



Step-by-step photo documentation:

Preserving an archival collection at the Leo Baeck Institute



Material from private collections typically encompasses a mixture of letters, photographs, IDs, and vital documents in varying degrees of organization



Professional archivists make an initial assessment to determine whether there are urgent environmental and preservation issues, such as mold, insects, or moisture, which may require quarantine of the materials or treatment in the Werner J. and Gisella Levi Cahnman Preservation Laboratory at the Center for Jewish history.

- A preliminary survey of the scope and content of the collection is undertaken while preserving the original order of materials, and a preliminary catalog record is created to enable tracking of the donation throughout the processing of the collection.
- Materials are transferred to acid-free folders and boxes. Materials containing sensitive personal data (e.g., financial papers, tax documents, social security cards, etc.) are taken out and either returned to the donor or discarded.



An archivist arranges the collection according to categories such as date, family branch, or genre. Whenever possible, the original order of papers is preserved, since the arrangement of the materials may provide information that helps to interpret the contents



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FINDING AID NAVIGATION

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Series I: Friedrich and Louise (Engels) Kapp family, undated, 1835-2009


Series II: Friedrich Ludwig and Julie (Seydel) Borckenhagen family, undated, 1783-1987

Series III: Lenel family, undated, 1812-1991

Series IV: Michaelis family, undated, 1773-1994

Series V: Walter Lenel, undated, 1868-1985

Series VI: Luise Lenel, undated, 1905-2010



Guide to the Fritz Victor Lenel Family Collection
Undated, 1773-2010 (bulk 1890s-1980s)

AR 25424 / MF 1125

Processed by Kevin Schlottmann

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The archivist then creates a Finding Aid, which is a standardized inventory of the materials in the collection that includes a detailed description of the contents.

The catalog entry is enhanced with a link to the Finding Aid as well as subject headings and other metadata that will allow users to discover the collections via a search, and the catalog record is made public.



The collection is microfilmed and digitized, either at the LBI Microfilming and Digitization Lab, the Gruss Lipper Digital Laboratory at the Center for Jewish History or by a trusted external vendor.



The original materials are placed in climate-controlled storage, either at the Center for Jewish History or off-site.

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