LEWYN, BERT, 1923-2016.
Bert and Esther Lewyn family papers, 1921-2009

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Lewyn, Bert, 1923-2016.
Title: Bert and Esther Lewyn family papers, 1921-2009
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 1148
Extent: 2.5 linear feet (5 boxes), and 1 oversized papers box (OP)
Abstract: Family papers of author, businessman, and Holocaust survivor Bert Lewyn, and his wife, Esther Lewyn, including correspondence, photographs, and materials relating to the writing of his book *On the Run in Nazi Berlin*.
Language: Materials in English, German, Hebrew, and Yiddish.

Administrative Information

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Related Materials in This Repository
Louis and Anna Geffen family papers

Source
Gift of Bert and Esther Lewyn, 2010.

Citation
[after identification of item(s)], Bert and Esther Lewyn family papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

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**Appraisal Note**
Acquired by Susan Potts McDonald, Head of Arrangement and Description Services, as part of the Rose Library's holdings in the history of the Jewish community of Atlanta, Georgia.

**Processing**
Arranged and described at the file level by Tierra Thomas, 2020. The collection arrived at Rose Library largely organized in binders and standard file folders with minimal description. Archivists retained the original foldered units, refoldered them in acid-free folders, and supplied additional description to facilitate access. Items in binders and photograph albums were removed and foldered and data found on binders was photocopied and included with that unit of material. Materials are described using the name of the person who created the majority of the contents then by the record type or activity to which the materials relate. Archivists arranged unfolded materials by grouping related materials and provided description.

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**Collection Description**

**Biographical Note**
Bert Lewyn was born Dagobert Lewin in Berlin, Germany, on April 2, 1923. He grew up during the Nazi party’s rise to power, and in 1942, at eighteen, he and his parents were taken by the Gestapo and separated. Lewyn was sent to work in the Gustav Genschow and Co., Weapons Factory (Berlin, Germany), and much later, he learned his parents were sentenced to die at the Trawniki (Poland) concentration camp. He was enslaved at the factory until 1943 when a non-Jewish worker warned him that the Gestapo were loading Jewish workers onto trucks and taking them away. That day he did not report to work and spent the next several years hiding at the homes of friends and strangers. In 1945 he was captured and imprisoned in the former Jewish Hospital in Berlin. He and a group of prisoners managed to escape through a tunnel they accessed with a key Bert Lewyn made from debris he found after a bombing occurred near the prison. He returned to the apartment of his friends, Jenny and Leo Lebrecht, and remained there for several weeks until Russian soldiers raided the apartment, signaling the end of the war. As Jewish people returned to Berlin, Bert Lewyn connected with his aunt Riva Gutman and, together, they emigrated to the Feldafing displaced persons camp (Bavaria, Germany), hoping to move onto Palestine. However, he lived there until 1949 when his great aunt Sarah Hene and great uncle Rabbi Tobias Geffen sponsored his emigration to Atlanta, Georgia. In Atlanta, he started the Lewyn Machinery Company and married Esther Sloan in 1951. They later had five children, and Bert Lewyn wrote his memoir *On the Run in Nazi Berlin* (2001) with the help of his daughter-in-law Bev Saltzman Lewyn.

**Scope and Content Note**
The collection consists of the papers of Bert and Esther Lewyn and includes personal and professional correspondence, photographs of the Lewyn family, and photographs documenting
sites significant to Bert Lewyn’s life in Berlin, Germany, such as the Jewish Orphan’s home he lived at as a child, the Gustav Genschow and Co., Weapons factory, and various monuments and memorials. Also included are his speeches about surviving the Holocaust, materials relating to the Lewyn Machinery Company, and family documents, including contracts and legal documents of Esther Lewyn’s father, Louis Sloan, the writings of Bert Lewyn’s cousin Dov Levin, a study conducted by Esther Lewyn, and transcribed journal entries of Rabbi Tobias Geffen. Correspondence is primarily between Bert Lewyn and his family and friends, including Dov Levin, Rivka Gutman, Fran Kuzitsky, Rabbi Tobias Geffen, and Sarah Hene. Additionally, the collection includes correspondence between Esther Lewyn and Dr. Bella Bernfeld and the correspondence of Dov Levin, Ida Borochoff, and Leslie Brent, primarily with the Lewyn family. The bulk of the collection contains materials relating to the writing and promotion of On the Run in Nazi Berlin, including manuscript drafts, self-publishing materials from Xlibris, financial documents relating to book ordering and royalties, and original photographs and documents from Bert Lewyn’s survival in Nazi Germany, including his identification card from the Feldafing displaced persons camp.

Arrangement Note
Arranged in alphabetical order.
### Container List

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