

<https://collections.ushmm.org>  
Contact [reference@ushmm.org](mailto:reference@ushmm.org) for further information about this collection

**GOLDMANN FAMILY PAPERS, 1876-1974**  
**2018.639.32**

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

**Descriptive summary**

Title: Goldmann family papers

Dates: 1876-1974

Accession number: 2018.639.32

Creator: Goldmann (Family: Eschwege, Germany)

Extent: 5.75 linear feet (11 boxes and 8 oversize folders)

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

Abstract: The Goldmann family papers consist of correspondence, biographical records, immigration documents, school notes and records, photographs, and military documents relating to Kurt Goldmann's prewar life in Germany, immigration to the United States in 1939, experience as a student at the Pennsylvania State University, service in the United States Army during WWII, and his postwar life in the United States. Also included are documents related to Kurt's parents, Paul and Hedwig (Hede) Goldmann, and their emigration from Germany to England and the United States, as well as prewar documents relating to the family business dating back to 1876.

Languages: German, English, Czech

**Administrative Information**

Access: There are no known restrictions on access to this material.

Reproduction and use: The donor, source institution, or a third party has asserted copyright over some or all of the material(s) in this collection. You do not require further permission from the Museum to use this material. The user is solely responsible for making a determination as to if and how the material may be used.

Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Goldmann family papers (2018.639.32), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

<https://collections.ushmm.org>

Contact [reference@ushmm.org](mailto:reference@ushmm.org) for further information about this collection

Acquisition information: Richard Goldmann, Nancy Goldmann Peller, and Hilary Goldmann, the children of Kurt Goldmann, donated the Goldmann family papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2018. The collections previously numbered 2018.660.1 and 2018.639.1 have been incorporated into this collection.

Related material: The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum also holds several objects relating to the Goldmann family including a paper bag (2018.639.31), coins (2018.639.4-.30), a prayer book (2018.639.2), and a wallet (2018.639.3).

Processing history: Morgan Voth, September 2023

### **Biographical note**

Kurt Goldmann (1921-2003) was born in Eschwege, Germany on September 8, 1921 to Paul (1883-1958) and Hedwig "Hede" (née Baum, 1892-1959) Goldmann. Paul was the son of Philipp (1845-1933) and Franziska (née, Levy, 1862-1891) Goldmann. Paul was the proprietor of the family business, named for his grandfather Jacob Goldmann (1807-1887), which was established in Eschwege in 1880, though the first family store dates back to the 1600s.

After the boycott of Jewish businesses, some customers continued to shop at the store, but the family was eventually forced to sell. In 1937, Eli Messerschmidt, a man whom Paul had a good relationship with, purchased the store. The sale was for a very diminished price, and Eli Messerschmidt paid the Goldmann family additional money after the war. Around the same time, Paul and Hede decided to leave Germany. Two of Hede's sisters, Gusti Baum (later Meyer) and Nellie Baum (later Scheurenberg), already immigrated to the United States.

As they prepared to leave, Kurt was enrolled at several schools including Stadtische Technische Lehranstalt in Bodenbach where he met Walter "Mike" Michael and became close friends. Late in the summer of 1938, with fears of the annexation of Sudetenland, Kurt and Mike left for Prague. After attempts to go to Amsterdam and Sweden, they were told by the Finnish consulate that they did not need a visa, but could stay on a permit for three months. They secured flights to Helsinki, with a stop in Poland. Kurt and Mike left Poland in September 1938. Once in Finland, Kurt went to the American consulate in Helsinki and learned that he needed an affidavit to obtain a visa to the United States. With the support of his aunts, Kurt obtained a visa in January 1939. He took a train to Stockholm, then Gothenburg, and sailed aboard the SS Gripsholm, arriving in New York on January 30, 1939.

Paul and Hede also applied for visas and received a quota number at the consulate in Stuttgart, but the wait list was long. After Kristallnacht, Paul was arrested and taken to Buchenwald. He remained in Buchenwald for a month before being released and allowed to return home. Paul and Hede left for England in August 1939 to await their visas and in October 1943 they arrived in New York.

After his arrival in New York, Kurt contacted the International Student Service and received a scholarship to the Pennsylvania State University. Kurt enlisted in the military in 1942 and served in the Army Air Force overseas as a staff sergeant. While in the military Kurt submitted his Petition of Naturalization in 1943. He briefly changed his name to Godann, which is reflected on his Certificate of Naturalization.

After the war, Kurt was reunited with his parents. He enrolled in MIT and received a Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering. Paul's sister, Edith Doernberg, and her daughter did not survive and Kurt's cousin, Richard Goldmann, was killed in a concentration camp. Two of Kurt's older cousins, Alfred and

<https://collections.ushmm.org>

Contact [reference@ushmm.org](mailto:reference@ushmm.org) for further information about this collection

Edgar Weil, sons of Paul Goldmann's sister Hedwig and her husband Edward, immigrated to South Africa. Kurt married Gladys Henigson Gilder (1930-2016) in 1955 and had three children: Nancy Edith Goldmann Peller (b. 1957); Richard Paul Goldmann (b. 1958) and Hilary Goldmann (b. 1964).

### **Scope and content of collection**

The Goldmann family papers consist of correspondence, biographical records, immigration documents, school notes and records, photographs, and military documents relating to Kurt Goldmann's prewar life in Germany, immigration to the United States in 1939, experience as a student at Pennsylvania State University, service in the United States Army during WWII, and his postwar life in the United States. Also included are documents related to Kurt's parents, Paul and Hedwig (Hede) Goldmann, and their emigration from Germany to England and the United States, as well as prewar documents relating to the family business dating back to 1876.

Jacob Goldmann store records include price lists, memos, receipts, vendor information, and postcards relating to the business from the late 1800s to the early 1900s, as well as correspondence between Eli Messerschmidt and the Goldmann family relating to selling the store in 1937 and a postwar settlement. Also included are photographs from the 75th anniversary of the store in 1955 and a wartime photograph of Eli Messerschmidt and his family.

Paul and Hedwig Goldmann documents include identification cards, verified marriage and birth certificates, documents needed to leave Germany, immigration correspondence and documentation, certification of military service for Paul, and certificates of naturalization. Correspondence includes letters mainly from Paul and Hedwig in Germany, England, and New York to their son, Kurt.

Kurt Goldmann's school records include geometry notes, school reports, correspondence, applications, and schedules relating to his acceptance and attendance at the Pennsylvania State College, as well as documents relating to the International Student Service. Biographical material includes a family narrative from 1943, certificates of vaccination and residence, identification cards, a birth certificate, a certificate of naturalization, and information relating to a Shoah interview. Military records include identification cards, selective service notifications, and discharge papers. Employment records include correspondence from Kurt and companies highlighting the difficulty of finding work before becoming a U.S. citizen, including being denied positions he was qualified for. Correspondence mainly includes letters, including V-Mail, from Kurt to his parents after he immigrated to the United States and during his time at college and in the military, as well as letters from his aunt Nellie, who provided his affidavit, his aunt Gusti, and his close friend, Walter "Mike" Michael. The series also includes copies of correspondence found elsewhere in the series and three reports written while Kurt was in college reflecting on growing up in Germany.

The Goldmann family series includes general correspondence sent to and from members of the Goldmann family and the extended family, including the Levy and Weil families, biographical material for Philipp and Franziska Goldmann, and a wartime photograph of Kurt and two postwar photographs of members of the Goldmann family. The series also includes stamps, empty envelopes from correspondence in the collection, and blank postcards and envelopes.

### **System of arrangement**

The Goldmann family papers is arranged as four series:

Series 1: Jacob Goldmann store, 1876-1955 and undated

Series 2: Paul and Hedwig Goldmann, 1891-1960

Series 3: Kurt Goldmann, 1921-1974

Series 4: Goldmann family, circa 1881-1961 and undated

**Indexing terms**

**Corporate**

Gripsholm (Ocean liner)

**Topical terms**

Jewish refugees--United States--Correspondence.

Soldiers--United States--Correspondence.

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

**Geographic terms**

Eschwege (Germany)

Helsinki (Finland)

Sussex (England)

New York (N.Y)

United States--Emigration and immigration--History.

**Genre terms**

Correspondence.

Newspapers.

Photographs.

**CONTAINER LIST**

**Series 1: Jacob Goldmann store, 1876-1955 and undated**

<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
1.1-1.7 2.1-2.7	Correspondence, 1876-1937 (14 folders)
3.1-3.6	Jacob Goldmann, 1876-circa 1880 (6 folders)
3.7-3.9, OS 2	Price lists, 1887-1886 (3 folders)
3.10, OS 1	Photographs, circa 1947-circa 1955 (negatives)
4.1-4.3	Messerschmidt, Eli 1939-1955 (3 folders)
4.4	Fabric sample, undated

**Series 2: Paul and Hedwig Goldmann, 1891-1960**

<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
4.5-4.6	Biographical material, 1891-1973 (2 folders)
4.7-4.9	Correspondence from Germany, 1920-1939 (3 folders)
4.10-4.11	Correspondence from England, 1939-1943 (2 folders)
5.1-5.5	Correspondence from New York, 1946-1960 (5 folders)
5.6	General correspondence, 1948-1958
5.7-5.8	Empty envelopes, circa 1920-circa 1960

**Series 3: Kurt Goldmann, 1921-1974**

Folder	Description
5.9-5.10	Biographical material, 1921-1943 (2 folders)
6.1-6.5, OS 6	Immigration, 1937-1946 (5 folders)
6.6, OS 3	Military records, 1942-1949
6.7-6.8	Employment, 1941-1974 (2 folders)
6.9-6.10	Work Camps for America, 1939-1941 (2 folders)
6.11	International Student Service, 1942
7.1-7.4, OS 4, OS 5, OS 7	Pennsylvania State College, 1939-1946 (4 folders)
7.5	School records, 1937-1946
7.6-7.14, 8.1	Geometry notes, circa 1940 (10 folders)
8.2	Empton, 1938-1945
8.3-8.5	Goldmann, Paul and Hedwig, 1939-1957 (3 folders)
8.6	Meyer, Gusti, 1938-1949
8.7	Michael, Walter, 1938-1941
8.8-8.9	Scheurenberg, Nellie, 1938-1970 (2 folders)
8.10	Stein, Brigitte, 1939-1944
9.1-9.10	General correspondence, circa 1935-circa 1955 (10 folders)
10.1-10.7	Copies of correspondence, 1938-1949 (7 folders)

**Series 4: Goldmann family, circa 1881-1961 and undated**

Folder	Description
10.8	Goldmann, Philipp and Franziska, circa 1882-1933
10.9	Goldmann family correspondence, 1888-1938
10.10	Goldmann, Philipp correspondence, 1882-1932
10.11	Levy family correspondence, 1887-1902
10.12	Weil family correspondence, 1921-1961
11.1-11.5	General correspondence, 1881-circa 1960 (5 folders)
11.6	Photographs, circa 1931-1958
OS 8	Newspapers, 1940-1955
11.7	Blank postcards, undated
11.8	Stamps, undated