

Collection #
M 1176

**FLORENCE FLICKINGER WOLFF
DIARIES, 1906–1962**

[Collection Information](#)

[Biographical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Contents](#)

[Cataloging Information](#)

Processed by

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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
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Indiana Historical Society
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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 4 manuscript boxes (34 diaries)

COLLECTION
DATES: 1906–62

PROVENANCE: Florence Binford Kichler, Indianapolis, Indiana, 2014

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE
FORMATS:

RELATED
HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION
NUMBER: 2014.0243

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Florence F. Wolff, born Florence Flickinger, was born in March of 1891 in Willoughby, Ohio. By 1900, the family relocated to Indianapolis. The family consisted of Florence along with her parents, Elmer and Florence Flickinger, her older sister Beulah, and her younger brothers, Daniel and Ray. Florence began keeping her daily diary in 1906, at the age of 15. These early diaries recounted her friendships, courtships, and activities. Shopping trips, parties and dances, recitals, and concerts were described in detail. In her childhood diaries, detailed accounts of her summers spent in Willoughby with family are documented.

Later diaries describe attending college in Boston. Throughout these diaries, she described her on and off courtship with Herman C. Wolff, whom she would later marry. The diaries from Wolff's college diaries describe her classes, classmates, and activities throughout the Boston area. Upon returning to Indianapolis, she traveled with her family to Europe in 1914 and married Herman Wolff soon after. The diaries cease in 1916 and she resumed writing in 1917. In the early days of the Wolff marriage, Florence described life in Chicago while Herman worked for the Aetna Insurance Co. In 1921, Florence described the pregnancy and the birth of her only daughter, also named Florence. Soon after, the Wolffs returned to Indianapolis and the diaries continued to describe social activities and relationships.

By 1930, Florence taught music at her home in Indianapolis while Herman worked in insurance. The 1930 City Directory for Indianapolis recorded Herman as the President of the Herman Wolff Insurance, Co. The 1930, like the 1916 diary remains one of few gaps in her daily record. Subsequent diaries continued to describe her home life and relationships. The adult diaries beginning with 1933, are less detailed than earlier ones. While her early diaries consisted of nearly a page of writing per day, these later diaries are often kept in Five Year Diary books. These books only allowed a few lines per day and often Florence used this space to briefly describe her social outings and household work.

In 1955, Herman's death is described by Florence. "Blackest day of my life," she wrote, "Herm weak and wild, and after terrible crisis died in my arms." Herman was buried in Crown Hill Cemetery, Indianapolis. After this entry, the diaries continued. City Directories from 1955 show that Florence established a role in her late husband's business. The Indianapolis Directory the year of his death listed Florence as the Vice President of the Herman Wolff Insurance Company.

Throughout the diaries extensive travel is recorded. There are separate travel diaries detailing many of these trips. One diary is used for both her 1949 and 1951 trips to Mexico. A 1954 diary described her multi-location trip beginning with New York. In

1954, she traveled to Paris, Rome, Cairo, Jerusalem, Beirut, Istanbul, Athens, Venice, and other locations. A third travel undated travel diary in the collection described travels to Ireland. However, the handwriting and language used makes it uncertain if the diary belonged to Florence or a different member of the family.

The diaries ended in 1962. Florence was 71 years old. Viewed as a whole, these diaries create a nearly complete daily record of Florence's life for 56 years and chronicle her experiences from age 15 to 71. Florence Flickinger Wolff died five years after the completion of her diaries. In 1967, at age 76, Florence was buried in Crown Hill Cemetery.

Sources:

Materials in Collection

Ancestry.com

U.S. Census Records 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940

Indianapolis City Directories 1930, 1945, 1952, 1955

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains one series. This series consists of diaries written by Florence Flickinger Wolff from 1906-62. These diaries create a nearly complete picture of Wolff's daily life through these years. However, 1916 and 1930 are not included. These diaries cover a span of 56 years and describe Florence's experiences from age 15 to 71.

The series contains both her daily diaries and three travel diaries recounting her experiences abroad. One of the three travel diaries may not have belonged to Florence. The handwriting and language used do not reflect the other diaries in the collection.

Altogether, the collection consists of 34 individual bound diaries. The early diaries consist of a single diary for each individual year. Later diaries in Florence's adult life are Five Year Diaries which contain short records for each day within a five year period.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Diary, 1906

Diary, 1907

Diary, 1908

Diary, 1909

Diary, 1910

Diary, 1911

Diary, 1912

Diary, 1913

Diary, 1914

Diary, 1915

Diary, 1917

Diary, 1918

Diary, 1919

Diary, 1920

Diary, 1921

Diary, 1922

Diary, 1923

Diary, 1924

Diary, 1925

Diary, 1926

Diary, 1927

CONTAINER

Box 1, Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 2

Box 1, Folder 3

Box 1, Folder 4

Box 1, Folder 5

Box 1, Folder 6

Box 1, Folder 7

Box 1, Folder 7

Box 1, Folder 8

Box 1, Folder 8

Box 2, Folder 1

Box 2, Folder 1

Box 2, Folder 2

Box 2, Folder 2

Box 2, Folder 3

Box 2, Folder 3

Box 2, Folder 4

Box 2, Folder 4

Box 3, Folder 1

Box 3, Folder 1

Box 3, Folder 2

Diary, 1928	Box 3, Folder 2
Diary, 1929	Box 3, Folder 3
Diary, 1931	Box 3, Folder 3
Diary, 1932	Box 3, Folder 4
Diary, 1933–37	Box 3, Folder 4
Diary, 1938–42	Box 4, Folder 1
Diary, 1943–47	Box 4, Folder 1
Diary, 1948–52	Box 4, Folder 2
Diary, 1953–57	Box 4, Folder 2
Diary, 1958–62	Box 4, Folder 3
Travel Diary, 1949–51 (Mexico)	Box 4, Folder 4
Travel Diary, 1954	Box 4, Folder 4
(New York, Paris, Rome, Cairo, Jerusalem, Amman, Damascus, Beirut, Istanbul, Venice, Firenze, Portofino, Beau Lieu Son Mer, Les Baux)	
Travel Diary, Undated (Ireland)	Box 4, Folder 5

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 1176).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.