Zenner Collection
MSS# 44

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Author: Phillip Zenner
Title: Zenner Collection
Date: 1869-1941
Abstract: Letters, photographs, newspaper clippings, and military promotion certificates
Quantity: 1 cu. ft.

BIOGRAPHY OF

Phillip Zenner was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on May 17, 1852. His father, David Zenner, emigrated from Lichtenfels, Bavaria (Germany) in the early 1800s, settling in Cincinnati, Ohio. David Zenner and his wife Babetta Frohman Zenner established a retail business in Cincinnati, then moved to Athens, Ohio when Phillip entered Ohio University in 1865. The family continued their retail business in Athens under the name D. Zenner and Company Wholesale and Retail Dealers in Dry Goods and Clothing.

Phillip Zenner entered Ohio University in 1865 at the age of 13. In 1870, at the age of 18, he received his Bachelor of Arts degree. Three years later, in 1873, he received a Masters of Art degree, then in 1875, he completed a medical degree at Miami Medical College in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Zenner practiced medicine in Cincinnati from 1875 to 1879, then went to Europe for post-graduate courses in Vienna, Leipsig, Berlin, Paris, and London. He returned to the United States in 1881 and became the first physician in Cincinnati to practice neurology and psychiatry. Zenner was a professor at the University of Cincinnati and became professor emeritus in 1910. Zenner was also a neurologist at Cincinnati Hospital for several years.

Phillip Zenner was the first Cincinnati doctor to hold special clinics for nervous
diseases, the first to suggest training of psychiatrists in mental institutions, and the first president and founder of the Cincinnati Society of Neurology and Psychiatry.

In 1886, Dr. Zenner and a group of Jewish doctors helped found the Jewish Hospital Association and until his death in 1956, was a member of the hospital’s staff. Among his other social contributions, Zenner established a loan fund to aid released prisoners of Ohio Penitentiary and with the help of his late sister, Rebecca Friday, started a fund with the public school system in Cincinnati, which provided money for underprivileged children.

Zenner’s literary and scientific contributions include, *Education in Sexual Physiology and Hygiene* (1910), written to educate teenagers on sexuality, *Mind and Other Essays* (1912), dealing with newly discovered field of psychiatry, and numerous publications in medical journals and encyclopedias in the United States and Europe.

Zenner remained a bachelor throughout his life and had no children. He died in 1956 at the age of 104.

**SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTION**

The Zenner Collection contains letters and correspondence of Dr. Phillip Zenner from 1869 to 1941. This includes 253 letters written to Zenner, all of which are from family and friends. All of the letters concern family business, health matters, and personal interests. Several letters contain information on the Zenner family history and ancestry. Phillip Zenner appeared to have been interested in tracing the lineage of his family back to Germany to determine relations (if any) with the Silberman family. The Silbermans were a family who requested Zenner’s financial assistance and sponsorship to help them leave Germany in 1941. The collection also contains several photographs of family members, newspaper clippings relevant to Zenner, and four military promotion certificates.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE COLLECTION**

These records are organized into the following series:

- **Series I**: Letters
- **Series II**: Correspondence
- **Series III**: Letters in German
- **Series IV**: Scrapbook Memorabilia
RELATED MATERIALS


Ohio University Archives. Biographical Folder, Dr. Phillip Zenner, 1852-1956

Ohio University Archives. Folders from W. W. Wright’s Office, 1866-1965 A-K. Phillip Zenner and Frank Jones Correspondence 1950


ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

**Restrictions:** The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Ohio University Libraries.

**Preferred Citation:** Researchers are requested to cite the collection name, collection number, and the Ohio University Libraries, in all footnotes and bibliographical references.

**Accession Number:** Unknown

**Provenance:** The Ohio University Archives received the collection as a donation by Dr. Phillip Zenner in July 1956. In 1950, Dr. Zenner agreed to give his collection to the Ohio University Library upon his death, which occurred six years later.

**Property Rights:** Ohio University retains all property rights to the collection.

**Copyrights:** Ohio University retains all copyrights unless retained by the donor, other correspondents, or other artists.
Photoduplication: Ohio University will entertain requests to photocopy reasonable amounts of material from the collection for the convenience of individual researchers.

Processing: Albert J. Goldman was responsible for transferring the Zenner Collection from Cincinnati to Ohio University in July 1956. Carolyn Copper processed this collection in September 1985. Ursula Lawson, professor of German at Ohio University, completed one translation of the ten German letters contained in the collection in the Fall of 1985. Johanna Bungartz, a graduate student of the Department of Modern Languages at Ohio University, completed the translation of the remaining nine letters in April of 1986.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Note to Researchers: To request materials, please note both the location and box numbers shown below.

CONTAINER LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box/Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 / 1</td>
<td>Letters to Zenner, 1869-1871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-49 letters from family, friends, and business acquaintances</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Letters to Zenner, 1873-1875</td>
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<td>-40 letters from family, friends, and business acquaintances</td>
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<td>Letters to Zenner, 1880</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-19 letters from family, friends, and business acquaintances</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 Letters to Zenner, 1881
   -12 letters from family, friends, and business acquaintances

2 / 1 Letters to Zenner, 1888-1895
   -19 letters from family, friends, and business acquaintances

2 Letters to Zenner, 1901, 1910, 1914, 1916
   -28 letters from family and friends

3 Letters to Zenner, 1934, 1939-1941
   -19 letters from family and friends
   -ALS April 20, 1941, 2 pgs. From Luise Silberman requesting Zenner’s financial support to assist her parents in leaving Germany
   -ALS December 4, 1941, 2 pgs. From Luise Silberman

Series II: Correspondence
4 Zenner Correspondence, 1872-1877
   -50 items, extensive correspondence with Fanny Zenner (sister), Julia Zenner (sister), and parents

5 Zenner Correspondence, 1878-1879, 1901, 1912-1913
   -8 items, correspondence with Fanny Zenner (sister) and Julia (Zenner) Friday (sister)

6 Zenner Correspondence, 1914
   -13 items, correspondence with Rebecca Friday and Rose Zenner

7 Zenner Correspondence, 1939
   -13 items, correspondence with numerous family members

Series III: Letters in German
8 Letters in the German language, 1879-1941, 10 items
-ALS to Zenner from Edward Silberman (nephew), October 9, 1871, 3 pgs. Bamberg, Germany
-ALS to “Cousin Julie” (Zenner-Friday) from “Cousin Babette Hamburger” March 12, 1907, 4 pgs. Bamberg, Germany
-ALS to “Aunt” from Paul Eber (nephew), September 9, 1938, 3 pgs. Munich, Germany
-ALS to “Aunt” from Paul Eber (nephew), August 5, 1938, 4 pgs. Munich, Germany
-ALS to Phillip Zenner from Martha Rothholz, June 21, 1938, 5 pgs. Charlottenburg, Germany
-ALS to “Aunt” from Paul Eber (nephew), August 25, 1938, 4 pgs. Munich, Germany
-TLS to “Cousin” from Sophie Weil (born Hamburger), June 16, 1939, 1 pg. Muehlhausen, Germany
-ALS to Phillip Zenner and sister, Rebecca from “Cousin Marie Krailsheimer” November 25, 1939, 1 1/2 pgs. Montlucon
- ALS to Phillip Zenner and sister, Rebecca from Marie Krailsheimer, March 25, 1940, 2 1/2 pgs. Montlucon
-TLS to “Cousin” from Sophie Weil, September 1, 1940, 1 pg. Muehlhausen, Germany

9 Zenner Translation of letters, additional copies

Series IV: Scrapbook Memorabilia

3 / 1 Prairie Flower excerpt, April 10, 1863, 8 pgs.
   Possible magazine or poetry publication, volume 1, number 1, author unknown

2 Article from The Daily Citizen, Thursday, July 2, 1863, Vicksburg, Missouri
   -Article includes obituaries and public
Military promotion certificate presented to Albert S. Sloane, January 5, 1897, Governor of Ohio, Asa S. Bushnell

Military Promotion Certificates
- Military promotion to Hiram R. Home, July 20, 1834 by Governor of Ohio, Robert Lucas
- Military promotion to Albert S. Sloane, October 23, 1894 by Governor of Ohio, Asa S. Bushell
- Military promotion to Albert S. Sloane, May 13, 1898 by Governor of Ohio, Asa S. Bushnell

Rose Zenner poem with unidentified photo on reverse side, no date

Newspaper articles about Zenner, his death, and his status as oldest living college graduate, editorials written by Zenner, 12 items, 1934-1954 (1-12)

Photographs, 13 items, 1865-1954
- Photos of Zenner and unidentified woman (13)
- Photo of unidentified German woman, 1865 (15)
- Photo of Philip McNight Zenner II, 1953 (16)
- Photo of Suzanne and Philip McNight Zenner II, 1954 (17)

Memorabilia 1857-1904, 6 items (18-20)
- Receipts from motels, poem written by David Zenner