

**TARJAN FAMILY PAPERS, 1904-1998**  
**1995.A.0057.2**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives  
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW  
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**Descriptive summary**

Title: Tarjan family papers

Dates: 1904-1998 (bulk 1941-1945)

Accession number: 1995.A.0057.2

Creator: Tarjan (Family : Budapest, Hungary)

Extent: 6 folders

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

Abstract: The collection primarily consists of wartime family correspondence between sisters Erzsébeth Steiner and Ágnes Steiner Takács in Budapest, Hungary and their parents Margit and Simon Steiner in Pécs, Hungary from 1941-1944. Some letters include transcriptions and translations provided by Erzsébeth and Tibor's son Peter Tarjan. Also included in the collection are a personal narrative by Peter regarding his family's Holocaust experiences, prewar family photographs, and a small amount of documents related to Ágnes.

Languages: Hungarian, English

**Administrative Information**

Access: There are no known restrictions on access to this material.

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Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Tarjan family papers (1995.A.0057.2), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Peter Tarjan donated the Tarjan family papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1993, 2018, 2019, and 2020. The accessions numbered 1995.A.0057, 2018.362.1, 2019.284.1, and 2020.27.1 have been incorporated into this collection.

Custodial history: Peter received the correspondence from his aunt, Ágnes Steiner Takács, and her friend Mira who found some of the letters in Ágnes' apartment after her death.

Related material: Peter Tarjan has published and edited several books on the Holocaust. The following titles are available from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum library: Children who survived the Final Solution / by twenty-six survivors ; edited by Peter Tarjan. (D804.48 .C56 2004); Transplanted lives : the adventures of young Jewish immigrants from post-Fascist and communist Hungary to the free world following the 1956 uprising : struggles and successes / edited by Susan V. Meschel and Peter Tarjan. (E184.35 .T735 2016); Young people speak : surviving the Holocaust in Hungary / compiled and edited by Andrew Handler and Susan V. Meschel. (D810.C4 Y68 1993)

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

Processing history: Adam Fielding, September 2018; updated by Adam Fielding, 2023

### **Biographical note**

Erzsébeth Steiner (nicknamed Bözsi, 1910-1945) was born in 1910 to Margit (née Katona, nicknamed Anyi, 1886-1944) and Simon Steiner (nicknamed Api, 1869-1944). She had one sister, Ágnes, and the family grew up in Pécs, Hungary where her father owned a tailor shop. She married Tibor Tarjan in 1931 and they moved to Budapest. Tibor Tarjan (1904-1945?) was born in 1904 in Szekszárd, Hungary to Mor Friedman (later Mor Tarjan, 1860-1920) and Fáni Löbl (ca. 1867-1910). He had three siblings, Aranka (1888-1944), Kornel (1893-1978), and Erzsébet (1898-1986). Tibor worked as a manager of the office of a leather factory and Erzsébet was a music teacher. Their son, Peter, was born in 1936.

Ágnes (later Ágnes Steiner Takács, 1906-1992) married Miklós Takács. They ran a custom-tailor lingerie shop in Budapest. In 1939 she and her husband converted to Catholics in order to continue operating their business. Ágnes and Miklós divorced in 1943.

Prior to the German occupation of Hungary, Tibor was periodically sent to work camps as a forced-laborer. After the German occupation of Budapest in March 1944, he kept in sporadic contact with his family. He was deported to Buchenwald and presumably perished there. Erzsébeth's parents were both deported from Pécs in July 1944 to Auschwitz-Birkenau where they were murdered.

Erzsébeth and Peter moved into a Swiss protected building in November 1944. Erzsébeth and her sister Ágnes were deported in December 1944, and likely sent on a death march toward the Austrian border. Erzsébeth perished, but Ágnes escaped and received a letter of protection issued by the Portuguese consulate in Budapest. She survived in the Budapest ghetto until liberation by the Soviet Red Army in 1945. Peter's mother's friend Panni Kertesz assisted in his survival as a hidden child in a safe building aided by Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg.

After liberation, Peter moved to Bonyhád, Hungary to live with his mother's sister Ágnes. In 1947 he went to live with his father's sister, Aunt Böske, in Pécs. She was a survivor of Auschwitz. He studied electrical engineering at the Technical University of Budapest. In 1956 he fled Budapest to Austria

following the 1956 Uprising. Peter immigrated to the United States in January 1957 aboard the USS General LeRoy Eltinge. He received his Ph.D. from Syracuse University and settled in Miami, Florida.

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

The collection primarily consists of wartime family correspondence between sisters Erzsébeth Steiner and Ágnes Steiner Takács in Budapest, Hungary and their parents Margit and Simon Steiner in Pécs, Hungary from 1941-1944. Some letters include transcriptions and translations provided by Erzsébeth and Tibor's son Peter Tarjan. Also included in the collection are a personal narrative by Peter regarding his family's Holocaust experiences, prewar family photographs, and a small amount of documents related to Ágnes. Included in the documents are a prewar address book related to Ágnes's salon clientele, and a letter of protection issued to Ágnes by the Portuguese consulate in Budapest, 1944. Photographs include depictions of Ágnes, her sister Erzsébeth, and their parents.

### **System of arrangement**

The collection is arranged as a single series.

Folder 1 of 6. Correspondence, 1941-1945

Folder 2 of 6. Translations and transcriptions, 1989, 1998

Folder 3 of 6. Personal narrative, circa 1993

Folder 4 of 6. Family correspondence, 1942-1945

Folder 5 of 6. Documents of Ágnes Takács, 1924-1945

Book Enclosure 1. Address book of Ágnes Takács, circa 1930-circa 1934

Folder 6 of 6. Photographs, 1904-circa 1930

Chronological arrangement of letters in folder 1 was established by the donor, and matches the donor-provided translations.

### **Indexing terms**

Person:

Tarjan, Peter P. (Peter Paul)

Tarjan, Tibor.

Steiner, Erzsébeth.

Topical Subject:

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Hungary--Personal narratives.

Hidden children (Holocaust)--Hungary.

Geography:

Budapest (Hungary)

Pécs (Hungary)

Jews--Hungary--Budapest.

Genre/Form:

Correspondence.

Personal narratives.

Address books.

Photographs.

## CONTAINER LIST

Folder	Title
1 of 6	Correspondence, 1941-1945
2 of 6	Translations and transcriptions, 1989, 1998
3 of 6	Personal narrative, circa 1993
4 of 6	Family correspondence, 1942-1945
5 of 6	Documents of Ágnes Takács, 1924-1945
BE 1	Address book of Ágnes Takács, circa 1930-circa 1934
6 of 6	Photographs, 1904-circa 1930