

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
Finding Aid
RG-10
Small Collections

RG-10.252
Acc. 1995.A.0138

Title: Helen Lubel Dickerman Collection.

Extent: 5 folders.

Provenance: The collection was donated by Helen Lubel Dickerman from 1993 to 1996.

Restrictions on access: No restrictions on access.

Restrictions on use: No restrictions on use.

Organization and arrangement: The collection is organized into five series: RG-10.242*01: Statement of duties at the International Refugee Organization of Helen Lubel Dickerman; RG-10.242*02: Documents relating to the Office of Reparation at the Preparatory Commission for the International Refugee Organization, 1945-1948; RG-10.242*03: Photographs relating to the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees and the International Refugee Organization; RG-10.242*04: Newspaper clippings relating to Abba Schwartz, Nicholas Winton and the International Refugee Organization; RG-10.242*05: Miscellaneous.

Language: English.

Biographical note: Donor Helen Lubel Dickerman worked for Abba P. Schwartz, Director of Reparations at the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees, in London, England. Her work in the Reparations Department included the supervision of transports of jewelry, china, silver and other valuables to the United States. Most of the valuables had been seized from Jewish victims by the Nazis and buried under the concentration camps, from where they were recovered in the postwar era.

The non-monetary gold was sold in the USA by a Merchandising Advisory Committee of the International Refugee Organisation, headed by David L. Rolbein. Dickerman recalls that they supervised the smelting of gold teeth, jewelry and other gold objects, and sorted out the currencies at the Reichsbank in Frankfurt.

In June 1947, the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees merged with the IRO in Geneva, where Helen Lubel Dickerman worked until 1951.

Abba P. Schwartz, Reparations Director of the Preparatory Commission of the International Refugee Organization, was later made Administrator of the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs at the State Department under President Kennedy.

Nicholas G. Winton was Assistant to Abba P. Schwartz.

According to the newspaper clippings in the collection, Nicholas G. Winton visited Prague, Czechoslovakia in early 1939 at the invitation of a friend at the British embassy. Months earlier Hitler occupied the Sudetenland and the city was crowded with Jewish refugees looking to escape the Nazi occupation. Winton immediately recognized the advancing danger and decided to make every effort to get Jewish children out of occupied Europe. He organized visas, guarantors, money and six trains, which brought 664 Jewish children from Czechoslovakia to England in March 1939. A last train, intended to bring 250 children out of Prague in September 1939, never made it to London. Winton's deeds only became public after his wife Greta had discovered an old leather briefcase containing lists of the children and letters from their parents.

(Information obtained from statement of duties of Helen Lubel Dickerman and other documents in the collection)

Historical note: When the American army entered Germany in the spring of 1945, they discovered a large amount of gold, hidden by the Germans. The gold had been looted from banks in German-occupied countries and victims of Nazi-persecution. After the end of the war, the Allies were concerned with the return of the gold to its rightful owners. The gold was stored in the Reichsbank building in Frankfurt, which had fallen to the Americans in March 1945 and was renamed the Frankfurt Exchange Depository or FED. Among the loot discovered were gold teeth, jewelry and other valuables taken from concentration camp victims. These belongings of Nazi victims were stored separately, were later referred to as non-monetary gold and used for the rehabilitation and resettlement of the victims of Nazi persecution. Given the vast quantity of gold in question, an international conference was convened in Paris in late 1945 to discuss plans for allocation. At the 18-nation Paris Reparations Conference in November and December 1945, the Allies agreed on more detailed policies based upon the Potsdam Conference for the collection and distribution of looted monetary gold, and the liquidation of German assets located in neutral nations. The concept of a "Gold Pool" was confirmed. The conference also agreed on a fund for the support of "non-repatriable persons" to include Jewish survivors and other victims of Nazism. The fund was to be made up of the non-monetary gold found in Germany by the Allied occupation forces. The June 1946 Five-Power Conference on Reparation for Non-Repatriables provided a plan for assistance to the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR) and also recommended that heirless assets belonging to victims of Nazi crimes be added to the fund. The Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees, established in 1945, assumed responsibility for the relief of refugees in Western European and neutral countries. A Non-Monetary Gold Directive from Joint Chiefs of Staff (dated Nov 16, 1946) instructed US occupation authorities to make available to IGCR all looted valuables that were in the custody of US forces in Germany and Austria, and defined non-monetary gold as "all valuable personal property" looted from Nazi victims.

The committee's functions and records were transferred to the International Refugee Organization (IRO), which was the official agency of the United Nations (UN) for the

maintenance and resettlement of European refugees. Although it was first officially organized on August 20, 1948, through the Preparatory Commission of IRO it actually began work on July 1, 1947, the date of expiration of the UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency) and the IGCR. The Preparatory Commission at the IRO was set up by twenty nations (including some that had not yet formally adhered to IRO) as a stopgap until the full official activation of IRO could take place.

Scope and content note: The bulk of the collection is composed of correspondence, accounts and other documents relating to the office of reparation at the preparatory commission for the international refugee organization, from 1945 to 1948.

Preferred citation: Standard citation for U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum Collections Division, Archives Branch.

Inventory:

Folder 1: RG-10.252*01

Statement of duties at the International Refugee Organization of Helen Lubel Dickerman

1. Statement of duties at the International Refugee Organization of Helen Lubel Dickerman (1 page).
2. Helen Lubel Dickerman's account of Nicholas Winton's life (1 page).

Folder 2: RG-10.252*02

Documents relating to the Office of Reparation at the Preparatory Commission for the International Refugee Organization, 1945-1948

1. "Final Act of the Paris Conference on Reparation, 21 December 1945. Part I, Article 8. Allocation of a Reparation Share to Non-Repatriable Victims of German Action." (2 pages).
2. "Five Power Agreement of 14 June 1946" (2 pages).
3. "Letter of Instruction transmitted by the Government of France on behalf of the Signatories to the Five Power Agreement" regarding the plan for the allocation of a Reparation share to non-repatriable victims of German action from the Director of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, London to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in France, June 21, 1946 (3 pages).????
4. Article by Eli Ginzberg, U.S. Representative to the Five-Power Conference on Reparations for Non-Repatriable Victims of German Action. Reprint from Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XV, No. 367, 14. July 1946 (2 pages).
5. Directive issued to CG. USFET. and CG. USFA. on definition of non-monetary gold pursuant to article 8 of the Paris reparations agreement, November 20, 1946 (1 page).
6. "To whom it may concern" from Abba P. Schwartz, July 4, 1947 (1 page)

7. Account "My movements whilst working with the reparations section of the I.R.O. 1947 (1 page).
8. Press Release No. 488, "Reparations for Nazi Victims", November 3, 1947.
9. Account "Arrangements in Bremerhaven" by Nicholas G. Winton, November 15, 1947 (1 page).
10. Account, December 6, 1947 (3 pages).
11. Letter from David L. Rolbein to Abba P. Schwartz, December 19, 1947 (4 pages).
12. Document "Non-monetary gold for victims of Nazism" from the Preparatory Commission for the international Refugee organization, December 19, 1947 (2 pages).
13. Timetable 1948 (1 page).
14. Letter to David L. Rolbein, January 13, 1948 (1 page).
15. Letter from Abba P. Schwartz to Colonel William G. Brey, February 6, 1948 (2 pages).
16. Telegram from Nicholas G. Winton to Abba P. Schwartz, February 1948 (1 page).
17. Press Release No. 715, "Reparations Gold for Nazi Victims" from the PCIRO", February 11, 1948 (2 pages).
18. Letter from Nicholas G. Winton to David L. Rolbein, February 13, 1948 (1 page).
19. Account, February 16, 1948 (1 page).
20. Letter to Abba P. Schwartz, February 26/27, 1948 (2 pages).
21. Letter to Abba P. Schwartz, February 26/27, 1948 (1 page).
22. Incomplete letter to Abba P. Schwartz, February 28, 1948 (1 pages).
23. Letter to Abba P. Schwartz, March 10, 1948 (1 page).
24. Account "Frankfurt 11th to 18th March. Shipment of Silver to London and Tangiers" (4 pages).
25. "To whom it may concern" from Donald A. Hyde, March 16, 1948 (1 page).
26. Letter from Nicholas G. Winton to Abba P. Schwartz, March 16, 1948 (2 pages).
27. Cable from Abba P. Schwartz to Nicholas G. Winton, March 19, 1948 (1 page).
28. Account "24 hours in Frankfurt" (4 pages).
29. "Precious metal smelting and refining" (1 page).
30. "Reparation funds for the rehabilitation and resettlement of non-repatriable victims of German action." Memorandum of Information and Instructions and addendum to Para VIII of PC/Leg/1 (5 pages).
31. "Removal of the currencies from the Reichsbank, Frankfurt, to Messrs. Julius Bar & Co. Zurich" (3 pages).
32. Letter to Abba P. Schwartz, November 8 (2 pages).
33. Account "Shipment of Bullion to London. 9th & 10th February, 1948" (3 pages).
34. Document "Mr. Hallam Tuck [...]" (1 page).

Folder 3: RG-10.252*03

Newspaper clippings:

1. Newspaper clipping about Abba Philip Schwartz from the New York Times, September 11, 1962.

2. Obituary Abba Philip Schwartz in the New York Times, September 15, 1989.
3. Newspaper article about Nicholas G. Winton from the Washington Post from June 21, 1989.
4. Newspaper article about Nicholas Winton from the Jewish Chronicle April 12, 1996.
5. Article "IRO gets personal treasures stolen from Nazi victims" from European Edition of The Stars and Stripes, September 6, 1947; article "£ 1,000,000 gold arrives by air" from News Chronicle, February 11, 1948; article "Victims' gold, worth million, flown to UK" from unknown source.

Folder 4: RG-10.252*04

Photographs: 20 photoprints : b&w.

1. Photograph, Jewelry in the Gold Smelting Plant in Frankfurt, Germany.
2. Photograph, Collection of Clocks.
3. Photograph taken in 1946 by "Stars and Stripes", the Army newspaper of that time.
4. Photograph, unidentified material.

Folder 5: RG-10.252*05

MISCELLANEOUS:

1. Copies from Goldie Szachter Kalib (with Sylvan Kalib and Ken Wachsberger), *The Last Selection. A Child's Journey through the Holocaust*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press 1991.
2. "Reflections on the March of the Living", Poem and "Memory", poem by Jody Kasner.
3. Review of Vera Gissing, *Pearls of Childhood*. New York: St. Martin's Press 1988.
4. Announcement of first Abba Schwartz Fellowship for Immigration, Naturalization, and Refugee Policy Studies, established by the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library, March 12, 1992.