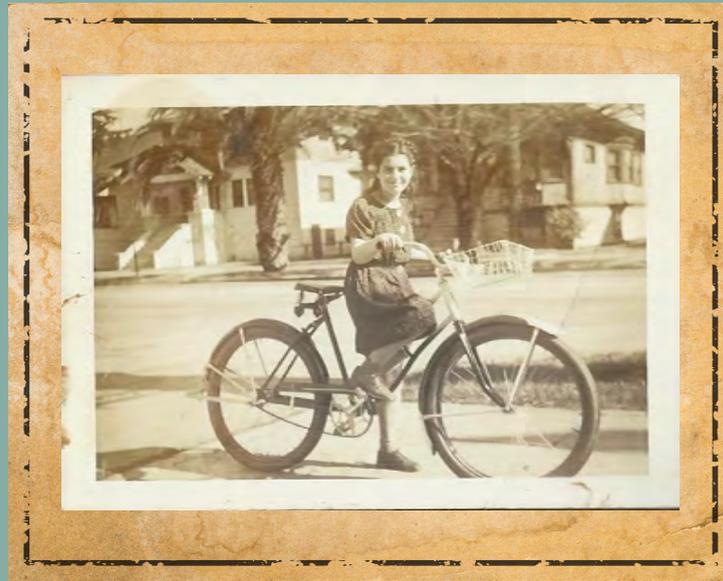


THE  
POESIE BOOK  
OF EVA GOLDBERG

LAUREN LEIDERMAN

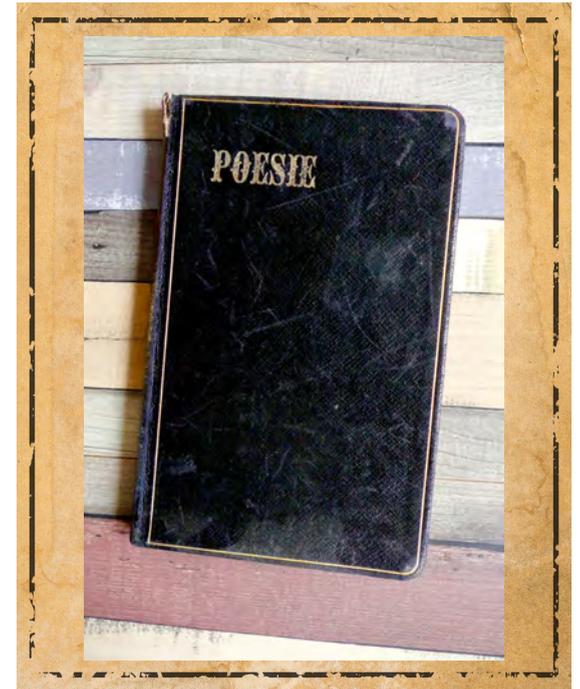


# WHAT IS A POESIE BOOK?

A poesie book was a firmly bound book with white blank pages, in which a person's friends and family could write its owner sweet messages, poetry (*poesie* actually translates to the word *poetry* in German), as well as well wishes for the book's owner. Think of a poesie book as being an autograph album of sorts, similar to how children get their friends to sign their school's "Year Book" each year in the United States.

A poesie book normally measured 16 cm × 16 cm/6.5 in x 6.5 in. Poesie books were a very common thing for a little girl or boy to have in Germany- both when Eva Goldberg was a child and even to an extent, today!

Children and adults would decorate their entries with drawings and personal photos, as is the case with some of the entries in Eva Goldberg's poesie book. A poesie book, like a diary, reminded its owner about the people with whom they had crossed paths with in their life. A poesie book therefore was a physical representation of one's memories.



The poesie book that you will be reading belonged to a little Jewish girl named Eva Goldberg. Eva was gifted her poesie book from her parents Helene and Max Goldberg. The first entry in the book comes from Eva's father, and it is dated to April 1938. The year 1938 was a particularly difficult and traumatic year for Jewish people living in Germany's "Third Reich". I have often wondered if Eva's parents gave her this little poesie book as a means of coping with the seemingly out-of-control world around her.

What makes this poesie book particularly famous is that one of its signees was Eva Goldberg's childhood friend, Anne Frank. However, before you go searching for her entry in the book, let me tell you a bit more about the Goldberg Family.

# A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF THE GOLDBERG FAMILY



HELENE, MAX, & EVA GOLDBERG  
GÖRLITZ, 1929

Max and Helene Goldberg were members of the Jewish community of Görlitz. Max worked in Görlitz at the Jewish-owned “Totschek Department Store” (where he was a procurement manager for Walter Totschek). Helene was a seamstress and homemaker. In 1929, they welcomed their first child, a daughter, Eva.

Eva recalled a happy childhood. She went to school, loved to play with dolls alongside her German friend Elfi, and enjoyed going to the synagogue for children's events. The Goldbergs would experience their first brush with heartache when Eva's little brother, Rudolf, died at less than a year old in 1931. He is buried in the Jewish Cemetery on Biesnitzer Strasse in Görlitz – his grave had been forgotten about over the years.



RUDOLF & EVA GOLDBERG  
GÖRLITZ, 1931

When cleaning the Jewish Cemetery in Spring of 2020, Daniel Breutmann and I found his grave again. It had been covered by years of vegetation and over growth. Before cleaning this area, no one would have even known that there were the tiny graves of children there ... and Rudolf was one of them. Even Eva's niece (by marriage) was surprised to learn that her aunt had had a baby brother. After confirming his identity with the Görlitz City Archives through a death certificate, there was definitive proof that this was Eva's brother.

Helene Goldberg (née Wechsler) had three sisters – Hennie, Anni, and Gerda. Two of these sisters, Hennie and Anni, lived in Amsterdam. Max, Helene, and Eva would visit them there often on holiday. It was on one of these family holidays in Amsterdam, that Eva met and befriended Anne Frank. Eva spent many holidays playing with Anne Frank and Susa Ledermann.



EVA GOLDBERG'S SCHOOL CLASS

(BOTTOM ROW: 6TH FROM RIGHT, EVA GOLDBERG; MIDDLE ROW: 4TH FROM RIGHT EVELINE LÖWENBERG)  
GÖRLITZ, 1935

When the Nazis came to power, Eva's parents (worried about their futures) began to study English, knowing that this might help them in the future. Eva had her first run in with anti-semitism in 1935. Eva and her friend Eveline Löwenberg (who was also Jewish) were walking in the Görlitz City Park with their doll prams. In the park, Eveline and Eva ran into a group of German girls who berated Eveline and Eva calling them "dirty Jews" and chasing them by throwing sticks. Eveline and Eva were only six years old. Eveline recounts that at that time she did not understand what the other girls meant when they shouted "dirty Jews"; and not knowing what it meant and not wanting to be bullied, Eveline joined the girls in ganging up on Eva Goldberg. Eva ran home to her mother and father. When Eveline made it back to her house, her parents were waiting for her – Helene Goldberg had called them and had told them the whole terrible account of what had happened in the park. Eveline's parents had a very serious talk with her about what had happened, and what role she had played in it. Eveline Löwenberg to this day recalls that this was the pivotal moment in her life when she truly understood for the first time the concept of antisemitism as well as her own identity as a Jew.

On November 9, 1938, Jewish men from all over Germany were arrested for no reason other than the fact that they were Jews. Max was one such Jewish man who was arrested in this horrible series of events known as the “Kristallnacht Pogrom/Reichspogromnacht”. Max was held in the Görlitz prison for eight weeks. Helene recounted that the Goldberg apartment was not looted only because German friends intervened and stopped the rioters from entering the apartment. In prison, Max became very ill with pneumonia. Knowing that she had to act quickly, Helene jumped into action by organizing the family’s escape. The Goldberg Family first stopped in Berlin, where they secured passage to their next destination, Amsterdam. When the family tried to exit the German border into Holland, all of their jewellery and possessions of any value were taken from them by the Nazi soldiers. However, the family managed to escape Germany.



**EVA AT A BIRTHDAY PARTY**

(FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: RENATE MUHR, EVELINE LÖWENBERG,  
EVA KAFKA, EVA GOLDBERG)  
GÖRLITZ, 1935

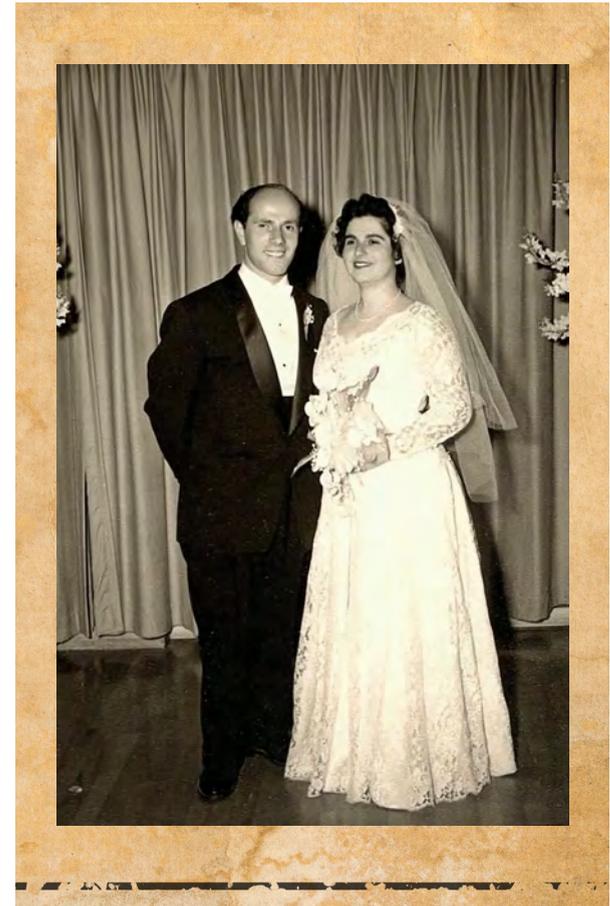
In Amsterdam, the family stayed with Helene’s sisters, Anni and Hennie Wechsler. It was while in Amsterdam awaiting voyage to England, that Eva’s close childhood friends, Anne Frank, Susanne Ledermann, and Hanelli Goslar signed her poesie book. The day was January 29, 1939, and it would be the last time Eva and her friends would be together in this life.

The Goldberg family made it to England in February 1939. In London, the Goldberg family lived with Max’s sister, Marie Goldenfeld, while waiting for both visa approval and transport to America. Two days before declaring war on Germany in September 1939, the British national government put into effect its recently developed evacuation plans designed to remove most of the schoolchildren, teachers, and caregivers living in London to safe towns and country districts.

During this time, Eva was taken from her parents and evacuated from London to Saltdean, in southern England: what I can only imagine was another traumatic experience for Eva. In her personal interviews Eva talks about how scary the evacuation was for her as it was the first time she had been separated from both of her parents.

The Goldbergs finally got their visa approval on October 17, 1939. On October 24, 1939, they left England aboard the "S. S. Washington"- it was one of the last commercial ships crossing the Atlantic for America. The Goldberg family were able to immigrate to America thanks to Max's cousin who was a medical doctor in Illinois. This cousin's affidavit to support the family granted them entry to the USA. Eva recalls her memories from the ocean voyage in video interviews. Eva said that the ship was very full, and that men and women were separated. She also sweetly remembers this voyage being the first time that she saw a movie with real people (not animation).

The Goldbergs arrived in New York City on November 1, 1939 at 11:23 PM. In NYC, the family lived with some of Max's distant cousins for a short time. Eventually, the family moved to California (literally traversing the US on a Greyhound Bus), settling in Sacramento. In Sacramento, the Goldbergs lived in a community with other Jewish families, including other survivors of the Holocaust. Max, Helene, and Eva were very active in their synagogue, and both Helene and Eva were active members of Hadassah. Max and Helene had very happy lives in California, and Max after many years rediscovered his love of the piano and music- something he never thought he would find again. Max died at 74 years old in 1964. Helene died at 85 years old in 1987.



THE WEDDING OF EVA GOLDBERG & BERNHARD JUDD  
CALIFORNIA, MARCH 11, 1956

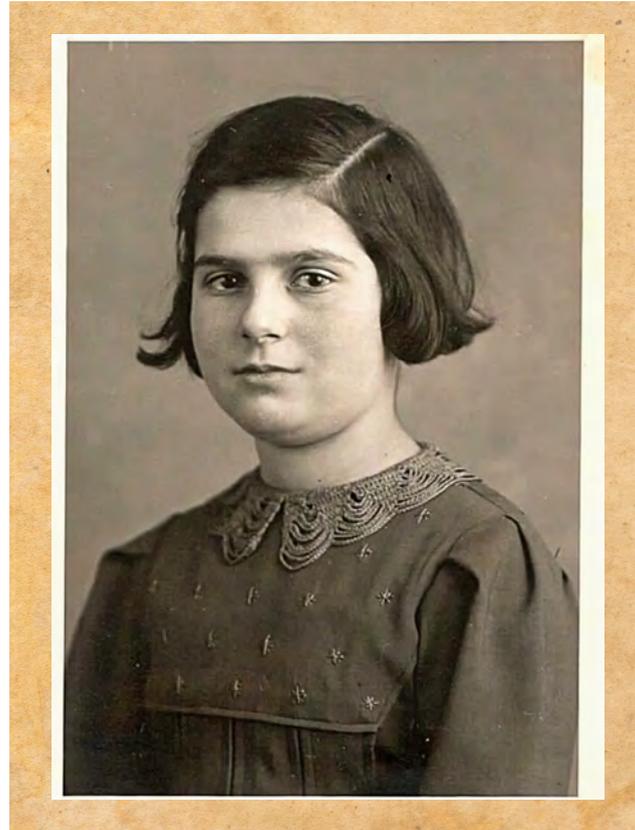
While visiting a friend in Los Angeles, Eva met Bernhard "Bernie" Judd – a fellow Holocaust survivor. The two dated for a few months before getting married on March 11, 1956. Eva and Bernie loved to travel, and visited Europe for the first time since fleeing in 1939. It was too difficult emotionally for Eva to ever see Görlitz again. Eva and Bernie loved and supported Israel, and the couple travelled there often. Eva and Bernie were married for 42 years when Eva passed away from cancer in 1997.

Eva and Bernie had no children, but were a loving aunt and uncle to many nieces and nephews. It was at the request of their family that I began transcribing and translating this book.

PAGE 3

German:

Eva Goldberg



English:

Eva Goldberg



**MAX GOLDBERG**

SACRAMENTO, 1958

"Willenskraft  
Nagen flafst."

Wöya flafst Comanffam fief bayleitan  
Und der fofe und gäta Vaga baraiten.  
Jff's abes unanfual fteruiffa Jast,  
Der flafst foyfar und barait.

Meinam Lieben Höflichkeit  
und fffam  
Vati.

Görlitz, 25. 4. 1938.

# PAGE 4

German:

„Willenskraft Wege schafft“

Möge stets Sonnenschein Dich begleiten  
Und Dir frohe und gute Tage bereiten. Ist's  
aber manchmal stürmische Zeit, Sei stets  
tapfer und bereit.

Meinem lieben Töchterchen  
von Ihrem  
Vati

Görlitz, 25.4.1938

English:

“Willpower Creates a Path”

May sunshine always accompany you  
and give you happy and good days. But  
when times are stormy, be always brave  
and ready.

To my dear little daughter  
from her  
Daddy

Görlitz, April 25, 1938

Max Goldberg was the father of Eva Goldberg Judd. Max was born in Leipzig in 1891. He was an employee of the Jewish-owned Totschek Kaufhaus in Görlitz for more than ten years. On Kristallnacht, Max was beaten by Nazi thugs and taken to prison. In prison Max contracted pneumonia and nearly died. Once Helene Goldberg was able to secure his release in December 1938, Max, Helene, and Eva fled Görlitz. Their escape would take them from Berlin to Amsterdam to London to New York City and eventually, to Sacramento, California. Max had a love for piano. He was an accomplished pianist; in California, he found the joy of playing once again. Max passed away in California in 1964.



HELENE, EVA & MAX GOLDBERG

SACRAMENTO, 1942

Thiift davin bestalt ünfer Gail,  
duß alles so kommt, wie wir es  
gornn wärrn,  
Tandem duß wir es yornn wärrn,  
wie es kommt.

Meinem lieben Kind

zur Befreiung.

In herzlichster Liebe

deine Mütter.

Yorditz, d. 25. April 1938

# PAGE 5

**German:**

**Nicht darin besteht unser Heil,  
dass alles so kommt, wie wir es  
gerne nehmen,  
sondern dass wir es gerne nehmen  
wie es kommt.**

**Meinem lieben Kind zur Beherzigung in  
herzlicher Liebe**

**deine Mutti**

**Görlitz, d. 25 April 1938**

**English:**

**Our salvation does not consist in  
everything coming out the way that we  
would like it,  
but in taking each thing  
as it comes.**

**To my dear child to keep in mind with  
heartfelt love**

**your Mummy**

**Görlitz, April 25, 1938**

Helene Goldberg was the mother of Eva Goldberg. Helene was born in 1902 in Stettin/Szczecin, Poland. Helene was the oldest of four girls: Helene (1902), Gerda (1904), Henni (1906), and Anni (1908). Gerda was a fervent Zionist, and she immigrated to Israel in 1931. Henni and Anni lived together in Amsterdam. All four sisters were accomplished seamstresses. Helene worked as a seamstress in Görlitz. She actually made the outfit Eva Goldberg is wearing in the photograph that I included on Page 3 of the Poesie Book. Helene was active in the Jewish community of Görlitz. After Kristallnacht and the arrest of her husband Max, Helene took action in organizing the Goldberg family's escape. When Max was released from prison in December 1938, the family left Görlitz. One of the stopovers on the family's escape was in Amsterdam, where the Goldberg family had travelled many times on holiday. It was here that Eva befriended the German girls, Anne Frank, Susanne Ledermann, and Elisabeth "Hanneli" Goslar.

In America, Helene continued to work as a seamstress. She was very active in Hadassah (a Zionist women's organization). Helene passed away in 1987.