

The Letters of Elsa Sommer to Ruth Holländer

1937.10.27 to 1939.06.09

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Kopie

Nr. 19

Heinebad am 1ten Juli 1914.

Vor dem unterzeichneten Standesbeamten erschien heute, der Persönlichkeit nach

der Herr Herrmann, der Herrmann,
der Herrmann Abraham Sommer

wohnhaft in Heinebad Grüb. No. 66

evangelisch Religion, und zeigte an, daß von der

Elsa Sommer geboren Kätz, pie
max Joseph

evangelisch Religion,

wohnhaft bei ihm

zu Heinebad in privater Wohnung

am 1ten Juli des Jahres

tausend neunhundert einundzwanzig vier mittags

um 11 Uhr ein Mädchen

geboren worden sei und daß das Kind Elsa Vornamen

Joseph

erhalten habe.

Vorgelesen, genehmigt und Zeichen

Abraham Sommer II

Der Standesbeamte.

Hartmann

Für tot erklärt 31.12.1915, Buch für Todeserklärung 26967 154 Berlin 5.

gemäß § 5 der Verordnung
zur Durchführung des Gesetzes
über die Eintragung von
Hochzeiten, vom 17.8.1938
wird auf Antrag der Ehe-
partner, vom 1.1.1939 ab
der zugehörige Name
angenommen.
Heinebad den 25. 10. 1938
Holländer
Hartmann

Birth Certificate of Elsa Sommer, 1914.07.01



Gedenke mich in der
Freunde Welt
Deiner Cousine
Elsa

Elsa Sommer -- 1937

Ruth Holländer was born on January 9, 1915 in Hilchenbach and emigrated from Germany on November 1, 1937. Just before she left she received a letter, dated October 27, 1937, and a photo from her cousin Else Sommer, born July 1, 1914 in Heinebach. After she left she received at least seven more letters. Some of these also had messages from other members of Else Sommer's family.

N.B. The writing paper used was very thin and one could often see the writing on the back side. Thus in some cases a high contrast photocopy was first made; this accounts for the white background on some pages and a yellowish tint when a scan was made directly from the letter.

Letter 1. Else Sommer in Nordrach to Ruth Holländer in Hilchenbach, 1937.10.27.

Best wishes in the new world.

Letter 2. Else Sommer in Nordrach to Ruth Holländer in New York, 1937.12.05.

Happy to have received first letter.

Letter 3. Else Sommer in Nordrach to Ruth Holländer in New York, 1938.01.19.

Has heard little from her brother Fritz. Has not heard from her very orthodox relatives in Eiterfeld [This refers to the family of Rosa Sommer, the sister of Julie Sommer, my mother's mother. They were able to emigrate to New York].

Letter 4. Else Sommer in Heinebach to Ruth Holländer in New York, 1938.03.26.

Back home in Heinebach as is brother Fritz (sick); wrote to Ruth's parents in Hilchenbach; Abraham Sommer going to Hilchenbach for Pessach. Written message from Fritz Sommer, Lina Katz, and Irma Sommer and [?]

Letter 5. Else Sommer in Heinebach to Ruth Holländer in New York, 1938.06.12.

Understands that Ruth Holländer often visits Tante Rosa [Rosa Sommer, see letter 3; thus we learn that the latter was already in New York]. Goes to the garden in nice weather. Hears often from Julie Sommer [the mother of Ruth Holländer who lived in Hilchenbach].

Letter 6. Else Sommer in Heinebach to Ruth Holländer in New York, 1938.07.17.

Includes a message from Lina Sommer.

Kristalnacht: 1938.11.09

Letter 7. Else Sommer in Nordrach to Ruth Holländer in New York, 1939.01.09.

Else Sommer restarted working.

Letter 8. Else Sommer in Nordrach to Ruth Holländer in New York, 1939.06.09.

“My dear Fischlers” [Ruth Holländer and Sigmund Fischler were married 1939.03.19]. Selma Holländer [my mother's sister; see the chapter “Selma Holländer and Freddy Furcht”] can now travel [to England].

The Sequel

From [Hecker, 2011, p. 334], we learn that Else Sommer had lived with her great-uncle Jacob Katzenstein [son of Amelie Marx and Abraham Katzenstein; see the chapter “Common Ancestors” and the letters that he wrote to my mother] in 1935 and 1936. She and her parents and a younger sister were deported from Kassel to the Sobibór extermination camp on June 1, 1942.

Bibliography

Hecker, H. 2011. *Jüdisches Leben in Frankenberg*. Frankenberg: Gesichtsverein Frankenberg.