

**SIMON JERUCHIM PAPERS, 1930-approximately 2011 (bulk 1930-1956)
2001.328.41**

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

Title: Simon Jeruchim papers

Dates: 1930-approximately 2011 (bulk 1930-1956)

Accession number: 2001.328.41

Creator: Jeruchim, Simon, 1929-

Extent: 0.5 linear foot (11 folders)

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

Abstract: The Simon Jeruchim papers include postwar correspondence among Simon and his siblings; Jeruchim family photographs including 20 photographs that Simon Jeruchim used in his January 2004 "First Person" interview at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; Jeruchim's 4-page 1949 immigration journal in French titled "Histoire d'un voyage qui commence à la gare de Lyon"; and his 58-page typed memoir with computer illustrations entitled "Hidden: The Jeruchim Family Saga in France and Under the Nazi Occupation" in English describing his family's pre-war life in France, the rise of Nazi power in France, his parents' arrest and subsequent deportation to Auschwitz where they perished, his and his siblings survival in separate hiding places in Normandy, their reunification after the war, and their immigration to the United States.

Languages: French, 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), Simon Jeruchim papers, 2001.328.41, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Simon and Michel Jeruchim donated the Simon Jeruchim papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives in 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2011. The accessions previously cataloged as 2001.328.1, 2002.434.1, 2003.365, and 2011.401.1 have been incorporated into this collection.

Related materials: Simon and Michel Jeruchim also donated two coin purses (2001.328.2 and 2001.328.3) and ten drawings and watercolors (2001.328.4-2001.328.10 and 2004.24.1) to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Michel Jeruchim donated a small suitcase (2001.309.1) to the Museum.

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

Processing history: Julie Schweitzer, June 2018

Biographical note

Simon Jeruchim was born in 1929, in Paris, France, to Polish immigrants Samuel Jeruchim (1898-1942) and Sonia Szpiro Jeruchim (1899-1942). His sister Alice was born in 1928, and his brother Michel was born in 1937. The family lived in Montreuil, a suburb of Paris, and Samuel worked as a watchmaker in Paris. They were not religious, and Simon did not know he was Jewish. When World War II started in September 1939, the family was vacationing in Richebourg in Normandy. Simon and Alice stayed there to attend school through December.

After Germany invaded France in May 1940, school aged children, including Simon and Alice, were evacuated to the south of Paris. Samuel arrived shortly after to take the children further south to St. Savinien. Sonia and Michel were to meet them but returned to Paris instead, and after 2 months Samuel, Simon, and Alice also returned to Paris. In November 1940, the family was ordered to register for the marked identification cards that all Jews were required to carry. Food was scarce and Simon was sent to Richebourg to obtain provisions. By the end of 1941, Simon had to wear a yellow star and, for the first time, became aware of his Jewish identity.

On July 14, 1942, during a visit from friends with a young son, Joseph, the family heard a rumor that all Parisian Jews were to be arrested. Both families hid with the Jeruchims' non-Jewish cleaning woman and avoided the July 16-17 Vel d'Hiv roundup. Samuel and Sonia arranged for the children, including Joseph, to go into hiding. They were sent to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bonneau, members of the underground, who placed the boys with a man named Ernst in Normandy while Alice was sent to live with Madame Ledauphin.

Ernst sent Michel to live with the LeClere family in nearby St. Aubin-les-Elbeuf. Simon was afraid of Ernst and suspected that he was dealing with the Germans. After 3 months, he wrote to the Bonneaus and asked to be moved. The Bonneaus were angry that Simon had endangered their operation by contacting them, but they found him another home. Mrs. Mounier, a Bonneau family friend, took Simon to live with Mrs. Huard in Savigny-le-Vieux. It was 3 miles from where Alice lived and Simon visited her. Simon had inadequate clothing and was barely tolerated. Mrs. Huard was very religious, and Simon pretended to be Catholic, attending Sunday mass and mumbling nightly prayers. He borrowed a prayer book and

learned the prayers while tending to the cows. In April 1943, Mrs. Mounier visited Simon and told him his parents had been arrested in 1942 in Poitiers and sent to Drancy internment camp.

Simon wrote the Bonneaus and asked to be moved. Mrs. Mounier retrieved Simon and brought him to the home of Madame Prim, her daughter, and Annette and Maurice, siblings that Simon suspected were Jewish, as they did not know their Catholic prayers. When Mme. Prim was unable to attend a school meeting for Maurice one day, she sent Simon in her place. A teacher named Mr. Crochet offered to lend him some library books. Simon identified a painting in the library and told the teacher he wanted to start drawing again. Mr. Crochet gave him a sketch pad and watercolors. Mme. Prim and her charges relocated to a larger house in La Renouardiere. Simon found drawing supplies and drew his surroundings. He heard news about the Allied advance on the secret radio of the neighbors, the Geslins. Simon developed a severe skin infection and was hospitalized for 2 weeks. When he returned, Allied forces were bombing the nearby town, and Mme. Prim and her charges hid in the attic.

Savigny-le-Vieux was liberated in August 1944, and Simon rode Alice's bike to the Bonneaus in Paris. He continued to hide his Jewish heritage, joined a Protestant Boy Scout troop, remained in Paris for a year, and finished high school. Alice soon joined him in Paris.

After the war, Simon learned that his parents had been deported to Auschwitz on September 11, 1942, and murdered. Simon's and Alice's maternal uncle, David Szpiro, became their guardian, and they moved in with him and his wife, Berthe, and son, Raoul. When Michel returned to Paris from the LeClere house, he did not recognize Simon. Due to a lack of space and money, the siblings were sent first to a Jewish orphanage in Cailly-sur-Eure and then to several others; in each, Simon decorated the walls with Hebrew songs and murals. Simon learned about his religion and was one of the first French Jews to be Bar Mitzvahed after the war. In 1946, Simon received a scholarship to study commercial art at the School of Applied Arts in Paris.

David arranged for the children to immigrate to the United States to live with their maternal grandmother, Tessie, and her son, Sam in New York in 1949. Simon served in the Korean War, attended the School of Visual Arts in New York, and became a package designer, book illustrator, and author. He married Cecile Rojer, who had survived the Holocaust as a hidden child in Belgium and immigrated to the US in 1948. The couple married in 1955, and had 2 daughters. Simon wrote a book about his experiences in 2001: *Hidden in France: A Boy's Journey under the Nazi Occupation*.

Scope and Content of Collection:

The Simon Jeruchim papers include postwar correspondence among Simon and his siblings; Jeruchim family photographs including 20 photographs that Simon Jeruchim used in his January 2004 "First Person" interview at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; Jeruchim's 4-page 1949 immigration journal in French titled "Histoire d'un voyage qui commence à la gare de Lyon"; and his 58-page typed memoir with computer illustrations entitled "Hidden: The Jeruchim Family Saga in France and Under the Nazi Occupation" in English describing his family's pre-war life in France, the rise of Nazi power in France, his parents' arrest and subsequent deportation to Auschwitz where they perished, his and his siblings survival in separate hiding places in Normandy, their reunification after the war, and their immigration to the United States.

System of Arrangement:

The Simon Jeruchim papers are arranged as three series:

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1940-1949
- Series 2: Personal narratives, 1949, approximately 2011
- Series 3: Photographs, 1930-1956

Indexing terms

Jeruchim, Simon, 1929-

Hidden children (Holocaust)--France.
Jewish children in the Holocaust--France.

France.

Correspondence.
Diaries.
Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Correspondence, 1940-1949

Folder	Title
1 of 11	Jeruchim, Alice, to Jeruchim, Michel, 1948-1949
2 of 11	Jeruchim, Michel, to Jeruchim, Alice, 1945-1949
3 of 11	Jeruchim, Michel, to Jeruchim, Simon, 1948
4 of 11	Jeruchim, Simon, to Jeruchim, Alice, 1944-1948
5 of 11	Jeruchim, Simon, to Jeruchim, Michel, 1948-1949
6 of 11	Additional correspondence, 1940, 1947-1949

Series 2: Personal narratives, 1949, approximately 2011

Folder	Title
7 of 11	<i>Histoire d'un voyage qui commence à la gare de Lyon</i> , 1949
8 of 11	<i>Hidden: The Jeruchim Family Saga in France Under the Nazi Occupation</i> , approximately 2011

Series 3: Photographs, 1930-1956

Folder	Title
9 of 11	Family photographs used in First Person interview, 1930-1948
10 of 11	Family photographs, approximately 1930s-1940s
11 of 11	Family photographs, approximately 1930-1956