

PRITZKER MILITARY MUSEUM & LIBRARY

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312-374-9333

Margery Shurman Collection

Creator: Margery Shurman
Dates: 1918-1988
Quantity: 0.25 linear feet, 1 box
Acquisition: Donated by Bev Shurman Lavitt, May 24, 2014
Identification: PMML ID# 800204, OCLC# 940511855, Call# PAPERS 00196
Citation: [Document Title]. The Margery Shurman Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Pritzker Military Museum & Library, Chicago, IL.
Language: English
Finding Aid: Brie Montoya, 2016; Updated by Andrea Martinez, 2018

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Biographical Note

Leonard Moses was born to Mr. and Mrs. Albert Moses. He enlisted December 13, 1917 and served as a Second Lieutenant in United States Army's Air Service (Aeronautics). He was honorably discharged August 19, 1918.

Margery Ann Shurman was born April 19, 1921 in Chicago, Illinois to Mr. Leonard Moses and Mrs. Hazel B. (Cohn) Moses. She attended Wellesley College before having to withdraw from her program and return to Illinois, where she enrolled in the University of Chicago. Upon graduation, Shurman tried to join WAVES but was rejected due to poor eyesight. She was then accepted into the United States Coast Guard's Women's Reserve, also known as SPARS, on July 16, 1944 and attended Officer's training in New London, Connecticut. After being commissioned an Ensign, she was stationed at various places including the First Naval District in Boston, Massachusetts, Rockland, Maine, Floyd Bennett Field in New York and Washington, D.C., where she acted as Coding Board Officer. She married Frank Shurman, a member of the U.S. Army, on September 24, 1945. After leaving the Coast Guard, she was employed for a short time doing research as United Airlines studying pilot errors in flying accidents.

Scope and Content of the Collection

The Margery Shurman Collection consists of memoirs, uniform pieces, photographs, and certificates. The vast majority of the collection relates to Shurman's time in World War II. A small portion of the collection relates to her father, Leonard Moses, and his service in World War I. The collection arrived in folders and a box. All items were reorganized by museum staff; uniform items were separated from the collection, as well as a sketch that was removed from its frame.

Arrangement

The collection arrived in no discernable order. Staff has arranged the collection. The collection consists of four series:

Series One: Personal Papers

This series consists of correspondence to and from Leonard Moses and Margery Shurman. It also includes military and personal biographical materials for both Leonard Moses and Margery Shurman. There are materials pertaining to Moses' time as a pilot during World War I and Shurman's time in the Coast Guard during World War II. Shurman began writing her memoirs and photocopied drafts of chapters are included. Pieces from Shurman's SPARS uniform have been separated from the collection.

Series Two: Ephemera

This series contains photocopies of items that pertained to Margery Shurman's military career and life. A pencil sketch of Margery Shurman in uniform has been separated from the series.

Series Three: Photographs

This series contains a photograph reprint of Leonard Moses in aviation gear and a photograph of Margery Shurman's SPAR Communication Officer's Class.

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Separations:

| Item ID | Call Number | Description | Location |
|-----------|-------------|---|----------|
| 800204022 | | Blue SPARS service dress jacket with Ensign rank sleeve braid; missing buttons, Margery Moses nametag sewn inside | |
| 800204023 | | Blue SPARS service dress skirt | |
| 800204024 | | Blue SPARS officer cap | |
| 800204025 | | Blue SPARS garrison cap - Margery A. Moses nametag sewn inside | |
| 800204026 | | Black work uniform tie | |
| 800204027 | | Black work uniform tie | |
| 800204028 | | Black work uniform tie - Nellie Peterson nametag sewn inside | |
| 800204029 | | Gray and white pinstriped seersucker crown cover for officer's cap | |
| 800204030 | | Blue plastic rain crown cover for officer's cap | |
| 800204031 | | White crown cover for officer's cap | |
| 800204032 | | White crown cover for officer's cap | |
| 800204033 | | Blue havelock cover | |
| 800204035 | | Pencil sketch of Margery Shurman in uniform - done by Fritz Ress in Baltimore, Maryland on 4/19/1946 | |

Key Subjects

This collection is indexed under the following headings in the Library's online catalog. Researchers interested in materials about related topics, persons, or places should search the catalog using these subject headings.

Subjects

United States. -- Army. -- Air Service.
 United States. -- Coast Guard. -- Women's Reserve.
 V-E Day, 1945.
 World War, 1939-1945 -- Participation, Female.

Container List

| Box | Folder | Item ID # | Title | Dates |
|---|--------|-----------|--|------------------------------------|
| Series 1: Personal Papers, Bulk 1918 and 1945-1947, 1920, 1988, n.d. | | | | |
| 1 | 1 | | Correspondence | 1920, 1946-1947, 1988, n.d. |
| | | 800204001 | Letter to Leonard Moses from the Chief of Air Service - returning his pilot book | 12/27/1920 |
| | | 800204002 | Letter to Margery Shurman regarding her transfer to the 3rd Coast Guard District | 4/23/1946 |
| | | 800204003 | Letter to Margery Shurman regarding the termination of her appointment in the U.S. Coast Guard | 11/21/1947 |
| | | 800204004 | Photocopy of letter to Wellesley College from Margery Shurman - asking that a contribution to the school from her and her husband be in honor of Augusta Rahr Hamilton | 7/20/1988 |
| | | 800204005 | Telegram to Margery Shurman from Frank Shurman | n.d. |
| 1 | 2 | | Biographical Materials - Military | 1918, 1945-1946, n.d. |
| | | 800204006 | Honorable Discharge certificate - as 2nd Lieut. A.S.A.U.S.A. | 8/19/1918 |
| | | 800204007 | International Aero Club of America Aviator's Certificate booklet - Leonard Moses, No. 3348 | 12/20/1918 |

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|-----------|---|------------|
| 800204008 | U.S. School of Military Aeronautics Pilot's Book - Leonard Moses | 12/27/1918 |
| 800204009 | Individual Record Card, Aviation Section, Signal Corps | 12/27/1918 |
| 800204010 | Honorable Discharge certificate - as 2nd Lieut. Air Service (Aeronautics) | 12/27/1918 |
| 800204011 | United States Coast Guard diplomas for Communications Operation - Ensign Margery A. Moses | 7/28/1945 |
| 800204012 | Notice of Separation from the U.S. Naval Service-Coast Guard - Margery Shurman | 5/31/1946 |
| 800204013 | U.S. Coast Guard Identification Card for Margery A. Moses | n.d. |
| 800204014 | Certificate of thanks signed by Harry Truman | n.d. |
| 800204015 | Photocopy of Margery Shurman in uniform standing in front of a building | n.d. |
| 800204016 | Photocopy of a headshot of Margery Shurman in uniform | n.d. |

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Biographical Materials - Personal

n.d.

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| 800204017 | Photocopy of short excerpt of an autobiography of Margery Shurman | n.d. |
| 800204018 | Photocopy of excerpts of Margery Shurman's drafted memoir titled "My Red Face" - details on Shurman's time signing up for WAVES, joining SPAR, Officer training in Connecticut, being commissioned as an Officer, her wedding to Frank Shurman | n.d. |
| 800204019 | Photocopy of pages 19-23 of Margery Shurman's drafted memoir - details of her life right before enlistment, the Coast Guard Academy, assignments in Boston, Maine, New York, and a bit of post-armed forces life | n.d. |
| 800204020 | Photocopy of a season's greetings card from Margie and Frank Shurman, both in uniform | n.d. |

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| 800204021 | Photocopy of scrapbook page dedicated to Frank and Margery Shurman's wedding | n.d. |
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Series 2: Ephemera, 1945, n.d.

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| 1 | 4 | Ephemera | 1945, n.d. |
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| 800204034 | Photocopy of the telegraph transmission announcing Germany's surrender (V-E Day), received at the U.S. Coast Guard Operating Base in Rockland, Maine on 5/10/1945 | 5/8/1945 |
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| 800204036 | Photocopy of program for Commissioning Exercises for the Candidates for Reserve Commissions on 9/6/1944 | n.d. |
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| 800204037 | Photocopy of picture and brief statement on WAVES by Lt. Comdr. Mildred H. McAfee | n.d. |
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| 800204038 | Photocopy of a page with Marie Haffenreffer's picture - she was the sister of Agusta Rahr Hamilton, a woman who helped Frank Shurman's family flee Nazi Germany | n.d. |
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Series 3: Photographs 1945, n.d.

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| 1 | 5 | Photographs | 1945, n.d. |
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| 800204039 | Copy of headshot of Lt. Leonard Moses, 1891-1947 | n.d. |
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| 800204040 | Black and white photograph - SPAR Communication Officer's Class; list of people on the back along with signatures | 6/4/1945 |
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