

**MIRIAM DAVENPORT EBEL PAPERS, 1938-1989 (bulk 1938-1945)  
1991.158.88**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives  
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW  
Washington, DC 20024-2126  
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**Descriptive summary**

Title: Miriam Davenport Ebel papers

Dates: 1938-1989 (bulk 1938-1945)

Accession number: 1991.158.88

Creator: Ebel, Miriam Davenport

Extent: 0.5 linear foot (15 folders)

Repository: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW,  
Washington, DC 20024-2126

Abstract: The Miriam Davenport Ebel papers consist of correspondence, identification papers, mementos, photographs, and printed materials documenting Davenport's wartime experiences in Marseilles and Ljubljana; her work and friendships with Varian Fry, Mary Jayne Gold, Walter Mehring, Hans Sahl, and others; and relief committees including the Emergency Rescue Committee, the International Relief and Rescue Committee, the Progressive Schools Committee for Refugee Children, and the Refugee Relief Trustees, Inc.

Languages: English, French

**Administrative Information**

Access: Collection is open for use, but is stored offsite. Please contact the Reference Desk more than seven days prior to visit in order to request access.

Reproduction and use: Collection is available for use. Material may be protected by copyright. Please contact reference staff for further information.

Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Miriam Davenport Ebel papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Miriam Davenport Ebel donated the Miriam Davenport Ebel papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1991.

Related materials: Miriam Davenport Ebel also donated a hatbox, a sticker, a book of poetry and songs by Walter Mehring, a book of choral music by Hans Sahl, and three Bill Freier portraits of herself to the Museum in 1991. Digital images of a handful of documents and photographs in the collection can be viewed through the catalog on the Museum's website. Digital copies of the full collection are available on site at the Museum.

Accruals: Accruals may have been received since this collection was first processed, see archives catalog at [collections.ushmm.org](http://collections.ushmm.org) for further information.

Processing history: Julie Schweitzer, October 2013

### **Biographical note**

Miriam Davenport Ebel (1915-1999) was born Miriam Davenport in Boston, studied art and architecture history at Smith College, New York University, and the University of Paris, and escaped to Toulouse and then Marseille during the German invasion in May 1940. She worked with Varian Fry at the Centre Américain de Secours, a cover for the Emergency Rescue Committee, helping to smuggle antifascist artists, writers, and intellectuals out of Europe. She joined her fiancé in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, in October, returned to the United States via Lisbon just after Pearl Harbor, and continued to work for relief, rescue, and refugee organizations. After the war she pursued her career in painting and sculpture and as an instructor in art and French. She married Charles Ebel (1937-2013) in the 1960s.

### **Scope and content of collection**

The Miriam Davenport Ebel papers consist of correspondence, identification papers, mementos, photographs, and printed materials documenting Davenport's wartime experiences in Marseilles and Ljubljana; her work and friendships with Varian Fry, Mary Jayne Gold, Walter Mehring, Hans Sahl, and others; and relief committees including the Emergency Rescue Committee, the International Relief and Rescue Committee, the Progressive Schools Committee for Refugee Children, and the Refugee Relief Trustees, Inc.

Correspondence consists of letters, notes, and telegrams between Miriam Davenport and Mary Jayne Gold, Varian Fry, Daniel Bénédict, Katia Landau, Walter Mehring, and Hans Sahl. The correspondence describes wartime life in Marseilles, advises Davenport on strategies for returning to the United States, and catches Davenport up on news in post-liberation France. A note from Walter Mehring includes a small sketch of a rabbit, and a note from Hans Sahl encloses a poem. This series also includes a couple of letters Davenport drafted on behalf of the Progressive Schools Committee for Refugee Children, her condolences to Fry's family on his passing, and a letter about Albrecht Ragg's project on German socialist immigration to the United States during the Hitler years accompanied by a photocopy of his chapter on rescue.

Identification papers include Miriam Davenport's calling card, French identification card, and Yugoslav visa.

Mementos include calling cards, tram receipts and Davenport's Yugoslav visa documenting her summer in Toulouse and Marseille, a hand painted-program for a 1941 Andalusia festival in Marseille, and Davenport's English translation of a German story by an unnamed refugee client.

Photographs depict Miriam Davenport, Varian Fry, Mary Jayne Gold, and Hans Sahl.

Printed materials consist of promotional brochures created by Miriam Davenport Ebel, Harold Oram, and Eileen Fry for the Emergency Rescue Committee, the International Relief and Rescue Committee, the Progressive Schools Committee for Refugee Children, and the Refugee Relief Trustees, Inc.

### **System of arrangement**

The Miriam Davenport Ebel papers are arranged as five series:

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1940-1980 (bulk 1940-1945)
- Series 2: Identification papers, 1938-1940
- Series 3: Mementos, 1940-1989 (bulk 1940-1943)
- Series 4: Photographs, 1940-1941
- Series 5: Printed materials, approximately 1943

### **Indexing terms**

Fry, Varian, 1907-1967.

Gold, Mary Jayne.

Emergency Rescue Committee.

International Rescue Committee.

Anti-fascist movements--United States.

Political refugees--France.

World War, 1939-1945--War work.

France--History--German occupation, 1940-1945.

France--Emigration and immigration--20<sup>th</sup> century.

Marseilles (France)

Ljubljana (Yugoslavia)

Photographs

## **CONTAINER LIST**

### **Series 1: Correspondence, 1940-1980 (bulk 1940-1945)**

Box	Folder	Title
1	1	Bénédite, Daniel, 1944-1945
1	2	Davenport, Miriam, Condolences to Varian Fry's family, 1967

1	3	Davenport, Miriam, Drafts on behalf of the Progressive Schools Committee for Refugee Children, approximately 1943
1	4	Davenport, Miriam, to Mary Jayne Gold, 1941
1	5	Fry, Varian, 1940-1941
1	6-7	Gold, Mary Jayne, 1941-1942 (2 folders)
1	8	Landau, Katia, 1940
1	9	Mehring, Walter, 1940
1	10	Ragg, Albrecht, 1980
1	11	Sahl, Hans, 1940-1941
1	12	Miscellaneous, 1940-1941

**Series 2: Identification papers, 1938-1940**

Box	Folder	Title
1	13	Davenport, Miriam, 1938-1940

**Series 3: Mementos, 1940-1989 (bulk 1940-1943)**

Box	Folder	Title
1	14	Mementos, 1940-1989 (bulk 1940-1943)

**Series 4: Photographs, 1940-1941**

Box	Folder	Title
1	15	Davenport, Miriam; Fry, Varian; Gold, Mary Jayne; and Sahl, Hans, 1940-1941

**Series 5: Printed materials, approximately 1943**

Box	Folder	Title
1	16	Emergency Rescue Committee, approximately 1943
1	17	International Relief and Rescue Committee, approximately 1943
1	18	Progressive Schools Committee for Refugee Children, approximately 1943
1	19	Refugee Relief Trustees, Inc., approximately 1943