

ELFRIEDE TOCH COLLECTION, 1925-1968
2016.243.3

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

Title: Elfriede Toch collection

Dates: 1925-1968

Accession number: 2016.243.3

Creator: Toch, Elfriede, 1924-2010

Extent: 1 box, 2 oversized boxes, 2 book enclosures, 1 oversized folder, 5 TIFFs (0.7 linear feet)

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

Abstract: Photographs, immigration documents, family tree, and other materials related to the childhood and emigration from Nazi-occupied Austria in June 1939 of Elfriede Toch, who was one of the "50 children" selected and sponsored by Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus of Philadelphia. The collection includes family photographs from the period of her childhood in Austria; immigration and naturalization documents, including her German passport and American immigration documents; and her autograph book, containing inscriptions and autographs from friends and family members in Austria, 1936-1939, and other emigre friends in Los Angeles after that. The collection also includes post-immigration family photographs; a family tree compiled by Toch's older daughter, Carolyn, for a school project in 1966; digital images of Toch's younger daughter Cynthia, Elfriede with her parent's immigration sponsor Mrs. Yumpolsky, and John and Adele Toch; and a United States one-dollar bill, representing the first dollar earned by the Toch's when they opened their new business in Los Angeles following immigration.

Languages: 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), Elfriede Toch collection (2016.243.3), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: Cindy Ermert and Carolyn Aarons, the daughters of Elfriede Toch Lawson, donated the Elfriede Toch collection to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2016 and 2019. Accessions 2016.243.1 and 2019.441.1 have been incorporated into this collection.

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, April 2016. Revised by Julie Schweitzer, November 2019.

Biographical note

Elfriede Toch Lawson (1925-2010) was born 30 September 1925 in Vienna, Austria, the daughter of Hans (John) and Adele Toch. The Tochs owned a butcher shop specializing in venison and game, and had one other child, a son named Paul (b. 1922). Following the German annexation of Austria in 1938, the Tochs lost their business, and after Kristallnacht, Hans was arrested, and when he returned to his family after having been tortured, he was determined to emigrate. In 1939, Elfriede's family learned about the efforts of an American couple, Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus, to select and sponsor fifty Jewish children for immigration to the United States, and determined to enroll their children. Paul was older than the cut-off age, but Elfriede was accepted and joined the group that traveled with the Krauses to Philadelphia in June 1939. Eventually, the remainder of her family, who had been sponsored by Mrs. Yumpolsky from Los Angeles, were also able to immigrate to the United States, reuniting with Elfriede in the fall of 1939, and settling in Los Angeles. The Tochs started a new business there, a restaurant and catering business. Elfriede graduated from Fairfax High School in 1944, and married Martin Lawson in 1947. The couple, who remained in Los Angeles, had two children, Carolyn and Cindy. Elfriede died in Carlsbad, California on 29 March 2010.

Scope and content of collection

Photographs, immigration documents, family tree, and other materials related to the childhood and emigration from Nazi-occupied Austria in June 1939 of Elfriede Toch, who was one of the "50 children" selected and sponsored by Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus of Philadelphia. The collection includes family photographs from the period of her childhood in Austria; immigration and naturalization documents, including her German passport and American immigration documents; and her autograph book, containing inscriptions and autographs from friends and family members in Austria, 1936-1939, and other emigre friends in Los Angeles after that. The collection also includes post-immigration family photographs; a family tree compiled by Toch's older daughter, Carolyn, for a school project in 1966; digital images of Toch's younger daughter Cynthia, Elfriede with her parent's immigration sponsor Mrs. Yumpolsky, and John and Adele Toch; and a United States one-dollar bill, representing the first dollar earned by the Toch's when they opened their new business in Los Angeles following immigration.

System of arrangement

The Elfriede Toch collection is arranged as a single series.

Indexing terms

Personal names

Kraus, Gilbert, 1897-1975.
Kraus, Eleanor, 1903-1989.
Toch, Adele.
Toch, Hans.
Toch, Paul.
Lawson, Martin.

Topical headings

Jews--Austria--Vienna.
Jewish refugees--United States--California.
Holocaust survivors--United States--California.
World War, 1939-1945--Jews--Rescue.

Geographical headings

Vienna (Austria)
Los Angeles (Calif.)

Genre headings

Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Box/Folder	Title
1.1	Birth certificate (copy)
1.2	Education: Austria, 1933-1939
1.3	Ephemera: One dollar bill (United States), with signatures, representing first dollar earned by the Tochs in their business in Los Angeles, undated, circa 1940
1.4, BE 2	Family history, by Carolyn Lawson, undated, circa 1966 (2 items)
Digital only	Digital images of Cynthia (Cindy) Lawson Ermert, Elfriede Toch Lawson, John and Adele Toch, and Mrs. Yumpolsky
1.5	Immigration and naturalization, 1939-1947
1.6	Passport, 1939
1.7	Photographs of Elfriede, and family, circa 1930-1947
1.8	Photographs of Elfriede, and friends, circa 1940-1950
1.9	Wedding certificate, 1947
2.1	Portrait of Hans and Adele Toch, circa 1950
2.2	Family portrait
2.3	Wedding portrait of Elfriede
3.1	Photograph of family business in Vienna
3.2-3.3	Childhood photographs of Elfriede (circa 1935) (2 folders)
BE 1	Autograph book, 1936-1944
OS 1	Scrapbook page of wedding photographs