

7-2018

## COLLECTION 0024: The Hamburger Collection of the Berlin Fellowship, 1950-2012

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**COLLECTION 24: Ralph Hamburger Collection of the Berlin Fellowship, 1950-2012**

**Administrative Information**

**Title:**

Ralph Hamburger Collection of the Berlin Fellowship, 1950-2012

**Collection Identifier:**

CFT00024

**Creators:**

Hamburger, Ralph (1922-2018)  
James, Walter E.

**Size:**

6 Boxes, 2.29 linear feet

**Repository:**

David Allan Hubbard Library  
Fuller Theological Seminary  
135 N Oakland Ave  
Pasadena, CA 91182  
archives@fuller.edu

**Provenance:**

Gift, c. 2003-2006 by Ralph Hamburger from California, USA.

**Conditions Governing Access/Restrictions:**

Scholarly use with parameters of copyright law  
Supervised use only

**Language:**

English, German

**Processing:**

Ralph Hamburger, Nancy Gower, 2006; Alyson Thomas, February 2019

**Finding Aid Revisions:**

Andrew Wong, June 2018; Alyson Thomas, February 2019

## **Historical Background**

During the Cold War (1947-1991), several Presbyterian churches in Southern California developed a relationship with Protestant-Evangelical congregations in Berlin and East Germany, in order to encourage them spiritually and materially as they recovered from the devastation of WWII and experienced the challenge of an oppressive communist regime.

These relationships were an outgrowth of the World Deputation program (1950s) for short term missions for youth begun at the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood, under the auspices of the denomination's Foreign and National Boards and the World Council of Churches, and later joined by other congregations in the area.

The first team to go out, advised by Corrie ten Boom, was led by Louis Evans Jr. and included Colleen Townsend, Ralph Hamburger and Walter James. Over the years, the program grew from youth work-camps into a regular visitation ministry to East-Germany by pastors and lay people. The group came to be known as the "Berlin Fellowship," or BF. Berlin Fellowship ran from 1961-1996.

## **Biographical Note**

Reverend Ralph Hamburger (Sept 1923 - Sept 2, 2018) grew up in Germany and Holland, where his family was part of the resistance helping Jewish people escape the Nazis. Hamburger relocated to Los Angeles, CA to attend college. At that time, he became involved with the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood (FPCH).

In 1974, Robert Munger (Professor of Evangelism at Fuller Theological Seminary) and Ralph Hamburger were appointed as fraternal delegates to Christian Churches in East Germany by the San Gabriel Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Hamburger served in the FPCH's World Deputation teams, the Berlin Fellowship, World Vision, and additional underground churches across Europe.

## Scope and Content

The Hamburger Collection of the Berlin Fellowship, 1950-2012 documents the history of a Christian work-camp program called World Deputation, which gave birth to the Berlin Fellowship.

The collection consists of correspondence, minutes, team reports and other documents involved in the ministry. Copies of the book *Tumbling Walls* by Walter James detailing the story of the Berlin Fellowship are also included. The collection also contains correspondence between Walter James and Berlin pastor, Alfred Schroeder.

Materials directly related to Reverend Ralph Hamburger include his autobiographical sketch, "Eternally Grateful," his correspondence with J.B. Phillips, and a talk he gave entitled "The Extended Hand of God."

### Subjects:

Berlin (Germany) -- Religion -- 20th century.  
Hamburger, Ralph (1923-2018).  
Hollywood (Los Angeles, Calif.) -- Religion.  
Hollywood Presbyterian Church (Hollywood, Calif.)  
James, Walter E. ( -- 2001)  
Mears, Henrietta C. (Henrietta Cornelia)  
Phillips, J.B. (--1982)

### Related Collection(s):

Arthur Frederick Glasser Collection, 1932-1997  
Berlin Fellowship Collection, 1952-1996

## Arrangement

The Hamburger Collection of the Berlin Fellowship, 1950-1994 is organized into 6 boxes:

Box 1: Walter James/Alfred Schroeder Correspondence, World Deputation & Berlin Fellowship Reports & Minutes

Box 2: World Deputation & Berlin Fellowship – Reports & Minutes

Box 3: Berlin Fellowship Minutes & Correspondence by James & Hamburger

Box 4: Berlin Fellowship histories written by Ralph Hamburger

Box 5: Berlin Fellowship histories written by Ralph Hamburger and Travel Diaries

Box 6: Audio Tapes

## Box Inventory

### ***Box 1: Walter James/Alfred Schroeder Correspondence, World Deputation & Berlin Fellowship Reports & Minutes***

Arranged chronologically, the box primarily contains correspondence between Walter E. James, leader of the World Deputation teams at Hollywood Presbyterian Church and Alfred Schroeder, youth director of the Protestant-Evangelical Church in Berlin. Topics relate to personal matters, the Berlin Fellowship, and Schroeder's visits to California. Contents are in German and English languages (sometimes translated to English by Ralph Hamburger).

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>
	Walter James and Christy Hawes Zatkan, <i>Tumbling Walls: A True Story of Ordinary People Bringing Reconciliation in Extraordinary Ways to an Alienated World</i> , Diaspora Foundation: La Jolla, CA (1990).
1	Two letters by Alfred Schroeder in German
2	Alfred Schroeder/Walter James pictures, biographies
3	Schroeder/James Correspondence, 1952-1959
4	Schroeder/James Correspondence, 1962-1963
5	Schroeder/James Correspondence, 1963-1969
6	Schroeder Correspondence, 1970-1976
7	Smith, Wilbur Correspondence regarding Hollywood Presbyterian Group (1949) – Photocopy
8	World Deputation Bulletins & Correspondence, 1950-1954
9	World Deputation Bulletins & Correspondence, 1955-1956
10	Berlin Fellowship Reports, 1950-1952
11	World Deputation Reports and Correspondence, 1953

### ***Box 2: World Deputation & Berlin Fellowship Reports & Minutes***

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	World Deputation – Team Reports/Evaluations/Correspondence, 1950-1959
2	Berlin Fellowship – Evaluations, 1967-1974
3	Expressions and Testimonies from World Deputation Work-Campers, 1951-1952
4	Schroeder Correspondence in West Berlin regarding the situation of the church in East Berlin, 1958-1967.
5	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes – 1960 – 1996
6	Berlin Fellowship – Member Lists – 1960s - 1970s
7	World Deputation – Training and Discipline Requirements
8	World Deputation – Financial Notes, Expenses, Budget Reports, 1950-1956
9	Berlin Hotel and Transport Souvenirs, 1966
10	Photos. Robert Munger's recommendation of Hamburger to take BF's leadership.

11	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1969-1970
12	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes & Correspondence, 1971
13	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1974
14	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1975
15	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1976
16	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1979
17	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1980
18	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1981
19	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1983
20	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1984
21	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1985
22	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1986
23	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1987
24	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1988
25	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1989
26	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1991
27	Berlin Fellowship – Summer Team Bible Study, 1991

***Box 3: Berlin Fellowship Minutes & Correspondence by James & Hamburger***

Box 3 contains Berlin Fellowship meeting minutes as well as chronologically organized correspondence by Walter James or Ralph Hamburger on behalf of the Berlin Fellowship (1950-1974).

Correspondence relates to individuals and institutions involved in organizing World Deputation teams, including Youth Argosy, Dr. Louis Evans, the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, the Foreign Missions office of the Presbyterian Church in New York, Dr. Henrietta Mears, the Deputation team at Camp Agape in Italy, the Reverend Pierre Basset in Paris, supporters of the Deputation teams at Hollywood Presbyterian Church, and the secretary of WCC Work Camps.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1992
2	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1992
3	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1993
4	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1994
5	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes, 1995
6	Berlin Fellowship – Minutes and Newsletters, 1996
7	Correspondence – Ralph Hamburger and J.B. Phillips, 1951-1954
8	Correspondence – Ralph Hamburger and J.B. Phillips, 1954-1997
9	Correspondence – Ralph Hamburger, Walter James, Louis Evans, 1950-1952
10	Correspondence – Ralph Hamburger, Walter James, Louis Evans, 1952
11	Correspondence – Ralph Hamburger, Walter James, Louis Evans, 1953
12	Correspondence – Berlin Fellowship Members, 1954
13	Correspondence – World Deputation, Hamburger, 1955

14	Correspondence – World Deputation, Hamburger, 1956
15	Correspondence – World Deputation, Hamburger, 1957-1974

***Box 4: Histories by Ralph Hamburger***

Ralph Hamburger compiled correspondence, photographs, and personal notations into binders to document the history of World Deputation and the Berlin Fellowship. The contents were removed from their metal fasteners and transferred to archival folders retaining their original order.

*The Beginnings of World Deputation* contains team correspondence to church leaders, the Board of Foreign Missions, the WCC youth division, Paul Evdokimov of CIMADE, and J.B. Phillips. It also includes photographs of the teams at work, orders of worship and clippings related to the Deputation teams in Alaska, Europe, Korea, and Japan.

*Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings* traces the relationships between Southern California Presbyterians and the Protestant-Evangelical Church in Berlin which resulted in the Berlin Fellowship, up to 1967. Included are documents related to the writing of *Tumbling Walls* and an Addendum containing documents related to the “Hallelujah-Amen-Celebration” held in 1996 to celebrate the conclusion of the Berlin Fellowship visitation ministry to East-Germany.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Correspondence – Gretel and Gunter Meith to Ralph Hamburger, September 1, 1994
2	<i>The Beginnings of World Deputation</i> by Ralph Hamburger, May 20, 2003. (1 of 6)
3	<i>The Beginnings of World Deputation</i> by Ralph Hamburger, May 20, 2003. (2 of 6)
4	<i>The Beginnings of World Deputation</i> by Ralph Hamburger, May 20, 2003. (3 of 6)
5	<i>The Beginnings of World Deputation</i> by Ralph Hamburger, May 20, 2003. (4 of 6)
6	<i>The Beginnings of World Deputation</i> by Ralph Hamburger, May 20, 2003. (5 of 6)
7	<i>The Beginnings of World Deputation</i> by Ralph Hamburger, May 20, 2003. (6 of 6)
8	<i>Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings</i> by Ralph Hamburger, Feb 1997. (1 of 4)
9	<i>Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings</i> by Ralph Hamburger, Feb 1997. (2 of 4)
10	<i>Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings</i> by Ralph Hamburger, Feb 1997. (3 of 4)
11	<i>Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings</i> by Ralph Hamburger, Feb 1997. (4 of 4)

***Box 5: Histories by Ralph Hamburger & Hamburger's Travel Diaries***

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	<i>Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings</i> by Ralph Hamburger, Feb 1997. (3 of 4)
2	<i>Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings</i> by Ralph Hamburger, Feb 1997. (4 of 4)
3	<i>Eternally Grateful: Memoirs of a Christian</i> by Ralph Hamburger, 2001 – an autobiography. “The Extended Hand of God,” a talk by Hamburger added in 2012.
4	Hamburger Travel Diaries – Berlin Visit, April 1959.
5	Hamburger Travel Diaries – Berlin Visit, October 6-15, 1961.
6	Hamburger Travel Diaries – DDR Trip, 1967-1968.
7	Hamburger Travel Diaries – DDR Trip, Sept – October 1970.
8	Hamburger Travel Diaries – DDR Trip, 1974. Partly written in “safety Dutch.”

***Box 6: Audio tapes***

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Thanksgiving Service for the Life & Ministry of J.B. Phillips, Sept. 30, 1982.
2	Alfred Schroeder: Last words 1991 (his last tape).
3	Dr. Robert B. Munger's message on the life of the Church in East Germany given at Glendale Presbyterian Church, Sept. 1, 1974.
4	Berlin Fellowship Meeting in California May 11, 1968: Reports by Bishop Kurt Scharf and Pastor Alfred Schroeder; discussions.
5	J.B. Phillips: “There is nothing hid” message given at First Presbyterian Church, Hollywood, 1954.
6	Ralph Hamburger, “IACWG Presentation” / “Presentation EE to WVI Int'l aff”, Feb 1988.
6	Ralph Hamburger, “Message on Eastern Europe” WVI Chapel, Nov. 29, 1989.
7	Ralph Hamburger, “Glimpses of My Life and Ministry – Romans 12”, at MUGH, Sept 16, 1999.
8	Ralph Hamburger, “Message on Eastern Europe” La Jolla Pres. Ch., April 18, 1990.