

Relics of a Long Life: The Gaster Papers at University College London
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Description: Moses Gaster (1856-1939), Sephardi Chief Rabbi, Zionist leader and polymath, left behind a vast archive of over 170,000 items, including correspondence, diaries, notebooks, unpublished memoirs, photographs, press cuttings, ephemera and more. This paper will explain the history and content of the archive and how it illuminates both Gaster's life and work, as well as the Anglo-Jewish community in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It will describe the arrangement, cataloguing, conservation and digitization of the archive carried out by the presenter and her predecessors since its deposit at University College London in 1960. It will also address the challenges faced by librarians in dealing with archival material.

Vanessa Freedman is Hebrew & Jewish Studies Librarian at University College London. She previously worked as Assistant Librarian at Leo Baeck College. She studied Classics at Cambridge University and Library and Information Studies at University College London, where her M.A. dissertation was on classification schemes for Jewish Studies libraries. In her current post she is responsible for the Hebrew & Jewish Studies and Dutch collections and also works on the Jewish rare book, manuscripts and archival collections.