Exit Berlin:How One Woman Saved Her Family from Nazi Germany

Charlotte R. Bonelli

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Exit Berlin:How One Woman Saved Her Family from Nazi Germany Charlotte R. Bonelli Just a week after the Kristallnacht terror in 1938, young Luzie Hatch, a German Jew, fled Berlin to resettle in New York. Her rescuer was an American-born cousin and industrialist, Arnold Hatch. Arnold spoke no German, so Luzie quickly became translator, intermediary, and advocate for family left behind. Soon an unending stream of desperate requests from German relatives made their way to Arnold's desk.

Luzie Hatch had faithfully preserved her letters both to and from far-flung relatives during the World War II era as well as copies of letters written on their behalf. This extraordinary collection, now housed at the American Jewish Committee Archives, serves as the framework for *Exit Berlin*. Charlotte R. Bonelli offers a vantage point rich with historical context, from biographical information about the correspondents to background on U.S. immigration laws, conditions at the Vichy internment camps, refuge in Shanghai, and many other topics, thus transforming the letters into a riveting narrative.

Arnold's letters reveal an unfamiliar side of Holocaust history. His are the responses of an "average" American Jew, struggling to keep his own business afloat while also assisting dozens of relatives trapped abroad—most of whom he had never met and whose deathly situation he could not fully comprehend. This book contributes importantly to historical understanding while also uncovering the dramatic story of one besieged family confronting unimaginable evil.



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