

DIARIES AND CORRESPONDENCE RESEARCH GUIDE

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BACKGROUND

The Diaries and Correspondence Research Guide provides an introduction to a segment of archival, library, museum and testimony holdings at the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre related to the concept of ego documents, used in the field of public history. Ego documents are texts in which the personal life and experiences of the author play an important role in their understanding. This guide features primary and secondary sources from the VHEC's collection and lists recommended resources found in the collections of other organizations. Where possible, resources are linked directly to their catalogue records in the VHEC's collections database: collections.vhec.org.

Research guides are an introduction to a particular topic, theme or collection. They are not exhaustive; independent research is recommended and encouraged.

Researchers wishing to access materials in person at the VHEC are encouraged to review the Plan a Research Visit section of our website: collections.vhec.org/About/plan.

INTRODUCTION

The diaries and personal correspondence listed in this guide touch on subjects including life prior to the Second World War, efforts to leave Europe, experiences during the Holocaust, and the lives of Holocaust survivors in the post-war period. Researchers interested in ego documents are encouraged to also consult related record forms such as memoirs, scrapbooks, life writings and other ego documents at the VHEC. The focus of this guide is on correspondence and personal diaries written at the time an author experienced events and includes later published diaries.

Diaries are personal documents that chronicle the author's own experiences of a given time period from their own perspective. They may be intended to remain private or may be written to record events for a future public audience; for example, many Holocaust survivors

deliberately intended their diaries to provide a written documentary account of their experiences.

Correspondence refers to documentary records of communication between individuals or groups that shed light on the writers' personal experiences. This guide focuses on private correspondence, such as personal letters between individuals or family members, in the form of letters and postcards. Unlike diaries, which usually detail private, personal thoughts, correspondence is formed as part of a dialogue between individuals; much of the correspondence at the VHEC is one-sided, and the response is either lost or not part of the VHEC's holdings.

Documents from the VHEC's collection span a large geographical territory throughout Europe and Canada. The primary sources in this research guide point to the stirrings of war in the pre-war period, the atrocities suffered during the war, and writings post-1945 as individuals grappled with the implications and losses of the Holocaust.

ACCESS POINTS

Access points are key persons and organizations, places and topics that can be searched in the catalogue to locate records pertaining to those subjects.

Topics

Topics are subject terms from the VHEC's local thesaurus that are used to tag related items in its collections. Searching or browsing by topic can help users find additional materials about a particular topic.

- Concentration camp
- Correspondence & communication
- Ghetto
- Immigration
- Internment camp
- Liberation & post-war life
- Military personnel
- Personnel narratives
- Post-war reunions
- Post-war search assistance organization
- Refugees
- Survivor responses

The library uses the following **Library of Congress Subject Headings**:

- Diaries
- Correspondence
- Personal Narratives
- Holocaust Survivors > Correspondence
- Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945) > Personal Narratives

Genres

Genres are used to tag primary source materials in the VHEC's collections to help users find resources grouped by common physical characteristics and/or similar intellectual characteristics.

- Albums, Diaries & Scrapbooks
- Correspondence & Philatelic Materials

PRIMARY SOURCES

Primary sources are the raw materials of historical research—original artefacts and documents or first-hand accounts created at or near the time of the event being studied. Primary sources provide direct evidence about the events, practices or conditions during the period in question.

ARCHIVES: Diaries

Fred Arnrich diaries [accession 2019.041]

Includes 41 original diaries dating from ca. 1910 to 1953 kept by Arnrich detailing family activities as well as the activities of their friends and acquaintances. A considerable portion of the diaries concern family trips and holidays, but experiences such as Walter Gerson's internment in Canada are also covered in detail. In addition to the original diaries, transcripts in German, and partial translations in English, are available in print and digital formats. Donated to the VHEC by Martin Gerson.

Peter Oberlander notebook and correspondence [accessions 2019.048, 2019.070]

One notebook of personal writing in English written during Peter Oberlander's internment as an Enemy Alien in Canada. Collection also includes correspondence between Oberlander, his parents and government officials attempting to secure his release. Donated to the VHEC by Wendy Oberlander.

Israel trip documents sub-series (RA11-01-07-00-03). Dunner family fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/2384>

Travel journal by Gisele Warren detailing her trip to Israel with husband, Lorne Warren, from May 9 to May 26, 1974. Inscription inside cover reads, "Bon Voyage 1974, Else & Sam," indicating that the journal was perhaps a gift from Gisele's brother, Samuel Dunner, and his wife, Else, both Holocaust survivors. Donated to the VHEC by Barry Dunner.

Monarch exercise book (RA013-03-00-00-01). Jennie Phillips fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/1981>

Brown 80-page lined monarch exercise book belonging to Jennie Phillips, written in shortly after she returned to Montreal in 1946. First page contains the name "Liepāja" crossed out.

Starting from back of notebook are five pages of dates and corresponding notes in Yiddish, to do with Jennie's Holocaust experiences. A typed translation of these notes by Jennie's daughter, Rachel Mines, is included. Donated to the VHEC by Rachel Mines.

Notebooks (RA023-01). Teitelbaum, Buckman family fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/627>

Handmade notebooks created and kept by Rebecca (née Buckman) Teitelbaum while at Ravensbrück concentration camp and/or the Sønderborg Hospital in Copenhagen. Includes a small notebook bound with thread with names, contact information, two sketches and short remembrances written about Ravensbrück, likely written by inmates in that camp who knew Rebecca Teitelbaum. Donated to the VHEC by Alex Buckman.

Notebook (Gerda Gottfried) (RA001-01-01-04), Gottfried family fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/28>

Gerda Gottfried's childhood notebook and related photo albums and textual records. The Gottfrieds were an extended family of Ashkenazi Jews who lived in Vienna from the late nineteenth century until the late 1930s, when most members fled to Shanghai. Gottfried family documents were donated to the VHEC by Gerda Gottfried, Lori Seeman and George Wendziak.

Themar, Thüringen scrapbook series (RA005-01). Rosengarten family fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/366>

Scrapbook entitled "Themar-Thüringen: my home town," by Manfred Rosengarten, with map, photographs, floppy disk, published materials and scrapbook caption transcriptions. Donated to the VHEC by Andrew Rosengarten.

Wartime diary of Rudolf W. Danziger (2007.030.010).

Six volumes of a diary written by Rudolf Danziger (later Walter Dunn) during his internment as an Enemy Alien in Britain, deportation on the HMT *Dunera*, and internment in Australia. He came to Canada in 1948 where he established a successful medical career. Donated to the VHEC by R. Walter Dunn.

Writings, publications and ephemera series (RA038-03). Meyer family fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/748>

Diaries written by members of the German-Jewish Meyer family, with related publications, pamphlets with information for emigrants and clippings and ephemera kept by Paul and Max Meyer. Donated to the VHEC by Paul and Max Meyer.

ARCHIVES: Correspondence

Collected textual records (RA044-03). Stanley Winfield fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/839>

Includes correspondence and publications, reprographic copies of reports, passports relating to Bergen-Belsen and the impact of the Holocaust on European Jews. Also includes documentation produced in the 1990s on the subjects of Bergen-Belsen, Ted Aplin and Ernst Zundel. Donated to the VHEC by Stanley H. Winfield.

Correspondence from the Warsaw ghetto (RA042-02). Arthur Hollander fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/833>

Six pieces of correspondence written to Ruth and Leopold Hollander in Grodno, near the current Polish and Lithuanian borders, from Ruth's sister, Justyna, and Leopold's father, Azryel, both living in the Warsaw ghetto. Letters describe the desperate situation experienced by the Hollanders' relatives and friends in the ghetto. Donated to the VHEC by Arthur Hollander.

Correspondence series (RA016-01), Alexander and Gina Dimant fonds

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/699>

Correspondence received by Holocaust survivors Alexander and Gina Dimant in Russia and Canada. Series has been arranged into three sub-series: Postcards from the Warsaw ghetto (1941); Maryla Zalesjka-Komar correspondence (1994–1999) and Miscellaneous correspondence (1989–2019). Donated to the VHEC by Gina Dimant.

Correspondence series (RA020-04). Peter N. Moogk Second World War history collection.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/601>

Personal and professional correspondence collected by Professor Emeritus of History Peter N. Moogk. Records detail or are dated from the Holocaust era. Some letters are written by inmates of concentration camps on printed forms in German, as required by the censors. Others are written by Nazi organizations. Donated to the VHEC by Peter N. Moogk.

Correspondence series (RA023-02). Teitelbaum, Buckman family fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/631>

Letters and telegrams regarding members of the Teitelbaum family, including Rebecca Teitelbaum's husband, Herman, and their daughter, Anny. Correspondents include Herman and Teitelbaum's brother, Jacques and date from 1944–45. The Teitelbaums lived in Brussels prior to the Second World War. Donated to the VHEC by Alex Buckman.

Correspondence series (RA024-04) Louise Stein Sorensen fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/726>

Correspondence dating from 1920 to 2019 between Sorensen and family members, as well as emails between Sorensen and individuals from the United States Holocaust Memorial

Museum and Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre. Records include handwritten and typed letters, postcards and emails. Donated to the VHEC by Louise Sorensen.

Correspondence series (RA033-01). Vilcsek family fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/710>

Postcards written from Ernő Vilcsek to his family in Budapest while a prisoner in Hungarian labour camp 202/57. Postcards are made of pulp stock and written in pencil with stamps. English translations available. Donated to the VHEC by Erika Fleischer and Eva Kero.

Correspondence series (RA034-01). Pollák, Deneberger, Kiss family fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/730>

Notes, postcards and letters sent or received by the Pollák, Deneberger, Kiss family in Hungary. Postcards from Roza and Sandor represent the last communication sent to their family before their deportations to Auschwitz. Donated to the VHEC by Ilona Mermelstein.

Correspondence series (RA038-02). Meyer family fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/747>

Correspondence written by or to members of the Meyer family in 1938–39. Correspondence primarily pertains to the family's efforts to leave Germany. Series includes one postcard sent home by Paul Meyer during his confinement at Dachau. Donated to the VHEC by Paul Meyer.

Vladimir Krausz correspondence (2008.002.001–006).

119 letters, telegrams and postcards written between Vladimir Krausz and family circa 1941–45. The letters provide insight into Krausz's experience as a Jewish officer and POW, as well insight into how branches of the family in various countries worked together during this period to try and save as many family members as possible. Donated to the VHEC by Daniella Givon.

Shia Moser fonds.

Includes notebooks written by Shia Moser detailing the experiences of Jewish children orphaned by the Holocaust, and letters and postcards from Shia Moser's previous students at the Peterswald Orphanage. Acquired by the Vancouver Holocaust Centre Society from Shia Moser.

Reisman family correspondence (96.064.001–003).

Four pieces of early 1940s correspondence in German and Hungarian between members of the Reisman family, who lived in Hungary and Belgium at the outbreak of the Second World War. Samuel Reisman, father of the donor, was a member of the Resistance and a political prisoner imprisoned at Buchenwald. Donated to the VHEC by David Reed.

Eisinger, Marcus family correspondence series (RA009-02). Eisinger family fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/340>

Letters and letter fragments in German from members of the Eisinger and Marcus families, who lived in England and what is now the Czech Republic during and shortly after the Holocaust. Correspondence dates from 1939 to 1954. Donated to the VHEC by Barbara Eisinger.

George Eisler correspondence (93.07.0031).

Eight pieces of handwritten correspondence in Yiddish between members of George Eisler's family in Lithuania. Donated to the VHEC by George Eisler.

Heinrich Dunner correspondence sub-series (RA011-01-06). Dunner family fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/453>

Sub-series consists of two letters addressed to Gisele Warren's brother, Heinrich "Henri" Dunner, sent in February 1942 to an address in France. The name of the author of the letters is illegible. Donated to the VHEC by Alex Buckman.

JH correspondence series (RA008-05). John Herbert fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/187>

Correspondence dating from 1955 to 2005, including originals and copies, between John Herbert and his family, friends and colleagues. Related correspondence in the John Herbert fonds is on the subject of restitution claims. Donated to the VHEC by the estate of John Herbert.

Letter from Tom Perry to his wife Claire (94.08.0011). Tom Perry collection.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/4627>

Item is a photocopy of a letter written by Tom Perry to his wife Claire during the liberation of Buchenwald. Letter describes the conditions in the camp during liberation. Donated to the VHEC by Claire Perry.

Letter written by Johanna van Kreveld (2019.099.001). Amalia Boe Fishman fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/8335>

Item is a letter from Johanna van Kreveld de Leeuw, mother of Amalia Boe-Fishman, to Amalia's foster family, about the health and care of her daughter while she hides with them in their home. Donated to the VHEC by Amalia Boe-Fishman.

Letters from the Warsaw ghetto (RA022-00-02). Dr. Leon Komar fonds.

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/622>

Original handwritten correspondence received by the donor while he was in Scotland studying medicine. Correspondence is from Komar's family, who lived in the Warsaw ghetto. Also available are translations provided by the donor as well as his commentary regarding the letters; these were produced when Komar was writing his 1996 memoir: Letters from the Warsaw Ghetto: 1938-1942. Donated to the VHEC by Leon Komar.

Loewy postcard collection (RA043). <https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/831>

Twenty-eight postcards written by Sylvia Loewy, in Stockholm, Sweden, to her husband, Fritz, after his 1942 arrest and deportation. Not knowing where her husband was, Sylvia sent the postcards by registered mail to shtetls, ghettos and concentration camps throughout the Polish General Government territory. The postcards were sent in batches with similar messages, explaining that she lives in Sweden, that she is fine, and that she hopes to receive news from her husband as soon as possible. Donated to the VHEC by Robert Krell.

Manfred and Eveline Rosengarten document series (RA005-02). Rosengarten family fonds. <https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/367>

Correspondence between Manfred Rosengarten and various contacts. Correspondence includes copies of outgoing letters, greeting cards, lists of addresses and a photograph. The majority of these letters are from when Manfred, missing his hometown of Themar, contacted his childhood friends. Donated to the VHEC by Andrew Rosengarten.

Personal correspondence (RA019-06). Hilary and Harrison Brown collection. Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre. <https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/585>

Personal letters from acquaintances of the Browns from Frankfurt, with translations by Hilary Brown (nee Newitt). Letters were distributed by Newitt in London to refusers and others. Donated to the VHEC by Hilary Brown.

Pichos Zozulya collection (RA004). Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre. <https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/79>

Writings by Pichos Zozulya describing the family's experience of the Holocaust and the atrocities committed by the Nazis in Chudnov, Ukraine. Donated to the VHEC by Asya Zozulya.

Postcard from Serge to his mother (2002.014.001). Dr. Serge Vanry fonds. <https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/7836>

A postcard written from Serge to his mother, Sarah [Suzanne] Wajnryb, at Drancy. It is stamped "rejected by the censor" and "return to sender." Donated to the VHEC by Serge Vanry.

Postcards series (RA027-01). Frank Orban fonds. <https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/681>

Twelve postcards written to Frank Orban (née Ornstein) while he was resident of a forced labour camp in Hungary. Postcards were mailed by his parents, Lipot and Olga Ornstein, and describe living conditions and updates about friends and family from the Jewish ghetto in Szeged, Hungary. Frank Orban kept these postcards until his death; they were the last communication he had from his parents, who were sent to a labour camp in Göstling an der

Ybbs, Austria, in 1945, and murdered by German soldiers. Donated to the VHEC by George Szasz.

vBR correspondence series (RA007-02). von Baiersdorf, Reif family fonds. Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre. <https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/collections/553>

Correspondence sent to members of the von Baiersdorf, Reif family between the late-nineteenth century and mid-twentieth century in Europe and in Canada.

MUSEUM: Correspondence

Pieces of correspondence that were not donated to the VHEC as part of a larger aggregation of archival records are catalogued as single items in the museum collection.

Letters from Elspeth Cherniavsky, 1938 (2021.003.001-002).

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/9344>

Two letters written from Elspeth Cherniavsky during her travels in Europe to her mother residing in Vancouver, British Columbia. Elspeth describes the worsening political climate and increased restrictions against her Jewish friends. Donated to the VHEC by Alix Cherniavsky Morgan.

Letter from Nathan Cohn, 1939 (99.001.001)

Item is a letter written from Krakow, Poland by Nathan Cohn to his uncle A. Cohn in Brooklyn, New York. Nathan Cohn describes his efforts to learn English and how he is looking forward to immigrating to the United States. Donated to the VHEC by Saul Cohn.

Letter from Erno Rosenzweig, 1938 (1994.004.007)

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/7134>

Letter written by Erno Rosenzweig to his relative Béla, describing the deteriorating rights of Hungarian Jews and asking for help to escape the country. Donated to the VHEC by Shirley Cohn.

Postcard from Birkenau, circa 1944 (1993.066.002).

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/2020>

Postcard sent by a relative of Daniel Wollner to a woman in Budapest who had agreed to pass correspondence on to his wife. Mr. Wollner was given this card after the war by his relative's wife. Donated to the VHEC by Daniel Wollner.

Postcard from Dachau, circa 1939 (98.018.001).

Postcard sent by Alois Grun to his wife Ella while he was imprisoned in Dachau concentration camp.

Pre-deportation postcard from Hungary, circa 1944 (2001.006.001).

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/3443>

Postcard sent to Imre Kunovits in Jolsva forced labour camp (on the Hungary-Slovak border) by his wife, Magdalena, just before she, her brother and son were deported to Auschwitz. Donated to the VHEC by Kathy Kunovits.

Prisoner of War mail postcard, 1940 (2011.011.001).

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/1581>

Peter Ziegler's prisoner of war postcard sent to R. Frankenbush in New York from Camp 70 (Ripples, New Brunswick), thanking him for his correspondence and for sending money and supplies. Donated to the VHEC by Peter Ziegler.

HOLOCAUST TESTIMONY pertaining to ego documents

Testimony is a first-hand personal account of an event. A Holocaust survivor's testimony is micro-history, one person's story told from a specific and subjective perspective. Since most survivors are not historians, they tell personal stories that can connect to historical details acquired from other sources. Historians listen to testimony in order to understand the personal experiences of people who were involved in an historical event. When historians examine testimony as an historical source, they must carefully consider the challenges and the benefits that accompany the use of such testimonies. It is important to consider why survivors testify and under what circumstances.

In the following testimony videos, interviewees recall sending and receiving correspondence or writing personal diaries. The interviewees may have donated records listed elsewhere in this research guide; however, in many cases the original correspondence mentioned in these interviews was not donated to the VHEC and its current location is unknown.

Chaim Kornfeld

Chaim K. testimony 1984 [video recording] (1h 50m 18s)

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/271>

Chaim K. was born in Hungary in 1926. He recalls deportation, arrival at Auschwitz and separation from his family. Chaim was transferred to Mauthausen for four days then taken to another camp to perform slave labour. He describes how his sisters received postcards from Auschwitz supposedly sent by him reassuring them of his well-being; however, Chaim did not send any correspondence and the postcards were falsified.

Daniel Wollner

Daniel W. testimony 1984 [video recording] (2h 1m)

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/201>

Daniel W. was born in Budapest, Hungary in 1927. He describes ghettoization and deportation with his mother and brother to Birkenau where he was then separated from his family. He

recalls being forced to send correspondence with misleading messages about his well-being and a falsified return address. He shows a postcard sent by a relative that Daniel received after the war.

Estera (Emmy) Krell

Estera K. testimony 1990 [video recording] (2h 1m)

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/282>

Estera was born in Poland. She left with a cousin to go to Holland. She recalls the last letter she received from her parents describing their deteriorating living conditions and how they sensed they would soon be forced to leave town.

Gerry Waldston

Gerry W. testimony 2011 [video recording] (7h 41m)

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/377>

Gerry W. was born in Berlin, Germany in 1923 as part of an upper-middle class Jewish family. He and his father obtained British visas and were able to escape Germany for Britain. At the start of the Second World War, Gerry was classified as an Enemy Alien, interned, and deported to Canada where he resided in several internment camps. He describes his friendships in the camps, including a friend name Bernie. Gerry explains how he would later receive Bernie's diary from their time in the camps.

Harry Shindler

Harry S. testimony 1983 [video recording] (1h 26m 17s)

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/966>

Harry S. was born in Vienna, Austria in 1921. His family was able to move to Holland to escape increased anti-Jewish regulations and antisemitism. After the Germany occupation of the Netherlands, his family escaped again to Belgium and Harry was smuggled into France. His parents were caught by German authorities. He describes receiving a postcard from his parents written on a transport from Drancy explaining that they were being taken east but did not know where. He learned later that they perished in Auschwitz.

Helene Josefowicz

Helene J. testimony 2015 [video recording] (2h 16m)

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/413>

Helene was born in Liege, Belgium in 1934. She describes how her parents arranged for her and her sister to live in hiding in an orphanage outside of Brussels. She was able to receive cards from her parents until they were deported to Auschwitz where they perished. Helene references and shows letters that her mother wrote to her family in England.

Leon Komar

Leon K. testimony 1990 [video recording] (1h 14m 38s)

<https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/263>

Leon K. was born in 1915 in Warsaw, Poland. He was attending university in England and Scotland when the war broke out in 1939. He describes the process of sending correspondence to his family in the Warsaw ghetto via an uncle in Tangier.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Secondary sources are created after a historical event and offer a description or interpretation of the event based on analysis of primary sources.

Published Diaries & Letters

| Item | Call Number |
|--|---------------------|
| <p>Applebaum, Molly. <i>Buried words: the diary of Molly Applebaum</i>. [Toronto]: Azrieli Foundation, 2017. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/7566</p> <p>"Hidden away underground, in a box, twelve-year-old Molly has only her older cousin and her diary to keep her company. For two years, she writes of her confinement 'in a grave': the cold, dark and stuffiness, the unbearable suffering from insufficient food, and the complicated reliance on the two farmers who are risking their own lives to save her. <i>Buried Words</i> is a stark confession of Molly's fears, despair and secrets and, above all, her fervent wish to stay alive." —Publisher</p> | EDUC AZR Ser. 8 APP |
| <p>Bachrach, Zvi, and Batsheva Pomerantz, eds. <i>Last Letters from the Shoah</i>. Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, the International Institute for Holocaust Research, 2013. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/1641</p> <p>"These letters were uncovered over 60 years, hoarded by the victims' families and friends, and ultimately collected by Yad Vashem. These letters were sent from the ghettos, hidden in cattle cars and train stations, and smuggled out of the concentration camps. They reveal the raw emotions of mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers, trying desperately to tell their story before it is too late." —Publisher</p> | 940.5315 B11L |
| <p>Cohn, Willy, Norbert Conrads, and Kenneth Kronenberg. <i>No justice in Germany : the Breslau diaries, 1933-1941</i>. Stanford, CA:</p> | 940.5315 C67n |

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| <p>Stanford University Press, 2012. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/7329</p> <p>The diary of Willy Cohn, a Jew and Social Democrat. In it, he details how the Nazi process of marginalization unfolded from 1933 in the Jewish community of Breslau—until the community's destruction in 1941. Cohn describes the difficulty of understanding exactly what was transpiring and documents the community's efforts to maintain a sense of normalcy. This work speaks to individual and communal efforts to resist Nazi oppression.</p> | |
| <p>Dafni, Re'uven and Klaiman Yehudit, eds. <i>Final letters: from the Yad Vashem Archive</i>. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/1878</p> <p>"The Yad Vashem Archives in Jerusalem possess a collection of hundreds of letters and postcards written by Jews under Nazi oppression. Most of them are fond farewells, last signs of life. On their way to the slaughter they tried to send relatives and friends some information about their fate...Many of these messages were left in hiding places or dropped without envelopes from deportation trains, the authors unaware of the destination to which they were being transported... Through the fear and despair there shine rays of hope which illuminate their tragedy and make these letters a fitting memorial to those who died." —Book jacket</p> | 940.5315 F49d |
| <p>Ehrenburg, Ilya and Vasily Grossman. <i>The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry</i>. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/4769</p> <p>"The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry is a collection of eyewitness testimonies, letters, diaries, affidavits, and other documents on the activities of the Nazis against Jews in the camps, ghettos, and towns of Eastern Europe. Arguably, the only apt comparison is to The Gulag Archipelago of Alexander Solzhenitsyn. This definitive edition of The Black Book, including for the first time materials omitted from previous editions, is a major addition to the literature on the Holocaust... it will be of particular interest to students, teachers, and scholars of the Holocaust and those interested in the history of Europe." —Back cover</p> | REF 947.0842 E67c |

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| <p>Flinker, Moishe. <i>Young Moshe's diary: the spiritual torment of a Jewish boy in Nazi Europe</i>. Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, n.d. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/3791</p> <p>This is the diary of an Orthodox Jewish youth who describes how he and his family hid from the Nazis in an apartment in Belgium.</p> | <p>YA 940.53161 F62y/RBSC 940.53161 F62y</p> |
| <p>Frank, Anne. <i>Het Achterhuis: Dagboekbrieven van 12 Juni 1942–1 Augustus 1944</i>. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Contact, 1947. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/4977</p> <p>Anne Frank's remarkable diary has become a world classic. In 1942, with Nazis occupying Holland, a thirteen-year old girl and her family fled their home in Amsterdam and went into hiding. For the next two years, until their whereabouts were betrayed to the Gestapo, they and another family lived cloistered in the "Secret Annex" of an old office building. In her diary Anne Frank recorded vivid impressions of her experiences during this period.</p> | <p>RBSC 949.207 F82a 1947</p> |
| <p>Van der Stroom, Gerrold and David Barnouw, eds. <i>The Diary of Anne Frank: the Critical Edition</i>. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1989. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/1935</p> <p>This edition was prepared by the Netherlands State Institute for War Documentation and includes never-before published versions of Anne's diary, biographies of the Frank family, details about what happened after the arrest, and more.</p> | <p>REF 949.2071 F82f</p> |
| <p>Gefen, Aba. <i>Hope in Darkness: the Aba Gefen Diaries</i>. Holocaust Library, 1989. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/7987</p> <p>A diary kept during the Second World War recounts how the author and his younger brother struggled to survive while evading the Nazis in German-occupied Lithuania by living an underground existence.</p> | <p>940.5315 G29h</p> |
| <p>Goldberg, Myrna, ed. <i>Before All Memory is Lost: Women's Voices from the Holocaust</i>. [Toronto]: The Azrieli Foundation, 2017. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/4853</p> <p>"This anthology contains separate memoirs—poems, literary</p> | <p>EDUC AZR Ser. 8 BEF</p> |

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| <p>pieces, diaries—by twenty different Jewish women that describe their persecution under the Nazi regime during World War II. Separated into four sections—women who survived in hiding, by passing, in the camps and in the Soviet Union—this powerful anthology is united by the common themes of resistance and resilience. Each section is preceded by a foreword by editor Myrna Goldenberg. The women are from various cities, towns and villages in Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, and the Soviet Union, and all immigrated to Canada after the war." —Publisher</p> | |
| <p>Herzberg, Abel. <i>Between two streams: a diary from Bergen-Belsen</i>. Translated by Jack Santcross. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/45</p> <p>A diary translated from Dutch into English that chronicles the experiences of Abel Herzberg, a Dutch lawyer and writer, living at Bergen-Belsen. Herzberg describes daily life in the camp and the horrific conditions he endured. Herzberg was transported to and from the camp by train with many others, one of which was a 9-year-old boy named Jack Santcross, who later translated Herzberg's diary. This diary is an eye-witness account of life in one of the most infamous Nazi concentration camps and is a significant historical work.</p> | 940.5317 B495he |
| <p>Hillesum, Etty. <i>Letters from Westerbork</i>. Translated by Arnold J. Pomerans. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/4829</p> <p>This book is a collection of letters authored by Etty Hillesum, a young woman who lived in Amsterdam during the Nazi occupation. The letters detail the final year of her life in the transit camp Westerbork, the last stop before Auschwitz. Despite the vivid descriptions of the treacherous camp Etty's own intelligence, sympathy, and rare gallantry shine through.</p> | 949.2071 H65L |
| <p>Holliday, Laurel ed. <i>Children in the Holocaust and World War II: their secret diaries</i>. New York: Pocketbooks, 1995. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/5091</p> <p>"[An] anthology of diaries written by children all across Nazi-occupied Europe and in England. Twenty-three young people, ages ten through eighteen, recount in vivid detail the horrors they lived</p> | 940.53161 C536 1995 |

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| through, day after day... They come from Czechoslovakia, Austria, Israel, Poland, Holland, Belgium, Hungary, Lithuania, Russia, England, and Denmark. They write... of life in ghettos and concentration camps, of bombings and Blitzkriegs, of fear and courage, tragedy and transcendence." —Book jacket | |
| <p>Jens, Inge ed. <i>At the heart of the White Rose : letters and diaries of Hans and Sophie Scholl</i>. New York: Harper Row, 1987. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/6132</p> <p>Adapted and translated from: Hans Scholl, Sophie Scholl, Briefe und Aufzeichnungen; Includes bibliographical references and index.</p> | 943.086 W58a |
| <p>Kaplan, Chaim Aron. <i>Scroll of Agony: the Warsaw diary of Chaim A. Kaplan</i>. Translated by Abraham Isaac Katsh. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1965. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/5565</p> <p>"This diary of a Hebrew school principal tells the story of one person's struggle for survival in the Warsaw ghetto. Kaplan's insights into the horrors surrounding him, and his deep appreciation of life, come through very strongly... Kaplan discusses such topics as: the politics of the ghetto, the building of the ghetto, daily ghetto life, and the deportations of the surviving Jews to the Nazi death camps." —Marty Bloomberg & Buckley Barry Barrett, <i>The Jewish Holocaust: An Annotated Guide to Books in English</i></p> | 940.5405 S435 |
| <p>Kellner, Friedrich. <i>My Opposition: the Diary of Friedrich Kellner—a German Against the Third Reich</i>. Translated and edited by Robert Scott Kellner. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/8791</p> <p>A mid-level official in a provincial town, Friedrich Kellner kept a secret diary from 1939 to 1945, risking his life to record Germany's path to dictatorship and genocide and to protest his countrymen's complicity in the regime's brutalities.</p> | 943.086 K29m |
| <p>Lévy-Hass, Hanna. <i>Diary of Bergen-Belsen</i>. Translated by Sophie Hand. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2009. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/2255</p> | 940.5317 B495Le |

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| <p>Hanna Lévy-Hass, a Yugoslavian Jew, emerged a defiant survivor of the Holocaust. Her observations shed new light on the lived experience of Nazi internment. Lévy-Hass stands alone as the only resistance fighter to report on her own experience inside the camps, and she does so with unflinching clarity in dealing with the political and social divisions inside Bergen-Belsen.</p> | |
| <p>Lewin, Abraham and Anthony Polonsky ed. <i>A Cup of Tears: A Diary of the Warsaw Ghetto</i>. Translated by Christopher Hutton. New York: Basil Blackwell in association with the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies, Oxford, 1988. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/6186</p> <p>Abraham Lewin was a 47-year-old school teacher who kept a record of the terrible events and conditions in the Warsaw Ghetto. Part of Abraham Lewin's diary, covering the period from April 1942 to January 1943, was found hidden in a milk churn after the war.</p> | 943.8053 L67c |
| <p>Lipszyc, Rywka and Anita Friedman ed. <i>Rywka's Diary: The Writings of A Jewish Girl From the Lodz Ghetto, Found at Auschwitz In 1945 And Published Seventy Years Later</i>. Translated by Malgorzata Markoff. New York: Harper, 2015. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/1417</p> <p>Revealed after seventy years in obscurity, this work is the diary of a young girl named Rywka Lipszyc. Written in a school notebook between October 1943 and April 1944, Rywka details the loss of her family and her time in the Lodz ghetto. While this work offers insight into the impact of the Holocaust on a young Jewish woman, the diary includes photographs, news clippings, maps, and commentary from Holocaust scholars and the girl's surviving relatives. Combining primary and secondary sources, this work provides context for this young woman's experience and suffering.</p> | 940.53161 L76r |
| <p>Lazin, Lauren. <i>I'm Still Here: Real Diaries of Young People Who Lived During The Holocaust</i>. New York: SISU Home Entertainment, Inc., 2008. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/3053</p> | Videos |

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| <p>Brings to life the diaries of young people who witnessed first-hand the horrors of the Holocaust. Through an emotional montage of sound and image, the film salutes this group of brave, young writers who refused to quietly disappear. The stories of the young Holocaust victims come to life by weaving together personal photos, handwritten pages and drawings from the diaries, and archival films.</p> | |
| <p>Ginz, Petr and Chava Pressburger, ed. <i>The diary of Petr Ginz 1941–1942</i>. Translated by Elena Lappin. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2007. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/11</p> <p>"Petr Ginz, like Anne Frank, was a budding literary and artistic genius whose life was cut short by the Nazis. More than a diary, this book is a rich scrapbook of an era—a collection of journal entries, poems, short stories, and drawings which offer keen insight into Jewish life in wartime Prague. Ginz's writings vividly describe the increasing horror of his situation but also reveal a brilliant, droll teenager with a hunger for life. Ginz studied history, drew maps, learned English, wrote eight novels, and made gorgeous woodcuts—most famously the 'Moon Landscape' that accompanied the first Israeli astronaut, Ilan Ramon, on the space shuttle Columbia. Ginz also became the driving force behind Vedem ('We Are Leading'), a secret newspaper defiantly published by the boys in his barracks that provided its writers with a vital outlet for self-expression in an impossible situation." —Publisher description</p> | YA 940.53161 G49p |
| <p>Rubin, Susan Goldman ed.. <i>Searching for Anne Frank: Letters from Amsterdam to Iowa</i>. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2003. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/4592</p> <p>Provides a glimpse of life during the Second World War in both the Netherlands and the United States through the correspondence of Anne Frank and her Iowa pen pals. —Publisher</p> | J 949.207 R89s |
| <p>Shirer, William Laurence. <i>Berlin diary: the journal of a foreign correspondent, 1934–1941</i>. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1941. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/3872</p> <p>This is a personal narrative of a foreign correspondent describing</p> | RBSC 943.086 S55b |

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| their experience and the things they saw in Germany during the Second World War. | |
| <p>Shoskes, Henry. <i>Bleter fun a geto-țog-bukh [Pages from a Ghetto Diary]</i>. New York: H.H. Glants, 1943. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/3907</p> <p>Pages of a ghetto-diary, with a preface by J. Junosza : an authentic document on the tragic events in Poland, from the invasion to the battle of the Warsaw-ghetto</p> | RBSC 943.8053 S55b |
| <p>Sonnenschein, Bronia and Dan Sonnenschein, ed. <i>Victory Over Nazism: A Holocaust Survivor's Journey</i>. Vancouver, B.C.: Memory Press, 2013. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/114</p> <p>This work is written by Bronia Sonnenschein and compiled and edited by her son Dan Sonnenschein. It documents Bronia's life in Vienna, her time in the Lodz Ghetto, Auschwitz and Stutthof concentration camps, and later harrowing experiences she endured before her liberation. This work also details her life in Vancouver and her dedication to Holocaust education. This work includes articles and letters written by Bronia alongside comments from teachers and students who read her work. <i>Victory Over Nazism: A Holocaust Survivor's Journey</i>, offers an important first hand account of life before, during, and after the Holocaust, and speaks to Bronia's resilience in the midst of terror.</p> | 940.5315 S69v 2013 |
| <p>Wilf, Aaron. <i>The Diary of Aaron Wilf: the Blood Soaked Saga of Skole</i>. Translated by Raphael Posner. [Place of publication not identified] : [The families of Rose Englander, Moshe Wilfe and Dov Lieblein], 1994. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/6230</p> <p>In this diary, Aaron Wilf fulfills the vow he made to the Jews of his town, Skole, before he went into hiding from the Nazi and Ukrainian murders in 1942. Aaron left Skole with its persecuted Jews and went into hiding at a Ukrainian friend's house in October 1942. The diary itself was begun on November 1st, 1942, when he arrived at the house of Mykhailo Svystun in the village of Korostów, situated 15km from Skole.</p> | 947.708 W67d |

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| <p>Wilkes, Helen Waldstein. <i>Letters from the Lost a Memoir of Discovery</i>. Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2014. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/4124</p> <p>"On March 15, 1939, Helen Waldstein's father snatched his stamped exit visa from a distracted clerk to escape from Prague with his wife and child. As the Nazis closed in on a war-torn Czechoslovakia, only letters from their extended family could reach Canada through the barriers of conflict. The Waldstein family received these letters as they made their lives on a southern Ontario farm, where they learned to be Canadian and forget their Jewish roots. Helen Waldstein read these letters as an adult—this changed everything. As her past refused to keep silent, Helen followed the trail of the letters back to Europe, where she discovered living witnesses who could attest to the letters' contents. She has here interwoven their stories and her own into a compelling narrative of suffering, survivor guilt, and overcoming intergenerational obstacles when exploring a traumatic past." — Publisher</p> | 940.5315 W16L |
| <p>Zapruder, Alexandra. <i>Salvaged Pages: Young Writers' Diaries of the Holocaust</i>. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015. https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/4133</p> <p>"This stirring collection of diaries written by young people, aged twelve to twenty-two years, during the Holocaust has been fully revised and updated. Some of the writers were refugees, others were in hiding or passing as non-Jews, some were imprisoned in ghettos, and nearly all perished before liberation. This [volume] preserves the impressions, emotions, and eyewitness reportage of young people whose accounts of daily events and often unexpected thoughts, ideas, and feelings serve to deepen and complicate our understanding of life during the Holocaust." — Publisher</p> | 940.5315 Z35p |

Publications about Diaries and Correspondence

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| Jockusch, Laura. <i>Collect and Record!: Jewish Holocaust</i> | 940.5318 J63c |

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| <p><i>Documentation in Early Postwar Europe</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.</p> <p>https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/3050</p> <p>"This book describes the vibrant activity of survivors who founded Jewish historical commissions and documentation centers in Europe immediately after the Second World War. In the first postwar decade, these initiatives collected thousands of Nazi documents along with testimonies, memoirs, diaries, songs, poems, and artifacts of Jewish victims...The survivors who created the historical commissions were the first people to study the development of Nazi policy towards the Jews and also to document Jewish responses to persecution, a topic that was largely ignored by later generations of Holocaust scholars." — Publisher</p> | |
| <p>Patterson, David. <i>Along the edge of annihilation : the collapse and recovery of life in the Holocaust diary</i>. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999.</p> <p>https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/5414</p> <p>Based on more than fifty diaries of Jewish Holocaust victims of all ages, written while the events described were actually taking place. -- Jacket.</p> | 940.5318 P297a |
| <p>Pincus, Meeg, and Jordi Solano. <i>Miep and the Most Famous Diary: The Woman Who Rescued Anne Frank's Diary</i>. Ann Arbor, MI: Sleeping Bear Press, 2019.</p> <p>https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/8334</p> <p>When the Frank family and others are found and arrested during the Second World War, Miep Gies hides young Anne's papers from the Nazis and later is instrumental in having her beloved friend's diary published.</p> | BR 949.207 G45m |
| <p>Roseman, Mark. <i>A Past in Hiding Memory and Survival in Nazi Germany</i>. New York: Picador USA, 2002.</p> <p>https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/4098</p> | 940.5315 R81p |

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| <p>"<i>A Past in Hiding</i> is a survivor story and historical investigation that offers new insight into daily life in the Third Reich and the powers and pitfalls of memory. At the outbreak of World War II, Marianne Strauss, the sheltered daughter of well-to-do German Jews, was an ordinary girl, concerned with her studies, friends, and romance. Almost overnight she was transformed into a woman of spirit and defiance, a fighter who, when the Gestapo came for her family, seized the moment and went underground...As Roseman excavates the past, he puts forward a new and sympathetic interpretation of the troubling discrepancies between fact and recollection that so often cloud survivors' accounts. A detective story, a love story, a story of great courage and survival in the harshest conditions, <i>A Past In Hiding</i> is also a poignant investigation into the nature of memory, authenticity, and truth." —Publisher</p> | |
| <p>Van Galen Last, Dick, and Rolf Wolfswinkel. <i>Anne Frank and After: Dutch Holocaust Literature in Historical Perspective</i>. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996.</p> <p>https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/6312</p> <p>"Van Galen Last and Wolfswinkel attempt in this book to comprehend the individual voices of some Dutch Jews (in their diaries, memoirs, novels) in view of the ever more frightening sequence of anti-Jewish measures being perpetrated by the Nazis. The reader becomes acquainted not only with Anne Frank but also with other young Dutch Jews who wrote acutely of their extreme experiences... The result is a series of very compelling personal accounts of the Holocaust set in historical perspective." —Back cover</p> | 949.2071 V21a |
| <p>Young, James E. <i>Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust: Narrative and the Consequences of Interpretation</i>. Bloomington: Indiana University Press Binding, 1988.</p> <p>https://collections.vhec.org/Detail/objects/2681</p> <p>A carefully prepared historiographical work interprets the meaning of Holocaust literature as it examines the perpetuation</p> | 809.93 Y73w |

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| of Holocaust memory and understanding in several forms of media studied ... Includes an extensive bibliography of works. | |
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EXTERNAL RESOURCES

The following repositories hold major collections of Holocaust materials including diaries and personal correspondence. They may be of interest to researchers wishing to broaden their understanding of the topic and find additional materials.

Archives, Museums and Other Repositories

Canadian Jewish Heritage Network <http://www.cjhn.ca>

The site brings together database and digitized archival material of the Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives, the Jewish Public Library Archives of Montreal, the Montreal Holocaust Museum, The Ottawa Jewish Archives, the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum, the Congregation Shaar Hashomayim Museum and Archives and the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue Archives.

Ringelblum Archive, Central Judaic Library, Jewish Historical Institute (Warsaw)

<https://www.jhi.pl/en/research/the-ringelblum-archive-and-the-oneg-shabbat-group>

A collection of documents including diaries, correspondence, documents, reports, posters, photographs, artworks and ephemera compiled in secret by the Oneg Shabbat group (led by Dr. Emanuel Ringelblum). Beginning in 1940, their goal was to document the destruction of Jewish life in Poland. Working with resistance groups inside the Warsaw ghetto, the Oneg Shabbat collected 35,000 documents, which are now digitized and available online through the Central Judaic Library.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum <https://www.ushmm.org/>

The USHMM contains one of the largest collections of Holocaust-related materials in North America, including numerous diaries and correspondence records. Many records are digitized and available online.

Includes two bibliographies about Holocaust diaries:

<https://www.ushmm.org/collections/bibliography/diaries>

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/childrens-diaries-during-the-holocaust>

Weiner Holocaust Library <https://wienerholocaustlibrary.org/>

One of the world's leading and most extensive archives on the Holocaust, the Nazi era and genocide. The Library's unique collection of over one million items includes published and

unpublished works, press cuttings, photographs and eyewitness testimony.

Yad Vashem Documents Archive <https://documents.yadvashem.org/>

As the Israeli national institution to document and commemorate the Holocaust, Yad Vashem collects various kinds of archival documentation including diaries, testimonies, photographs, belongings, personal and official documents to encompass different aspects of the Holocaust narrative.

YIVO Holocaust Archive <https://yivo.org/Holocaust-Archive>

Established in 1945, the YIVO Holocaust Archive is the largest North American repository of original documents on the Holocaust including handwritten diaries, survivors testimonies, documents created in ghettos and concentration camps, official Nazi government records and files of Jewish refugee organizations.