
Inventory of the Winifred Bliss Howe Papers, 1922-1986

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Music Library

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Berkeley, California, 94720-6000

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Collection number: ARCHIVES HOWE 1

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Processed by:

Judy S. Tsou

Date Completed:

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Winifred Bliss Howe Papers,

Date: 1922-1986

Collection number: ARCHIVES HOWE 1

Extent: Number of containers: 2 cartons
Linear feet: 2.7

Repository: The Music Library
Berkeley, California 94720-6000

Shelf location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

Language: English.

March 1991

Donors

Barbara Scherrer and Philip Scherrer

Access

Unrestricted

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Winifred Bliss Howe Papers, Archives Howe 1, The Music Library, University of California, Berkeley

Biography

American pianist, critic, and educator. Winifred Bliss Howe(1904-1990) was the daughter of Henry Warren Howe and Katherine McFarland Howe . At the age of one, her father committed suicide, leaving her mother to bring up her sister, Katherine Howe(later Jones, 1894-1971), and Winifred. A brother, Warren, died at the age of 10 (1900-1910). Her uncle left money for the two sisters for college. Winifred attended Mills Collegefrom 1922 (August) to 1924 (May). She then went to England to study with Tobias Matthay (1858-1945) and to Paris to study with Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979) between 1924 and 1927. She met and fell in love with the noted musicologist, Arthur Mendel(1905-1979), who was then a fellow student of Nadia Boulanger.Their romance lasted until the early 1930s even though Mendelwas living in New York, and she was in living in California most of that period.

After her studies abroad, she taught at the Colorado Woman's College in Denver for a year (1927-28) before moving back to California. She became Ernest Bloch's (1880-1959) assistant in 1928 while he was teaching at the San Francisco Conservatory. Howe and Arthur Mendel arranged Bloch's *America* for a 4-hand piano version which Bloch performed with Howe. (The arrangement was apparently never published. The manuscript is at the possession of Howe's grandnephew, Philip Scherrer). Between 1934 and 1936, she was music critic for the *Monterey Peninsula Herald*. She was also very much involved with the Carmel Bach festival, serving as accompanist and publicist manager when it started in 1935, and was still an active participant in the 1960s. She obtained both bachelor's and master's degrees (AB, 1940, MA, 1941) from the University of California (Berkeley) and taught in the Music Department until 1959, retired at the rank of assistant professor. After her retirement, she and some close friends, including Alice Harwood (Topsy) and Helen Poindexter (Poindie) embarked on a world tour from October 1959 to June 1961.

Although Howe never married, she had a three-decade on-and-off affair with Ernest Bloch. Much of her mature musical career involved Bloch. They performed together, and she was the support and advisor of his many performances including the premiere of his opera, *Macbeth* in Rome. She was probably considered part of his family as Bloch's daughters, Suzanne and Lucienne, had contact with Howe until her death. After her retirement, Howe moved to Carmel area with close friend (and Mills College roommate) Alice Harwood. Howe died in 1990 in Walnut Creek (Rossmoor).

Scope and Content Note

The materials in this archive span the years 1922 and 1986. The majority of the materials, however, are from the 1920s and 1930s. Correspondence made up the bulk of the archive; they are letters between Howe and her mother, and letters between Arthur Mendel and Howe. Other materials include some photographs, letters and telegrams from Bloch (many other letters from Bloch were donated to the library by Howe in 1987 but are sealed until the year 2000). There are also writings by Howe when she was a music critic for the *Monterey Peninsula Herald* in the 1930s.

Box 1

Series I: Correspondence.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Letters from relatives, Arthur Mendel, Ernest Bloch, and other friends. Also includes letters from Howe to her mother and sister. There are a few letters that are not included here; they are a card from Nadia Boulanger, some letters with clippings from Suzanne and Lucienne Bloch. These are in Series IV.

Box 2

Series II: Tapes.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Full and half-track tapes from concerts of some of Bloch's compositions. A recording of Howe and Bloch playing Bloch's 4-hand composition, *Helvetia* is included in the collection. There are two cassette tapes, copies of some of the original tapes.

Box 2

Series III: Photographs.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Many photographs of Bloch, of Howe, of Bloch and Howe, as well as pictures of Arthur Mendel and other friends.

Box 2

Series IV: Miscellaneous Materials.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Includes biographical materials on Howe (some collected later, IV:8), Bloch memorabilia, reviews written by Howe for the *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, and various newspaper clippings.

SERIES I: CORRESPONDENCE.

Subseries A: To Mother (Katherine McFarland Howe)

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Box Box 1, Folder 1 | August 1922 -May 1923 (Mills College) |
| Folder 2 | August 1923 -May 1924 (Mills College) |
| Folder 3 | 1925 |
| Folder 4 | 1926 |
| Folder 5 | 1927 -1929 |
| Folder 6 | 1931 |
| Folder 7 | January - May 1932 |
| Folder 8 | June - December 1932 |
| Folder 9 | 1933 |
| Folder 10 | 1937 - 1945 |

Subseries B: To Alice Harwood (Topsy)

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Box Box 1, Folder 11 | Jan - Mar 1953 |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|

Subseries C: To Sister (Katherine Howe Jones)

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Box Box 1, Folder 12 | 1959 (World Tour) |
| Folder 13 | January - April 1960 (World Tour) |
| Folder 14 | May - September 1960 (World Tour) |
| Folder 15 | October - December 1960 (World Tour) |
| Folder 16 | 1961 (World Tour) |

Subseries D: From Mother (Katherine McFarland Howe)

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Box Box 1, Folder 17 | 1939 - 1932 |
|-------------------------|--------------------|

Subseries E: From Other Relatives

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Box Box 1, Folder 18 | 1926 - 1929 |
| Folder 19 | 1930 - 1932 |

Subseries F: From Arthur Mendel (Christopher Robbins, CR)

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Box Box 1, Folder 20 | March, 1927 |
| Folder 21 | April, 1927 |
| Folder 22 | June, 1927 |
| Folder 23 | September, 1927 |
| Folder 24 | October, 1927 |
| Folder 25 | November, 1927 |
| Folder 26 | January, 1928 |
| Folder 27 | February - March , 1928 |
| Folder 28 | June - October, 1928 |
| Folder 29 | November, 1928 |
| Folder 30 | January - February, 1929 |
| | 2/22/29 letter on America: |
| | pp. 1-2 |
| | pp. 3-4 |

SERIES I: CORRESPONDENCE.

Subseries F: From Arthur Mendel (Christopher Robbins, CR)

| | |
|-----------|----------------------|
| | pp. 5-6 |
| | pp. 7-8 |
| Folder 31 | March - April, 1929 |
| Folder 32 | May - December, 1929 |
| Folder 33 | 1930 |
| Folder 34 | 1931 - 1934 |

Subseries G: From Ernest Bloch

Additional Note

O ther letters from Bloch are in the Bloch/Howe Collection, sealed until January 1, 2000.

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Box Box 1, Folder 35 | 1930 - 1953 |
|-------------------------|-------------|

Subseries H: From Franz Lischauer

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| Box Box 1, Folder 36 | 1953 |
|-------------------------|------|

Subseries I: From Lischauer Family

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Box Box 1, Folder 37 | 1971 - 1983 |
|-------------------------|-------------|

Subseries J: From Others

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Box Box 1, Folder 38 | 1955 - 1986 |
|-------------------------|-------------|

SERIES II: AUDIO TAPES.

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Box Box 2, Folder 1 | Meggie Teyte (from first Bach Festival?) |
| Folder 2 | Bloch, Second Quintet |
| Folder 3-4 | Bloch, <i>Macbeth</i> (parts 1 and 2) |
| Folder 5-6 | Bloch, <i>America</i> (parts 1 and 2) |
| Folder 7 | Bloch, <i>Helvetia</i> (piano, 4 hands; Howe and Bloch); copy on cassette (1991) |
| Folder 8 | Unknown |

SERIES III: PHOTOGRAPHS.

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Box Box 2, Folder 1 | Bloch, Ernest |
| Folder 2 | Howe, Winifred |
| Folder 3 | Howe and Bloch |
| Folder 4 | Group pictures: Arthur Mendel, Helen Poindexter, and Howe Nadia Boulanger's class, 1920s Howe and Bloch with Lillian Hodgehead, Ada Clement, and an unidentified San Francisco Conservatory person |

SERIES IV: MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS.

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Box Box 2, Folder 1 | Bloch, Ernest -- arrticles on Bloch |
| Folder 2 | Bloch, Ernest -- discography, articles on Bloch |
| Folder 3 | Bloch, Lucienne and Suzanne -- letters and pamphlets from E.'s daughters |
| Folder 4 | Boulanger, Nadia -- card, article, |

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Folder 5 | Carmel Bach Festival -- article from <i>Monterey Peninsula Herald</i> |
| Folder 6 | <i>Ernest Bloch Society Bulletin</i>, 1982-1985 |
| Folder 7 | Hodghead, Lillian -- article on LH |
| Folder 8 | Howe, Winifred -- biographical materials |
| Folder 9 | Pedagogy -- grade sheet for Bloch's course, 1941 |
| Folder 10 | Pedagogy -- lecture notes |
| Folder 11 | Programs: 1929 and 1958 |
| Folder 12-13 | Reviews by Howe for the <i>Monterey Peninsula Herald</i>, 1934-1936, some undated |
| Folder 14 | Miscellaneous pamphlets |