

KANN FAMILY PAPERS
1908-2007 (bulk, 1942-1945)
2012.424.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
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Descriptive summary

Title: Kann family papers

Dates: 1908-2007 (bulk, 1942-1945)

Accession number: 2012.424.1

Creator: Kann, Elizabeth Gerson.

Extent: 1 box (0.5 linear foot).

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

Abstract: Correspondence, manuscripts, book cover, news clipping, primarily related to the efforts of Elizabeth Kann to determine the whereabouts of her husband, Johan Kann, following the German invasion and occupation of the Netherlands in 1940. Also contains a memoir by Kann's daughter, Jean Kann Sonder, written in 2007, and other family memoirs, as well as information about Johan Kann's father, Jacobus Kann, a prominent Dutch Zionist in the early 20th century.

Languages: Dutch, 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), Kann family papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: Donated by Mrs. Jean Sonder, Ms. Elise Jaeger, February 2012.

Related archival materials: Elise Kann Jaeger, the cousin of Jean Kann Sonder, donated a collection of artifacts used to create false identification documents during the German occupation of the Netherlands. These materials can be found under the Elise Kann Jaeger collection, accession number 2010.441.

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

Processing history: Processed by Brad Bauer, 2012.

Biographical note

Elizabeth Gerson Kann (born 1905) was the American-born wife of Johan Kann, a banker from The Hague, Netherlands. The two had met when Johan Kann was on a business trip to the United States, and after their wedding in October 1926, they returned to the Netherlands. Following the invasion of the Netherlands in May 1940, Mrs. Kann was able to return to the United States with her three children (Jean Adrienne, Donald Josef, and Barbara Leonora) in January 1941, settling in New York, with the understanding that her husband would follow. Johan Kann, however, was captured by the German authorities when he sought to escape the Netherlands by boat, and was subsequently imprisoned and deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where he died shortly after arrival in August 1942. Mr. Kann's father, J.H. (Jacobus Henricus) Kann, a Dutch banker and prominent supporter of Zionist organizations in the Netherlands, was deported with his wife, first to Bergen-Belsen, and then to Theresienstadt, where they died toward the end of the war.

Scope and content of collection

The Kann family papers contains correspondence, manuscripts, a book cover, and news clippings, primarily related to the efforts of Elizabeth Kann to determine the whereabouts of her husband, Johan Kann, following the German invasion and occupation of the Netherlands in 1940, and her own escape from that country in 1941. Most of the correspondence consists of letters sent to Elizabeth Kann from diplomats, aid organizations, and members of her husband's extended family, both trying to determine the fate of Johan Kann during the war, as well as sharing information and stories after the war about what they had learned about Kann's fate. This collection also contains a memoir by Kann's daughter, Jean Kann Sonder, written in 2007, and other family memoirs, as well as information about Johan Kann's father, J.H. (Jacobus Henricus) Kann, a prominent Dutch Zionist in the early 20th century. Included is an unpublished English translation by Jean Kann Sonder and Elise Kann Jaeger of J.H. Kann's 1908 book, "Erets Israel: Het Joodsche Land."

System of arrangement

The collection is divided in two series, "Speeches and Writings" and "Correspondence," both of which are arranged alphabetically by author/correspondent.

Indexing terms

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Netherlands--Hague.
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Netherlands--Personal narratives.
World War, 1939-1945--Military occupations--German--Netherlands.

Kann, J. H. (Jacobus Henricus), b. 1872.
Kann, Johan
Kann, Elizabeth Gerson

CONTAINER LIST

Box *Folder*

Speeches and Writings

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | Jaeger, Elise Kann. "Johan Kann in Memoriam, August 7, 1992" |
| 1 | 2 | Kann, Elizabeth. Account of the invasion of the Netherlands, as recounted in letter to friends in the United States, 1941 |
| 1 | 3 | Kann, J.H. "Erets Israel: Het Joodsche Land." Book cover, preface, from 1908 edition |
| 1 | 4 | Kann, J.H. "Eretz Israel: The Jewish Homeland," translation from Dutch by Jean Kann Sonder and Elise Kann Jaeger, undated |
| 1 | 5 | Kann, J.H. Articles about Kann by others, 1987-2009 |
| 1 | 6 | Kann, Otto. "The Boy Jaap Kann" (translated text of speech given in Amsterdam, circa 1996) |
| 1 | 7 | Sonder, Jean Kann. "Invasion and Escape" (personal account of invasion of the Netherlands and her family's escape to the United States), 2007 |
| 1 | 8 | Other manuscripts about occupation of the Netherlands, 1978 and undated. |

Correspondence

- | | | |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | 9 | American Embassy, London (Jesse F. Van Wickel), 1945 |
| 1 | 10 | American Red Cross, New York, 1943 |
| 1 | 11 | Bachmann, Ermanno, 1942 |
| 1 | 12 | Central Location Index, New York, 1945 |
| 1 | 13 | Consulate General of the Netherlands, New York, 1945 |
| 1 | 14 | Gersony, George, 1945 |
| 1 | 15 | Izkovitch, Elise Kann, 1944 |
| 1 | 16 | Juliana, H.R.H. Princess; Office of the Aide-de-Camp, 1941 |
| 1 | 17 | Kann, Anna, 1945 |
| 1 | 18 | Kann, Edward ("Eek"), 1944-1945 |
| 1 | 19 | Kann, Patricia, 1945 |
| 1 | 20 | Kanter, P.J. de, 1945 |
| 1 | 21 | Kayton, John, 1944 |
| 1 | 22 | Lissa and Kann Bank, The Hague, 1945 |
| 1 | 23 | Pollak-Daniels, Antoine, 1943 |
| 1 | 24 | Solomonson, Bernd, 1945 |
| 1 | 25 | United Jewish Appeal, New York, 1941 |