

RALPH HAMBURGER COLLECTION  
OF THE BERLIN FELLOWSHIP  
1950-2012

FINDING AID

The David Allan Hubbard Library



Alyson Thomas  
September 2024  
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## **Administrative Information**

**Title:**

Ralph Hamburger Collection of the Berlin Fellowship, 1950-2012

**Creator(s):**

Hamburger, Ralph, 1922-2018

James, Walter E.

**Collection Identifier:**

CFT00024

**Extent:**

6 Boxes, 2.29 linear feet

**Repository:**

David Allan Hubbard Library

Fuller Theological Seminary

135 N Oakland Ave

Pasadena, CA 91182

**Acquisition Information:**

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

**Conditions Governing Access:**

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**Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:**

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**Language:**

English, German

**Preferred Citation:**

[Identification of Item], Ralph Hamburger Collection of the Berlin Fellowship, Archives and Special Collections, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California.

**Name of Cataloger/Date Completed:**

Collection cataloged and finding aid written by Ralph Hamburger and Nancy Sanders Gower, 2006. Additional processing and finding aid revision by Alyson Thomas in February 2019.

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## **Biographical History**

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.

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.

## **Related Collections**

Arthur Frederick Glasser Collection, Fuller Theological Seminary

Berlin Fellowship Collection, Fuller Theological Seminary

Collection of Original Manuscripts by Fred Bock, Fuller Theological Seminary

Papers of Jack and Anna Kerr, Fuller Theological Seminary

Lloyd John Ogilvie Collection, Fuller Theological Seminary

Raymond Lindquist Audio Collection, Fuller Theological Seminary

## Scope and Content

The Ralph 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, compiled histories of the organizations, and other documents involved in the ministry. A copy of the book *Tumbling Walls* by Walter James detailing the story of the Berlin Fellowship is 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)

## Arrangement

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

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

World Deputation & Berlin Fellowship – Reports & Minutes (Box 2)

Berlin Fellowship Minutes & Correspondence by James & Hamburger (Box 3)

Berlin Fellowship histories written by Ralph Hamburger (Box 4)

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

Audio Tapes (Box 6)

## Container List

### Scope and Content Note

Arranged chronologically, Box 1 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).

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

Folder	Item	Date/Note
	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

Folder	Item	Date/Note
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

**Scope and Content Note**

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.

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

Folder	Item	Date/Note
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

### Scope and Content Note

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 within Box 4. The original order has been retained.

*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.

### Box 4: Berlin Fellowship histories written by Ralph Hamburger

Folder	Item	Date/Note
1	Correspondence – Gretel and Gunter Meith to Hamburger	01 September 1994
2	<i>The Beginnings of World Deputation</i> by Hamburger (1 of 6)	20 May 2003
3	<i>The Beginnings of World Deputation</i> by Hamburger (2 of 6)	20 May 2003
4	<i>The Beginnings of World Deputation</i> by Hamburger (3 of 6)	20 May 2003
5	<i>The Beginnings of World Deputation</i> by Hamburger (4 of 6)	20 May 2003
6	<i>The Beginnings of World Deputation</i> by Hamburger (5 of 6)	20 May 2003
7	<i>The Beginnings of World Deputation</i> by Hamburger (6 of 6)	20 May 2003
8	<i>Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings</i> by Hamburger (1 of 4)	February 1997
9	<i>Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings</i> by Hamburger (2 of 4)	February 1997
10	<i>Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings</i> by Hamburger (3 of 4)	February 1997
11	<i>Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings</i> by Hamburger (4 of 4)	February 1997

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

Folder	Item	Date/Note
1	<i>Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings</i> by Hamburger (3 of 4)	February 1997
2	<i>Berlin Fellowship: Antecedents and Beginnings</i> by Hamburger (4 of 4)	February 1997

3	<i>Eternally Grateful: Memoirs of a Christian</i> by Hamburger, 2001 – an autobiography. “The Extended Hand of God,” a talk by Hamburger added in 2012.	2001, 2012
	<i>The Quiet Minister: Stories From My Journey of Faith</i> by Hamburger	2020
4	Hamburger Travel Diaries – Berlin Visit	April 1959
5	Hamburger Travel Diaries – Berlin Visit	6-15 October 1961
6	Hamburger Travel Diaries – DDR Trip	1967-1968
7	Hamburger Travel Diaries – DDR Trip	September – October 1970
8	Hamburger Travel Diaries – DDR Trip. Partly written in “safety Dutch.”	1974

**Box 6: Audio Tapes**

Folder	Item	Date/Note
1	Thanksgiving Service for the Life & Ministry of J.B. Phillips	30 September 1982
2	Alfred Schroeder: Last words 1991 (his last tape)	1991
3	Dr. Robert B. Munger’s message on the life of the Church in East Germany given at Glendale Presbyterian Church	01 September 1974
4	Berlin Fellowship Meeting in California May 11, 1968: Reports by Bishop Kurt Scharf and Pastor Alfred Schroeder; discussions	11 May 1968
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”	February 1988
7	Ralph Hamburger, “Message on Eastern Europe” WVI Chapel	29 November 1989
8	Ralph Hamburger, “Glimpses of My Life and Ministry – Romans 12”, at MUGH	16 September 1999