

GISELA EDEN PAPERS, 1939-1995

2013.476.1

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

Title: Gisela Eden papers

Dates: 1939-1995

Accession number: 2013.476.1

Creator: Eden, Gisela, 1925-2012.

Extent: 1 box, 3 oversize boxes, and 1 book enclosure

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

Abstract: The Gisela Eden papers consists of correspondence, restitution paperwork, a poesie book, a diary, and family photographs relating to the experiences of Gisela Eden (née Marx) who traveled to England from Dülken, Germany on a Kindertransport.

Languages: German, English

Administrative Information

Access: Collection is open for use.

Physical access note: The diary covers in boxes 3 and 4 cannot be accessed physically.

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), Gisela Eden papers (2013.476.1) United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The George Washington University and the Estate of John P. Eden donated the Gisela Eden papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2013.

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

Processing history: Katelynn Vance, February 2020

Biographical note

Gisela Amalie Marx (Jill, later Gisela Eden) was born on April 24, 1925 in Dülken, Germany to Leopold and Eva Marx (née Lifges). Leopold Marx was born on November 28, 1882, in Dülken, Germany. Leopold had two sisters, Rosetta (Rosa) and Eva Marx. He served in the German Army during World War I and was awarded the Iron Cross. He married Erna Lifges, who was born on July 23, 1892 in Suchteln, Germany. Leopold and Erna met in Paris, where Leopold worked as a junior diplomat and Erna served as a correspondent. Their daughter, Gisela Amalie Marx was born on April 24, 1925. The Marx family was very wealthy and the largest landowners in Westphalia. The family kept kosher and observed the holidays, but were not very religious.

In 1939, Leopold and Erna Marx arranged for Gisela to travel to England on a Kindertransport. Leopold sent money to a friend in England, who agreed to care for Gisela after she arrived. Gisela traveled from Cologne to Holland by train, then sailed to England, arriving on August 25, 1939. However, her father's friend never arrived. Gisela and two other abandoned children were sent to live with an Orthodox rabbi. Gisela had a difficult time adjusting because she was not raised to be observant and did not speak English. A member of the Jewish Refugee Committee arranged for Gisela to attend a boarding school in Lancashire. In 1941, Gisela was called for military service after she turned sixteen. Gisela chose to study nursing and worked at a children's hospital in London. The hospital was bombed during the Blitz. Gisela was then transferred to an American military hospital in Surrey. Later, Gisela worked at a nursery for disabled children and received a grant to study Fine Arts at Cambridge.

Gisela's family did not survive the Holocaust. Her aunts, Eva and Rosa Marx were deported to Theresienstadt where they died. On December 11, 1941, Leopold and Erna Marx were deported from Dusseldorf to the Riga ghetto, where they died. Before they were deported, her parents entrusted family jewelry and Judaica to a local pastor who buried the items in his cellar. The pastor was later arrested and interned in a concentration camp for preaching anti-Nazi sermons. In 1950, Gisela Marx received a Red Cross letter from the pastor afterwards, she and an American friend traveled to Dülken to retrieve her family's possessions. However, due to anti-Semitism within the community, she was unable to retrieve the items. After returning to Cambridge, Gisela obtained visa to the United States. On December 19, 1954 she sailed from Liverpool, England on the *SS Ascania* and arrived in New York on December 30, 1954. She settled in New York and worked as a nurse, file clerk, and executive secretary. She met John Peter Eden (born Hans Eibuschitz, 1923-2013) at a British social club event. John Eden had been sent on a Kindertransport from Czechoslovakia to England in 1939. He immigrated to the United States in 1950. The couple married in 1958 and settled in Washington DC. Gisela Eden died on August 20, 2012. John Eden died on May 29, 2013.

Scope and content of collection

The Gisela Eden papers consists of correspondence, restitution paperwork, a poesie book, a diary, and family photographs relating to the experiences of Gisela Eden (née Marx) who traveled to England from Germany on a Kindertransport.

The correspondence includes letters and postcards written by family and friends in Germany to Gisela Marx while she was living in England, 1939-1957. The letters, largely written by her parents, Leopold and Erna Marx, and relatives are written in German.

The restitution paperwork is directed to Gisela Eden and relates to the Marx family. The paperwork includes correspondence, financial materials, notes, and a photocopy of Gisella Amalie Marx's birth certificate, 1925.

The photographs include photographs of the Eden family in Germany include Leopold and Erna Marx and their daughter, Gisela Marx, circa 1930s-1940s.

The diary of Gisela Marx was written from March 29, 1939 to August 1941 in German and consists of 91 written pages. Gisela begins her diary while still living in Dülken, Germany and records her travels on the Kindertransport to England and her experiences while in England. Some of the entries include newspaper clippings in English and small sketches. Gisela Marx's poesie book, 1935-1942, includes autographs, notes, and drawings by her family and friends.

System of arrangement

The Gisela Eden papers are arranged in four series.

Series 1: Correspondence, 1939-1957, undated

Series 2: Restitution documents, 1995

Series 3: Photographs, circa 1930s-1940s

Series 4: Poesie book and diary, 1935-1942

Indexing terms

People:

Eden, John, 1923-2013.

Eden, Gisela, 1925-2012.

Topic:

Children.

Displaced persons--Europe.

Families.

Holocaust survivors.

Holocaust victims.

Holocaust, Jewish, (1939-1945)--reparations.

Jewish children.

Jewish refugees.

Jews rescue (1939-1945)

Kindertransport (Rescue operations)--Great Britain.

World War, 1939-1945--Refugees.

Gene / Form:

Correspondence.

Diary.
 Photographs.
 Poesie book.
 Restitution paperwork.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Correspondence, 1939-1957, undated

Box / Folder:	Title:
1.1	Postcards to Gisela Marx, May - August 1939
1.2	General correspondence, May - June 1939
1.3	General correspondence, July - August 1939
1.4	General correspondence, September - December 1939
1.5	General correspondence, 1940
1.6	General correspondence, 1941 - 1943
1.7	General correspondence, 1946, 1949-1954
1.8	General correspondence, 1955-1957
1.9	General correspondence, undated, empty envelopes

Series 2: Restitution documents, 1995

Box / Folder:	Title:
1.10	Restitution documents, 1995

Series 3: Photographs, circa 1930s-1940s

Box / Folder:	Title:
1.11	Family photographs, circa 1930s-1940s

Series 4: Poesie book and diary, 1935-1942

Box / Folder:	Title:
BE 1	Gisela Marx's poesie book, 1935-1942
Box 3	Gisela Marx's poesie book cover, 1935-1942
Box 2	Gisela Marx diary, 1939-1941
Box 4	Gisela Marx diary cover, 1939-1941