

MARCEL WOLF ZYTO PAPERS, 1926-2009
2014.172.2

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
Washington, DC 20024-2126
Tel. (202) 479-9717
e-mail: reference@ushmm.org

Descriptive summary

Title: Marcel Wolf Zyto papers

Dates: 1926-2009

Accession number: 2014.172.2

Creator: Zyto, Marcel Wolf, 1923-2010

Extent: 0.5 linear foot (1 box, 2 oversize folders)

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

Abstract: The Marcel Wolf Zyto papers include pre-war, wartime, and post-war records documenting Marcel Wolf Zyto, who survived the war living under the false name of Marcel or Pierre Benoît in France. Documents include pre-war personal documents, false identification papers, employment records, recommendations, a ration book in his false name, and a photograph. The papers also contain copies of post-war documents including personal records used for Marcel's immigration to the United States, where he was later joined by his mother.

Languages: French, English, 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), Marcel Wolf Zyto papers (2014.172.2), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Leslie Celentano donated the Marcel Wolf Zyto papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2014 and 2019. Leslie Celentano is Marcel Wolf Zyto's daughter. Accessions previously cataloged as 2014.172.2 and 2019.2.1 have been incorporated into this collection.

Related material: The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's library holds a copy of Marcel Wolf Zyto's book *Improbable Survival!* (DS135.F9 Z96 1994).

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

Processing history: Julie Schweitzer, September 2019

Biographical note

Marcel Wolf Zyto (1923-2010) was born in Paris on May 30, 1923 to Polish immigrants Jakob (Jacob) and Sima (Syma, née Finkelstein) Zyto. He had one brother, Henri, and one sister, Henriette, who died in early childhood and was buried in their native Poland. The Zyto family lived in the 20th district in Paris, and as a teenager Marcel studied to be a pharmacy assistant, receiving a diploma in 1939. During the German occupation of France, a neighboring friend named Jean-Jacques Rothstein persuaded him to flee to the town of Donnemarie-en-Montois (Seine-et-Marne, now Donnemarie-Dontilly), where he assumed the false identity "Marcel Benoît" and joined the resistance. His parents survived the war in hiding. Following the liberation of France in 1944, Marcel joined and served in the French Army, including in the forces that occupied Germany. Marcel immigrated to the United States aboard the SS *Queen Mary* in August 1947, sponsored by an uncle living in New York, and completed his education. He worked for Bristol Laboratories and married his wife, Muriel, in 1953. The couple had three daughters and lived in Japan and Hong Kong before returning to the United States in 1967 and settling in northern New Jersey. He died in North Caldwell, New Jersey, on May 19, 2010.

Scope and content of collection

The Marcel Wolf Zyto papers include pre-war, wartime, and post-war biographical materials documenting Marcel Wolf Zyto, who survived the war living under the false name of Marcel or Pierre Benoît in France, as well as his parents and his sister. The collection also includes restitution files documenting Zyto's efforts to receive restitution from the French, German, and Swiss governments, and subject files documenting Zyto's autobiography, his support for a memorial plaque for Jean-Jacques Rothstein, and his search for his sister's burial place.

Jacob and Syma Zyto materials include copies and translations of their marriage certificate, Jacob's nationalization certificate, a certificate from Marcel permitting Syma to sell their Paris apartment, and records provided by Marcel in support of his mother's immigration to America. Many of the documents are photocopies. Marcel Wolf Zyto materials include his certificate of French nationality, reissued birth certificates, a certificate declaring that he refused to collaborate with the German occupiers, French passport and voter registration cards, correspondence about the status of his French citizenship in 1962, and notes for a 2006 speech. False identification papers include an identification card, ration book with tickets, calling card, work card, a service card for André Citroën, real estate and residence certificates, service requisition orders, and labor transfer notices, all in the name Marcel Pierre Benoît, Pierre Marcel Benoît, or Marcel Zito. Education records include identification cards, certificates, diplomas, documenting Zyto's education in pharmaceuticals, factory management, and law in France and at

University College and City College in New York. Employment records include certificates documenting Zyto's work at La Grande Pharmacie Gambetta and Laboratoire de la "Gynaldene" as well as a clipping documenting his work at Wyeth International. French Army documents include certificates, identification papers, orders, permissions, and discharge and demobilization papers documenting Zyto's military service in France. Immigration records include correspondence, affidavits, and financial documents. This series also includes a birth certificate for Henriette Zyto.

Restitution files document Zyto's efforts in the 1990s and 2000s to obtain restitution from the French government through the CIVS commission, the German government through the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, and Swiss government through the Swiss Fund for Needy Victims of the Holocaust and the Holocaust Victim Assets Litigation.

Subject files include correspondence, printed materials, photographs, and copies of records documenting Zyto's book *Improbable Survival!*, his support for the restoration of a memorial plaque for Jean-Jacques Rothstein in Paris, his research into his Polish family history, and his search for the burial place of his sister Henriette.

System of arrangement

The Marcel Wolf Zyto papers are arranged as three series:

Series 1: Biographical materials, 1926-2009

Series 2: Restitution, 1998-2009

Series 3: Subject files, 1979-2007

Indexing terms

Personal names

Zyto, Marcel.

Zyto, Henriette.

Rothstein, Jean-Jacques.

Topical terms

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--France--Paris.

World War, 1939-1945--Jewish resistance--France.

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

Geographic terms

Donnemarie-Dontilly (France)

Lublin (Poland)

Paris (France)

Warsaw (Poland)

Genre Terms

Correspondence.

Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Biographical materials, 1926-2009

Box/Folder	Title
1.1	Zyto, Henriette, 1995
1.2	Zyto, Jacob and Syma, 1929-1958
1.3	Zyto, Marcel Wolf, 1926-2006
1.4	Zyto, Marcel Wolf, under aliases, 1940-1944
1.5, OS 1	Zyto, Marcel Wolf, education, 1937-1955
1.6	Zyto, Marcel Wolf, employment, 1940-1944, 1959
1.7-1.8	Zyto, Marcel Wolf, French Army, 1943-1959
1.9	Zyto, Marcel Wolf, immigration and naturalization, 1946-1954, 1992-2009
1.10	Photograph of residence, undated

Series 2: Restitution, 1998-2009

Box/Folder	Title
1.11	French, 2001-2009
1.12	German, 2001-2009
1.13	Swiss, 1998-2005

Series 3: Subject files, 1979-2007

Box/Folder	Title
1.14-1.15	French documents used in <i>Improbable Survival!</i> , circa 1983-1999 (2 folders)
1.16, OS 2	Rothstein, Jean Jacques, 2000-2006
1.17	Warsaw/Lublin documents, 1979, circa 1990-1993
1.18-1.19	Zyto, Henriette, 1992-2009
1.20	General correspondence, 1994-2007