METZ AND OBERLAENDER FAMILIES PAPERS, 1912-2015 (bulk 1915-1950) 2014.478.1

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: Metz and Oberlaender families papers

Dates: 1912-2015

Accession number: 2014.478.1

Creator: Oberlaender, Gabrielle Metz, 1912-1997

Additional creator: Oberlaender, Bernhard, 1912-2000

Extent: 5.1 linear feet (10 boxes and 1 oversize folder)

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

Abstract: The Metz and Oberlaender families papers consist of documents, correspondence, and photograph albums related to the Metz family, originally of Frankfurt am Main, Germany and correspondence, biographical materials, and immigration materials related to the Oberlaender family, originally of Fürth and Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Gabrielle Metz and Hardy Oberlaender met in Frankfurt, were married in Chicago, and were eventually joined by many of their family members in the United States. Both series are especially valuable to researchers because both sides of the correspondence are represented: Gabrielle Metz and Hardy Oberlaender in the United States and the family members who remained in Europe and came to the United States later.

Languages: German, French, 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), Metz and Oberlaender family papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Jackie Gish donated this collection to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2014 and 2016.

Processing history: Rebecca Erbelding, September 2014, Julie Schweitzer, May 2016

Biographical note

Gabrielle Metz (1912-1997) was born in Brussels, Belgium, to Gottfried (1875-1976) and Johanna ("Hansi," née Trier) Metz. She had one brother, René Marcel. In 1914, the family moved to Frankfurt am Main, where Gottfried worked as an accountant. In 1933, they moved to Paris, France. In 1939, Gabrielle immigrated to the United States to marry Bernhard (Hardy) Oberlaender, a friend from Frankfurt. At the outbreak of war, Gottfried, Hansi, and René moved south to Agen (Lot-et-Garonne), in unoccupied France. Hansi died in December 1941. Gabrielle tried to bring her father and brother to the United States but was unsuccessful until after the war. In 1942, René escaped over the Pyrenees into Spain and then Portugal, and he joined the British military at the end of the war. Gottfried was able to leave for Switzerland in 1942, and spent the war in Zurich. In 1946, he joined Gabrielle in the United States, but passed away shortly thereafter. René immigrated to the United States in 1947.

Bernhard (Hardy) Oberlaender (1912-2000) was born in Fürth, Germany, to Joseph and Felicia (née Fuchs) Oberlaender. He had two brothers, Siegfried (Fred) and Ernst. Joseph Oberlaender was a factory owner, and the family moved to Frankfurt am Main in 1927. Joseph visited New York on business in 1934 and asked Hardy to join him there. Joseph returned to Germany, but Hardy remained permanently in the United States. The Oberlaenders were forced to give up their business in Germany, and Joseph and Felicia moved to Belgium and then England, where they were joined by Hardy's brothers. Hardy's uncle Leopold and aunt Lilly moved to the Netherlands, where they were joined by the Oberlaender family governess, Babette Bogner, who was not Jewish. Fred immigrated to the United States in 1937, Joseph died of a heart attack in London shortly thereafter, and in 1938, Felicia and Ernst came to the United States, although Ernst later returned to Germany. Leopold and Lilly were arrested and interned at the Westerbork concentration camp for two years and survived. Oberlaender family members have spelled their name Oberländer, Oberlander, and Oberlaender, and all three spellings are used in this collection.

Scope and content of collection

The Metz and Oberlaender families papers consist of documents, correspondence, photographs, biographical materials, and immigration materials related to the Metz family, originally of Frankfurt am Main, Germany and to the Oberlaender family, originally of Fürth and Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Gabrielle Metz and Hardy Oberlaender met in Frankfurt, were married in Chicago, and were eventually joined by many of their family members in the United States. The papers of both families are especially valuable to researchers because both sides of the correspondence are represented: the first family members to immigrate to the United States and the family members who remained in Europe and came to the United States later.

The Metz family papers consist of photograph albums, biographical materials and correspondence related to Gabrielle Metz, additional correspondence among the Metz family and their friends, letters

Gabrielle received from her parents and brother, and printouts of digitized records of family tree information, correspondence and photographs that remain with the family. The papers document Gabrielle Metz's prewar life in Germany, her immigration to the United States in 1939, her efforts to remain in contact with her family, her mother's death, her father's immigration in 1946 and her brother's immigration in 1947.

The photograph albums largely date from before the war and document Gabrielle's school years and the Metz family's life in Frankfurt in the 1920s and early 1930s. The postcard album includes postcards mostly mailed to Gabrielle Metz by friends and relatives between 1912 and 1932 celebrating birthdays and holidays or describing travel. The postcards include commercial artistic and photographic images and are accompanied by a handful of photographs of friends.

The documents related to Gabrielle Metz Oberlaender include her emigration and naturalization documents and menus from the *SS Veendam*, August 27, 1939-September 4, 1939. This series also includes original typed copies of Gabrielle's correspondence to her parents and brother from 1939-1942, and more than one hundred telegrams and condolence letters she received after her mother's death in December 1941. The series further contains documents and forms attesting to Gabrielle's efforts on behalf of her family, including her notes after appearing before an Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee in Washington, DC, in 1944.

The general correspondence series includes correspondence exchanged among the Metz family and extended family or friends. This subseries includes letters from Fritz Trier, Hansi Metz's cousin, who survived in Mexico, and Leo Trier, her nephew, who survived the war in France; a few letters from Selma Metz, Gottfried's sister, who committed suicide to avoid deportation in October 1940 in Frankfurt; and letters written by Henny Kahn, Gabrielle's cousin, who escaped to Brazil, and her partner, Anna, who remained in Germany.

The letters from Gottfried, Hansi, and René Metz to Gabrielle are extensive. With the exception of late 1942-1945, when the war restricted mail services, the family corresponded on a weekly basis, if not more frequently, in lengthy handwritten letters.

Printouts consist of printed copies of digitized original materials that remain with the donor's family and include family tree information, photographs, correspondence, and family documents. They document the Metz, Trier, and Gutenstein families, and the family tree information explains the relationship between the subject of each folder and the Metz family. This subseries documents not just the Metz family in Europe and the United States but also Fritz Trier, who immigrated to Mexico, Leo Trier, who survived in France, and Willy Schlesinger and his daughter Gerda, who immigrated to Argentina.

The Oberlaender family papers include biographical materials, correspondence, immigration materials, and digitized records documenting the Oberlaender family from Fürth and Frankfurt. The papers document Hardy Oberlaender's immigration to the United States in 1934, his brother Fred's immigration and his father's death in 1937, his brother Ernst and his mother's arrival in the United States in 1938, and the family's efforts to keep in touch with relatives who remained in Europe.

Biographical materials include an address book, driver's license, employment records, and a police clearance certificate documenting Joseph, Felicia, Hardy, and Leopold Oberlaender; death announcements and funeral speeches for Joseph Oberlaender and Nelly Wittman (Lilly

Oberlaender's mother); and narratives documenting Hardy's cousin Alfred Davidsohn's arrest and deportation.

Correspondence primarily consists of Hardy Oberlaender's correspondence with his parents and brothers as they each lived in Frankfurt, Brussels, London, Amsterdam, and Chicago. This subseries also contains correspondence with relatives Leopold and Lilly Oberlaender, Eleanor Fuchs, Betty and Alfred Abraham, Alfred Davidsohn, Sophie and Felix Horwitz, Morris Lange, Benny, Jacob, and Max Oberländer, Jacob and Jenny Sachs, Therese and Eugene Saenger, Henry and Cora Salzer, Joseph, Lucile, and Sidney Rice, and David and Sophie Wice. These family members lived in Fürth, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Bremen, Nuremberg, New York, Cincinnati, and Omaha. Family correspondence documents planning for immigration to the United States, health concerns, family deaths, daily life in Europe and America, and other family news. Additional correspondence is with family friends Babette Bogner (in Frankfurt, Brussels, London, and Amsterdam) and Günter Stern-Oppenheimer (Steven Opton, in San Francisco). Some of the correspondence is accompanied by full or partial transcriptions and translations. This subseries also includes some Oberlaender business correspondence, condolence letters the family received after Joseph Oberlaender's death, and tracing correspondence in search of Leopold and Lilly Oberlaender, Alfred Davidsohn, and Babette Bogner.

Immigration materials include correspondence, affidavits, applications, and attestations documenting the Oberlaender family's successful efforts to bring Hardy, Fred, Felicia, and Ernst Oberlaender to the United States and unsuccessful efforts to bring Alfred Davidsohn and Babette Bogner to the United States.

Digitized records consist of electronic access copies of original materials that remain with the donor's family. These records include family trees, family histories, identification papers and other biographical materials and family photographs. This series further documents Alfred Davidsohn's trial for so-called "racial defilement" of his fiancée, Frieda Walmann, before his deportation and includes the patent drawings Davidsohn gave Waldmann in hopes of supporting her financially. Davidsohn materials also include prewar photographs of him with family and friends and prewar and wartime correspondence with friends. In addition to the Oberlaender family in Europe and the United States, this subseries also documents Fuchs, Horwitz, Herzberg, Lange, Phillipsborn, Sachs, Saenger, Saltzer, Rice, and Wice relatives.

The Oberlaender family papers also include reference materials documenting German mail censorship, antisemitism, and Nuremberg.

System of arrangement

The collection is arranged in ten series:

Series 1: Metz family papers, 1912-2014: Photograph and postcard albums, 1912-1947

Series 2: Metz family papers, 1912-2014: Documents related to Gabrielle Metz Oberlaender, 1939-1950

Series 3: Metz family papers, 1912-2014: General correspondence, 1915-1950

Series 4: Metz family papers, 1912-2014: Correspondence from Gottfried, Hansi, and René Metz, 1939-1947

Series 5: Metz family papers, 1912-2014: Printouts of digitized records that remain with the family, 2014

Series 6: Oberlaender family papers, 1930-2015: Biographical materials, approximately 1930s-2001

Series 7: Oberlaender family papers, 1930-2015: Correspondence, 1932-1952

Series 8: Oberlaender family papers, 1930-2015: Immigration materials, 1934-1942

Series 9: Oberlaender family papers, 1930-2015: Reference materials, approximately 1940s

Series 10: Oberlaender family papers, 1930-2015: Digital copies of records that remain with the family, 2015

Indexing terms

Jews--Germany--Fürth.
Jews--Germany--Frankfurt am Main.
Jewish refugees--England.
Jewish refugees--France.
Jewish refugees--Netherlands.
Jewish refugees--Switzerland.
Jewish refugees--United States.
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945).

Agen (France)
Amsterdam (Netherlands)
Brussels (Belgium)
Fürth (Bavaria, Germany)
Frankfurt am Main (Germany)
London (England)
Chicago (III.)
Germany--Emigration and immigration--History--20th century.
France--Emigration and immigration--History--20th century.

United States--Emigration and immigration--History--20th century.

Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Metz family papers, 1912-2014: Photograph and postcard albums, 1912-1947

Box/Folder	
1.1	Photograph album, approximately 1924-1933
1.2	Photograph album, approximately 1929-1931
1.3	Photograph album, approximately 1931-1933
1.4	Photograph album, approximately 1932-1936
1.5	Loose photograph from photograph albums, approximately 1924-1936
2.1	Photograph album, approximately 1937-1947
10.1	Postcard album, 1912-1932

Series 2: Metz family papers, 1912-2014: Documents related to Gabrielle Metz Oberlaender, 1939-1950

Box/Folder	
3.1	Address book, 1939-1950
3.2-3.6	Condolence letters on death of Metz, Johanna, 1941-1942 (5 folders)
3.7-3.10	Copies of letters from Metz, Gabrielle to Metz, Gottfried, Johanna, and René, 1941-1942
	(4 folders)
3.11-3.12	Correspondence and forms related to the immigration and naturalization of Metz,
	Gabrielle, 1939-1943 (2 folders)
3.13-3.14	Documents and correspondence trying to help Metz, Gottfried and René, 1939-1946
	(2 folders)
3.15	Receipts for money orders sent to Europe, 1941-1945
3.16-3.18	Travel documents, 1939 (3 folders)
3.19, OS 1	Miscellaneous, 1939-1945 (2 folders)

Series 3: Metz family papers, 1912-2014: General correspondence, 1915-1950

Box/Folder	
4.1-4.4	Alexander, Adi, 1939-1944 (4 folders)
4.5	Baer, Frieda, 1942, 1950
4.6	Baer, Kurt, Beulah, and Howard, 1939-1940
4.7	Bertl, Joshua, 1939-1940
4.8	Degeler, Else, 1947
4.9	Haberman, Felix and Jenny, 1945-1947
4.10	Ituribarria, Maryla, 1939-1940
4.11-4.14	Kahn, Henny and Göbel, Anna, 1939-1949 (4 folders)
4.15	Lechner, Paul and Erna, 1947-1948
4.16	Lowenstein family, 1940-1941
4.17	Metz, Selma, 1939-1940
4.18	Mosel, Blanka, 1945-1948
4.19-4.20	Negro, Marie, 1945-1949 (2 folders)
4.21	Phillipsohn, Max, 1945
4.22	Trier, Fritz, 1943-1945
5.1-5.3	Trier, Leo, 1944-1946 (3 folders)
5.4	Wennberg, Blanch, 1940-1947
5.5	Miscellaneous family, 1915, 1941, 1947
5.6	Miscellaneous people, 1939-1940, 1946

Series 4: Metz family papers, 1912-2014: Correspondence from Metz, Gottfried, Johanna, and René, 1939-1947

Box/Folder	
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5.8	1939 September

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	6.20	1947 March

Series 5: Metz family papers, 1912-2014: Printouts of digitized records that remain with the family, 2014

Box/Folder	
7.1	Family trees, 2014
7.2	Frankfurt graves and info, 2014
7.3	General personal information, 2014
7.4	Gutenstein, Fritz and Bertel, 2014
7.5	Gutenstein, various relatives, 2014
7.3	Hochschild, Moritz and Else (née Trier), 2014

7.7	Kahn, Henny, 2014
7.8	Marx, Moritz and Rosa (née Trier), 2014
7.9	Metz family photographs, 2014
7.10	Offenbach graves and info, 2014
7.11	Schlesinger, Willy, Henny, and Gerda, 2014
7.12	Trier, Abraham and Clara, 2014
7.13	Trier, Alfred, 2014
7.14	Trier, Fritz, 2014
7.15	Trier, Leopold and Mathilde, 2014
7.16	Trier, Wilhelm, 2014
7.17	Vogel, Edith and Kurt, and Gutenstein, Lulu, 2014
7.18	Wennberg, Adolphe and Blanche, 2014
7.19	Wieland, Trudi, 2014
7.20	Willstaedt, Martin and Jeannette Gutenstein, 2014
7.21	Worms, August, Recha, and Emanuel, 2014
7.22	Unknown, 2014

Series 6: Oberlaender family papers, 1930-2015: Biographical materials, approximately 1930s-2001

Box/Folder	
7.23	Address book, approximately 1930s
7.24	Davidsohn, Alfred, approximately 2001
7.25	Oberlaender, Felicia, 1994
7.26	Oberlaender, Hardy, 1934-1943
7.27	Oberlaender, Joseph, 1937, 1947
7.28	Oberlaender, Leopold, 1934, 1981
7.29	Wittmann, Nelly, 1939

Series 7: Oberlaender family papers, 1930-2015: Correspondence, 1932-1952

Box/Folder	
7.30	Abraham, Betty, to Bogner, Babette, 1939-1940
7.31	Abraham, Betty and Alfred, to Oberlaender, Joseph and Felicia, 1934
7.32	Abraham, Betty and Alfred, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1934-1937
7.33	Abraham, Betty and Alfred, to Oberlaender, Hardy and Fred, 1937-1938
7.34	Abraham, Betty and Alfred, to Oberlaender, Hardy, Fred, Ernst, and Felicia, 1938-1941
7.35	Abraham, Werner, to Oberlaender, Hardy, Fred, Ernst, and Felicia, 1937-1940
7.36	Bogner, Babette, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1934-1937
7.37	Bogner, Babette, to Oberlaender, Hardy and Fred, 1937
7.38	Bogner, Babette, to Oberlaender, Hardy, Fred, Ernst, and Felicia, 1938-1940
7.39	Davidsohn, Alfred, to Oberlaender, Hardy and Fred, 1934-1938
7.40	Davidsohn, Alfred, to Hirschfeld family, 1942, photocopy, approximately 2015
7.41	Fuchs, Eleanor, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1934-1937
7.42	Fuchs, Eleanor, to Oberlaender, Hardy and Fred, 1937-1938

7.43	Fuchs, Eleanor, to Oberlaender, Hardy, Fred, Ernst, and Felicia, 1938-1939
7.44	Fuchs, Eleanor, to Oberlaender, Joseph and Felicia, 1934
8.1	Horwitz, Sophie and Felix, to Oberlaender, Felicia and Hardy, 1939-1940
8.2	Lange, Morris, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1937-1941
8.3	Oberländer, Benny, 1938-1939
8.4	Oberländer, Ernst, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1934-1941
8.5	Oberländer, Ernst, to Oberlaender, Joseph, 1934
8.6	Oberlander, Fred, to Oberlander, Felicia, 1937
8.7	Oberlander, Fred, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1934-1937, 1945
8.8	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Bogner, Babette, 1936-1941
8.9	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Fuchs, Eleanor, and Abraham, Betty, Alfred, and Werner, 1937-1941
8.10	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Herzberg and Horwitz relatives, 1940-1941
8.11	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Lange, Morris, 1937-1942
8.12	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Oberländer, Benny, 1939-1940
8.13	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Oberländer, Ernst, 1937
8.14	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Oberländer, Jacob, 1939
8.15	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Oberlaender, Joseph and Felicia, 1936-1937
8.16-8.18	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Oberlaender, Leopold and Lilly, 1936-1941 (3 folders)
8.19	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Sachs, Jacob and Jenny, 1935-1940
8.20	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Saenger, Therese and Eugene, 1935-1941
8.21	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Salzer, Henry and Cora, 1935-1941
8.22	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Rice, Joseph and Lucile, 1937
8.23	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Rice, Sidney, 1939
8.24	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Stern-Oppenheimer, Günter (Opton, Steven), 1936-1942
8.25	Oberlaender, Hardy, to Wice, David and Sophie, 1936-1941
8.26	Oberländer, Jacob, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1937-1939
8.27-8.30	Oberlaender, Joseph and Felicia, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1933-1934 (4 folders)
8.31	Oberlaender, Joseph and Felicia, to Oberlaender, Hardy,1935
9.1	Oberlaender, Joseph and Felicia, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1936
9.2	Oberlaender, Joseph and Felicia, to Oberlaender, Hardy and Fred, 1937
9.3	Oberlaender, Joseph and Felicia, to Oberlaender, Hardy and Fred, 1938
9.4	Oberlaender, Joseph and Felicia, to Oberlaender, Hardy, loose pages, approximately 1933-1938
9.5	Oberlaender, Leopold and Lilly, to Oberlaender, Hardy and Fred, 1934-1938
9.6	Oberlaender, Leopold and Lilly, to Oberlaender, Hardy, Fred, Ernst, and Felicia, 1938
9.7	Oberlaender, Leopold and Lilly, to Oberlaender, Hardy, Fred, Ernst, and Felicia, 1939-1941
9.8	Oberlaender, Leopold and Lilly, to Oberlaender, Hardy, Fred, Ernst, and Felicia, 1945
9.9	Oberländer, Max, to Oberlaender family, 1938
9.10	Punfed, Hede, to Bogner, Babette, 1939
9.11	Rice, Joseph and Lucile, to Oberlaender family, 1937
9.12	Rice, Sidney, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1939-1940
9.13	Sachs, Jacob and Jenny, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1935-1939
9.14	Saenger, Therese and Eugene, to Oberlaender, Felicia, 1938-1939
9.15	Saenger, Therese and Eugene, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1935-1941, 1952
9.16	Salzer, Henry and Cora, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1935
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9.17	Salzer, Henry and Cora, to Oberlaender, Hardy and Fred, 1937
9.18	Salzer, Henry and Cora, to Oberlaender, Hardy, Fred, Ernst, and Felicia,1938-1943
9.19	Stern-Oppenheimer, Gunter (Opton, Steven), to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1934-1941
9.20	Wice, David and Sophie, to Oberlaender, Hardy, 1935-1937
9.21	Wice, David and Sophie, to Oberlaender, Hardy, Fred, Ernst, and Felicia, 1937-1940
9.22-9.23	Miscellaneous business correspondence, 1932-1936 (2 folders)
9.24	Miscellaneous condolence letters after Joseph Oberlaender's death, 1937
9.25	Miscellaneous tracing correspondence in search of Leopold and Lilly Oberlaender, Alfred
	Davidsohn, and Babette Bogner, 1945
9.26	Miscellaneous correspondence, approximately 1934-1939

Series 8: Oberlaender family papers, 1930-2015: Immigration materials, 1934-1942

Box/Folder	
9.27-9.28	Bogner, Babette, 1934-1941
9.29	Davidsohn, Alfred, 1938
9.30	Oberlaender, Felicia and Ernst, 1937-1938
9.31	Oberlander, Fred, 1936-1942
9.32	Oberlaender, Hardy, 1934-1941

Series 9: Oberlaender family papers, 1930-2015: Reference materials, approximately 1940s

Box/Folder	
9.33	Remembrance of Things Passed (sic), a satirical list of passages from censored German
	mail, approximately 1940s
9.34	Freedman, Paul W., personal narrative of a staff sergeant at Nuremberg about his
	experiences in Europe in the summer of 1945, 1945
9.35	Make Way for Truth!, anti-Semitic article, 1945

Series 10: Oberlaender family papers, 1930-2015: Digital copies of records that remain with the family, 2015

Box/Folder	
Electronic	Hardy Oberlaender family trees
Electronic	Hardy Oberlaender history modified
Electronic	Information for Washington DC Holocaust Museum with Hardy Oberlaender box
Electronic	Drawings which Fredy Davidsohn gave Frieda
Electronic	Information on graves, immigration, war service, etc.
Electronic	Ernst and family
Electronic	Felicia
Electronic	Fred and family
Electronic	Fredy Davidsohn documents from Furth Museum
Electronic	Fredy Davidsohn correspondence, prewar and wartime, with friends
Electronic	Transcriptions of records from Fredy Davisohn's trial

Electronic	Hardy Army & Immigration
Electronic	Oberlaender
Electronic	Phillipsborn Fuchs Horwitz Herzberg
Electronic	Sachs Lange Saenger Saltze Wice Rice
Electronic	Miscellaneous
Electronic	Leopold and Lilly Oberlaender write-up for Westerbork 70 th anniversary and 1952
	wedding anniversary
Electronic	Letters including translations from Furth family
Electronic	Pictures
Electronic	Brothers of Joseph Oberlaender and families
Electronic	Fred Oberlander pictures form WWII
Electronic	Fredy Davidsohn, prewar, with family and friends
Electronic	Fuchs Phillipsborn
Electronic	Sachs
Electronic	Miscellaneous