

WILLIAM ROSENWALD FAMILY ASSOCIATION SELECTED RECORDS, 1934-2006

2017.456.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: William Rosenwald Family Association selected records

Dates: 1934-2006

Accession number: 2017.456.1

Creator: William Rosenwald Family Association

Extent: 3.26 linear feet (5 boxes, 1 oversize box, 1 oversize folder)

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

Abstract: The collection contains affidavits, correspondence, reports, financial documents, and similar materials documenting the philanthropic activities of the children of late Sears, Roebuck and Company president Julius Rosenwald. Referred to as the "German Relatives Program," their activities enabled Rosenwald and Nussbaum relatives, members of their extended families, and numerous others emigrate from Germany and escape anti-Semitic persecution in the late 1930s. The records also document the financial and other material support provided by the project to those whom they had helped immigrate, assistance that in some cases lasted for decades after their arrival.

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), William Rosenwald Family Association selected records (2017.456.1), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2017 by Alice Rosenwald, Nina Rosenwald and Elizabeth Rosenwald Varet.

Related archival materials: Schwarz and Rosenwald families papers (2017.167.1); Rosenwald and Stahl families papers (2017.222.1); Rosenwald, Block, and Kupferschlag families papers (1999.A.0278); Rosenwald, Block, and Kupferschlag family collection (1999.177.1-5)

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

Processing history: Adam Fielding, September 2017

Administrative history

Lessing J. Rosenwald (1891-1979), Adele R. Levy (1892-1960), Edith R. Stern (1895-1980), Marion R. Ascoli (1902-1990), and William Rosenwald (1903-1996), the children of Julius Rosenwald (1862-1932), a philanthropist and former president of Sears, Roebuck and Company, and his wife Augusta Nussbaum Rosenwald (1868-1929) started the "German Relatives Program" in 1935 to help rescue German relatives facing increased Nazi persecution. They first learned of the growing threat from their cousin Paul Rosenwald, who visited the United States in 1935 to meet with the family on behalf of the plight of the German relatives and to seek their help. That same year, Fred Rosenwald, the first of the family members to arrive, further made it clear how treacherous the situation was and urged them to help rescue those still in Germany. The children's aunt Sophie Rosenwald Adler and her husband Max were also actively involved as was their son Robert, and later their son-in-law Leonard Sperry.

On their joint affidavits, the Rosenwalds succeeded in bringing all of their relatives from their father's side to the U.S. – altogether seventy-one individuals. Subsequently, they worked to bring over as many of their mother's Nussbaum/Norman relatives as possible, and in this they were joined by Edward Norman and the Nussbaum aunts and cousins. Another forty-six relatives were saved and came to the United States on their affidavits, and sixty-two came on affidavits submitted by other relatives or friends though funded by the Rosenwalds. There were affidavits submitted for another twenty-seven relatives who were unable to obtain U.S. visas and perished during the Holocaust. There was also an effort on behalf of thirty-seven relatives to immigrate to countries other than the U.S., but only seven of these relatives survived. They also provided nine Nussbaum family relatives who survived the war with affidavits to immigrate to the U.S. In total, nearly three hundred individuals who had a connection to the extended family were aided.

The German Relatives Program extended generous assistance beyond submission of affidavits and U.S. immigration assistance to include: payment of transportation, arrangements for living expenses, education, vocational counseling, employment referrals and business loans, language training, help with naturalization applications, medical assistance, emergency assistance, and ongoing budgetary help on an as-needed basis. All of this was organized by the Rosenwald family children, with first William Rosenwald as administrator and then Marion Rosenwald Ascoli. The "Assistance Fund" continued its support until 2004 when the last of the relatives receiving aid passed away.

In addition to the directed emigration efforts, there was also the Refugee Transportation Fund which was established in 1940-41 by the Rosenwalds with \$200,000 for Refugee Transportation on behalf of immigrants other than their German relatives. By 23 May 1941, 1,496 individuals were helped through

this program. The Rosenwalds also hired social workers to assist with resettlement efforts. Jacob Kravitz was hired in 1936, and Max Perlman soon took over until he was drafted in January 1943. In addition, Ilse Windmueller, a recent immigrant herself, served as the bi-lingual secretary for William Rosenwald beginning in March 1936. Ilse assumed additional responsibilities after Max Perlman was inducted into the Army. She continued to work until early 1949 and then occasionally was consulted by the Rosenwalds. With the help of the Rosenwald family, Ilse was able to rescue members of her own family.

Biography by Grace Cohen Grossmann and Adam Fielding, 2017

Scope and content of collection

The collection contains affidavits, correspondence, reports, financial documents, and similar materials documenting the philanthropic activities of the children of late Sears, Roebuck and Company president Julius Rosenwald. Referred to as the "German Relatives Program," their activities enabled numerous members of the Rosenwald and Nussbaum families, members of their extended relatives, and numerous others emigrate from Germany and escape anti-Semitic persecution in the late 1930s. The records also document the financial and other material support provided by the project to those whom they had helped immigrate, assistance that in some cases lasted for decades after their arrival.

Series 1 consists of a set of bound affidavits for relatives in 1936. They are organized by which consulate they were sent: Berlin, Hamburg, and Stuttgart. There is a table of contents and set of master documents for each consulate.

Series 2 consists of the organizational files of the rescue effort, referred to as the "German Relatives Program" and later the "Assistance Program." Included here are reports, project histories, family trees, financial documents, and restitution claims. Correspondence and memorandums are mixed in with the files. The reports contain detailed information about the general political situation, budgets and costs, and brief reports on individual families. The payment files contain correspondence and financial information documenting the post-war financial assistance given to relatives. The bulk of the files document payments made in 1981 through 2004, when the last relative receiving financial aid, Rosel Wertheimer, passed away.

Series 3 contains correspondence, primarily from 1981-1993, regarding the assistance program. Included is correspondence from Rosel Wertheimer and Selma Kaufmann, and Herbert and Ilse Wolff, some of the last recipients of the program.

System of arrangement

The collection is arranged as three series:

Series 1: Affidavits, 1936

Series 2: Assistance program files, 1934-2006

Series 3: Correspondence, 1981-2001

The collection retains the donor's arrangement with some exceptions. Folder titles are arranged alphabetically, and documents are arranged chronologically. The affidavits are arranged by German consulate and retains the donor's numerical order.

Indexing terms

Person:

Rosenwald, Julius, 1862-1932.

Rosenwald, William.
 Rosenwald, Lessing.
 Levy, Adele Rosenwald.
 Stern, Edith Rosenwald.
 Ascoli, Marion Rosenwald.
 Ascoli, Peter.
 Farrell, Marion.

Topical Subject:
 Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)—Reparations
 Jewish refugees--United States.
 Jews--Germany.
 Philanthropists--United States.
 World War, 1939-1945--Jews--Rescue.

Geography:
 United States--Emigration and immigration--20th century.

Genre/Form:
 Affidavits.
 Correspondence.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Affidavits, 1936

Box	Folder	Title
		Berlin consulate:
1	1	Table of contents
1	2	Master documents
1	3	Hirsch, Hermann
1	4	Reisner, Sophie, Gerda, and Kurt
1	5	Reisner, Hans and Ilse
1	6	Rosenwald, Gustav and Anna
1	7	Rosenwald, Hans Hermann
1	8	Plaut, Ernst and Edith
1	9	Rosenwald, Paul, Margarethe, and Heinz
1	10	Löwenthal, Egon, Herbert, and Erika
		Hamburg consulate:
1	11	Table of contents
1	12	Master documents
1	13	Schloss, Käthe, Otto, Hanna, and Hans; Rosenwald, Emma
1	14	Schwarz, Richard, Bertha, Gertrud, and Magrit
1	15	Münchhausen, Otto, Margarete, Edith, and Vera; Hirsch, Thekla
2	1	Friedheim, Alfred
		Stuttgart consulate:
2	2	Table of contents
2	3	Master documents

2	4	Cahn, Hugo, Hilde, and Ilse
2	5	Hirsch, Otto, Else, and Ursel
2	6	Hirsch, Erich
2	7	Bach, Alfred, Betty, Günther Paul, David, Ida
2	8	Lange, Käthe, Paul, and Herbert
2	9	Ferber, Trude, Herbert, and Harold
2	10	Archenhold, Regine
2	11	Rosenwald, Julius and Julie
2	12	Rosenwald, Bernd
2	13	Friedheim, Alfred, Grete, and Ursula
3	1	Friedheim, Grete and Ursula
3	2	Rosenwald, Otto, Elfriede, Helene Gussi, and Simon
3	3	Rosenwald, Ernst and Gertrud
6	1	Affidavit binder (empty)

Series 2: Assistance program files, 1934-2006

Box	Folder	Title
3	4	Administrative files, 1934-1935
3	5	Administrative files, 1946-1952
3	6	Family trees, 1952-1983 and undated
3	7	List of family members, 1982
3	8	Neurath, Hans, 1934-1935
OS	1	
3	9	Nussbaum relatives index, 1942
		Payments:
3	10	1946-1951
3	11	1981
3	12	1982
3	13	1983
3	14	1984
3	15	1985-1986
3	16	1987
3	17	1988
3	18	1989
3	19	1990
3	20	1991
3	21	1992
3	22	1993
4	1	1994
4	2	1995
4	3	1996
4	4	1997
4	5	1998
4	6	1999
4	7	2000
4	8	2001-2006

		Reports:
4	9	1936-1938
4	10	1939
4	11	1940
4	12	1941
4	13	1948
4	14	1948 (photocopies)
5	1-2	Restitution claims, 1957-1958 (2 folders)
5	3	Rosenwald-Norman agreements and amendments, 1936-1945

Series 3: Correspondence, 1981-2001

Box	Folder	Title
5	4	Friedman, Lester A., 1983-1984
5	5	Kaufmann, Selma, 1981-1993
5	6	Rothenberg, Steven, 1981-1983
5	7	Shimon, Raphael, 1985
5	8	Sperling, William and Margret, 1981-1985
5	9	Wertheimer, Rosel, 1981-2001
5	10	Wolff, Herbert and Ilse, 1981-1984