

**The New York Public Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division**

**Jewish Foundation for Education of Women
Records, 1880-1988**

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Summary

Main Entry: Jewish Foundation for Education of Women.

Title: Records, 1880-1988.

Size: 20 boxes; 1 index card box (8.8 lin. ft.).

Source: Gifts of Jewish Foundation for Education of Women, December 1983; November 1991, November 1994.

Access: Researchers consulting Series D. Case Files (Containers#5-7, 19-21) and Series E. Registers of Scholarship Recipients (Containers #8-12) are required to sign a waiver form. Fragile Records in Container #18 are under permanent restriction.

Abstract: The Jewish Foundation for Education of Women was founded in New York City in 1880 as the Louis Down Town Sabbath School for the purpose of helping underprivileged children of Jewish immigrants on the Lower East Side. The records include correspondence, minutes, annual reports, case files, registers of scholarship recipients, and miscellaneous administrative records.

Historical Note

The Jewish Foundation for Education of Women was founded in New York City in 1880 by members of Temple Emanu-El to help underprivileged female children of Jewish immigrants on the Lower East Side. Its original title was Louis Down Town Sabbath School. The school began by offering instruction in personal hygiene and religion to some thirty-one young children at its modest headquarters on the top floor of a building at 105 East Broadway near the heart of the Jewish Ghetto on Ludlow Street. The school soon added a "day school" and expanded its curriculum to include courses in the commercial and manual arts, especially bookkeeping and fine sewing. By 1887 the school had moved to a building at 267 Henry Street and had changed its name to Louis Down-Town Sabbath and Daily School. With the help of Adolph Lewisohn and other philanthropists, the school was moved in 1906 to a new building at 15th Street and 2nd Avenue, where, until its closure in 1932, it offered a two year curriculum of courses in industrial and commercial arts to young women who had completed grammar school. In keeping with its expanded activities the school had been renamed in 1895 Hebrew Technical School for Girls. It was the first successful free school in New York City devoted to the vocational training of women.

When the City of New York began for the first time to provide vocational training for women in its public schools in 1932, the board of directors of the Hebrew Technical School for Girls, unwilling to duplicate training provided in the public schools, decided to close the school. In its place the board established in 1934 a program of direct grants to women who were engaged in programs of undergraduate or graduate study. With continuing support from Jewish philanthropic institutions, and with the proceeds received in 1938 from the condemnation of its building at 15th Street and 2nd Avenue, the board of directors was able to double its scholarship assistance and to include loans as well as grants in its scholarship program. The following year (1939) permission was obtained to change its corporate name to Educational Foundation for Jewish Girls.

Since that time and through its scholarship committee, staffed by women volunteers who interview applicants and evaluate their needs, the foundation has awarded loans and grants to hundreds of disadvantaged women in the New York City metropolitan area who have sought to advance themselves through higher education.

In 1964 when the foundation became non-sectarian its name was changed to Jewish Foundation for Education of Girls (the term "Jewish" being retained in the title only as a reminder of its ethnic heritage), and in 1976 the word "Women" was substituted for "Girls" in its corporate name.

From its founding its presidents have included Mrs Minnie D. Louis, Mrs. Jacob N. Bloom, Nathaniel Myers, Abram I. Elkus, Mrs. Alfred Rossin, Adolph Lewisohn, Charles A. Riegelman, Maxwell Steinhardt, Irving M. Engel, Lasalle Felheim, Charles J. Tannenbaum, and Marcia (Mrs. Warren R.) Goldsmith.

Note on Restrictions

Researchers consulting Series D. Case Files (Containers #5-7, 19-21) and Series E. Registers of Scholarship Recipients (Containers #8-12) are required to sign a waiver form. Also, Series H. Fragile Records (Container #18) has been placed under permanent restriction in order to protect the records from further handling and deterioration.

Scope and Content

The records include correspondence, minutes of the board of directors, annual reports, case records, registers of scholarship recipients, and financial statements. The records reflect the origins of the organization in 1880 as a charity school for aiding children of Jewish immigrants on the Lower East Side; its development into a vocational school for underprivileged Jewish women; and its work as a foundation offering scholarship grants and loans to disadvantaged Jewish women seeking personal advancement through higher education. Most of the records predate 1964 when the foundation became non-sectarian.

Arrangement Note

The records are arranged into nine series: A. Correspondence; B. Minutes; C. Annual & Miscellaneous Reports; D. Case Files; E. Registers of Scholarship Recipients; F. Financial Records; G. Miscellaneous Records; H. Fragile Records [Restricted]; I. Additional Records. The series are described in sequence below.

Series Descriptions

A. Correspondence (Container #1)

The correspondence (1900-48), which is arranged chronologically, and which is sparse up to 1931, is mainly that of Irving M. Engel, as member of the board of directors and as president, with other officers of the organization including Richard Lewisohn, Jr., Louise Rosen Meyer, Maxwell Steinhardt, and Jerome Tanenbaum. The correspondence concerns routine legal, financial and administrative matters. Included is correspondence with academic institutions relative to the planning and administration of student loan funds.

B. Minutes (Containers #2-3).

The bulk of the minutes (1915-88) which are in typescript form, are of meetings of the board of directors and members which run continuously from 1928 to 1948. Included in the board of directors' minutes are financial reports of the treasurer and of the scholarship committee, and reports on recipients of grants and loans some of which contain personal information relative to the loan recipient. Other minutes are of the executive committee (1971-84), the loan committee (1968-88), the policy committee (1956-86), and the scholarship committee (1939-42). The miscellaneous minutes (1915, 1917, 1931) include minutes of an annual meeting (1915); minutes of a meeting (1917) held at the home of Adolph Lewisohn regarding an article on ideal education by Nathaniel Myers; and minutes of a special committee (1931) regarding the continuance of the work of the board of directors.

C. Annual & Miscellaneous Reports (Container #4).

The annual reports which are printed and bound in book or pamphlet form, are in the period 1880-1893, 1896-1919. There are no reports present for the years 1894-1896. The earlier reports are entitled Louis Down Town Sabbath School and Louis Down-Town Sabbath and Daily School; and from 1897, Hebrew Technical School for Girls. Included in the miscellaneous reports (1928-31) are surveys and evaluations of the work of the Hebrew Technical School for Girls.

D. Case Files (Containers #5-7, 19-21)

The bulk of the case files (1937-55), which are arranged alphabetically by year by name of applicant, fall in the period 1937-41. The files consist of applications submitted to the scholarship committee by women applying for tuition loans or grants. The applications record data on the personal and family history of the applicant and her parents, including age, birthplace, occupation, and financial status. Many of the applicants or their parents had immigrated from Europe. The interviewer's personal impressions of the applicant and her recommendations are recorded on the verso of the application or on a separate sheet. Each file contains a record of the financial transactions resulting from each loan or grant. There are also follow-up reports submitted by scholarship recipients after the completion of their studies. There are also a few photographs of applicants. Women receiving scholarships were required to reside

within a radius of 50 miles of New York City, and be enrolled in an accredited college, university or technical school without geographical limitation. No records of disapproved applications are present.

Additions to the Case Files series are described in Series I. Additional Records below.

E. Registers of Scholarship Recipients (Containers #8-12).

The registers of scholarship recipients are arranged alphabetically by recipient's name in two periods, 1934-40; and 1940-63. The registers record the recipients's home address, case number, period of grant, name of school and course of study, name of referral agency, name of interviewer, and synopsis of awards and disbursements made.

F. Financial Records (Containers #13-14).

The bulk of the financial records consists of auditors' annual financial statements and reports in the period 1927-50. There is no report for the year 1931. Included also is a cash book (1944-60); two journals (1933-58; 1939-43); and a register (1940-43) of grants approved by the board of directors. Financial reports of the treasurer which were submitted to the board of directors are filed in Series B. Minutes (Containers #2-3).

G. Miscellaneous Records (Containers #15-17).

The bulk of the miscellaneous records (1887-1985) consists of by-laws; papers relating to corporate name change; leases, deeds, mortgages and indentures; lists of graduates; and memorabilia. There are also students' monthly reports (1924-25) of grades mainly for the manual course; an index card file (1928-32) of students which lists the course, date of entry and type of diploma awarded; and an incomplete index card file (1942) of students seeking employment. Included in the memorabilia are engrossed tributes to Nathaniel Myers upon his death in 1921; an autograph manuscript poem (1922) written by Minnie D. Louis in tribute to Nathaniel Myers; an holograph pledge (1902) of subscriptions for a new school building signed by Nathaniel Myers, Adolph Lewisohn and others; and printed copies of addresses by Nathaniel Myers and by Minnie D. Louis.

There is also a list of graduates (1907-32) of the Hebrew Technical School for Girls which is partially fragmented and deteriorated. In so far as possible damaged pages have been replaced on Permalife paper.

H. Fragile Records (Container #18). [RESTRICTED].

These records consist of badly fragmented and deteriorated pages of a list of graduates of the Hebrew Technical School for Girls in the period 1907-1932. When feasible damaged pages have been replaced by preservation copies on Permalife paper and filed in Series G. above.

I. Additional Records (Containers #19-21)

The Additional records consist of additions to the Case Files series consisting of a file of partially sorted records (c1950-51) on applicants for financial aid.

Jewish Foundation for Education of Women

Container List

Container No.

- 1 A. Correspondence (1900-48)
- 2 B. Minutes
 -Board of Directors (1928-40)
- 3 -Board of Directors (1941-48)
 -Executive Committee (1971-84)
 -Loan Committee (1968-88)
 -Policy Committee (1956-86)
 -Public Affairs Committee (1973-82)
 -Scholarship Committee (1939-40)
 -Miscellaneous (1915, 1917, 1931)
- 4 C. Annual & Miscellaneous Reports
 -Annual Reports (1880-93, 1897-1919)
 -Miscellaneous Reports (1928-31)
- 5 D. Case Files
 (Alphabetical by Year)
 1937 - 1940, "D"
- 6 1940, "F" - 1941, "R"
- 7 1941, "S" - 1955; n.d.
- SEE Also: Containers #19-21 for Additions to the Case Files
 (94M38)
- 8 E. Registers of Scholarship Recipients
 A-Z (1934-40)
- 9 A-F (1940-63)
- 10 G-L (1940-63)
- 11 M-Sim (1940-63)
- 12 N-Z (1940-63)

F. Financial Records

- 13 Financial Statements & Reports (1927-50)
- 14 Cash book (1944-46); Journals (1933-58; 1939-43);
Register of Grants issued by the Board (1940-43)

G. Miscellaneous Records

- 15 By-laws (1928)
Corporate name change (1939, including copies of
certificate of incorporation and other documents of the
Louis Down Town Sabbath School)
Leases, Deeds, Mortgages, Indentures (1887, 1896, 1903-
04, 1907, 1910)
Lists of Graduates (1907- 32 & n.d.)
Memorabilia
Memoranda
- 16 Miscellany
100th Anniversary Follow-Up Study - Statistical Report
School Site at 2nd Avenue and East 15th Street (appraisal
and inventory, c1923, 1932, 1937)
Seminar on Trends in Education for Women (Oct. 18,
1985)
Students' Monthly Reports (1924-25)
- 17 Students' Records (index card file, 1928-1932)

18 H. Fragile Records [Restricted]

I. Additional Records

- 19-21 Additions to the Case Files (1950-51) [94M38]