

HERMANN FAMILY CORRESPONDENCE, 1938-1951 2012.499.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: Hermann family correspondence

Dates: 1938-1951

Accession number: 2012.499.1

Creator: Hermann (Family : Munich, Germany)

Extent: 0.5 linear foot (5 folders)

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

Abstract: The Hermann family correspondence consists of letters and postcards written by Sophie, Julius, and Gerda Hermann in Munich and Brussels, Paul and Ruth Bohrmann in New York, and Elise Bickart in Munich and shared with Kurt and Gertrude Hermann in Cuba and Florida. The correspondence relates news about the Hermann, Bickart, and Bohrmann families and their relatives and friends, condolences on Julius' death, and efforts to bring Hermann and Bickart relatives to America.

Languages: German

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), Hermann family correspondence, 2012.499.1, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Charlotte Janis, daughter of Kurt and Gertrude Hermann, donated the Hermann family correspondence to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2012.

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

Related material: Charlotte Janis also donated a 1994 video oral history conducted with Helene Bickart Stricks to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (2012.499.2).

Processing history: Processed by Julie Schweitzer, August 2018.

Biographical note

Julius Hermann (1878-1941) was born in Bredow, near Stettin, Germany (Szczecin, Poland). He married Sophie Klein (1884-1942, b. Berlin, to Wolf and Johanna Klein) in Berlin in 1908. They moved to Ingolstadt where Julius joined Sophie's brother in running a men's clothing store called Bruder Klein. They lived above the store, had a middle class lifestyle, and attended synagogue. They had three children: Gerda (b. 10/31/1909), Kurt (b. 4/20/1913), and Kate (Käthe, b. 8/17/1916). Kate became a kindergarten teacher, married Paul Bohrmann, and immigrated to New York in May 1938. Her husband followed in April 1939 when he received his visa. The rest of the family relocated to Munich in 1938.

Kurt Hermann worked creating signs and decorating department stores in Munich and married Gertrude Bickart (1916-2008) in June 1938. Gertrude's parents were Otto Bickart (1874-1936), a physician who had served in World War I, and Elise Löwenstein Bickart (1888-1941). She had two siblings: Helene Bickart Stricks (1912-2004) and Alfred Bickart (1913-1997). Gertrude was a kindergarten teacher and photographer and was sent to Spain to work as a nanny for a doctor's family when laws restricting Jews came into effect in Germany. Due to the war there, however, she was soon sent back to Germany. Kurt and Gertrude left Germany in September 1938, lived for about two years in Cuba, and immigrated to the United States in 1940. They settled in Florida and owned and operated Pronto Photos Camera Stores in Pensacola.

In 1939 Julius, Sophie, and Gerda secured passage aboard the *SS St. Louis* to Cuba to join Kurt and Gertrude. They were not allowed to disembark in Cuba, and were instead sent to Belgium where they lived in a one-room apartment. At some point around 1940, Julius, Sophie, and Gerda were on a train to France which was bombed, were seriously injured, and were hospitalized in France until they had recovered enough to travel back to Brussels. Julius had a heart attack and died on August 19, 1941 in Brussels. In 1942 Sophie and Gerda were deported from Mechelen (Malines) to Auschwitz, where they perished.

Gertrude's brother Alfred immigrated to the United States in 1937. Her sister Helene was sent to Bergen-Belsen, where she witnessed the killing of her husband Joseph. She survived five years in Bergen Belsen and was liberated by the Soviets. Gertrude's mother, Elise was deported from Munich in November 1941 and shot at the Ninth Fort in Kaunas.

Scope and content of collection

The Hermann family correspondence consists of letters and postcards written by Sophie, Julius, and Gerda Hermann in Munich and Brussels, Paul and Ruth Bohrmann in New York, and Elise Bickart in Munich and shared with Kurt and Gertrude Hermann in Cuba and Florida. The correspondence relates

news about the Hermann, Bickart, and Bohrmann families and their relatives and friends, condolences on Julius' death, and efforts to bring Hermann and Bickart relatives to America.

System of arrangement

The Hermann family correspondence is arranged as a single series.

Indexing terms

Jews--Germany--Munich.

Jewish refugees--Belgium--Brussels.

Jewish refugees--New York (State)--New York.

Germany--Emigration and immigration--History--1933-1945.

Correspondence.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Hermann family correspondence, 1938-1951

Folder	Title
1 of 5	Bickart, Elise, approximately 1940-1941
2 of 5	Bohman, Paul and Ruth, 1938-1941
3-4 of 5	Hermann, Sophie, Julius, and Gerda, approximately 1939-1942 (2 folders)
5 of 5	Miscellaneous, 1939, 1950-1951