Leo Baeck Institute: Family History Research Guide

Leo Baeck Institute

Leo Baeck Institute (LBI) was founded in 1955 to document the history and culture of German-speaking Jewry. Its Archives and Library offer the most comprehensive collection of documents, memoirs, photographs and books dealing with the life and history of Jews in German-speaking lands from earliest times until the present. The materials are mostly in German, with some in Hebrew, and many in English.

Genealogical Resources at LBI

LBI’s collections are bountiful sources of material for German-Jewish genealogical research. Archival holdings include family collections as well as larger genealogical collections assembled by historians. Almost all include family trees, vital records, community histories, and other materials relevant to family and community research. Library collections include biographical dictionaries, biographies, and surveys of archives in Germany. To find these sources, do a simple keyword search on the family surname or town name in CJH’s online catalog at http://catalog.cjh.org.

The list below contains library and archival holdings relevant for genealogical research. The list does not include family and community histories, vital records, and biographies that can be identified through surname and town searches of the online catalog. Books marked REF are shelved in the Reading Room, and those marked CGI, in the Ackman & Ziff Family Genealogy Institute. For more extensive lists, see:

Mokotoff, Gary How to Document Victims and Locate Survivors of the Holocaust (Avotaynu, 1995) CGI D 804.3 .M65

General Sources

Berthold Rosenthal Collection (1875-1957): Manuscripts and correspondence on the history and genealogies of the Jews in Baden, and memorbucher (memorial books) of many other communities. Includes family trees, surname adoptions, and lists of residents.

Dokumentation zur jüdischen Kultur in Deutschland 1840-1940: die Zeitungsausschnittsammlung Steininger. Archiv Bibliographia Judaica, K. G. Sauer Verlag. [Documents of Jewish Culture in Germany from 1870 to 1940: The Collection of Newspaper clippings by Steininger] Microfiche (ask a librarian for access)


Ellmann-Krueger, Angelika and Dietrich Ellman. Bibliographie zur deutsch-jüdischen Familienforschung und zur neueren Regional- und Lokalgeschichte der Juden = Bibliography on German-Jewish Family Research and on Recent Regional and Local History of the Jews. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006. CD-ROM (ask a librarian for access)


Jacob Jacobson Collection (1888-1968). The Jacobson estate includes substantial remains of the Gesamtarchiv der deutschen Juden (Archives of German Jewry) established in Berlin in 1905 as the central repository for the records of German-Jewish communities and organizations.


Stammbaum: Journal of German-Jewish Genealogy, 1993-present. Published by volunteers with LBI oversight. CGI

Holocaust Victims, Survivors, and Refugees

_Gedenkbuch: Opfer der Verfolgung der Juden, 1933-1945._ Koblenz: Bundesarchiv, 1986. 2 volumes [Memorial volume: Victims of the persecution of the Jews, 1933-1945] (With cooperation from Yad Vashem, Jerusalem. Lists Jews of Germany who perished, with birth date, last residence place, death place, and cause of death if known; may not be completely accurate.) _REF DS 135 .G33 G38_

1938 German Census: The 1938 Census was officially a census of all “non-German” minorities living in German territory in 1939, including the region of Sudetenland that had been annexed from Czechoslovakia.

Spalek, John M, with Adrienne Ash and Sandra H. Hawrylchak, _Verzeichnis der Quellen und Materialen der deutschsprachigen Emigration in den USA seit 1933._ Charlottesvile, University Press of Virginia, 1978. [Listing of Sources and Materials of the German-speaking Immigration to the USA since 1933] _E 184 .G3 S68_

**Geographic Regions**


_Frankfurt:_ Ele Toldot A 32-volume collection of transcribed genealogical records of the Jewish community of Frankfurt am Main, covering the years 1241 to 1824. _MF 536 (reels 1-19)_


_The John H. Bergmann Collection has a history of the Jews of Laupheim (Schwaben), with family trees for most families, and information and files on surrounding communities in Schwaben, e.g. Ichenhausen, Huerben, Augsburg and Buttenhausen._

_Shanghai:_ LBI has significant archival holdings on the community of Jews living in Shanghai during World War II, including clippings, interviews, posters, correspondence, videos, municipal records, address books, and a list of refugees who died while in Shanghai.

**Contact Information**

Contact LBI’s Family Research Department by mail: LBI, 15 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011; e-mail, _lbigenealogy@lbi.cjh.org_, phone, (212) 744-6400; or fax, (212) 988-1305. Be sure to complete the family research form first, available at _www.lbi.org/famresearchappl.html_, including your name, mailing address, specific family names and, if possible, specific locations (regions, towns, villages) where your family lived. The more specific the search criteria, the better.