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SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

**Inventory of the Milton A. Pearlstine And  
Cecile M. Pearlstine Papers, 1869-1994**

Addlestone Library, Special Collections  
College of Charleston  
66 George Street  
Charleston, SC 29424 USA  
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Phone: (843) 953-8016 | Fax: (843) 953-6319

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## Descriptive Summary

<b>Title:</b>	Milton A. Pearlstine and Cecile M. Pearlstine papers
<b>Date(s)</b>	1869-1994
<b>Creator:</b>	Pearlstine, Milton Alfred, 1899-1994; Pearlstine, Cecile Mayer, 1912-2006
<b>Abstract:</b>	Correspondence, photographs, clippings, and other assorted papers relating to the life and work of Milton Alfred Pearlstine, founding member and secretary of the South Carolina State Ports Authority from 1942 to 1972 and president and secretary of I. M. Pearlstine & Sons. The collection also contains materials relating to his wife, civic volunteer and former president of the Charleston Section of the National Council of Jewish Women, Cecile Mayer Pearlstine.
<b>Extent:</b>	3.5 linear feet (1 document box, 3 flat boxes)
<b>Repository:</b>	Jewish Heritage Collection, Special Collections, College of Charleston Libraries 66 George Street Charleston, SC 29424 Phone: (843) 953-8016 Fax: (843) 953-6319 URL: <a href="http://archives.library.cofc.edu">http://archives.library.cofc.edu</a>
<b>Call Number:</b>	Mss 1104
<b>Language of Material:</b>	Materials in English

## Biographical Note

Milton Alfred Pearlstine (1899-1994) was born in Mayesville, South Carolina, to Esther Strauss Pearlstine (1874-1934) and Hyman Pearlstine (1870-1934), co-owner of I. M. Pearlstine & Sons. In 1913 Milton entered The Citadel military college and graduated in 1919 with a Bachelor of Science degree. He maintained strong ties with the military college, serving as director emeritus of The Citadel Alumni Trust Fund, president and honorary life member of the Association of Citadel Men, and chairman of the Association's Board of Trustees for the Permanent Funds. In 1965 The Citadel awarded Pearlstine an honorary Doctor of Laws degree.

After graduation he entered the family business, I. M. Pearlstine & Sons, a wholesale grocery and hardware business founded in 1865 by his grandfather, Isaac Moses Pearlstine (1844-1911), and great-grandfather, Tanchum "Thomas" Pearlstine (1817-1877). After the death of Hyman Pearlstine, control of the business went to a cousin, Sam Cohen, and Hyman's two sons, Milton and Edwin. In 1950, after the retirement of Sam Cohen, Pearlstine liquidated the wholesale grocery and hardware business to allow the company to concentrate on beer distribution in Charleston and surrounding counties. In 1971 Milton's nephew, Edwin Pearlstine Jr., purchased the beverage division and Pearlstine Distributors was incorporated. I. M. Pearlstine & Sons became a real estate and investment management firm and finally the name of a holding company.

As one of the original board members appointed to the South Carolina State Ports Authority (SPA), Milton Pearlstine was instrumental in obtaining the former army port of embarkation in North Charleston from the federal government in 1947 for the SPA and in securing a \$21 million state-funded expansion program for the renovation of the Charleston waterfront and the establishment of port facilities at Georgetown and Port Royal in 1957. In 1962 he chaired a SPA committee that established a grain elevator at the Port of Charleston, enabling major shipments of grain to pass through the ports, and facilitating the growth of the state's soybean industry. In 1972, after 30 years of service, Pearlstine retired from the SPA board, was awarded the Order of the Palmetto, the state's highest honor, and was named life-member emeritus of the Ports Authority. Pearlstine also served several terms on the board of directors of the American Association of Ports Authorities and was elected an honorary lifetime member in 1972. An active member Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim, Pearlstine served as president of the congregation from 1947 to 1949. In 1986, after extensive remodeling and renovation, the Bicentennial Tabernacle was rededicated Pearlstine Hall in honor of the contributions made toward its renovation by Pearlstine and his brother, Edwin. Milton also contributed to the historic preservation of downtown Charleston with his gift to the city of the Planters Hotel in 1935, making possible the construction of the Dock Street Theater within the shell of the old hotel.

Pearlstine's wife, Cecile Mayer Pearlstine (1912-1948), was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, to Fannye Latner Mayer (1884 -1951) and Sidney Hanaver Mayer (1880-1950). She was a graduate of Miami Beach High School and a 1933 graduate of Agnes Scott College. She was active in many civic organizations and served as president of the Charleston Section of the National Council of Jewish Women, the Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Sisterhood, and the Happy Workers of Charleston. During World War II she belonged to the Red Cross Motor Corp. Cecile and Milton Pearlstine had two daughters, Mary Ann Pearlstine Aberman (b. 1935) and Barbara Pearlstine Lemel (1937-2010).

## Collection Overview

The collection contains material relating to the life and work of Milton Alfred Pearlstine and Cecile Mayer Pearlstine. Materials pertaining to Milton Pearlstine contain assorted correspondence including a photocopied letter from South Carolina Governor John C. West designating Pearlstine as Member Emeritus of the Ports Authority; a letter electing him as an honorary member of the American Association of Port Authorities; and a letter from Charleston Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr. thanking Pearlstine for his help with the Cooper River Waterfront Redevelopment project. Also included are letters of congratulation regarding a State Ports Authority luncheon and portrait unveiling held in 1988 in Pearlstine's honor. Materials concerning Pearlstine's education at The Citadel include first place track and field medals; his honorable discharge certificate; honorary degree of Doctor of Law; honorary doctorate cap and hood; and annual commencement program and invitations. The collection also includes *Milton A. Pearlstine, 30 Years of Distinguished Public Service*, a bound volume prepared by the South Carolina States Ports Authority as a tribute to Pearlstine on his retirement from the SPA board. Also included are certificates of admission, membership, and appreciation from local and regional fraternal, religious, and professional organizations. Photographs show Pearlstine with members of the SPA board as well as of his portrait unveiling ceremony. Also included are images of the Pearlstines at various public and private events. Clippings pertain to Pearlstine's professional career, his service on the SPA board, and his retirement. Materials relating to Cecile Mayer Pearlstine document her work with the National Council of Jewish Women. Also included are certificates of confirmation, honor, promotion, and volunteer service from the Mizpah synagogue in Chattanooga, Tennessee; Chattanooga High School; The American Red Cross; and the religious school of Temple Israel, Miami, Florida.

## Collection Arrangement

Materials are described at the folder level.

## Restrictions

### Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research.

### Copyright Notice

The nature of the College of Charleston's archival holdings means that copyright or other information about restrictions may be difficult or even impossible to determine despite reasonable efforts. Special Collections claims only physical ownership of most archival materials.

The materials from our collections are made available for use in research, teaching, and private study, pursuant to U.S. copyright law. The user must assume full responsibility for any use of the materials, including but not limited to, infringement of copyright and publication rights of reproduced materials. Any materials used for academic research or otherwise should be fully credited with the source.

## Related Material

Related materials in Special Collections include the Rittenberg and Pearlstine papers (Mss 1008), the Pearlstine family papers: real estate and family documents (Mss 1027), the Pearlstine and Strauss family papers (Mss 1062), and oral history interviews with Hanna Pearlstine (Mss 1035-088), Eddie Aberman, Mary Ann Aberman, Jack Leader, Harriet Marshall Goode, and Martin Goode (Mss 1035-218), and Eddie Aberman and Mary Ann Pearlstine Aberman (Mss 1035-221).

## Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person, family, or organization, by topical subject, by place, and by types of material.

### Names

- Pearlstine, Milton Alfred, 1899-1994
- Pearlstine, Cecile Mayer, 1912-2006
- South Carolina State Ports Authority
- I.M. Pearlstine & Sons (S.C.)
- National Council of Jewish Women. Charleston Section

### Subjects

- Jews--South Carolina--Charleston
- Businessmen--South Carolina--Charleston
- Jewish families--South Carolina--Charleston

### Places

- Charleston (S.C.)

### **Types of Material**

- Correspondence
- Certificates
- Black-and-white photographs
- Medals
- Degrees (academic)
- Clothing
- Notebooks
- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Pamphlets

## **Administrative Information**

### **Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], Milton A. Pearlstine and Cecile M. Pearlstine papers, College of Charleston Libraries, Charleston, SC, USA.

### **Acquisitions Information**

Materials were donated in 2005 by Barbara Pearlstine Lemel and Mary Ann Pearlstine Aberman.

### **Processing Information**

Processed by Joshua Minor, July 2012.

Encoded by Joshua Minor, July 2012.

Reviewed, edited, and uploaded by Martha McTear, July 2012.

Funding from the Council on Library and Information Resources supported the processing of this collection and encoding of the finding aid.

# Inventory

Milton Alfred Pearlstine, 1869-1989

Correspondence, 1902-1988

Box 1 Folder 1

1902-1919

Contains a letter from the Hebrew Orphans Home of Atlanta, Georgia, notifying I. M. Pearlstine of his appointment to the Board of Managers of the Hebrew Orphans Home; several letters to Hyman Pearlstine from friends concerning Milton A. Pearlstine's appendicitis; and letters of advice to Milton from his uncle, I. C. Strauss, and mother, Esther Strauss Pearlstine, concerning whether to continue at the Citadel or join the Marine Corps.

Box 1 Folder 2

1972-1987

Contains assorted personal correspondence as well as a photocopied letter from South Carolina Governor John C. West designating Pearlstine as Member Emeritus of the Ports Authority; a letter electing Pearlstine as an honorary member of the American Association of Port Authorities; and a letter from Charleston Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr. thanking Pearlstine for his help with the Cooper River Waterfront Redevelopment project.

Box 1 Folder 3

1988

Letters of congratulation regarding the State Ports Authority luncheon and portrait unveiling held in Pearlstine's honor.

Education, 1915, 1919, 1965

Materials pertain to Pearlstine's education at The Citadel and his honorary Doctor of Laws degree awarded to him by the college in 1965.

Box 1 Folder 4

Track and field medals, 1915

Box 1 Folder 5

Honorable discharge certificate, 1919

Box 1 Folder 6

Honorary Doctor of Laws certificate, 1965

Box 2

Honorary doctorate cap and hood, 1965

Box 1 Folder 7

Annual commencement program and invitations, 1965

Also includes invitation and program to the inauguration of General Hugh Pate Harris as 12th president of The Citadel and a copy of the *Association of Citadel Men Alumni News*.

Box 3

*Milton A. Pearlstine, 30 Years of Distinguished Public Service, 1972*

Bound volume prepared by the South Carolina States Ports Authority as a tribute to Pearlstine on his retirement from the SPA board. Volume contains original letters from local and state politicians and businessmen, clippings from local newspapers, and photographs taken at a reception for Pearlstine given by Governor John C. West at the Governor's mansion in Columbia, South Carolina.

**Certificates, 1921-1989**

Contains certificates of admission, membership, and appreciation from local and regional fraternal, religious, and professional organizations, including the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine; the Freemasons of South Carolina; the Propeller Club of the United States; the Association of Citadel Men; the Charleston Jewish Community Center; Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim; B'nai B'rith; the South Carolina State Ports Authority; and the State of South Carolina.

Box 4 Folder 1

Fraternal organizations, 1921-1987

Box 4 Folder 2

Religious organizations, 1950-1989, undated

Box 4 Folder 3

Professional organizations, 1960,1982

Box 1 Folder 8

I. M. Pearlstine notebook, 1869-1880

Small personal pocket notebook of Isaac Moses Pearlstine, grandfather of Milton A. Pearlstine, recording monies owed and due, addresses, and a list of Hebrew books sent to Charleston from New York City.

**Cecile Mayer Pearlstine, 1926-1988**

Box 1 Folder 9

National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), 1940-1963

Includes Second Biennial of the Mid-Atlantic States Conference National Council of Jewish Juniors pamphlets and programs, a draft of a speech given at the 50th Anniversary Council on the activities of the Charleston Section of the NCJW, and a judge's order in 1949 substituting the NCJW's Charleston Section as trustee for the Happy Workers of Charleston, a local charitable organization.

Box 4 Folder 4

Certificates, 1926-1942, undated

Contains certificates of confirmation, honor, promotion, and volunteer service from the Mizpah synagogue in Chattanooga, Tennessee; Chattanooga High School; The American Red Cross; and the religious school of Temple Israel, Miami, Florida.

Box 1 Folder 10

Miscellaneous, 1929-1988, undated

Includes several newspaper clippings, correspondence, and a typed report on the South Carolina State Federation of Temple Sisterhoods convention of 1947.

**Photographs, 1950s-1988**



Contains assorted images of Pearlstine with members of the State Ports Authority board as well as of Pearlstine's portrait unveiling ceremony in 1988. Also included are images of the Pearlstines at various public and private events including the cornerstone dedication of Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Bicentennial Tabernacle; recognition of gift event at the Planters Hotel; and the baby naming ceremony of Catherine Cecile Meyerson.

Box 1 Folder 11 State Ports Authority, 1950s-1988, undated

Box 1 Folder 12 Pearlstine family, 1950-1984

Box 1 Folder 13 Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim (KKBE), 1950-1988, undated

Includes various printed material and clippings of the Charleston Jewish community bicentennial celebration of 1950, two draft copies and a typed copy of a speech given by Cecile M. Pearlstine at the rededication of KKBE's tabernacle in 1950, and a copy of *The Synagogues of Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim of Charleston, South Carolina* by Solomon Breibart.

Box 1 Folder 14 Clippings, 1947-1994

Includes assorted local newspaper clippings pertaining to Pearlstine's service on the board of the State Ports Authority and his retirement

Box 1 Folder 15 Miscellaneous, 1937-1981

Contains a photocopy of a Dock Street Theatre commemoration and rededication booklet, a South Carolina National Board of Directors listing, and Pearlstine's South Carolina Ports identification badge.