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**Inventory of the Harry Blas and Erika
Stockfleth Blas Papers, circa 1910-circa 1980**

Addlestone Library, Special Collections
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Descriptive Summary

Title:	Harry Blas and Erika Stockfleth Blas papers
Date(s)	circa 1910-circa 1980
Creator:	Blas, Harry, 1924-2003; Blas, Erika
Abstract:	The collection consists mainly of copy negatives, slides, and digital images of pre-World War II photographs of the families of Harry Blas, born in #ód#, Poland, and Erika Stockfleth Blas, born in Grevesmühlen, Germany. Also included is a short memoir by Harry Blas detailing his experiences in the #ód# ghetto and Auschwitz concentration camp, and a handwritten genealogy of the Stockfleth family by Erika Blas.
Extent:	0.1 linear feet (2 folders)
Repository:	Jewish Heritage Collection, Special Collections, College of Charleston Libraries 66 George Street Charleston, SC 29424 Phone: (843) 953-8016 Fax: (843) 953-6319 URL: http://archives.library.cofc.edu
Call Number:	Mss 1065-029
Language of Material:	Materials in English

Biographical Note

Harry Blas (1924-2003), né Herszl Blass, was born in #ód#, Poland, to Sarah and Peretz Blass. In 1939, after the German occupation of #ód#, Blas and his family, including his parents, siblings, and young nephews, were ordered to move to the Jewish ghetto. In August 1944, the family was sent to Auschwitz. From there, Harry Blas was sent to Austria to work in an ammunition factory, where he stayed until the American army liberated his camp. Only one other member of Blas's family survived, his brother, who had volunteered to work in a German labor camp while in the #ód# ghetto.

Erika Stockfleth was born in Grevesmühlen, Germany, to Marie-Gertrude Botta-Stockfleth and William Stockfleth. Her mother, who was Jewish, had been raised by a great-aunt after her parents died in a train wreck. In 1941, her father, a Protestant, helped a Jewish family escape Nazi Germany by taking the family to Hamburg and helping them buy tickets for travel to Uruguay. Upon his return to Grevesmühlen, he was arrested by the Gestapo and sent to fight on the Russian front. His family never saw him again, and believed that he may have perished in a Russian labor camp.

Afraid that their Jewish identity would be discovered, Marie-Gertrude Botta-Stockfleth hid Erika and her younger sister, Heidi, with a gentile girlfriend. Marie-Gertrude told Erika that she was Jewish shortly before going into hiding, but she did not tell Heidi, instead saying that she was sick as an excuse for the girls being sent away. Shortly before the war ended, a farmer took the sisters home and they arrived a few days ahead of American troops. In February 1946, Marie-Gertrude Botta-Stockfleth died of pneumonia. Her daughters could not find a rabbi in Grevesmühlen and the Jewish cemetery had been demolished, so their mother was eulogized by a Protestant minister and buried in a Christian graveyard.

Erika Stockfleth met Harry Blas while he was hospitalized in Germany. Stockfleth had come to the hospital to visit a school friend, and Blas was in the next bed. After Blas was released, he introduced Stockfleth to his brother and sister-in-law, who were living in Grevesmühlen with other Jewish displaced persons from #ód#. This group, including Blas and Stockfleth, decided to cross the border into the western section of Germany controlled by the British and Americans; Erika's sister had already crossed the border and joined her in Hamburg. Stockfleth and Blas married in 1951, then moved to New York a year later. In 1966, the couple relocated to Charleston, South Carolina, with their five-year-old daughter, Susan. Harry Blas's first cousin, Guta Blas Weintraub, had already settled in Charleston with her family.

Collection Overview

The collection consists mainly of copy negatives, slides, and digital images of pre-World War II images of the families of Harry Blas, born in #ód#, Poland, and Erika Stockfleth Blas, born in Grevesmühlen, Germany. Post-war images show their 1951 wedding in Hamburg, Germany, and their daughter, Susan. Also included is a short memoir by Harry Blas detailing his experiences in the #ód# ghetto and Auschwitz concentration camp, and a handwritten genealogy of the Stockfleth family by Erika Blas.

Collection Arrangement

Materials are described at the folder level.

Restrictions

Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research.

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Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person, family, or organization, by topical subject, by place, and by types of material.

Names

Blas, Harry, 1924-2003

Blas, Erika

Auschwitz (Concentration camp)

Subjects

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Personal narratives
Holocaust survivors--Poland
Jewish ghettos--Poland--History
World War, 1939-1945--Atrocities
World War, 1939-1945--Concentration camps--Germany

Places

Grevesmühlen (Germany)
#ód# (Poland)

Types of Material

Black-and-white negatives
Black-and-white slides
Color slides
Digital images
DVDs
Genealogies
Memoirs
Photo CDs

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Harry Blas and Erika Stockfleth Blas papers, College of Charleston Libraries, Charleston, SC, USA.

Acquisitions Information

Materials were lent for copying in 2000 by Harry Blas and Erika Stockfleth Blas.

Alternate Form of Materials

Digital reproduction available online in the **Lowcountry Digital Library**.

Processing Information

Processed by Rebecca McClure, January 2012.

Encoded by Rebecca McClure, April 2012.

Reviewed and uploaded by Martha McTear, July 2012.

Funding from the Council on Library and Information Resources supported the processing of this collection and encoding of the finding aid.

Inventory

Folder 1

Images, circa 1910-circa 1980, undated

Copies (slides, negatives, and contact prints) of pre-war images of the Blas family include Israel and Liba Blass, grandparents of Harry Blas; Peretz and Sara Blass, his parents; and Freida, Malka, and Josef Blass, his siblings. Pre-war images of the Stockfleth family include Erika; her great-grandmother, unnamed; her grandmother, Dorothea Gedon Stockfleth; her parents, William and Marie-Gertrude Botta Stockfleth; and her sister, Edelheit "Heidi." Post-war images show Harry and Erika Blas at their 1951 wedding and with their daughter, Susan. Digital images on CD and DVD are included.

Folder 2

Miscellaneous, undated

Included is a copy of a four-page memoir from Harry Blas in which he describes his experiences in the #ód# ghetto, Auschwitz concentration camp, and the search for his family after the war. Also included is a brief handwritten genealogy from Erika Blas.