

**VITALE FAMILY PAPERS, 1944-1947**  
**1995.A.0373**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives  
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**Descriptive summary**

Title: Vitale family papers

Dates: 1944-1947

Accession number: 1995.A.0373

Creator: Vitale, Massimo Adolfo

Extent: 2 folders

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

Abstract: Correspondence (8 letters) from Gemma Vitale Servadio, written to friends, family and an attorney, June 1944. Servadio sent these letters from the Fossoli internment camp, after she and her mother, Nina Levi Vitale, were arrested, and prior to their deportation to Auschwitz. Collection also contains the text of a lecture given by Servadio's brother, Col. Massimo Adolfo Vitale, in 1947, after he observed the trial of Auschwitz camp commandant Rudolf Hoess in Warsaw, and subsequently visited the camp.

Languages: Italian, English

**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), Vitale family papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: Gift of Mirella Shapiro, 1993 and 1994.

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: Brad Bauer, August 2013.

### **Biographical note**

Gemma Servadio, née Vitale, was born in Turin, Italy, on August 13, 1878. She was arrested in Turin by German forces on May 23, 1944, and sent, along with her mother, Sara “Nina” Vitale, née Levi (August 18, 1855 – June 30, 1944), to the Fossoli internment camp. Both of them were deported to Auschwitz on June 26, 1944, and were gassed on their arrival there. Gemma Servadio had five children, including her daughter Lucia, and son, Lucio, who are mentioned in her letters from Fossoli. Nina Vitale had, in addition to her daughter Gemma, two sons, Enrico and Adolfo.

Massimo Adolfo Vitale was born in Turin in 1886, and pursued a career in the Italian Army, rising to the rank of Colonel. As a Jew, he was discharged from the army in 1938, after the introduction of the first racial laws in Italy. He left Italy for Paris, and subsequently for Morocco, where he stayed for the duration of World War II, performing intelligence work for American forces based in Tangier. At the end of the war, Vitale returned to Italy, and founded the Comitato Ricerche Deportati Ebrei (Committee for the Search of Deported Jews), which sought to trace the whereabouts of deported Jews, and when possible, to reunite them with their families. Vitale also interviewed survivors in Italy and compiled data about the deportations.

[Source of biographical information: Mirella Shapiro].

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

Correspondence (8 letters) from Gemma Vitale Servadio, written to friends, family and an attorney, June 1944. Servadio sent these letters from the Fossoli internment camp, after she and her mother, Nina Levi Vitale, were arrested, and prior to their deportation to Auschwitz. Each letter contains a transcript of the Italian text and an English translation, provided by Mirella Shapiro, a granddaughter of Servadio. Collection also contains the text of a lecture given by Servadio’s brother, Col. Massimo Adolfo Vitale, in 1947, after he observed the trial of Auschwitz camp commandant Rudolf Hoess in Warsaw, and subsequently visited the camp. The file contains a copy of the Italian text and an English translation, as well as copies of related documentation obtained by Vitale, as well as a brief biography of Vitale written by Mirella Shapiro.

### **System of arrangement**

Material is arranged in two series: I. Gemma Vitale Servadio, II. Massimo Adolfo Vitale.

### **Indexing terms**

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Italy--Turin.  
Fossoli di Carpi (Concentration camp).  
Höss, Rudolf, 1900-1947.

## CONTAINER LIST

Folder Item

I. Gemma Vitale Servadio: Correspondence

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | Postcard, addressed to Dolores Masi (neighbor), Turin, 1944, May 24-25  |
| 1 | 2 | Letter and envelope, addressed to Dolores Masi, Turin, 1944, May 29   |
| 1 | 3 | Letter and envelope, addressed to Arturo Garino, attorney, Turin, 1944, June 2  |
| 1 | 4 | Letter, probably sent to Ada Saxer (friend), Turin, 1944, June 6  |
| 1 | 5 | Letter, addressed to Oreste Gallese (bank director), Parma, 1944, June 9  |
| 1 | 6 | Letter (photographic copy) sent to brother, Enrico Vitale, who had taken refuge in Vatican City, 1944, June 12. Enclosed in subsequent letter to Ada Saxer. |
| 1 | 7 | Letter and envelope addressed to Ada Saxer, Turin, 1944, June 14  |
| 1 | 8 | Letter addressed to Ada Saxer, Turin, 1944, June 23   |

II. Massimo Adolfo Vitale: Speech text and documents

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | “Pellegrinaggio fra l’orrore: Il processo Hoess a Varsavia, i campi di sterminio di Auschwitz-Birkenau-Maidanek.” Speech text, delivered in various venues in Italy, 1947, June-July.   |
| 2 | 2 | “Pilgrimage through Horror,” English translation of speech text above, translation by Mirella Shapiro, undated.   |
| 2 | 3 | Copied images of Rudolf Hoess and of pellets of Zyklon-B gas, undated   |
| 2 | 4 | Copied document, from Concentration Camp Auschwitz III / Monowitz, detailing punishment given to prisoner Jakob Josef, of Salonica, Greece, for failing to work and for speaking with an English fellow-prisoner, 1944, March 6 |
| 2 | 5 | Copied document, Italian translation of above document from Auschwitz-Monowitz, 1944, March 6   |
| 2 | 6 | Biography of Massimo Adolfo Vitale, written by Mirella Shapiro, undated   |