

STEFI GEISEL PAPERS, 1870-1956
2005.288.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
Washington, DC 20024-2126
Tel. (202) 479-9717
e-mail: reference@ushmm.org

Descriptive summary

Title: Stefi Geisel papers

Dates: 1870-1956

Accession number: 2005.288.1

Creator: Geisel, Stefi

Extent: 0.8 linear foot (1 box, 3 oversize folders)

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

Abstract: The Stefi Geisel papers consist of biographical materials, correspondence, photographic materials, printed materials, and writings documenting the lives of the Siegel and Geisel families in Germany before the war, Stefi and Gus Geisel's immigration to the United States, and Walter Siegel's experiences in the Netherlands before his deportation and death at Bergen Belsen. The papers include the Franco-Prussian War diary of a relative of Gus Geisel's and Gus Geisel's own brief immigration diary written as he sailed to America.

Languages: German, English, Hebrew

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), Stefi Geisel papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Stefi Geisel donated the Stefi Geisel papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2005.

Related materials: Stefi Geisel also donated a leather wallet (2005.288.2) and a metal ID tag (2005.288.3) to the United States Holocaust Memorial 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, March 2014

Biographical note

Stefi Geisel (1919-) was born Stefanie Siegel in Mosbach to leather merchant Siegfried Siegel (1884-1953) and his wife Friedel (Fredericka, nee Moritz, 1887-1982). She immigrated to the United States in September 1938 and lived in Chicago with relatives. Her parents obtained American visa quota numbers, lived with relatives in England from 1939 to 1943, and then joined Stefi in the United States. Her brother Walter (1923-1945) went to the Netherlands in 1938 to learn a trade and possibly emigrate to Palestine and became trapped after the German invasion. He was deported via Westerbork to Bergen Belsen in 1944 and perished in 1945. In 1942 Stefi married Gus (Gustav) Geisel (1911-1997) who was born in Rheinbach to Hermann and Sophie Geisel. Gus had also immigrated to the United States in 1938, his brother Albert arrived in 1940, and their parents followed in 1942.

Scope and content of collection

The Stefi Geisel papers consist of biographical materials, correspondence, photographic materials, printed materials, and writings documenting the lives of the Siegel and Geisel families in Germany before the war, Stefi and Gus Geisel's immigration to the United States, and Walter Siegel's experiences in the Netherlands before his deportation and death at Bergen Belsen.

Biographical materials consist of *yahrzeit* calendars for Hedwig and Martin Moritz and Siegfried Siegel, death announcements for Hedwig Moritz and Walter Siegel, Gustav Geisel's 1933 driver's license, a birth certificate and tax document for Stefi Geisel, Friedel and Siegfried Siegel's marriage certificate and English certificates of identity, Siegfried's visa quota number, fragments of a record documenting Siegfried's imprisonment in Dachau following Kristallnacht, and certificates of good conduct for Walter.

Correspondence consists primarily of letters from Walter Siegel in Haarlem and Rotterdam to his parents and his sister in London and Chicago. This series also includes Red Cross messages to Walter from his parents and his sister, letters documenting his family's efforts find him after the war, and a scrapbook containing congratulations he and his family received on the occasion of Walter's Bar Mitzvah.

Photographic materials include two photograph albums and loose photographs of Stefi Geisel and her Siegel and Moritz family and friends in Mosbach, Mainz, Hamburg, London, and Chicago and Gus Geisel and his family and friends in Rheinbach, Berlin, and vacation sites. Family members depicted include Stefi's parents, grandfather Martin Moritz, grandmothers Hedwig Moritz and Clara Siegel, aunts Erna Moritz and Rina Bachrach, and cousins Judith and Margot Moritz and Clare Bachrach, as well as Gus's parents and brother Albert Geisel.

Printed materials include a 1945 program for a Jewish religious service celebrating the Allied victory and a 1956 issue of *K.C. Blätter*, the magazine of Gustav Geisel's fraternity.

Writings consist of Eduard Geisel's Franco-Prussian War diary describing his mobilization and movements with the 11th Company, 2nd Rhine Infantry Regiment, Nr 28; Gustav Geisel's travel diary written aboard the *Queen Mary* on his way to America; a poem celebrating the marriage of Siegfried and Friedel Siegel; and poems and songs celebrating Walter Siegel's Bar Mitzvah.

System of arrangement

The Stefi Geisel papers are arranged as five series:

- Series 1: Biographical materials, 1933-1953
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1936-1950
- Series 3: Photographic materials, approximately 1879-1945 (bulk 1919-1945)
- Series 4: Printed materials, 1945, 1956
- Series 5: Writings, 1870-1936

Indexing terms

Jews--Germany--Mosbach (Baden-Württemberg).

Jews--Germany--Rheinbach.

Jewish refugees--Netherlands--Correspondence.

Jews, German--United States--Emigration and immigration--Diaries.

Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1871--Jewish participation--Diaries.

Mosbach (Baden-Württemberg, Germany)

Rheinbach (Germany)

Netherlands

Diaries.

Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Biographical materials, 1933-1953

Box	Folder	Title
1	1	Geisel, Gustav, 1933
1	2	Geisel, Stefi, 1938-1939
1	3	Moritz, Hedwig, 1936 (see also oversize folder 1)
1	4	Moritz, Martin, 1935 (see oversize folder 2)
1	5	Siegel, Friedel, 1939-1943
1	6	Siegel, Siegfried, 1938-1943, 1953
1	7	Siegel, Walter, 1938, 1945

Series 2: Correspondence, 1936-1950

Box	Folder	Title
1	8	Geisel, Stefi, 1938-1943
1	9	Siegel, Clara, pre-1942
1	10	Siegel, Siegfried, 1940-1945, 1950
1	11-14	Siegel, Walter, 1939-1943 (4 folders)
1	15	Siegel, Walter, 1936, Congratulations on his Bar Mitzvah

Series 3: Photographic materials, approximately 1879-1945 (bulk 1919-1945)

Box	Folder	Title
1	16	Geisel, Stefi, aboard the <i>Statendam</i> , in Chicago, and with her wedding party, 1938-1945
1	17	Gustav Geisel's photograph album, approximately 1926-1931
1	18	Gustav Geisel's photograph album, Loose photos, approximately 1926-1931
1	19	Loose photographs from Eduard Geisel's diary, approximately 1879-1914
1	20	Moritz, Erna and Martin and Siegel, Erna, approximately 1919-1939
1	21	Siegel family, friends, home, and synagogue in Mosbach, approximately 1922-1938
1	22	Siegel family photograph album, 1933
1	23	Siegel, Siegfried and Friedel, in Mosbach and London, 1919, approximately 1942
1	24	Siegel, Walter in the Netherlands, 1939
1	25	Unidentified men in uniform, approximately 1945

Series 4: Printed materials, 1945, 1956

Box	Folder	Title
1	26	<i>K.C. Blätter, Festschrift</i> , 1956
1	27	Program for service in London celebrating Allied victory, 1945

Series 5: Writings, 1870-1936

Box	Folder	Title
1	28	Eduard Geisel's Franco-Prussian War diary, 1870-1871
1	29	Gustav Geisel's immigration diary from aboard the <i>Queen Mary</i> , 1938
1	30	Poem celebrating the marriage of Siegfried and Friedel Siegel, 1919 (see oversize folder 3)
1	31	Poetry and songs written for Walter Siegel's Bar Mitzvah, 1936

Oversize folder

Folder	Title
1	Moritz, Hedwig, Jahrzeit calendar, 1936
2	Moritz, Martin, Jahrzeit calendar, 1935
3	Poem celebrating the marriage of Siegfried and Friedel Siegel, 1919