



The New York Public Library
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

Channing H. Tobias collection

1937-1983

Sc MG 423

Home to Harlem Project funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Summary

Creator: Tobias, Channing Heggie, 1882-1961

Title: Channing H. Tobias collection

Date: 1937-1983

Size: 0.42 linear feet (1 box)

Source: Gift, Messner, Mary Tobias, 07/--/1991

Revision History: This finding aid was updated by Allison Hughes.

Abstract: The collection contains documentation relating to Tobias' involvement with the Phelps-Stokes Fund and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), as well as other items. Files for the Phelps-Stokes Fund consist of minutes of Trustees' meetings (1940-1944), and files from two Trustees' committees on which Tobias served: the Committee on Negro Americans in Defense Industries (1941-1942) and the Committee on Africa, the War and Peace Aims (1941-1943). Materials pertaining to the YMCA consist of three printed speeches Tobias delivered concerning the YMCA and African Americans in the workplace (1940-1946), and a publication about the contributions of African Americans to the YMCA. Other items in the collection are three letters Tobias wrote to W.E.B. DuBois. The collection also includes an autobiographical sketch in "Thirteen Americans: Their Spiritual Autobiographies" (1953), and some material related to Tobias following his death (1974).

Preferred citation: [Item], Channing H. Tobias collection, Sc MG 423, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Creator History

Channing H. Tobias, a religious and civic leader, was the senior secretary of the Colored Division of the Young Men's Christian Association (1911-1946), the first black president of the Phelps-Stokes Fund (1946-1953), and Chairman of the Board of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (1953-1959).

Tobias' work with the YMCA commenced in 1911 when he became secretary of its National Council in Washington, D.C., a position he held until 1923; from 1923 to 1946 he was senior secretary of the Colored Division of the National Council, with headquarters in New York City. Tobias also served as a trustee (1939-1953) of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, a New York City foundation devoted to the improvement of educational opportunities for African Americans, and in 1946 was hired as its first African-American director. Tobias was elected a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1943, and resigned in 1953 from the Phelps-Stokes Fund to become Chairman of the Board of the NAACP, a position he held until his retirement in 1959. In 1951 he was elected to the United Service Organization's (USO) Board of Governors.

Scope and Content Note

The collection contains documentation relating to Tobias' involvement with the Phelps-Stokes Fund and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), as well as other items. Files for the Phelps-Stokes Fund consist of minutes of Trustees' meetings (1940-1944), and files from two Trustees' committees on which Tobias served: the Committee on Negro Americans in Defense Industries (1941-1942) and the Committee on Africa, the War and Peace Aims (1941-1943). Materials pertaining to the YMCA consist of three printed speeches Tobias delivered concerning the YMCA and African Americans in the workplace (1940-1946), and a publication about the contributions of African Americans to the YMCA. Other items in the collection are three letters Tobias wrote to W.E.B. DuBois. The collection also includes an autobiographical sketch in "Thirteen Americans: Their Spiritual Autobiographies" (1953), and some material related to Tobias following his death (1974).

Key Terms

Subjects

African American civic leaders
Civic leaders -- United States

Names

Tobias, Channing Heggie, 1882-1961
Phelps-Stokes Fund
YMCA of the USA

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