



The Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People Jerusalem (CAHJP)

REBECCA GERTRUDE AFFACHINER Collection – P 85

Introduction

Miss Rebecca Gertrude Affachiner was born in New York City in 1884. In 1934 she settled in Palestine, where she lived – except for extended trips abroad – until her death in 1966.

She was an active figure in Jewish public service in the United States until 1934 and in Israel from the time of her *aliya* to the mid 1950's.

The following biographical sketch, which was found among Miss Affachiner's papers, describes her various activities. A matter not mentioned in it, but subsequently indicated in her archives, was the management in Israel, during the 1940's, of an import-export company, on whose behalf she apparently traveled to the United States after World War II.

Affachiner attended the School of Philanthropy and Art School in New York. She was the first teacher to graduate from the Jewish Theological Seminary, New York City; she took special courses at Columbia and Yale Universities and Hartford College of Law, etc.

She began her career in social work as an investigator for the United Hebrew Charities, New York City, later serving as Assistant Superintendent at Beth Israel Hospital, Y.W.H.A. Superintendent Columbia Religious and Industrial School for Jewish Girls; leader of girl's clubs at the Educational Alliance, Recreation Rooms and Settlements, etc. She was the first woman to act as chaplain in a State Institution, serving in that capacity at the New York State Training School, Hudson, N.Y., under the auspices of the New York Section, Council of Jewish Women.

During World War I, Affachiner was Assistant Regional Director of the American Embarkation Center, Le Man, leaving for France with the first women's unit of the Jewish Welfare Board. Upon her return from service overseas, she conducted a survey for Child Welfare for the United Jewish Aid Society of Brooklyn, N.Y., later making a study of the problem of the Jewish blind, in the same city.

For six years, she served as Superintendent of the United Jewish Charities in Hartford and was actively interested in the Connecticut State School for the Blind. Being a pioneer in work among juvenile delinquents, she was responsible for the earliest developments of the Jewish Big Sisters Movement in New York City, and founded the Jewish Big Sister and Big Brother Organizations in Hartford shortly after coming there in 1920.

In May 1923 Affachiner was appointed a Juvenile Commissioner of the City of Hartford, and in 1924 Governor Templeton chose her to represent the State of Connecticut at the International Conference of Social Workers, meeting in Toronto, Canada. She also served as Vice President of the New England Social Workers, Secretary of the Advisory Board, Y.M. and Y.M.H.A. of Hartford Director of the Travelers Aid Society in that city.

In 1926 she made a tour of Palestine, Egypt, Italy, and the Near East; upon her return to America she was appointed the first National Field Secretary of Hadassah, of which she was a charter member.

From 1929 to 1934 Affachiner was Director of Jewish Social Service for Greater Norfolk Va. Under the Auspices of the Norfolk Section National Council of Jewish Women, she also founded and directed Council House, the first Jewish Community Center in that city. In 1929 she was elected to represent Norfolk at the World Zionist Congress held in Zurich, Switzerland.

In 1934 after resigning her post in Norfolk, Mrs. Affachiner returned to Palestine. Shortly after her arrival in Jerusalem she organized the Palestine Society for Crippled Children (later ALYN), acting as its Director of Social Service and in whose interest she made a trip around the world.

In 1937 she helped organize the Rumanian Settlers' Association (*Hitahdut Olei Rumania*) of which she became the Director, and in whose interest she had visited Rumania and the USA 1937-38.

1939 she was the only woman asked to serve on the Executive *Vaad* of the Child Placement Bureau Jerusalem – *Miklat Dati*.

She was one of the Jewish Charter Members of the American Association of Social Workers, International Conference of Social Work. She is listed in "Who's Who among American Jews" American Hebrew, 1923, and "Women of 1924" – International.

Affachiner traveled extensively throughout the world. In 1924 she went to Mexico to study the conditions under which the Jews lived there, and the possibilities for settling the Polish Jewish refugees flocking, not only there and to Cuba, but to other Central American countries as well. In 1925 she went to Spain and Portugal, being interested in the problem of the modern *Marranos*. In 1930 she visited South America, in 1931 she went to Poland and in 1932 to Soviet Russia, being primarily interested in the Jewish problem in these countries.

Most of Affachiner's material left to the CAHJP has been retained by the Archives and is listed on the following pages.

The material not kept consists of passports, private correspondence, receipts and other personal financial papers, pocket calendars, various illustrated brochures and some personal snapshots. Two passports and one pocket calendar were kept for illustrative purposes, as well as those personal letters which have some connection to public activity.

A number of books, brought with her papers to the Archives, were also discarded. They are:

Directory of Members of American Association of Social Workers

The Jewish State – Herzl

"En Soledad de la Mota" by Esperanza Velasques Bringas (Mexican labour pamphlet, autographed by the author)

Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam

The Koran

Poetical works of Matthew Arnold

Toldot Tochnit Basel by H. Bodenheimer

The material was transferred to the CAHJP in October 1966 by Dr. P. Jacobi, executor of Miss Affachiner's estate and Mr. Ezra Gorodetsky. In May 1968 the CAHJP also received the appointment books of Miss Affachiner, which were added as appendix to the list. The collection was arranged by Hadassah Kellman in January 1968.

PERSONAL

Documents

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| 1
(o.s.) | Theological Seminary of America, diploma certifying Miss Affachiner as a teacher of Hebrew (signed by Solomon Schechter) | June 1907 |
| 2a,b,c | Three United States passports issued to Miss Affachiner | 1913,1923,1938 |
| 3 | - Letters certifying Miss Affachiner's work as a newspaper correspondent, 1924, 1933
- Government of Palestine Press Card issued to Miss Affachiner, 1935 | 1924 - 1935 |
| 4a,b
(o.s.) | <i>Keren Kayment</i> : two certificates, issued to Miss Affachiner
H., E. | no date |
| 4c
(o.s.) | Registry documents for land near Ramallah, purchased by Miss Affachiner | 1937 - 1943 |
| 13a | Various identification cards, receipts from Israel etc.
H. | no date |

Correspondence

- | | | |
|----|--|-------------|
| 5a | - Private correspondence, greeting cards,
- copies of a letter sent by Miss Affachiner,
- notes
E., H. | 1913 - 1956 |
| 5b | - Recommendation from the American Consulate in Rome for an audience of Miss Affachiner with the Pope
- Invitation to the White House for Miss Affachiner, 1931 | 1926, 1931 |
| 5c | Invitations
E., H. | 1912 - 1965 |

Varia

- | | | |
|---|--|-------------|
| 6 | Scrap book with newspaper clippings on R.G. Affachiner | 1921 - 1938 |
| 7 | Diary of a trip through New York State, Canada and New England | 1908, 1909 |
| 8 | Diary of case records, New York State | 1917 |
| 9 | Memorandum book including record of a trip to South Africa | 1958 |

10	Photographs - personal and family	no date
11 (o.s.)	Portrait of Miss Affachiner's father, Issac Affachiner	no date
12	Miscellaneous visiting cards	no date
13b	Copies of reports and newspaper clippings with articles about Miss Affachiner and institutions she was affiliated with	1906 - 1967
13c	Family trees and notes Incl: exchanges between Elka Farfel nee Affachiner and Marcella Brenner, Miss Affachiner's niece	No dates 1974, 1988

PUBLIC ACTIVITIES - UNITED STATES

14a	"Jewish Welfare Board", Le Mans, France - two letters	1919 - 1920
14b	"United Jewish Charities in Hartford, Connecticut" - letters and membership card	1921 - 1926
14c	"Juvenile Commissioner of the City of Hartford" - Certificate and telegram re Miss Affachiner's election as a member of the Board of Juvenile Commissioners - invitations for meetings	1923 - 1926
14d	"Hadassah" Organization - correspondence, invitation for a <i>Hadassah Sabbath</i> with Miss Affachiner	1926 - 1934, 1956
14e	"Norfolk Virginia Section, National Council of Jewish Women" - letters, forms, programs for activities and printed matter	1929 - 1934

PUBLIC ACTIVITIES - PALESTINE AND ISRAEL

"Alyn" and other social organizations

15	"Alyn" (The Palestine Society for Crippled Children) - correspondence, minutes, invitations for activities, papers, articles, photos	1935 - 1938
16	"Alyn" (The Palestine Society for Crippled Children) - Correspondence concerning donation of candies to ALYN	1953 - 1954
17	"Alyn" (The Palestine Society for Crippled Children) - notes, programs etc.	no date
18	"The Boys' Shelter", Jerusalem - statutes, correspondence, budget etc.	1940 - 1941

- 19 "Child Home Placement Bureau (*Miklat Dati*), Jerusalem 1938 - 1939
- letters and papers
- 20 "Agricultural Training Centre for Palestine Children,
David Florentin " - letters and statutes 1942
Incl.: letters to Miss Affachiner from Recha Freier
E., H.
- 20a "Institute of Jewish Social Research for Palestine,
Jerusalem Industrial and Trade School" - proposed Nov. 1934
program
- 91 Invitations to various public ceremonies in Jerusalem 1955 - 1965

Rumanian Jews

- 21 "*Hitachdut Olei Rumania*" (Society for Rumanian Immigrants) - papers, correspondence, finances, notes and photos 1937 - 1943
Incl.: - letters from Stephen Wise, Jan. 1938
- letter from Abba Hillel Silver, 24. March 1938
- letter from Louis Lipsky, 28. March 1938
- letter to Senator Alben Barkely, 7. March 1938
E., H., Rumanian
- 24 "*Hitachdut Olei Rumania*" (Society for Rumanian Immigrants) - minutes of committee meetings 1949
Rumanian
- 25 "*Hitachdut Olei Rumania*" (Society for Rumanian Immigrants), Jerusalem - papers and correspondence 1950 - 1951
Incl.: Renasterea Noastra (newspaper), 2.3.1950,
31.8.1950
E., H., Rumanian
- 26 "*Hitachdut Olei Rumania*" (Society for Rumanian Immigrants) - individual cases no date
E., H.

- 27 "*Hitachdut Olei Rumania*" (Society for Rumanian Immigrants) - varia 1937 - 1941
Incl.: - "Ziele und Grundsätze der Organisation OWDEI JISRAEL" (socialistic colonist labour organization), no date
 - Propaganda of *Hitachdut Olei Germania* ("המזרח", 14 לאוגוסט 1941 (שבועון) "ניו-יארקער וואכנבלאט", 22 ליוני 1938)
 - Rumanian anti-Semitic circular [1937]
 - Letterhead and pamphlet of the "Altneuland Group" sponsor of "The Haifa Zebulun Seafaring Society"
 E., H., Yiddish, Rumanian, German
- 22 The Rumanian Jewish War Effort Fund – correspondence 1939 - 1942
- 23 The Council of Rumanian Jews of America – papers and correspondence 1938 - 1946
Incl.: - Journal of United Rumanian Jews of America
 - Letterheads of Central Rumanian Committee of America

Various organizations

- 28 The Orient Service Ltd. (Import-Export Company) – correspondence and papers 1940 - 1946
- 29 Jerusalem Beth-Am – three letters proposing erection of the institution 1948 - 1949
- 30 Hadassah Hospital – correspondence concerning the dedication of the nursing school in the new hospital in *Ein Karem* to Henriette Szold 1958
Incl.: photos
- 31 "*Hechal Shlomo*" – correspondence concerning dedication of a room to Miss Affachiner 1958, 1961
- 32 "*Keren Kaymeth Leisrael*" – correspondence concerning Miss Affachiner 's donation of land in Staten Island, New York to the *Keren Kayemet* 1945 - 1953

CORRESPONDENCE

- 35 General correspondence in public matters 1933 - 1962
 E., H.

- | | | |
|----|--|----------------------|
| 34 | Correspondence concerning Max Bodenheimer and other matters with his daughter, Hannah E., German | 1941 - 1958,
1961 |
| 33 | Letters to the <i>Palestine Post</i> (Jerusalem Post) | 1942 - 1955 |

WRITINGS BY R.G. AFFACHINER

- | | | |
|----|--|-------------------------|
| 36 | Articles on World Travels: Alaska | no date |
| 37 | Manuscript: Jews in many lands | no date |
| 38 | Typescript: Jewish Refugees in Cuba | no date |
| 39 | Typescript: Jews in Germany | no date |
| 40 | Typescript: The Jews of Mexico | no date |
| 41 | Typescript: My Impressions of Poland | no date |
| 42 | Typescript: Soviet Russia 1932 | no date |
| 43 | Typescript: Jews in Spain | no date |
| 44 | Several manuscripts and typescripts concerning Jewish social service | no dates |
| 45 | Several manuscripts and typescripts on Jewish and social topics | 1909 - 1933,
no date |
| 46 | Short stories | no date |

PHOTOGRAPHS

Jewish Interest

- | | | |
|----|--|------|
| 47 | Douglas, Arizona (U.S.): Young Men's Association | 1916 |
| 48 | France: Jewish Welfare Board activities with American forces | 1919 |
| 49 | Granada and Toledo: Synagogues | 1925 |
| 50 | Krakow and Warsaw, Poland: Jewish interest | 1931 |
| 51 | Nieśwież (Poland, today Belarus): Affachiner family background | 1931 |
| 52 | Russia: a Jewish Kolkhoz near Odessa | 1932 |

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|----|--|---------------|
| 53 | Bombay, India: members of the " <i>Bene Israel</i> " Community | 1936 |
| 54 | Palestine: general | 1936 - [1947] |
| 55 | Miscellaneous | no date |
| | - Van Eyck's "Triumph of the Church over the Synagogue" | |
| | - Post-Card depicting the synagogue in Florence, Italy | |

General Interest

- | | | |
|----|--|-------------|
| 56 | New York City: Young Man's Christian Association War Workers in Training | 1918 |
| 57 | France: American Forces | 1919 |
| 58 | Russia: guided tour | 1932 |
| 59 | World travels: varia | 1930 - 1933 |

PRINTED MATTER – UNITED STATES

Newspapers and Bulletins

- | | | |
|--------|--|-------------|
| 60 | "Jewish News" (Weekly) | 1918 |
| (o.s.) | 5.7.1918; 20.9.1918 | |
| 61 | "The Ounce", Big Brother and Big Sister Federation (Monthly) | May 1923 |
| 62 | "The American Hebrew" (National Jewish Weekly) | 1923 |
| | 1.6.1923, 7.12.1923 | |
| 69 | Jewish Welfare Board News Bulletin "The Shield within the Circle" | 1923 |
| | Vol. 1, no 1 & 2, April & Oct. 1923 | |
| 63 | "Monticello Bulletin" | 1927 |
| | 5.3.1927 | |
| 64 | "Hadassah News Letter" | 1927, 1930 |
| | Jan. 1927, Dec. 1930 | |
| 71 | National Council of Jewish Women, Norfolk, Virginia Section "The Bulletin" | 1929 - 1934 |
| | Feb. 1929, May 1929, Nov.1929, May 1930, March 1932, | |
| | 1933-1934 | |
| 65 | "Jewish Frontier" | 1936 |
| | 30.5.1936 | |
| 80 | Various clippings from local newspapers | 1919 - 1925 |

Printed matter from Jewish organizations

67	Council of Jewish Women, New York Section – Year Book 1918-1919 (5679)	1919
68	The Jewish Welfare Board – Final Report of War Emergency Activities	1920
73-76	Young Women's Hebrew Association (YWHA), Hartford Connecticut - Constitution, 1920 - Annual Report, 1922 - Bulletin, Nov. 1922 - "The 'Y' Standard", Dec. 1923	1920 - 1923
72	United Jewish Charities of Hartford, Connecticut – Annual Reports 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924	1920 - 1924
77	"Connecticut Hebrew Record", the Jewish Home Periodical Aug. 1920, June 1922	1920, 1922
70	"The Training School for Jewish Social Work" – Announcement	1926 - 1927
78	"The Jewish Theological Seminary of America" – Register 1926-1927 (5687)	1927
66	First Yassier Association – Revised Constitution	1931
79	"Jewish Charity", a monthly review of general Jewish charity	Oct. 1905

PRINTED MATTER – PALESTINE AND ISRAEL**Newspapers**

82	"הרפואה", עתון רפואי עברי (העתקה מודפסת)	1934
83	"Acta Medica Scandinavica", Medical journal featuring an article by the Jerusalem doctor, F. Bodenheim	1934
99	"Jerusalem Post" and other clippings	1934 – 1963
96	"Palestine Review", Jerusalem	Sept. 1937
97	"דבר השבוע, שבועון עממי מצויר לארץ ולגולה"	March 1951
98	"Israel Digest", Jerusalem (Weekly) 15.7.1966, 9.9.1966	1966

Brochures and pamphlets

81	2 reports of " <i>Waad Leumi</i> , Jewish Community of Palestine General Council Social" - Service in Palestine, - Care of Jewish delinquent Boys	1932
84	הגדה של פסח, רמת רחל	1937
85	" <i>Beth Ha'am</i> , Jerusalem" – various printed matter	1940
86	"Association of Americans and Canadians in Israel" – Bulletin	Feb. 1955
87	"אוצר התישבות היהודים בערבון מוגבל" – דין-וחשבון, מאזן	Dec. 1957
88	Address by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion on receiving the Henrietta Szold award	June 1958
89	"Women's International League for Peace and Freedom" (W.I.L.P.F.), Jerusalem – mimeographed material	1958
95	Background notes on Eilat and Vicinity	1960
90	"Bar-Ilan University" – statistical report for the academic year 1961/62	1962

Books and booklets

92	במסילת ראשונים, לזכר מ. בודנהיימר (with personal dedication to R. Affachiner)	1957
93	יצחק ר. מלכו, רבי משה אלמושנינו, חייו וספריו	1942
94	Yitzchak Molcho, "Le President Yitzchak Ben Zvi", French	1952

PRINTED MATTER – INDIA

100	"The Jewish Tribune", Bombay, India	Feb. 1936
101	"The Jewish Advocate", Bombay, India	Feb. 1936

APPENDIX – DIARIES AND APPOINTMENT BOOKS

102	Trip to Europe – Diary	July - Aug.1913
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103	- Trip to California – Diary, July-Aug. 1915 - Trip in America and on sea – Diary, Aug.-Sept. 1916	1915, 1916
104	Hudson Valley, weekly visits; notes	1916 - 1919
105	Trips to Europe, Jewish Welfare Board – Diary	1918 - 1919, 1923
106	Appointment book (almost empty)	1919
107	Idem	1928
108	Idem	1929
109	Idem	1930
110	Idem	1931
111	Idem	1932
112	Idem	1933
113	Trip to Russia – Diary	July – Aug. 1932
114	Trip to America – Diary	June-July 1933
115	Appointment book, notebook	1934 – 1938
116	Appointment book	1938
117	Idem	1941
118	Idem	1942
119	Court records, Hudson Valley	(1899 - 1916)