

**FLORENCE HODEL PAPERS, 1925-1973, BULK 1944-1945
2014.300.1**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
Washington, DC 20024-2126
Tel. (202) 479-9717
e-mail: reference@ushmm.org

Descriptive summary

Title: Florence Hodel papers

Dates: 1925-1973, bulk 1944-1945

Accession number: 2014.300.1

Creator: Florence Hodel

Extent: 5 folders

Repository: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW,
Washington, DC 20024-2126

Abstract: Consists of photographs, correspondence, reports, and documents related to Florence Hodel, who served as the Assistant Executive Director of the War Refugee Board between 1944-1945, and later worked for the International Monetary Fund. Includes pre-war, wartime, and post-war portraits of Hodel and her sisters; press releases, transcripts, and published reports produced by the War Refugee Board; post-war correspondence about WRB activities; and personal and professional correspondence regarding the IMF during the 1960s.

Languages: English

Administrative Information

Access: Collection is open for use, but is stored offsite. Please contact the Reference Desk more than seven days prior to visit in order to request access.

Reproduction and use: Collection is available for use. Material may be protected by copyright. Please contact reference staff for further information.

Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Florence Hodel papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Jay Weber donated his aunt's papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2014.

Related archival materials: Please also see Florence Hodel's copy of the three volume set, "The History of the War Refugee Board with selected documents," (pub. 1946), which is housed in the Rare Book collection of the USHMM Library.

Processing history: Rebecca Erbelding, April 2014.

Biographical note

Florence Hodel was born on September 12, 1907, on the outskirts of New York City, to Jacob and Amelia Hodel. She was the oldest of three daughters: Florence, Ethel, and Amy. The family later moved to Millburn, NJ. Florence graduated from Wellesley in 1928 and attended Cornell Law School, where she was on the editorial board of the Cornell Law Quarterly. She graduated from Cornell in 1931 and went to work in New York City for Legal Aid. She met and married Christopher Wagner, but continued to use her maiden name. Their marriage was unhappy, and they divorced shortly after World War II, though they had been separated for some time. In 1939, Florence moved to Washington, DC, and began to work for the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Funds Control. After the creation of the War Refugee Board (WRB) in January 1944, Florence became Assistant Executive Director of the agency, working for John Pehle, formerly the head of Foreign Funds Control and the WRB's first director. In January 1945, with the war coming to a close, most of the WRB staff resigned, although Florence stayed on to assist new Executive Director William O'Dwyer. During O'Dwyer's frequent absences from the WRB, during his candidacy for mayor of New York, Florence became the Acting Executive Director of the War Refugee Board. After the war, Florence worked for the International Monetary Fund until her retirement in 1969. She lived in Bowie, MD, and passed away on April 27, 1991.

Scope and content of collection

The Florence Hodel papers consists of photographic portraits, printed reports, correspondence, and clippings related to Hodel's work as a member of the staff of the War Refugee Board and her post-war work on the International Monetary Fund.

The portraits include graduation portraits of Hodel, portraits of Hodel and her sisters ca. wartime, portraits of Hodel taken in 1945, and portraits, ca. 1960, of Hodel in her office at the International Monetary Fund.

The War Refugee Board materials include a transcript of a meeting between Moses Leavitt of the Joint (JDC) and John Pehle, Florence Hodel, and Josiah DuBois, Jr. of the Treasury Department staff on January 10, 1944, related to the history of the relationship between the State Department and relief agencies. It also includes the reports "The Extermination Camps of Auschwitz (Oswiecim) and Birkenau in Upper Silesia," (Nov. 1944), "Report on the Activities of the War Refugee Board Through its Representation at the American Legation in Bern, Switzerland, March 1944-July 1945," and "Final Summary Report of the Executive Director, War Refugee Board." Miscellaneous clippings, copies of press releases, correspondence about an upcoming interview with journalist Arthur Morse, and distribution lists of "The War Refugee Board History" volumes are also included.

The International Monetary Fund material includes personal and professional correspondence sent to Hodel during the period 1961-1969. Several of the letters are from former members and collaborators of the War Refugee Board, but for the most part, these documents relate to Hodel's post-war work.

Indexing terms

Hodel, Florence.

Pehle, John.

O'Dwyer, William.

McClelland, Roswell.

United States. War Refugee Board.

International Monetary Fund.

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

World War, 1939-1945—Jews—Rescue.

Bern (Switzerland)

Washington (D.C.)

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1:

Box	Folder	
1	1	Photographs, 1925- ca. 1965
1	2	War Refugee Board documents, 1944-1945
1	3	War Refugee Board documents, 1946-1973
1	4	International Monetary Fund correspondence, 1961-1963
1	5	International Monetary Fund correspondence, 1964-969