



Collection 3082

**Gondos Family  
Papers**

**1895-ca. 1978 (bulk 1900-1975)  
13 boxes, 3 vols., 7 flat files, 3.9 lin. feet**

**Contact:** The Historical Society of Pennsylvania  
1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107  
Phone: (215) 732-6200 FAX: (215) 732-2680  
<http://www.hsp.org>

**Processed by:** Cary Majewicz  
**Processing Completed:** October 2006  
**Sponsor:** Phoebe W. Haas Charitable Trust  
**Restrictions:** None  
**Related Collections at  
HSP:** Gruen family (SC 191)

---

**Gondos Family**  
**Papers, 1895-ca. 1978 (bulk 1900-1975)**  
**13 boxes, 3 vols., 7 flat files, 3.9 lin. feet**

**Collection 3082**

---

**Abstract**

Victor Gondos, a civil engineer, immigrated to the United States with his family in 1911, settling in Chicago. He married Irene Trautmann, and they had two sons, Zoltan (later Robert) and Victor Jr. In the 1920s they moved to Reading, Pennsylvania, where Victor set up The Gondos Company, a general contracting firm. In 1930, Gondos joined with his sons to form Gondos and Gondos, an architectural firm headquartered in Philadelphia that designed industrial buildings, schools, and hotels. Both sons garnered engineering degrees, but Victor Jr. was also a historian and archivist, and he served on the staff of the National Archives for twenty-three years.

This diverse collection, which spans almost one hundred years, chronicles a Hungarian family's attempt to assimilate to the United States yet retain its heritage. It also documents the family's architectural and construction businesses from the mid 1920s through the Great Depression and World War II. The vast majority of this collection is correspondence between family members in the United States and in Hungary. There are also scrapbooks, audio materials, clippings, programs, pamphlets, journals, technical drawings, and photographs.

**Background note**

Victor Gondos<sup>1</sup> (1879-1963) was born in Szilagyecseh, Hungary to Morris Gondos (1843-1921), a physician, and Rosalie Lindenfels (1846-1895). Victor had several siblings, but only his brother Alexander (d. 1960) would eventually join him in the United States. Together the family lived in Năgybanya, Hungary (now Baia Mare, Romania), where Morris practiced. Not much is known about Victor's early life in Năgybanya, but it is clear that the family was educated and at least somewhat prosperous, as Victor went on to study civil engineering at Budapest's Royal Joseph Technological University. After receiving his degree in 1900, Victor obtained a PhD in political science from the same university in 1906.

---

<sup>1</sup> In this collection, individuals' names vary between the original Hungarian form (last name, first name: "Gondos Victor") and their Americanized form (first name, last name: "Victor Gondos"). In general, once family members permanently moved to the United States, they assumed Americanized names. In this finding aid, Americanized names are used throughout.

---

In 1901, a year after Victor received his first degree, he married Budapest native Irene Trautmann (1883-1964), daughter of Dr. Otto Trautmann (1846-1909), a German civil engineer, and Henrietta Tollassy (1853-1910). Irene attended a young women's finishing school where she learned Hungarian and English (in addition to her family's native German) and trained on the piano. Together Victor and Irene had two sons, Victor Grant<sup>2</sup> (1902-1976) and Zoltan Otto (1905-1989), both born in Budapest.

Victor found nominal success as an engineer in Hungary, and he envisioned his family's future in America after a 1904 visit to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, or St. Louis World Fair. The Austro-Hungarian Department of Commerce charged Victor to attend the Exposition and to report back on American advances in agricultural machinery and production. When Victor returned to Hungary, inspired by America as the "land of opportunity," he was met with few job options. Eventually, he found work as mathematics teacher; but low pay and overall dissatisfaction led him to appeal to the Austro-Hungarian government to send him on another assignment in the United States. Victor's request was met, and in 1906 he was sent to Chicago, Illinois, again to study American agricultural machinery and production. This time he brought his family. Victor, Irene, Victor Jr., and Zoltan stayed in Chicago from late 1906 to 1909. While Irene remained at home to raise the children, Victor worked with several firms as an engineer. This work led the family to a brief stay, in 1909, in Honey Harbor, Ontario, Canada, where Victor joined a team of engineers to fix a collapsing grain elevator.

In late 1909, when the Gondoses learned that Irene's father, Dr. Otto Trautmann, had become seriously ill, they immediately returned to Hungary. Dr. Trautmann passed away about a month after their arrival, but the Gondoses remained with their relatives in Hungary until 1911. While in Hungary, Victor formed a modest construction company that focused on pre-fabricated housing. Unfortunately, Victor's technical demands were at odds with Hungary's meager building supplies, and his company closed. The family permanently immigrated to the United States in 1911.

Upon returning to America, the Gondoses found a home in New York City. Around this time, Victor's brother Alexander, a journalist and writer, immigrated to the United States and started a family. Victor took various jobs as an engineer, an engineering consultant, and even an importer to support his family. Because they still had family in Hungary, the Gondoses closely watched events in Europe that foreshadowed war. Once war began in 1914, Victor Jr., who had developed an avid interest in the military, followed troop movements and battles.

In 1915, shortly after the family relocated to Bridgeport, Connecticut, for Victor's work, he and his brother Alexander were arrested on extortion charges. In a 1915 letter to his father, Victor Jr. wrote "In the school nobody said a word about anything that happened though they read it in the newspapers; but two boys I spoke to assured me that they sympathized with you very much and said that they thought the whole charge false." In another letter written the same year, Victor Jr. noted he was "sorry to hear that mother

---

<sup>2</sup> Hereafter, Victor Gondos Sr. is referred to "Victor," while his son is referred to as "Victor Jr."

can't get the bail." From late 1915 to early 1916, the family survived without its patriarch and awaited Victor's and Alexander's release.

In Spring 1916, both Victor and Alexander were freed from prison. The brothers came to see no future for their families in Bridgeport and made plans to move. Alexander relocated his family to Dayton, Ohio. Victor followed suit, but instead moved to Cleveland, Ohio, a place with plenty of industry and a large Hungarian population. The family's stay in Cleveland was brief, for in 1917 Alexander convinced Victor to move to Dayton so their families could be closer. But Victor, now a sales representative for Truscon Steel Company, received a promotion and transfer to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1918.

The end of World War I in 1918 brought about more changes for the Gondos family. Not being naturalized citizens, they were still considered aliens; and that status had changed to "enemy aliens" during wartime. When the war ended, they regained "alien" status, and Victor felt it was time for him to go into business on his own. But before establishing his own business, sometime around late 1918 or early 1919 Victor accepted a partnership in a small steel sales business in Reading, Pennsylvania.

In Reading, the boys enrolled at Reading High School (Victor Jr. only attended for six months before graduating, Zoltan attended for about a year and a half.) When Zoltan enrolled, he changed his first name to "Robert" and kept Zoltan as his middle name. Victor Jr. had a knack for writing and wrote for the school paper. After graduating in February 1920, he spent the summer in the Coast Guard, before beginning studies in civil engineering and architecture at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Robert graduated from Reading High School in 1921 and went on to Lehigh University to study civil engineering.

Around this time, Victor formed his own steel sales business. His first design-and-build projects were the American Beauty Silk Mill and Higrade Silk Mill, both in Allentown, Pennsylvania. In the early 1920s he formed The Gondos Company, a general contracting firm. Headquartered in Reading, the company constructed numerous buildings in Pennsylvania, including the Philips Memorial Building of West Chester's State Teacher's College and a high school in Frackville. Victor's reputation extended as far as Albany, New York, where his company built a bakery. Perhaps his most famous creations were the hotels Jefferson and Madison, both in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Described as a hotel "with the most efficiently economic layout and the most startling architectural beauty possible,"<sup>3</sup> the Hotel Jefferson was built in just over five months between 1928 and 1929. While The Gondos Company performed construction, Victor Jr., now a registered architect, joined with his father to design the hotel. It was the first time they had worked together. On the heels of this project, the Gondoses went on to complete the Hotel Madison in January 1930 in a record 95 working days. Again Victor was the builder and Victor Jr. served as designer. In 1930, Victor, with his sons Victor

---

<sup>3</sup> "\$900,000 Worth of Comfort at Your Service: New 'Hotel Jefferson'." *Boardwalk Illustrated News* (16 April 1928): 22.

Jr. and Robert, engineering degree in hand, organized Gondos and Gondos, Architects and Engineers, with main offices in Philadelphia.

With the 1930s came the Great Depression and a hard time for the Gondoses and their companies. It is somewhat difficult to piece together the family's whereabouts during this time. Victor and Irene had moved to New Jersey by late 1931. In the late 1920s Victor Jr. had taken a job with the Architect's Office of the United States Treasury and shuttled between Washington, D.C., Pennsylvania, and New Jersey for business. However, a severe bout of arthritis prevented Victor Jr. from working and traveling for about ten years starting in the early 1930s. Robert lived close to Victor and Irene in New Jersey and continued his work with Gondos and Gondos.

Work came slow but steady for the Gondos firms between 1933 and 1935. In 1935, Robert convinced Victor to move back to Philadelphia, reestablish Gondos and Gondos (which had since moved to the Hotel Madison), and hunt for Public Works Administration (PWA) projects. Work picked up in 1935, and the Gondoses won bids to work on several PWA ventures in Pennsylvania. Under Gondos and Gondos, Victor and Robert built high schools in West Chester, Palmyra, and Lebanon County. They also constructed power houses and dormitories for the state teacher's colleges at Lock Haven, Kutztown, and West Chester.

The late 1930s and early 1940s were prosperous times for the family. Company profits allowed the family to visit relatives in Hungary and sightsee in Europe. In 1942, Victor Jr., who had recovered enough from his arthritis to begin work again, received his master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania and accepted a job in the National Archives in Washington, D.C. He specialized in architecture for archives and published a booklet entitled *Archives and Records Center Buildings*. In 1947, Victor Jr. married Dorothy Ditter (1909-2005), a history professor at American University in Washington, D.C. He began a successful career in 1951 as editor-in-chief of *Military Affairs*, a military history journal published by the American Military Institute.

Robert Z. Gondos, to supplement his work with his father, took part-time jobs with local chemical plants. Nothing substantial came about until February 1, 1945, when Robert accepted a design engineer position at the Campbell Soup Company. He resigned from Gondos and Gondos soon after and remained with Campbell's for twenty-one years.

Victor dissolved Gondos and Gondos sometime in the late 1940s, but managed The Gondos Company until his retirement in 1953. He and Irene then moved to Orlando, Florida on their retirement income. Their later years were marked by their travels across the United States and abroad. In 1963, both moved to a nursing home in Moorestown, New Jersey, to be closer to Robert. Victor died on October 10, 1963. Irene survived only eight months longer and passed away on May 24, 1964.

Victor Jr. became a celebrated historian and archivist, being nominated a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists in 1958. In the 1950s and 1960s, he had articles published in *Military Affairs* and *The American Archivist*. In 1964, the Society of American

Archivists and American University set up the Gondos Memorial Award, which awarded \$200 for the best essay on the history or administration of archives. Victor Jr.'s final goal in life was to obtain a PhD. After he retired as the editor of *Military Affairs* in December 1965, he enrolled as a PhD candidate at American University. He completed his dissertation, "The Movement for the National Archives of the United States, 1906-1926" in 1971, only five years before his death. Victor Jr. died on March 2, 1976.

After a successful design and engineering career with the Campbell's Soup Company, Robert retired in 1966. He set up a permanent residence in Philadelphia, and he spent much of the 1960s and 1970s traveling between the United States and Europe. In 1976, for Philadelphia's Bicentennial celebration, he organized an exhibition highlighting Hungarian immigration to the United States. He died on November 19, 1989 or 1990.

## Scope & content

This collection contains a wide range of materials and spans almost one hundred years. From an 1895 Hungarian death certificate to Robert's autobiography, printed sometime in 1978, these materials chronicle a Hungarian family's attempt to assimilate to America yet retain its heritage. They also document the family's business from the mid 1920s through the Great Depression and World War II. The vast majority of this collection is comprised of correspondence between family members in the United States and in Hungary. There are also scrapbooks, audio materials, clippings, programs, pamphlets, journals, technical drawings, and photographs. There are Hungarian-language materials throughout the collection; but most of it is concentrated at the beginning of Series 1 (*Gondos family*) and Series 3 (*Victor Gondos Sr.*).

The collection is divided into five series, and the folders in each series are arranged chronologically. It appeared that one of the sons, probably Victor Jr. since he was an archivist, had previously arranged the papers in labeled folders. This original order has been maintained, hence there is sometimes an overlap between the date ranges of different folders. Whenever possible, the original titles from the folders were used, such as "Letters to Hungary" or "Correspondence V.G./I.G."<sup>4</sup>

Family correspondence makes up the majority of Series 1 (*Gondos family*). The bulk of the correspondence spans from when Victor Jr. and Robert were in college in the early 1920s to just around the time of Victor Jr.'s death in 1976. The earliest correspondence consists of letters and postcards between Victor; his father, Morris Gondos; Irene; and other family members. Other materials in this series include death certificates, genealogical notes, and two phonographic records.

Series 2 (*Architectural and construction projects*) is small but rich in information about the Gondoses' construction and architectural work. There are a few folders dedicated to specific projects, such as the Atlantic City, New Jersey, hotels Jefferson and Madison.

---

<sup>4</sup> The initials in some of the folder's titles represent the following: "V.G."=Victor Gondos, Sr.; "I.G."=Irene Gondos; "V.G. jr."=Victor Gondos, Jr.; "R.Z.G."=Robert Zoltan Gondos. Other initials appear on some folders, representing other correspondents' names.

There is also a folder of recommendations from people and firms that hired the Gondoses. The folder of an unbound scrapbook contains a wealth of building photographs, some labeled, and a resume of the Gondoses' architectural achievements.

The final three series, Series 3 (*Victor Gondos Sr.*), Series 4 (*Victor Gondos Jr.*) and Series 5 (*Robert Zoltan Gondos*), are comprised of materials related to these family members' interests and accomplishments. There is correspondence, reports, certificates and diplomas, printed materials, audio materials, and photographs. Series 3 contains correspondence between Victor in the United States and the Austro-Hungarian government in the early 1900s. In Series 4 are several folders of Victor Jr.'s historical and archival publications. A highlight of Series 5 is Robert's autobiography of his childhood years from about 1901 to 1921.

## Overview of arrangement

Series I	Gondos family, 1895-1975	37 folders, 2 volumes, 1 flat file
Series II	Architectural and construction projects, 1928-1950	8 folders
Series III	Victor Gondos Sr., 1900-1953	9 folders, 5 flat files
Series IV	Victor Gondos Jr., 1910-1970	10 folders
Series V	Robert Z. Gondos, 1943-ca. 1978	6 folders, 1 flat file

## Series descriptions

### Series 1. Gondos family, 1895-1975 (Boxes 1-4, 8-9, Vols. 1-2, FF 1)

Correspondence comprises the bulk of this series. The earliest correspondence is between Victor, his father, Irene, and other family members in Hungary. The majority of the pre-1915 correspondence is in Hungarian (which the processor could not read). Once the family established themselves in the United States, they generally corresponded with each other in English. One folder contains heartfelt letters from Victor Jr. and Zoltan (Robert) to their incarcerated father, as the boys longed for their father to be released. "I wish you were home to help me," Victor Jr. wrote in one letter about his trouble with arithmetic. "I am very anxious to have you come home," wrote Zoltan in another. Other unfortunate occurrences are documented in the family's early letters, such as Irene's bout with an undisclosed illness which sent her away from the family under a doctor's care. "I am very glad we took your run-down condition seriously," wrote Victor in a letter to his wife, "and you went to a place and under the cares of a doctor—and a sister—and a son who love you too well to relax their strict vigilance."<sup>5</sup>

The bulk of Victor's and Irene's correspondence to Victor Jr. and Robert, once they went away to college, discusses general topics such as health matters, business prospects, and family vacations. The family's letters of the 1930s and 1940s largely

---

<sup>5</sup> 4 January 1927.

concern the family's construction and architectural businesses. Their correspondence of the 1950s and 1960s discusses their travels to Hungary or Europe. Other prevalent topics in the more recent letters include Victor's and Irene's retirement to Florida, Victor Jr.'s award ceremonies, and Robert's successes at the Campbell's Soup Company. This series also contains a folder of photographs of various members of the Gondos family.

Also in this series are a few oversized certificates and accompanying seals from 1900, 1901, and 1906. The certificates are in Hungarian and belonged to Victor Sr. Attached to each certificate were wax seals in circular wooden containers. These have been removed from their respective certificates and re-housed in Boxes 8 and 9. The container in Box 8 has a wax seal, while the container in Box 9 is empty.

The audio materials in the series have been digitized, and the CDs are available for researchers in Box 13.

### **Series 2. Architectural and construction projects , 1928-1950 (Boxes 3-4)**

This small series of seven folders and one volume is rich in its documentation of the Gondoses' building projects over two decades. Both their contracting firm, The Gondos Company, and architectural firm, Gondos and Gondos, are represented. The first three folders are dedicated to specific buildings, all hotels the Gondoses designed and built in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

The first is the Hotel Jefferson which was completed in 1929. It was designed by Victor Jr. and built by Victor Sr. Its folder contains an excerpt from *Boardwalk Illustrated News*, 16 April 1929, about the hotel, its funders, and creators. The second hotel, the Madison, was completed in January 1930. The Gondoses set a personal record by completing the design and construction of the hotel in only 95 working days. This folder contains a copy of a congratulatory certificate issued to Victor Gondos, Sr. from the various people and firms that worked on the Madison. The third project was the Runnymede Hotel, completed in May 1930. It was designed and built in less than three months. All three folders contain pamphlets, photographs, articles, and other ephemera pertaining to each hotel.

Other materials in this series include letters of recommendation from the firms and people who hired the Gondoses for various projects. All the letters have the same commending tone as illustrated in a letter dated 5 September 1940 from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction, to the quartermaster general of the U.S. Army in charge of construction. The letter began, "I consider it a privilege to recommend for your consideration The Gondos Company, General Contractors, and the firm of Gondos and Gondos, Architects and Engineers."

The unbound scrapbook in Box 5 Folder 2 is a compilation of the Gondoses' projects from the late 1920s to the early 1940s. It contains mostly photographs of their various buildings, such as the Philips Memorial Building in West Chester, Pennsylvania, a bakery in Albany, and various projects for colleges around the state.



### Series 3. Victor Gondos, Sr., 1900-1953 (Boxes 4-5, FF 2-6)

Most of the papers in this series are specific to Victor's work for the Austro-Hungarian government from about 1901 to 1909. There are five folders and one flat file entitled "Official papers," which contain letters from the Austro-Hungarian Department of Commerce and Victor's reports on American agriculture and industry. Victor was first sent to the United States in 1904 to study American agricultural production methods at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, Missouri. Two years later, in 1906, the Austro-Hungarian Department of Commerce sent Victor back to the United States, this time to Chicago, Illinois, "for the particular purpose of studying: 1) use of water-power in manufactures; 2) work-saving use of machinery; 3) industrial use of maize, [and] 4) other technical matters."<sup>6</sup>

Some of Victor's work for the Austro-Hungarian government is detailed in his reports. One such report, dated 1908 and printed in Hungarian, is probably about American packing methods since it contains pictures of American storage containers (e.g. sacks, baskets, metal tins) and industrial machinery used to create such containers. Victor's work was apparently published in a Hungarian technical magazine, as copies of such a magazine are in Box 5, folder 6. They contain Victor's name under the title (indicating that he may have played a role in publishing the magazine) and an article he authored. In another folder are photographs of various American grain silos and railroad grain elevators. Accompanying the photographs are pages from another of Victor's reports, presumably about American grain production and storage.

Also in this series is a folder of correspondence, reports, and schedules from the Blanding Construction Company, for whom Victor worked in the early 1950s. There are also two folders of Victor's personal materials, including analyses of chess games and family tributes. In three flat files are two issues of *Gazdasági Mérnök*, a Hungarian engineering journal, from 1901 and 1902. Additionally, there is a scrapbook, housed in Box 10, entitled "Work of Victor Gondos, C.E., R.E.; 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary." It contains photographs of Victor's architectural work up to and including 1939. Some of the photographs are duplicates of those in found in Series 2 (*Architectural and construction projects*).

### Series 4. Victor Gondos Jr., 1910-1970 (Boxes 5-6)

This is a small but diverse group of items highlighting Victor Jr.'s interests and accomplishments. At the beginning of the series are two folders of personal materials including the February 1920 issue of *The Red and Black*, published by Reading High School. This particular issue featured the graduating class, Victor Jr. being among them. There are also a few photographs, an excerpt on Victor Jr. from Marquis Publication's *Who's Who*, certificates and diplomas, and copies of the preface and abstract from Victor Jr.'s PhD dissertation.

There are also several folders housing Victor Jr.'s publications, from copies of *Military Affairs* to his book *Archives and Record Center Buildings*. One folder contains

---

<sup>6</sup> 19 September 1906.

several reprints of his articles from *Military Affairs* and *The American Archivist*. Prior to his appointment as editor-in-chief of *Military Affairs* in 1943, he wrote an article for the journal entitled, "Army Historiography: Retrospect and Prospect," in response to the work *Military History of the United States*, published by Major General J.A. Ulio during World War II. Of the issues of *Military Affairs* in the collection, only one, dated 1963, is from the time Victor Jr. was the editor of the journal. The rest are dated after his retirement from *Military Affairs* in 1965.

Other notable items in this series include several tribute letters to Victor from various colleagues. In May 1961, Victor Jr. was honored at a dinner held by the American Military Institute, publishers of *Military Affairs*. Victor was presented with the tribute letters at this dinner. Also in the folder of "tributes and testimonials" are a few family tribute letters from about ten years earlier.

### **Series 5. Robert Z. Gondos, 1943-ca. 1978 (Boxes 6-7, FF 7)**

The final series is dedicated to the youngest Gondos and contains the most recent material in the collection. Highlights include personal correspondence and poems, both written and recorded on a phonographic record. In one folder is a self-printed copy of Robert's memoirs of his early childhood in Hungary and the United States. As an immigrant child, Robert provided an interesting perspective on life in the United States from the early 1900s to the 1920s. Robert wrote candidly about everything from his personal revelations and experiences to the effects of war and economic depression on his family and its businesses.

In 1915, Robert's father and uncle were arrested and convicted on extortion charges and imprisoned. News of the arrests was in many local papers, and both Robert and Victor Jr. faced and challenged jeering classmates, wishing to uphold their father's honor. Both boys were overjoyed at their father's release. Robert recalled, "When I saw [my father] joy and relief mingled with the bitterness of the past few months overwhelmed me, so that I threw myself sobbing in his arms."<sup>7</sup> His father's imprisonment traumatized Robert, so much so that he did not even like to discuss it some sixty years later.<sup>8</sup> In the 1970s, presumably in response to this occurrence and to help him write his childhood memoir, Robert requested from the FBI any files about himself and his family. Hence, in this series there is a folder of copies of FBI reports on the Gondoses from the 1940s.

Final compliments to this series include a folder of photographic portraits showing Robert over the years from 1921 to 1952, Robert's various school diplomas and engineering certificates housed in a flat file, and an unbound scrapbook made in 1955 for Robert's 55<sup>th</sup> birthday. The components of this scrapbook, including the cover, photographs, and ephemera, are housed and foldered in Box 11.

The audio materials in the series have been digitized, and the CDs are available for researchers in Box 13.

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>8</sup> Gondos, *Recollections*, 43.

## Separation report

To HSP library:

Gondos, Victor, Jr. "The Movement for a National Archives of the United States, 1906-1926." PhD diss., American University, 1971.

## Related materials

At the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC:  
Victor Gondos Collection [1851-1922] (Series DM.5)

## Languages Represented

English, Hungarian, German

## Bibliography

Gondos, Robert Zoltan. *Recollections of My Early Youth, 1908-1921*. Philadelphia, Pa.: privately printed, ca. 1978.

"\$900,000 Worth of Comfort at Your Service: New 'Hotel Jefferson'." *Boardwalk Illustrated News*, 16 April 1928, 22-23, 28.

## Subjects

Allentown (Pa.) – Buildings, structures, etc.  
Architects – New Jersey.  
Architects – Pennsylvania.  
Architecture – New Jersey – Atlantic City.  
Architecture – Pennsylvania.  
Atlantic City (N.J.) – Buildings, structures, etc.  
Construction contracts – New Jersey.  
Construction contracts – Pennsylvania.  
Hungarian Americans – Cultural assimilation.  
Hungarian Americans – Pennsylvania.  
Immigrants – Hungary.  
National archivists.  
Public architecture.  
Self-employed – Hungarian Americans.  
West Chester (Pa.) – Buildings, structures, etc.  
  
The Gondos Company.  
Gondos and Gondos.  
Hotel Jefferson. (Atlantic City, N.J.).  
Hotel Madison. (Atlantic City, N.J.).  
National Archives. (U.S.).  
United States. Public Works Administration.

Gondos, Irene, 1883-1964.  
Gondos, Robert Z.  
Gondos, Victor, 1879-1963.  
Gondos, Victor, 1902-

## **Administrative Information**

### **Restrictions**

The collection is open for research.

### **Acquisition information**

Provenance unknown.

Accession number 2001-046.

Previously named the Victor and Robert Gondos Collection.

### **Preferred citation**

Cite as: [Indicate cited item or series here], Gondos Family Papers (Collection 3082), The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

### **Processing note**

Processing made possible by a grant from the Phoebe W. Haas Charitable Trust.

Since this collection was processed by a non-Hungarian-speaking processor, no translations of Hungarian written or printed materials have been made.

The four phonographic records in this collection have been digitized. Digital service copies of these recordings are available to researchers in Box 13.

## Box and folder listing

\*—Some items are written or printed in Hungarian.

\*\*—Most or all items are written or printed in Hungarian.

### Series 1. Gondos family, 1895-1975. (Boxes 1-4)

Folder title	Date	Extent	Box/Vol.	Folder
Death certificates (copies) and genealogical papers**	1895-1971	16 items	1	1
Death certificates (originals)**	1895-1926, 1966, 1967	10 items	Vol. 1	n/a
Postcards*	1899-1936, n.d.	62 items	1	2
Certificates**	1900, 1901, 1906	5 items	n/a	FF 1
Seal in wooden case**	1900	1 item	8	n/a
Seal in wooden case	1906	1 item	9	n/a
Letters inside Hungary: Dr. Gondos Mor to Gondos Victor**	1902-1906	45 items	1	3
Correspondence**	1905-1913	17 items	1	4
Letters to Chicago: Dr. Gondos Mor to Gondos Victor**	1906-1909	41 items	1	5
Letters from Chicago: Victor Gondos to Dr. Gondos Mor in Nagybanya**	1906-1909	31 items	1	6
Letters to Hungary: Dr. Gondos Mor to Gondos Victor**	1909-1911	12 items	1	7
Letters inside Hungary: Gondos Victor to Dr. Gondos Mor**	1910-1911	6 items	1	8
Letters to New York City: Dr. Gondos Mor to Gondos Victor**	1911	21 items	1	9
Letters from New York City: Victor Gondos to Gondos Mor**	1911-1913, 1921	35 items	1	10
Correspondence: I.G./R.Z.G./V.G. jr. to V.G.*	1915	30 items	1	11
Correspondence: V.G. to I.G.*	1916-1927	41 items	1	12

Correspondence	1918-1936, 1947,1952- 1957, n.d.	99 items	1	13
<i>Szerelmem szárnyain költemények</i> (Hungarian poems) and pressed flowers	ca. 1920	3 items	Vol. 2	n/a
Correspondence: R.Z.G. to I.G./V.G	1921-1947	81 items	2	1
Correspondence: V.G. jr. to R.Z.G.	1921-1951	90 items	2	2
Correspondence: I.G./V.G. to R.Z.G.	1922-1950	93 items	2	3
Correspondence: V.G. to R.Z.G/V.G. jr.	1924-1937, 1949-1950	41 items	2	4
Correspondence: I.G./V.G.*	1927-1951	43 items	2	5
Correspondence: V.G. sr., V.G. jr./S.M., K.A.*	1932-1934	14 items	2	6
Ephemera and pressed flowers	1938-1952, n.d.	4 items	Vol. 3	n/a
Postcards	1940-1959	70 items	2	7
Correspondence: Vic and Dorothy	1942-1951	20 items	2	8
Correspondence and photographs	1942-1954	22 items	2	9
Christmas recording	25 Dec. 1945	1 item	12	n/a
Correspondence: V.G. jr., I.G., R.Z.G.	1948-1949	29 items	2	10
Correspondence	1951-1953	59 items	2	11
Correspondence: V.G., I.G.	1951, 1953- 1954	72 items	3	1
Correspondence: R.Z.G. to I.G/V.G	1953-1959	64 items	3	2
Recordings: "Hungarian and German poems"	2 May 1954	2 items	12	n/a
Correspondence*	1955-1959	78 items	3	3
Correspondence	1957-1961	106 items	3	4
Correspondence and inventory	1957-1963	66 items	3	5
Correspondence: R.Z.G., I.G., V.G.	1960-1962	51 items	3	6
Correspondence*	1960-1964	117 items	3	7
Postcards	1960-1970	58 items	3	8
Correspondence	1961-1962	43 items	4	1
Correspondence and clippings: V.G. obituaries*	1963, 1976, 1977	29 items	4	2
Correspondence: R.Z.G., V.G. jr.	1964-1974	137 items	4	3

Correspondence**	1965, 1967- 1975	104 items	4	4
Postcards*	1970-1975	26 items	4	5
Photographs	ca. 1900-1940	12 items	4	6

**Series 2. Architectural and construction projects, 1928-1950. (Boxes 3-4)**

Folder title	Date	Extent	Box/Vol.	Folder
Hotel Jefferson	1928-1929	7 items	4	7
Hotel Madison	1929-1930	15 items	4	8
Unbound scrapbook (Madison Hotel)	1930	47 items	4	9
The Runnymede	1930	5 items	4	10
Miscellaneous	1930-1931, 1935-1937, n.d.	9 items	4	11
Company recommendations	1936, 1940- 1942	15 items	4	12
Bristol High School, specifications booklet	25 June 1938	1 item	5	1
Unbound scrapbook	ca. 1940-1950	43 items	5	2

**Series 3. Victor Gondos Sr., 1900-1953. (Boxes 4-5, 1 FF)**

Folder title	Date	Extent	Box/Vol.	Folder
Official papers (originals)**	1900-1923	9 items	n/a	FF 2
Official papers (copies)**	1900-1923	18 items	5	3
<i>Gazdasági Mérnök</i> (pages)**	31 Mar. 1901	2 items	n/a	FF 3
<i>Gazdasági Mérnök</i> (covers)**	31 Mar. 1901, 1 May 1902	6 items	n/a	FF 4
<i>Gazdasági Mérnök</i> (pages)**	1 May 1902	1 item	n/a	FF 5
Official papers**	1901-1911	47 items	5	4
Official papers**	1904-1911	40 items	5	5
Official papers**	1906	1 item	5	6
Official papers**	ca. 1909	9 items	5	7
Official papers and photographs**	ca. 1909	20 items	6	1
Analyses of chess games**	1937, 1939, 1950, 1951	33 items	6	2
Personal	1939, 1949, 1954. n.d.	4 items	6	3
Blanding Construction Company	1953	28 items	6	4



Progress schedule	30 October 1953	1 item	n/a	FF 6
“Work of Victor Gondos, C.E., R.E.; 60 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary”	15 Mar. 1939	1 item	10	n/a

**Series 4. Victor Gondos Jr., 1910-1970. (Boxes 5-6)**

Folder title	Date	Extent	Box/Vol.	Folder
Personal	1910-1954	13 items	6	5
Personal	1957-1974	14 items	6	6
Diplomas and certificates	1928, 1958, 1961, 1968	5 items	6	7
Correspondence and notes*	1941-1975	20 items	6	8
History and archives booklets	1943, 1946, 1963, 1964	4 items	6	9
Tributes and testimonials	1952, 1953, 1961, 1968	40 items	6	10
Unbound scrapbook	1961	21 items	6	11
Military Affairs	1963, 1966- 1968	3 items	7	1
Military Affairs	1969, 1971	2 items	7	2
<i>Archives and Record Center Buildings</i>	1970	2 items	7	3

**Series 5. Robert Z. Gondos, 1943-ca. 1978. (Boxes 6-7)**

Folder title	Date	Extent	Box/Vol.	Folder
Diplomas and certificates	1921, 1925, 1939, 1954	4 items	n/a	FF 7
Photographs	1921-1952	11 items	7	4
Unbound scrapbook photographs	1923-1955	16 items	11	1
Unbound scrapbook ephemera and photocopies	1955		11	2
Unbound scrapbook cover	1955	1 item	11	n/a
FBI inquiry	1943, 1978- 1979	35 items	7	5
Personal	1956-1977	31 items	7	6
Recording: “Military Sonnets”	1971, 1977	1 item	12	n/a
“Recollections of my early youth, 1908-1921”	ca. 1977	1 item	7	7
“Autobiography of RZG, 1905-1912” cassette recording	ca. 1977	1 item	12	n/a
Poems	1977	12 items	7	8

Folder fronts w/titles	ca. 1978	34 items	7	9
------------------------	----------	----------	---	---

### Volumes

Title	Date	Extent	Box/Vol.	Folder
Death certificates (originals)	1895-1926, 1966, 1967	10 items	Vol. 1	n/a
<i>Szerelem szárnyain költemények</i> (Hungarian poems) and pressed flowers	ca. 1920	3 items	Vol. 2	n/a
Ephemera and pressed flowers	1938-1952, n.d.	4 items	Vol. 3	n/a

### Oversize

Folder title	Date	Extent	Box/Vol.	Folder
Certificates and certificate copy**	1900, 1906	3 items	n/a	FF 1
Official papers**	1900-1923	9 items	n/a	FF 2
<i>Gazdasági Mérnök</i> (pages)**	31 Mar. 1901	2 items	n/a	FF 3
<i>Gazdasági Mérnök</i> (covers)**	31 Mar. 1901, 1 May 1902	6 items	n/a	FF 4
<i>Gazdasági Mérnök</i> (pages)**	1 May 1902	1 item	n/a	FF 5
Progress schedule	30 October 1953	1 item	n/a	FF 6
Diplomas and certificates	1921, 1925, 1939, 1954	4 items	n/a	FF 7

### Audio materials

Folder title	Date	Extent	Box/Vol.	Folder
Christmas recording	25 Dec. 1945	1 item	12	n/a
Christmas recording CDs	25 Dec. 1945	2 items	13	n/a
Recordings: "Hungarian and German poems"	2 May 1954	2 items	12	n/a
"Hungarian and German poems" CDs	2 May 1954	2 items	13	n/a
Recording: "Military Sonnets"	1971, 1977	1 item	12	n/a
"Military Sonnets" CDs	1971, 1977	2 items	13	n/a
"Autobiography of RZG, 1905-1912" cassette recording	ca. 1977	1 item	12	n/a