

ELLEN KAUFMANN BOUCHER PAPERS, approximately 1900-2014 2018.38.2

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

Title: Ellen Kaufmann Boucher papers

Dates: approximately 1900-2014

Accession number: 2018.38.2

Creator: Boucher, Ellen Kaufmann, 1920-2014

Extent: 0.5 linear feet (5 folders)

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

Abstract: The Ellen Kaufmann Boucher papers include Holocaust-era and postwar correspondence addressed to Ellen in the United States from family and friends in Europe, the memoir Ellen drafted between 1988 and her death, prewar and wartime photographs of her family in Mainz, Germany, and a transcript of an interview she gave in 1995.

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), Ellen Kaufmann Boucher papers (2018.38.2), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Anita Boucher, Ellen Kaufmann Boucher's daughter, donated the Ellen Kaufmann Boucher papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2018. The accessions formerly cataloged as 2018.38.1 and 2018.62.1 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: Julie Schweitzer, October 2018

Biographical note

Ellen Kaufmann Boucher (1920-2014) was born to Hermann (1882-1942) and Ella (née Barth, 1890-1920) Kaufmann in Mainz, Germany. Hermann Kaufmann, a veteran of WWI, was the proprietor of a dry goods store in the city. Ellen's mother died in childbirth, and her father Hermann married Else Wallach (1896-1942) in 1924. Ellen's sister Marianne (affectionately called 'Peter') was born in 1926. Throughout the 1930s the Kaufmann family endured hardships brought on by anti-Semitic Nazi strictures, including the loss of Hermann's shop which he was forced to close. When Jewish children were prohibited from attending local public schools in Mainz, Ellen and Marianne began attending Jewish schools, including the orthodox Bondi-Schule. In 1937 arrangements were made for Ellen to emigrate from Germany with her maternal grandmother Amalie Barth. The pair were to join relatives who had previously fled Germany and settled in the United States. Ellen remained in contact with her parents and sister until 1942. She provided affidavits for them, but their quota numbers were very high. In the fall of 1942 Ellen received word from a friend in Switzerland that they, as well as other loved ones, had been deported. The following year Ellen joined the Women's Army Corps. She was later assigned the Military Intelligence Training Center at Camp Ritchie and worked in the unit responsible for training servicemen on the interrogation of German POWs. During this time Ellen met Melville Boucher. In 1946 the couple were married at Camp Ritchie. In the following years Ellen and Melville traveled the world and raised three children while living abroad.

Scope and content of collection

The Ellen Kaufmann Boucher papers include Holocaust-era and postwar correspondence addressed to Ellen in the United States from family and friends in Europe, the memoir Ellen drafted between 1988 and her death, prewar and wartime photographs of her family in Mainz, Germany, and a transcript of an interview she gave in 1995.

Holocaust-era letters are addressed to Ellen primarily from her parents and sister Marianne in Mainz and relates family news and good wishes. A letter from a friend of Marianne's in Montevideo describes an opportunity for Marianne to immigrate to Uruguay. A letter from a family friend in Switzerland alerts Ellen to her grandmother's deportation to Theresienstadt and her parents' and sister's deportation elsewhere. Postwar letters are addressed to Ellen from relatives and friends in Switzerland, France, and Germany and describe the deportation of her family and the Holocaust fates of other relatives and friends.

Ellen's memoir describes her childhood in Germany, the effects of anti-Semitic measures passed by the Nazi regime, immigrating to the United States with her grandmother, acclimating to America, learning increasingly bad news from her family in Germany, joining the Women's Army Corps, working at Camp Ritchie, marrying her husband, and living and traveling all over the world. The memoirs include several reproduced family photographs.

Photographs depict Ellen's aunt Hedwig around 1900; an aunt, uncle, and cousins around 1930; her uncle Ludwig in 1936; Ellen with her sister and parents in 1937; Marianne with her classmates in August 1939; Marianne in 1940; Ellen's aunt and uncle, Emma Kaufmann David and Hermann David; and a family portrait of Ellen's parents, sister, uncle Ludwig Wallach, and grandmother Nanni Wallach.

The interview transcript documents an interview conducted by Angela Barrington with Ellen in response to a Holocaust denier. The interview was aired on cable television in Canandaigua, New York in 1995 and covers Ellen's childhood in Germany, anti-Semitic measures enacted by the Nazis, the loss of her father's business, her immigration to the United States, and the deportations and deaths of her family members.

System of arrangement

The Ellen Kaufmann Boucher papers are arranged as a single series.

Indexing terms

Boucher, Ellen Kaufmann, 1920-2014.

Jews--Germany--Mainz (Rhineland-Palatinate)--History.

Holocaust victims--Germany.

Jewish refugees--United States.

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Personal narratives.

Holocaust survivors--Interviews.

Mainz (Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany)

Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Ellen Kaufmann Boucher papers, approximately 1900-2014

Folder	Title
1 of 5	Correspondence, Holocaust-era, 1938-1942
2 of 5	Correspondence, postwar, 1945-1948
3 of 5	<i>Granny's memoirs</i> , by Ellen Kaufmann Boucher, approximately 1988-2014
4 of 5	Photographs, approximately 1900-1942
5 of 5	<i>Remembering the Holocaust</i> , interview transcript, 1995