

PAULA ABELOW COLLECTION, 1904-1957 [bulk 1923-1948]
2008.111.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: Paula Abelow collection

Dates: 1904-1957 [bulk 1923-1948]

Accession number: 2008.111.1

Creator: Paula Abelow

Extent: 1.5 linear feet (9 folders, 2 flat boxes)

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

Abstract: The Paula Abelow collection consists primarily of photographs and correspondence with her family. Contained within the collection are correspondence from parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and family friends to Paula, her sister Alice and her brother Walter while they were living in Switzerland in 1938-1939. Also included are 4 family photo albums, as well as some loose photographs depicting the family on vacations and their travels to the United States and Mexico. Additional documents include a work permit, and photocopies of her aunt's birth and death certificate.

Languages: English, German, Czech

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: Paula Abelow collection, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The Paula Abelow collection was donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2008 by Paula Abelow.

Related material: The Brunner Lieben story as recollected by Paula Brunner Abelow is a biography held by the USHMM Library.

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

Processing history: Michael Folkerts, April 2015

Biographical note

Paula Abelow was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia in 1923 to Felix Brunner and Eugenie Lieben Brunner. She had two siblings, Alice and Walter. Felix traveled often as a stamp collector and international dealer, while Eugenie stayed home and raised the children. Eugenie had a large family, and had several sisters who were close to the family, including Sophie, Josefa (Pepi), Hedwig, and Charlotte (Lotte). In September of 1938, Felix was in Zurich, Switzerland to show his private stamp collection at an international stamp exhibit. A client, Galeazzo Ciano, was son-in-law to Benito Mussolini and warned Felix not return to Prague and to get his family out. In the meantime, the Munich agreement was signed, and Felix rushed to have a plane chartered to arrive in Prague and help his wife, children, and mother-in-law Hermine Lieben escape. The family arrived in Zurich in September of 1938, but Hermine would return to Prague, where she later committed suicide in 1941. The children were placed in boarding schools so they could retain the right to stay in Switzerland. Felix and Eugenie left for the United States on a travel visa. The children would reunite with their parents in March of 1940, but the visa had expired and they were forced to leave. They traveled to Mexico City where they stayed for a year while waiting to be approved for formal immigration into the United States. After the war ended, news arrived about Eugenie's sisters. Sophie and Charlotte who had been deported and killed, while Josefa and Hedwig, both of whom worked at Theresienstadt, had survived. Paula soon met Ira Abelow, and in 1948 they were married.

Scope and content of collection

The Paula Abelow contains primarily correspondence and photographs with Paula and her family. The correspondence is addressed to Paula, and her sister Alice and her brother Walter. The letters are dated from 1938-1939, and are from the period when the children were placed in a Swiss boarding school while their parents attempted to gain citizenship to the United States. The letters are written in Czech and German, and are from their parents, grandmother, aunts, and family friends. Some of the letters have multiple authors per page, and have been placed in the folder labeled "Various." These letters are still primarily from Paula's grandmother, parents and aunts. The photograph series is comprised of four photo albums and a folder of loose photographs. The albums show the family both at home and on vacation with relatives and friends prior to World War II. Some of the photos follow Paula's parents on their quest to gain American citizenship, and show them in New York and Mexico City. Also included in the collection are documents collected by Paula from her aunts Sophie, Josefa, and Hedwig. They are a work permit from Theresienstadt, and photocopies of a birth and death certificate.

System of arrangement

The Paula Abelow collection is arranged as three series:

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1938-1939

- Series 2: Documents, 1904-1957
- Series 3: Photographs, 1923-1948

Indexing terms

Abelow, Paula Brunner
Brunner, Alice
Brunner, Walter
Brunner, Eugenie Lieben
Brunner, Felix
Brunner, Herman
Lieben, Hermine
Lieben, Hede
Lieben, Hedwig
Lieben, Josefa
Jensen, Sophie Lieben
Jensen, Otto
Lieben, Alois
Adler, Sigmund
Frolich, Charlotte Lieben
Frolich, Robert
Adler, Sigmund
Nemecova, Anci
Koch, Mitzi
Brunner, Camilla
Kada, Eva
Goldstein, Leo
Triebel, Eva
Prazak, Mattl
Taussing, Eva
Scherer, Rita
Hess, Maria
Kopecky, Suse
Lieblein, Eva
Hirschberg, Ilse
Duschenes, Rolf
Lowe, Berthold
Popper, Abbi
Naumann, Ernst
Asmus, Inge
Jungbauer, Susi
Baruschke, Harold
Stucki, Brigitte
Heimann, Motte
Schwartz, Henny
Stonehill, Fred
Gilbert, Adele
Hochstadt, Ruth
Mariam, Hortense

Weingarten, Hilde
Hess, Maria
Sinclair, Curtiss
Haas, Walter
Haas, Phyllis
Geiger, Ruth
Flaxman, Sylvia

Theresienstadt (Concentration camp)

Jews—Czech Republic--Prague.
Jewish families--Czechoslovakia.
World War, 1939-1945--Jews--Czech Republic.
United States--Emigration and immigration--History--20th century.

Prague (Czech Republic)
Mexico City (Mexico)
New York (N.Y.)
Zurich (Switzerland)

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Correspondence, 1938-1939

Folder	Title
1	Felix Brunner, 1938-1939
2	Hermine Lieben, 1939
3	Charlotte Frolich, 1938-1939
4	Sophie Jensen, 1938-1939
5	Various, 1938-1939

Series 2: Documents, 1904-1957

Folder	Title
6	Birth certificate for Hedwig Lieben, 1904
7	Death certificate for Sophie Jensen, 1957
8	Ghetto Theresienstadt work permit for Josefa Pallas, 1945

Series 3: Photographs, 1923-1948

Folder	Title
9	Loose photographs, 1936-1948
Box 2, Item 1	Photo album, 1923-1929
Box 2, Item 2	Photo album, 1929

Box 3, Item 1	Photo album, 1931-1938
Box 3, Item 2	Photo album, 1937-1947