

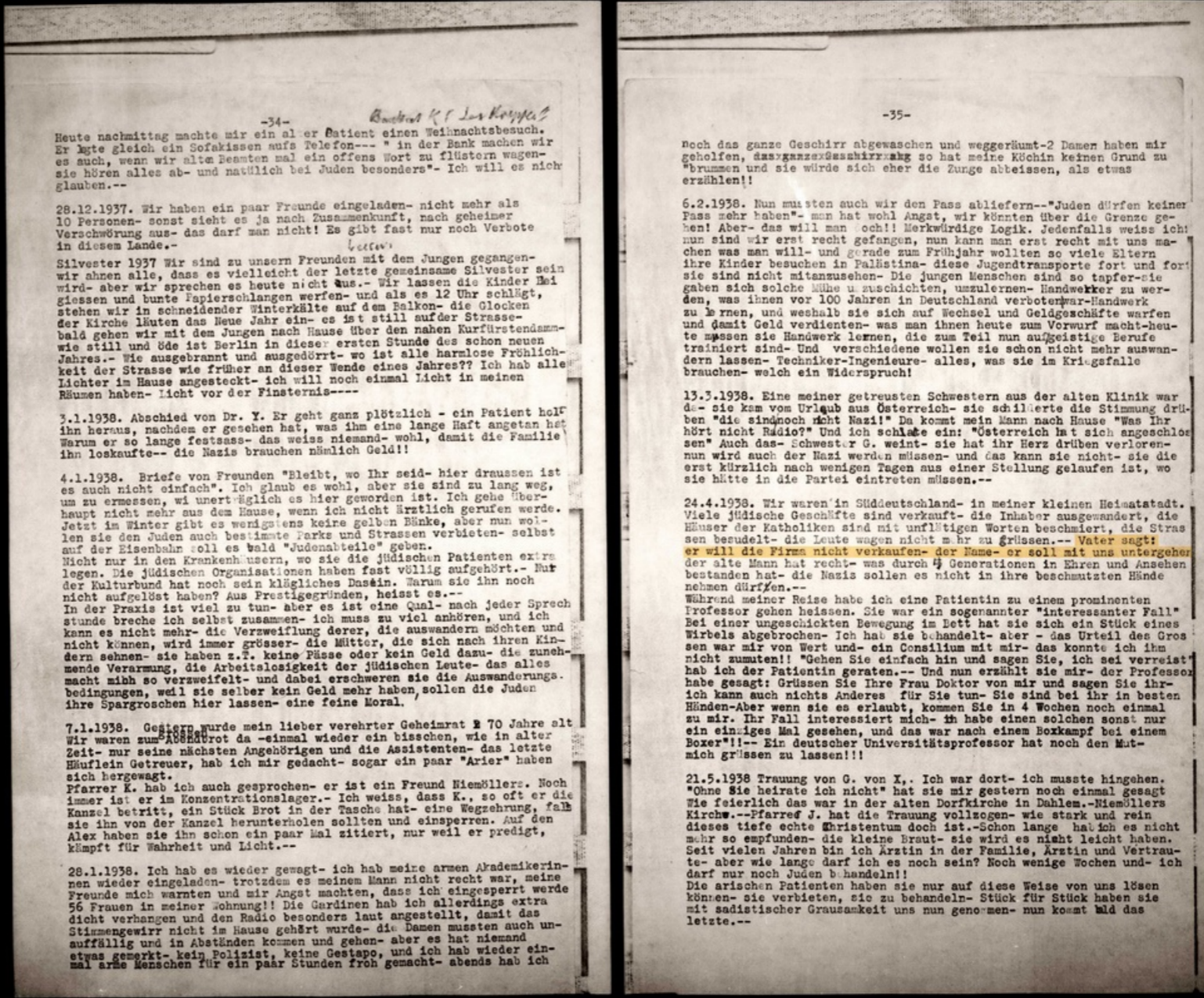
24. APRIL

ZURÜCK ZUR CHRONIK

SONNTAG



Interesse an wöchentlichen Updates? Email eingeben



- TEILEN: Facebook, Twitter, Email, Instagram

„Vater sagt, er will die Firma nicht verkaufen. Der Name, er soll mit uns untergehen [...]“

QUELLE: Leo Baeck Institute - New York | Berlin | Hertha Nathorff, Memoir, Reichstagsbrandt, ME 460.

LAUPHEIM

Das Tagebuch Dr. Hertha Nathorffs (geb. Einstein) vermittelt ein lebendiges und manchmal alptraumhaftes Bild von den Erfahrungen der jüdischen Ärztin in Nazi-Deutschland. Am 24. April beschreibt sie einen Besuch bei ihren Eltern in ihrem Geburtsort Laupheim in Schwaben: Viele jüdische Geschäfte waren verkauft worden, ihre Besitzer emigriert. Die Bemühungen der Nazis, die Juden zu verleumden und zu isolieren, waren so erfolgreich gewesen, dass die Vorübergehenden Angst hatten, sie zu grüßen. Ihr Vater hatte ihr mitgeteilt, er werde die Firma, seit vier Generationen im Familienbesitz, nicht verkaufen, sondern lieber mit ihrem Namen untergehen. Das Ausmaß der Isolation, der deutsche Juden ausgesetzt waren, geht auch aus einer Episode hervor, die im selben Eintrag erwähnt wird: Dr. Nathorff ist überrascht, dass ihr ehemaliger Professor tatsächlich den Mut hatte, ihr durch eine Patientin Grüße ausrichten zu lassen.

GESTERN UND DIE TAGE ZUVOR

23. APRIL



22. APRIL



21. APRIL





Handout

Our name should perish with us. A Jewish physician describes a nightmarish visit to her hometown

April 24, 1938: Berlin based physician Hertha Nathorff visits her hometown and notes the startling changes in the once familiar surroundings.

Topics

Discrimination; marginalization; emigration; medical profession

Source

<https://www.lbi.org/1938projekt/detail/our-name-should-perish-with-us/>

Type: Diary (typescript)

Date: April 24, 1938

LAUPHEIM

The diary of Dr. Hertha Nathorff (née Einstein) paints a vivid and at times nightmarish picture of the Jewish physician's experiences in Nazi Germany. On April 24, she describes a visit with her parents in her native Laupheim in Swabia. Many Jewish shops had been sold, and their owners had emigrated. The Nazis' efforts to malign and isolate the Jews had been so successful that passers-by were afraid to greet her. Her father had informed her that he was not going to sell the company which had been in the family's possession for four generations and that he would prefer that it perish along with their name. The degree of isolation experienced by German Jews at the time is also evident in another episode mentioned in the diary: Dr. Nathorff is amazed at the fact that her former professor had the courage to send her regards through a patient.

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Background Information

Biographical information

Hertha Nathorff was born in 1895. In 1923 she was appointed as director of a children’s home and baby nursery run by the Red Cross in Berlin Charlottenburg, and her husband, Erich, was an internist and senior physician at the Moabit Hospital. Additionally, the couple had a private practice. Shortly after the Nazis came to power, both lost their positions. Until then Hertha Nathorff has been the first and only female member of Berlin’s Medical Chamber. The married couple maintained their joint practice until September 1938, when the licenses of all Jewish physicians were revoked. Erich Nathorff was among the few Jewish physicians who were allowed to tend to the needs of Jewish patients as so-called “caretakers of the sick.” He was arrested at the November Pogroms and incarcerated at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp leaving Hertha Nathorff to fend for herself and take care of the family’s emigration. She sent her son on a Kindertransport to England and managed to obtain US visa for her husband and herself. In 1939 they arrived in London from where they continued to New York. Although the family escaped, neither Erich nor Hertha were able to continue their successful medical career as their degrees weren’t recognized in the US. Hertha Nathorff never returned to Germany and died in 1993 in New York.

Further information

Hertha Nathorff’s German memoir can be accessed through DigiBaeck:

Hertha Nathorff, Memoir, Reichstagsbrandt, ME 460

<http://www.lbi.org/digibaek/results/?qtype=pid&term=423505>

Analyzing source material

- *What kind of source is depicted?*
- *When does it date from?*
- *Where was it written?*
- *For which audience?*
- *From which perspective is the story told?*
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ZURÜCK ZUR CHRONIK

26. SEPTEMBER

Interesse an wöchentlichen Updates?

Email eingeben

26

MONTAG

„WIR WANDERN AUS.“

Ein neues Jahr, ein neuer Start



TEILEN



HAMBURG

Ob sich die Schwestern Helen und Eva Hesse irgendwann noch an das diesjährige Rosch Haschana erinnern würden können? Für ihre Eltern Wilhelm und Ruth Hesse jedenfalls war das Neujahrsfest 1938 eine Zäsur. Die Familie hatte die Entscheidung gefasst, aus Hamburg auszuwandern. Helen war zu diesem Zeitpunkt fünf Jahre alt, ihre kleine Schwester Eva gerade einmal zwei. Ihr Vater führte in dieser Zeit ein Tagebuch für seine beiden Töchter. Den Eintrag zu Rosch Haschana 5699 überschrieb er mit großen, gedruckten Lettern: „Wir wandern aus“, das „Motiv“ des diesjährigen Neujahrsfestes, wie Wilhelm handschriftlich ergänzte. Seine Töchter sollten bis dahin allerdings möglichst sorgenfrei leben. Dass es ihren Eltern ganz anders ging, wird zum Ende des Tagesbucheintrages klar. Dort schrieb Wilhelm Hesse: „Später werden sie sich mal wundern, was ihre Eltern in diesen Zeiten alles ertragen mussten. Wir wandern aus.“

QUELLE

Leo Baeck Institute – New York | Berlin [↗](#)
Sammlung Helen und Eva Hesse Familie, AR 25327 [↗](#)
Archivbox 1, Ordner 3

GESTERN UND DIE TAGE ZUVOR

25. SEPTEMBER

FLIESSEND ENGLISCH!

7. SEPTEMBER

STAATENLOS DIE EINEN, TATENLOS VON DACHAU NACH DIE ANDEREN

23. SEPTEMBER

BUCHENWALD





Handout

“We’re emigrating.” A new year, a new start: Family Hesse from Hamburg

September 26, 1938: The Hamburg lawyer Wilhelm Hesse recorded a grave resolution for the Jewish New Year in 1938: he and his young family would join the thousands of German Jews who were leaving their homes behind in hope of finding safety abroad.

Topics

Jewish Holidays: Rosh Hashanah 5699; emigration; family biography; Hamburg region

Source

<https://www.lbi.org/1938projekt/detail/we-are-emigrating/>

Type: Diary, Photographs, Collage

Date: September 26, 1938

HAMBURG

Would the sisters Helen and Eva Hesse remember this year’s Rosh Hashanah someday? For their parents, Wilhelm and Ruth Hesse, the new year’s celebration of 1938 was a break with tradition. The family had made the decision to emigrate from Hamburg. Helen was five years old at this point in time. Her little sister Eva had just turned two. Their father kept a diary for both his daughters during this period. Over the entry for Rosh Hashana 5699 in large, typeprinted letters are the words: “We’re emigrating,” the theme of this year’s new year celebration. The rest of the entry Wilhelm wrote by hand. Until then, however, he wanted his daughters’ lives to be as carefree as possible. That it went very differently for their parents is clear at the end of the diary entry. There Wilhelm Hesse wrote: “Later they’ll be amazed what their parents had to suffer in these times. We’re emigrating.”

Transcript

“We’re emigrating—that is the theme of Rosh Hashanah this year. The children still don’t know anything. Helen only knows that her friends are moving to America, Africa, Holland, Palestine, etc..., and she knows more “Geography” than even much older children used to know. Thank God the children have no worries. Later they will be amazed at all their parents had to endure in these times. We are emigrating.”

“Leshana tovah tikatevu (לשנה טובה תכתבי)”: May you be inscribed for a good year.

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Background Information

Glossary

Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year. The Hebrew term signifies “head of the year”. Rosh Hashanah is part of the High Holidays, the most important Jewish Holidays. Typical greetings for Rosh Hashanah are: “Shana Tovah” (a good year) , “Shana Tovah Umetukah” (a good and sweet year) and “Leshana tovah tikatevu” (May you be inscribed [in the Book of Life] for a good year).

Biographical information

Wilhelm Hesse was the son of an Orthodox Jewish businessman. A lawyer with a doctorate, Hesse had been laid off already in April 1933. He resided in Hamburg with his wife Ruth and his two little daughters, Helen and Eva. Wilhelm Hesse was a loving and profoundly involved father. Since the births of his daughters, Helen (pictured, b. 1933) and Eva (b. 1936), he had meticulously documented the girls’ development in diaries which he kept for them. In addition to little texts and poems he composed, he included numerous photographs as well as material referring to Jewish holidays. Occasionally, the frequently humorous, sometimes even childlike tone is interrupted by material documenting the political situation, such as a call by Rabbi Leo Baeck for Jewish unity and solidarity in the name of the Reich Representation of German Jews. The photographs, newspaper clippings and notes provide information about the life of the young family in the shadow of Nazi dictatorship. But Helen and her sister Eva were lucky enough to be too young to grasp what was looming around them. The daughters were sent unaccompanied on a Kindertransport to England, and the family was reunited in London the following year. From there, they migrated to the United States, where Eva Hesse became a sculptor and one of the leading figures of the “Process Art” movement.

Further information

Further information as well as additional source material can be accessed through the English finding aids:
Guide to the Papers of the Helen and Eva Hesse Family 1882-1956 AR 25327 / MF 979
<http://diqifindingaids.cjh.org/?pID=347022>

Analyzing source material

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Additional sample Questions

What do you know about Jewish Holidays? (or if previous knowledge exists: How is Rosh Hashanah celebrated? Why does one eat apples and honey on Rosh Hashanah?)

What do you know about emigration? Are there differences or similarities to today's situation? How would you describe your own everyday life?

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ZURÜCK ZUR CHRONIK

20. NOVEMBER

Interesse an wöchentlichen Updates?

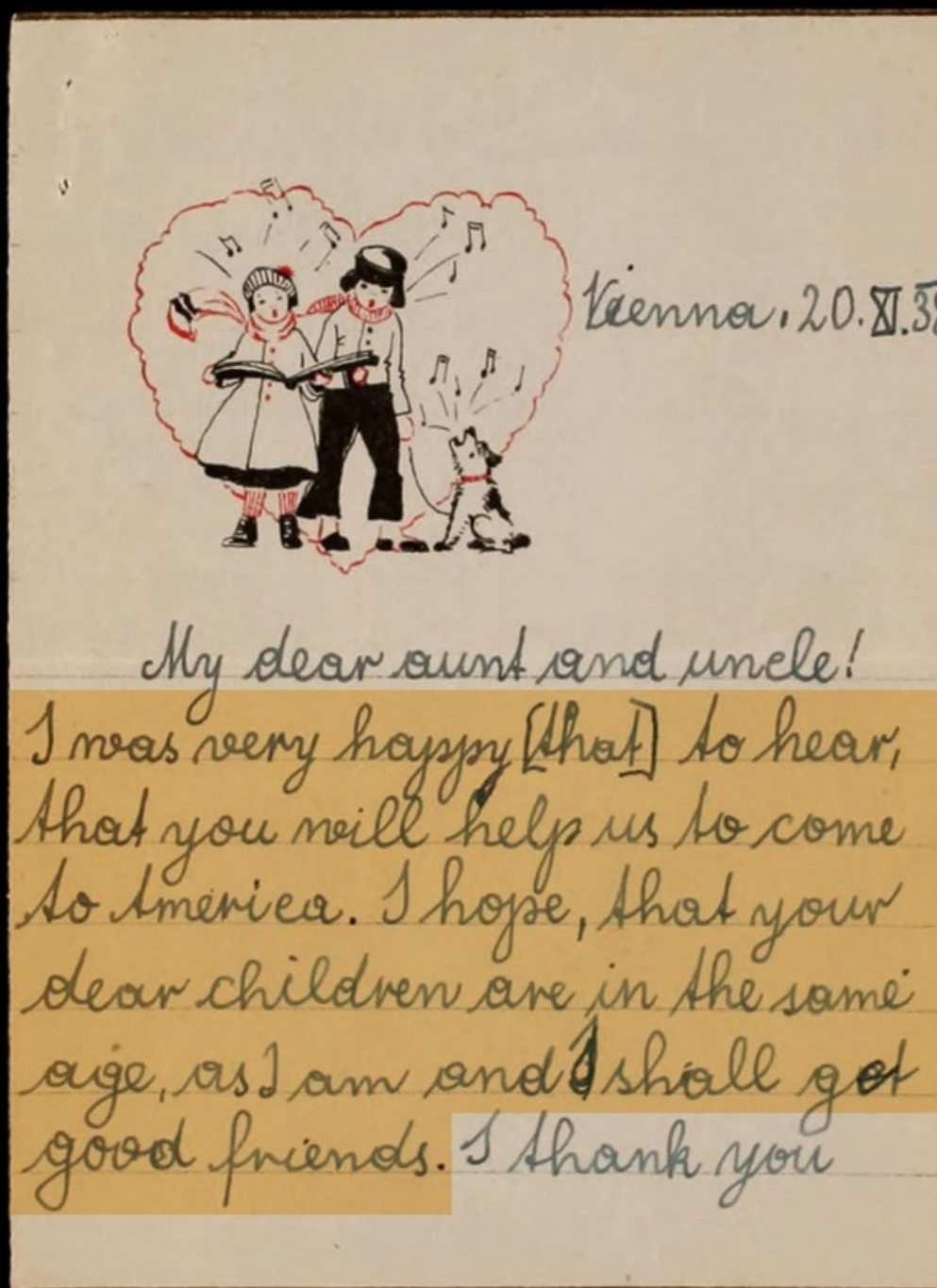
Email eingeben

20

SONNTAG

NEUE HOFFNUNG AUF HILFE

Die Feldsteins in Wien hoffen auf Hilfe von den Feldsteins in Los Angeles



TEILEN



„Es hat mich sehr gefreut zu hören, dass Sie uns helfen werden, nach Amerika zu kommen. Ich hoffe Ihre Kinder sind im selben Alter wie ich, und ich werde gute Freunde haben.“

WIEN/LOS ANGELES

19 Jahre lang hatte Fritz Feldstein zur vollsten Zufriedenheit seiner Vorgesetzten bei einer Wiener Bank gearbeitet. Doch 1938, nachdem Deutschland das benachbarte Österreich annektiert hatte, verlor er seine Stelle. Am 5. Juli ließ sich die Familie beim Amerikanischen Generalkonsulat registrieren, aber zur Einwanderung wurden Bürgschaften benötigt. Nach Monaten zutiefst beunruhigender politischer Veränderungen wagte Fritz Feldstein einen ungewöhnlichen Schritt: Am 16. Oktober wandte er sich an einen Julius Feldstein in Los Angeles, von dem er hoffte, er sei ein Verwandter, und appellierte an "die wohlbekannte amerikanische Hilfsbereitschaft". Bald entwickelte sich ein Briefaustausch, an dem auch Fritz' Ehefrau Martha und die gemeinsame Tochter Gerda beteiligt war. Die Elfjährige war nicht nur eine geschickte Klavierspielerin, sie hatte offenbar auch ein ausgesprochenes Sprachtalent: Am 20. November schreibt sie den Feldsteins zum ersten Mal – auf Englisch.

QUELLE

Leo Baeck Institute – New York | Berlin
Sammlung Fritz Feldstein Familie, AR 3250
Archivbox 1, Ordner 1

GESTERN UND DIE TAGE ZUVOR

19. NOVEMBER

VOM REGEN IN DIE TRAUFE

18. NOVEMBER

WO IST PAUL WEINER?

17. NOVEMBER

NO REPRIEVE

Handout***New hope for help: The Feldsteins in Vienna are hoping for help from the Feldsteins in Los Angeles***

November 20, 1938: Happiness and relief are reflected in this letter by little Gerda Feldstein to her uncle and aunt in Los Angeles, in which the 11-year-old thanks them for (seemingly) securing her family's move to the US.

Topics

“Kristallnacht”; “Anschluss”; Austria; USA; affidavits; emigration

Source

<https://www.lbi.org/1938projekt/detail/new-hope-for-help/>

Type: Letter

Date: November 20, 1938

VIENNA

For 19 years, Fritz Feldstein had been working at a bank in Vienna to the full satisfaction of his superiors. But, in 1938, after Nazi Germany annexed neighboring Austria, he lost his position. On July 5th, the family registered with the US consulate in Vienna, but for immigration, affidavits were needed. After months of deeply upsetting political changes, Fritz Feldstein ventured an unusual step. On Oct. 16th, he turned to a Julius Feldstein in Los Angeles who, he hoped, might be a relative, appealing to “the well-known American readiness to help.” Soon, a correspondence developed, also involving Fritz’s wife, Martha, and their daughter, Gerda. The 11-year-old was not only a skillful piano player, she obviously also had a knack for languages. On November 20th, she writes to the Feldsteins in California for the first time – in English.

Transcript

“My dear aunt and uncle!

I was very happy [that] to hear, that you will help us to come to America. I hope, that your dear children are in the same age, as I am and I shall get good friends. I thank you very much and I am with kindest regards yours

sincerely

Gerda Feldstein”

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Background Information

Glossary

Affidavit: An affidavit is a written sworn statement and was primarily required in order to emigrate to the US. By issuing an affidavit, the residing relatives or acquaintances assured to vouch for those persons whom they named and support them financially if the need arises.

Biographical information

Images of burning synagogues, shattered shop windows, ravaged private households and their abused inhabitants have become symbols of the destruction of former prospering German-Jewish life. In the night from the 9th until the 10th of November 1938 the orchestrated violence against Jews in Germany and Austria reached an unprecedented dimension. Against this backdrop, the news that the Feldstein family received, was all the more gratifying. Their American relatives were promising to issue affidavits and bring the family to America. But this hope for a new life in the US was shattered. Bureaucratic procedures delayed the issuing of entry visa. Only in August 1939 the Feldsteins were informed that they will receive their visa shortly – but this never happened. On September 1, 1939 Nazi troops invaded Poland and WWII began, cutting of their means of escape. Gerda was deported to Poland in June 1941, and at the age of fourteen, she was murdered in Sobibor.

Further information

Additional source material can be accessed through the original collection:

Fritz Feldstein Family Collection, AR 3250

<http://digital.cjh.org/webclient/DeliveryManager?pid=1711565>

Analyzing source material

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Additional sample Questions

What do you know about emigration? Are there differences or similarities to today's situation? How would you establish the first contact? How would you react if a stranger asked you to vouch for him/her?

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