moses
  - In German
  - Looks like a medical report

- 1/10/27, from H.J. Corper, National Jewish Hospital
  - Thanks for a contribution from her and the Sisterhood

- 3/12/95, from David Philipson (and a few lines from his wife)
  - Thanks for a gift
  - Talks about HUC a little - work proceeding as usual; "I am glad to discern a more earnest spirit"; he has formed a "seminary" where students meet at night to discuss recent books and articles

- 9/28/94, from Ermentine Poole
  - Thanks for a sermon

- 5/18/98, from P[R?] De Vecchi
  - People whom she should see in Europe
- 1/24/00, from Toby Rosenstat
  - Invitation to tea
- 1/11/95, from Samuel Schultz
  - "you were an inspiration. You pricked my slumbering ambition into an ardent desire to live my
    life for all that it was worth - to put forth my best energies."
  - "Accept my congratulations in the success of your Portland engagement. The papers there
certainly were eulogistic, though in one way exceeding your true deserts [sic]."
- 3/26/97, from Samuel Schultz
  - Says that he was brought up without much religion, but an article by Zangwill ("Children of the
    Ghetto") has inspired him, and he dreams of living with a "froom" family along the "froomest"
lines
- 4/11/98, from Bertha Sloss
- 11/19/97, from Bertha Sloss
  - Sending a check for $425, "the proceeds of the lectures up to the present"
  - RFL is giving a lecture series; the first one was well-attended and Sloss enjoyed it very much
- 12/27/98, from Bertha Sloss
  - RFL is in London
  - She seems to be offering her money if she needs it
- 1/20/01, from Bertha Sloss
  - Mentions that Sadie American had visited San Francisco
  - Inspired them to organize a section of the Council of Jewish Women
  - She's friends with a Miss Peixotto, with whom she has started a study group, and who was
  nominated as delegate to the National Congress of Jewish Women
- 10/16/94, from David Jordan, Pres. of Stanford U.
  - She had written him a letter about a statement he made about Natural Selection
- 1/15/96, from Charles Lathrop?
  - She's coming to Stanford to speak on Sun. morning, 1/19
- 1/12/44, from Raymond Swing
  - Asking her to contribute to $ to go to Freda Kirchway for social service, to be presented to FK
  at a dinner in her honor, which RFL can't attend but is helping to sponsor
- 9/20/25, from Mrs. Abraham Weil, of Sisterhood of Temple Isaiah Israel, Chicago
  - Their sisterhoods had met; she's asking for RFL's Sisterhood's report
- 10/30/40, from Gertrude Jonas Herschman of First Hebrew congregation of Oakland, Temple Sinai
  - Invitation to a homecoming celebration on the 65th anniversary of the Temple's founding
  - RFL had been a president of the Sisterhood
- 1/14/13, from Laura Vendon?
- 10/24/25, from Mrs. Abraham Weil
  - Thanks for sending her Sisterhood's report
- 11/22/25, from Mrs. Abraham Weil
- 9/17/95, from Melvin Winstock, Pres. Montefiore Literary Society, Seattle
  - Inviting her to address their society during her trip there
- 2 letters, incomplete and unsigned, from Paris, 10/18/00 and 6/20/01
- 1931, from "Janet"
  - Thanks for a sympathy note

Letters addressed mainly to Prof. S. Litman regarding wife's health and sympathy letters

- 12/28/44, from Harriet Kenley Brooks
  - Thanks for a sympathy note
- 10/14/48, from Dr. William A. Brams
- Sympathy note
- 8/12/48, from Dr. Helen Coyle
  - RFL's in the hospital, HC visited her, is reporting to SL
- 10/12/48, from Julia Felsenthal
  - Sympathy note
- N.d. (July 5 in pencil, after RFL's death), from Anne Gustafson
  - Some mention of RFL, of wanting to visit her resting place
- N.d. (1948? in pencil)
  - Memories of RFL
- 10/12/48, from Mrs. Max Kaplan, Corresponding Sec'y, Champaign-Urbana Chapter of Hadassah
  - Sympathy note
- 10/14/48, Anita Libman Lebeson
  - Sympathy
- 10/29/48, H. Clifford Northcott, Resident Bishop, Methodist Church of Wisconsin
  - Sympathy
- 7/24/48, from Dr. Ulrich Ledien, The Michell Sanatorium, Peoria
  - RFL is staying there, and he lists some things that SL could send to her to make her stay more comfortable
  - "On the whole Mrs. Litman has made a good adjustment. She is very cooperative, and did not yet show any of those temper tantrums you mentioned when you talked with me over the phone. Apparently she tries hard to adjust herself and makes the best of the new situation. In a very charming and almost touching way she is grateful for any attention she receives."
- 10/12/48, from Abe Sachar (on Brandeis letterhead)
  - Sympathy note
  - "My mind goes back to the very beginning of our friendship when I came as a young instructor to Illinois. Almost the first people that we met were you and Mrs. Litman; we found in you the deepest and warmest kind of friendship and a pride in Jewish life which made it easy always to come to both of you for counsel. Mrs. Litman represented for us the symbol of the Jewess at her best, - sensitive to Jewish values but always well balanced enough not to be over-sensitive. Every good cause claimed her devotion so that thinking back over them is like calling the roll of everything that is worthwhile in American and in Jewish life."
- 11/13/48, from Annie Temby
  - Sympathy
- James G. Thomas
  - Sympathy

Letter from Israel Zangwill, 1897, regarding: Art and Life

- 1/15/97: "Your (false) reputation as a Rabbi is not unknown to me and I am please to hear from you direct."
- On what art is, what literature is, life, etc.

Typewritten paper by Faith Yarknarf

"The Women of California: An Opportunity of the Ages"
- "it is this land which is to breed another type of woman, a new type of mothers of men"
- "the individualism of spaciousness is heroic courage, self-denial, determination, honesty of purpose and a large hospitality for its kind. Anything born and bred in such an environment is necessarily colored by it. Women more quickly absorb, reflect and even exaggerate an
environment; hence the native Californian women of the white race give evidence of what I have termed a new type, of which individuality, strength and versatility are the main characteristics."
- Californian women are larger and stronger than women of "other lands"
- Also a lot of working women
- More women [percentage wise] attend college than in any other state
- "Californian women lead the world in the production of literature, music, painting"

*Typescript essays by RFL*

1. "A Triple Tragedy" (16 typewritten pages)
   - Story about miners - a romantic tragedy

2. "A Bit of Higher Education" (4 typewritten pages)
   - A woman in love with a dynamic lecturer who gives her signals that he is fond of her, too; she finds out in the end that he is married, and she goes off alone

3. "Psyche Awakened" (15 typewritten pages, tied with a green ribbon)
   - A young woman in love with a man who, she finds out, is married, but is in love with her - she's noble and moral, and struggles with her love for him, eventually gives him up, but her view of the world is shattered

*Published Biographical Material*

   - As she looks at the world: "I see Commerce trading in souls; Falsehood standing in pulpits; Persecution naming itself Religion. I see men and women changed into beasts of burden. I see children fed on the flesh of parents. I see mothers hanging sons. I see sons murdering fathers. I see Prophecy called Madness. I see Nobility wounded, I see Charity rebuked. I see Hypocrisy decked in theology. I see woman losing her womanhood. I see luxury called necessity. I see labor despised and reviled."

   - "she is often described as a female Rabbi. As a matter of fact, she is not a Rabbi, though more than one Rabbinical post has been offered to her."
   - "one of the best known lady lecturers in America."
   - "It would be a mistake to suppose that, because Miss Frank has done so remarkable a work, and filled a part so unusual for a member of her sex, that she is what would be called a New Woman. Her views on the subject of woman's place in the social scheme are as modest and maidenly as her own demeanor.
     
     "I believe in all forms of intellectual progress,' she remarked to me in the course of our interview; 'but I am not a suffragist. I do not believe that a woman can properly fulfil her home duties and be out in the world too.'

     "What about unmarried women?' I asked. 'You would scarcely deny to them the right of going out into the world and making a career for themselves?'

     "No, I would not. I believe in women whom circumstances do not permit to marry becoming independent and adopting professions: but I do not believe in their being taken up by married women. Married women cannot do both things - attend to their home and follow a profession. So far as my experience goes, those who have attempted the two have invariably failed in one. Usually it is the home that suffer. There might be a limited suffrage for unmarried women. But one great thing against the woman suffrage movement is that it is carried on by
women who have no mental training....Understand, I believe in the intellectual and educated
woman, whatever her sphere of life is to be....At one time women were one-sided in being only
domesticated, nowadays they are one-sided in neglecting the considerations of home and family.
They must be brought back, and taught to see that every innovation, every change does not
necessarily mean progress."
- "My work as been chiefly directed to [Jewish women]. Through all the ages Jewish women
have been the great home-builders, the foundations of the family. It would be a thousand pities if
at this late day, when the intellectual development of women is on a level with that of men, the
Jewess were to forsake her old duties, her high calling which she has filled so long and so nobly."

   - "One does not think of her as a man in petticoats; for there can be nothing more gracefully
     feminine than Ray Frank."
   - "Ray Frank is not a 'woman preacher;' she is not a Rabbi; she does not seek notoriety and profit
     attached to a name, she is a woman with a mission; her platform is the world, her audience
     mankind, and she receives her inspiration from the forests, and the mountains, and the sea and the
     stars. Women like Ray Frank are not to be classified, compared or analyzed; they are developed
     by conditions, as was Confucius, and Moses, and Buddah, and Christ; they grip mankind's heart
     and lift its soul to the divine."

   *Clippings about RFL*

1. "Work of a Woman Rabbi," *S.F. Bulletin* 15, 1895
   - Includes quotes by her about women in the home, her mission

2. "A Famous Jewess, Who Has Been Called 'A Female Messiah'," *Cincinnati Times-Star*, n.d., p. 6
   - She's come to Cincinnati to enroll at HUC
   - Quotes from her about why she's a preacher and how she came to be one
   - She wants to teach "enlightened Judaism," not orthodox or reform
   - She says Wise told her she could take any courses she wanted to
   - The commercialism of the Jews, she says, causes them to doubt - they aren't a philosophical
     people

   - Says that at HUC she "took a supplemental course...completing the full course
     mapped out for rabbis"
   - Urged the congregation to accept women as members

   - Quotes from her speech about "The Main Strength of the Species"

5. "Peace and Harmony Mark the Dissolution of the Congress of Women" *The Examiner, San Francisco*,
   May 3, 1897, p. 3
   - Extensive quotes from her speech

   - A speech of hers about education

7. "If I were a Rebitzen," Ray Frank, *Jewish Times and Observer*, June 20, 1890
- She'd be kind, not snobby, let everyone into her home, not be expected to prepare big dinners, etc.
- The editors of the paper asked her to write this because of the stir her "If I Were a Rabbi" caused

8. "Miss Ray Frank," *Daily Record, Stockton*, May 12, 1897, p. 1
   - Short, 1 paragraph description of her and her work

9. "Honored by her Class"
   - Resolution by her Bible Class at first Hebrew congregation in Oakland, thanking her for her contributions and saying that they'll miss her because she's moving

10. "Portland, Oregon" [written by her?]
    - On the Jews of Portland


12. "For Woman's Advancement"
    - On the convening of the Woman's Congress in Stockton, 1897

    - On beauty, physical, natural, spiritual
    - Quotes from a speech she gave

    - A copy of an article she submitted to the *Oakland Times*

    - Calls her "one of the two Jewish lady rabbis in the world"

    - About her giving a sermon in Seattle
    - Includes a piece by her, "Idol Breakers"

17. "Oakland News," Nov. 4, 1892
    - On the party given for her by the "Bible Class"

    - On Frank's lecture on "The God Idea in Art," given to a group of Unitarian women

19. "Baton and Buskin," *The Province* [Canadian], Sept 28, 1895, p. 616
    - She delivered "The Art of the Nation" at a synagogue in Victoria

    - On beauty, physical, natural, spiritual
    - Quotes from a speech she gave

"First Jewess Who Occupied Pulpit"
- Brief bio with photo

Printed Material: Articles Written by R.F. Litman


2. "The Token" (poem)
   - About Jewish immigrants from Poland

3. "Woman Dons Bloomers to Capture the Hearts of Quaker Elders" 1895 (article)

4. "The Prayers that are Heard" (article)


   - Takes issue with someone who compares the Jewish Question in Russia to the Chinese problem in the US
   - Says Jews are better citizens in Russia than Chinese are in US

   - Against claims that Jewish situation in Russia is exaggerated

9. *Jewish Messenger*, Mary 23, 1890 (article)
   - On "what I would NOT do if I were a rabbi"
   - Not "expect people to follow my shallow words because I am the rabbi"
   - Not have a fine residence, homes, silk hat, jewels
   - Not "take more in salary than I need"
   - Not sell seats in the shul
   - Not turn away the poor from services
   - Not use corporal punishment in Hebrew school
   - Not take money for doing funerals
   - "Women are precluded from entering the Holy of Holies; but it is a great satisfaction to contemplate what we would not do were the high office not denied us."

    - The renegade Jew - proselyte, self-hater - is the arch enemy

11. "A Sign of the Times," *The Jewish _____*, (a San Francisco paper) June 12, 1891 (vol. 35) (article)
    - About pro-Jewish things which happened in Oakland on Decoration Day

    - Report on Herzl and Dr. Gaster's speeches


   - Parents should teach children to pray


Printed Material: Sermons of RFL

1. "A Passover Sermon," San Francisco Times and Observer, April 17, 1868

   - The sermon she gave on Erev Yom Kippur at Spokane Falls

Manuscript Poems of RFL

1. "Song"
2. "The Future"
3. "Absent"
4. "Montefiore"
5. "Siste Viator" [?], Jan. 1, 1876

Manuscript Copy of a Book Walter McKormick: A Story of the West by RFL

178 pp., begins with Chapter 2

2 poems

1. "A Suppliant" by R. Frank MacAbee [a pseudonym?]
2. "A Mood"

Box 2

Scrapbook

- Containing clippings about RFL and Esther Frank
- Also programs from events like graduations, plays (which they appeared in)
- Clippings on many of RFL's big lectures (CA, NY, Cincinnati, Nevada)
- Some articles written by RFL
  - P. 63 - on women and journalism
  - P. 114 - rebuttal to a rabbi who said that women ought to only remain in the home
  - P. 131 - her views against suffrage
  - Pp. 141-143 - her refusal of an invitation to serve as a rabbi for a congregation (and articles with the misinformation that she was soon to be ordained as the 1st female rabbi)

Programs

For lectures she gave
At the Woman's Congress (5/1/97)
At the World Congress (1893), Jewish Women's Religious Congress

Miscellaneous

1. Visiting Cards
   - Including the Chief Rabbi (of England, who had heard about her from Jacob Schiff)
   - Lady Montagu, Miss L. Montagu and Miss E. Montagu

2. Passenger List, S.S. Minnewaska, sailing June 25, 1898
   - Including RFL, "Mrs. A. Kohut" (probably Rebekah Kohut)

3. (What looks to be) a school prize
   - Card with color picture of a woman and a man (courting?)
   - "Presented to Rachel Frank by Belle Kimble, Teacher"
   - In an envelope on which is written, in pen (in her handwriting, it seems) "My first and most prized reward. Nothing in life has given me half the pleasure nor has any joy been so lasting"

4. Ausweis für Auditoren, Hochschule Zürich, 11/8/00

5. Another slip which is in German and appears to be a receipt for tuition paid for classes at the Eidgenoessisches Polytechnikum, Zürich, 1900-1901

Clippings re: Invitation to Nevada by the Governor

Clippings about her trip to Nevada (where she spent part of her early life), on the incredible reception she received, on the various speeches she gave there, and on the parties given for her by Governor Jones and his wife (an old friend) and others
   - She spoke on Judaism, art
   - She was invited to the inaugural ball of the new governor, "the first Jewess to attend such an inaugural ball as one of the executive staff of ladies"

Certificate of Appreciation from Bible Class - Oakland, CA

Cover: in color "Resolutions of Gratitude and Regret to Miss Ray Frank from her Bible Class, Oakland, CA"
   - Because she's the President of the Bible class and is leaving
   - A few heavy pages tied together with ribbon

Clippings about RFL

About her speeches (before and after marriage and Europe), texts of some of them, on her observations about women in Europe, on her observations about Jewish women in Europe, on her invitation to be a rabbi in Stockton

"Work of a Woman," The Bulletin, San Francisco, November 15, 1895
   - "'In no walk of life,' she said, 'can a woman or man either be too highly educated in the true sense. A mother whose life work is the training of young minds and hearts to be worthy citizens of society and the State, cannot bring too much science, too much mental equipment to her work.
'Women used to be one-sided in being only domestic. The fault is the other way now. They are still one-sided; they are beginning to forget how all-important the home and the family are. They might be brought back and taught to see that every innovation, every change is not progress. They must take their intellectual life first into their homes, afterward into the streets.'

'My work is directed chiefly to the Jewish woman, who, through all the ages, has been the great home-builder, the foundation of the family. Will she now, at this late day, when her intellectual development is more than ever on an equal with that of men, forsake her old duties, her old high calling, which she has fulfilled so long and so nobly?''

"Miss Ray Frank at the Congress in Chicago," unknown source, n.d.

- "Woman may be ordained rabbi or be the president of a synagogue, but her noblest work will be at home, her highest ideal, a home. Our women living in a century and in a country which gives them every opportunity to improve are not making the most of themselves, and to the stranger, the non-Jew, who views us critically, we are not entirely an improvement on our mothers of old. We no longer offer up such reverent homage to the Almighty as that which was given in times of direst distress and persecution.... Sisters, our work in and for the synagogue lies in bringing to the temple the Samuels to fulfill the law. As mothers of Israel I appeal to you to first make our homes temples, to rear each child a priest by teaching him to be true to himself. If the synagogues are then deserted let it be because the homes are filled; then we will be a nation of priests; edifices of worship will be everywhere. What matter whether women are ordained rabbis or not. We are capable of fulfilling the office and the best way to prove it is to convert ourselves and families into reverent beings. To be simply ordained priest is not enough and the awful punishment which befell Eli is the best illustration of this. Nothing can replace the duty of the mother in the home. Nothing can replace the reverence of children and the children are yours to do as ye will with them. Mothers, you can restore Israel's glory, can fulfill the prophecy by bringing the man children, strong love of the eternal, to his maker."

2 copies of pamphlets with press comments on RFL

Clippings regarding lecture "Heart Throbs of Israel"

[heart throbs here refers to the "pulse" of Israel]

Newspaper articles regarding general matters

- General articles written by her on women who do unusual things, etc., from San Francisco Sunday Call

Ray Frank Litman: A Memoir by Simon Litman
- Published by AJHS (NY), 1957
- Includes photos, biography, selections from correspondence with her (from Nina Davis Salaman and other well-known figures)

Pencil sketch of RFL
- done by artist Maud Ball, 1899
- included is a small photograph of Ball inscribed to Litman, c.1905
see also: folder in oversize manuscript drawer - Resolution of Appreciation from Congregation Tifferes Israel of San Francisco for her work there (speaking)