

VOGEL AND BAER FAMILY CORRESPONDENCE, 1938-1941
2011.140.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: Vogel and Baer family correspondence

Dates: 1938-1941

Accession number: 2011.140.1

Creators: Vogel and Baer families

Extent: 1 box

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

Abstract: The Vogel and Baer family consists of Berta (Bertha) Baer Vogel of Untergrombach, Germany, her ex-husband Albert Vogel, their children, Inga and Ellen, and extended family. The daughter of a Jewish ironmonger, Berta lived in Karlsruhe, Germany with her family until her and Albert separated in 1930 and she immigrated to Basel, Switzerland. The Vogel and Baer family correspondence comprises letters primarily from Inga, who was a student in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to her Berta, Ellen, and her grandparents in Basel, Switzerland between 1938 and 1941. The letters detail her studies, life in the United States, and marriage. Letters between other family members and friends are also comprised in this collection.

Language: German, 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 if item), Vogel and Baer family correspondence (2011.140.1) United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: The Vogel and Baer family correspondence was donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2011 by Ellen Vogel Lutzer's sons, David and Steven Lutzer.

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

Processing history: Colleen Benoit, February 2016

Biographical note

The Vogel and Baer family consists of Berta (Bertha) Baer Vogel, her ex-husband Albert Vogel, their children, Inga and Ellen, and Berta's extended family. Born in Untergrombach, Germany to Berthold and Karoline Baer, Berta was the middle of three children. Her grandfather, Machol Baer, an ironmonger, founded an iron and metal wholesale company called Gebrüder Baer, which provided the family a great source of wealth. In 1920, Berta married Albert Vogel, a World War I veteran of Mainz, Germany at the registry office in Karlsruhe. A year later, the couple had their first daughter, Inga. Albert worked in the iron and metal sales business, at one point working closely with Berta's younger brother, Sigmund as a partner at Gebrüder Baer. In 1926, Berta and Albert had a second daughter, Ellen, and four years later in 1930, the couple separated quoting an "irreparable break in the marriage." In 1933 Berta immigrated to Basel, Switzerland with her parents and daughters. Inga went on to immigrate to the United States to study at the Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University) in 1937. During this time, Berthold had become ill, which prevented the rest of the family from immigrating. Berthold died in 1937 and the family remained in Switzerland until 1941 when Sigmund, who was working in the iron industry in France under an alias, paid their immigration fees, allowing them to leave Switzerland for the United States. Albert, meanwhile, remained in Germany and could not find work after 1935 due to the increasing anti-Semitic practices at the time. Shortly after Kristallnacht, in 1938, Albert was deported to Dachau. In October 1940, he was deported to Gurs and in 1942, transfer to Drancy for a period of four days before being sent to Auschwitz, where he is presumed to have perished.

Scope and content of collection

The Vogel and Baer family correspondence comprises letters between members of the Baer and Vogel family, primarily from Inga in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to her mother, sister, and grandparents in Basel, Switzerland. The vast majority of this correspondence is written by Inga to her family in Europe between 1938 and 1941 regarding her studies at Carnegie Mellon, life in the United States, and later, her marriage to Jules Avins. Among her letters is a newspaper clipping depicting her and another Carnegie Tech student from California having Christmas dinner at a professor's house. Also included in this collection is a smaller number of letters written by Berta to Inga and other family members. Correspondence between Hellen and Inga and a number of letters from an unidentified person by the name of Peter is comprised in this collection as well. Many of the letters discuss immigration matters and steps to procure papers for Berta, Hellen, and Karoline to leave Switzerland, as they were trying to flee the country at this time.

System of arrangement

The Vogel and Baer family correspondence is arranged as a single series.

Indexing terms

Baer, Berta (1898-1979).
Baer, Sigmund (1901-1975).
Baer, Berthold (1866-1937).
Baer, Karoline.
Vogel, Albert (1883-1942).
Avins, Inga Vogel (1921-1994).
Avins, Jules.
Lutzer, Ellen Vogel (1926-2010).
Lutzer, Paul.

Auschwitz (Concentration camp).
Gurs (Concentration camp).
Dachau (Concentration camp).
Drancy (Concentration camp).
Carnegie-Mellon University.

Immigration from Europe to North America.

Holocaust survivors--Germany.
Holocaust victims--Germany.
Jewish businesspeople--Germany--History--20th Century.

Pittsburg (Pa.).
Basel (Switzerland).
Bruchsal (Germany).
Karlsruhe (Germany).

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Vogel and Baer family correspondence, 1938-1941

Box	Folder	Title
1	1	Avins, Jules, approximately 1941
1	2	Baer, Berta, 1940-1941
1	3	Baer, Sigmund, 1941
1	4	[?], Peter, 1940-1941
1	5	Unidentified correspondents, 1940-1941
1	6	Vogel, Albert, 1940-1942
1	7	Vogel, Ellen, 1938-1941
1	8	Vogel, Inga, 1939
1	9	Vogel, Inga, 1940-1941