

# **Karl D. Jessen papers**

**3H**

**Finding aid prepared by Annalise Berdini,  
Christiana Dobrzynski Grippe, and Megan Evans.**

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Last updated on September 26, 2014.

Bryn Mawr College

2014 September 26

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Bryn Mawr College
<b>Creator</b>	Jessen, Karl Detlev, 1872-1919
<b>Title</b>	Karl D. Jessen papers
<b>Call number</b>	3H
<b>Date [bulk]</b>	1890-1917
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1872-1980
<b>Extent</b>	6.2 linear feet (13 document boxes, 3 items)
<b>Language</b>	English

**Language of Materials note** Materials are in German, French, and English.

**Abstract** Karl Detlev Jessen (1872-1919) was a professor of German Literature at Bryn Mawr College from 1910 to 1919. He was involved with the Socialist movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Karl D. Jessen papers house the records of Karl D. Jessen. This collection dates from 1872 to 1980, with bulk dates of 1890 to 1917. This collection consists mostly of correspondence between Jessen and his family, friends, and colleagues, in addition to manuscripts and manuscript drafts, clippings, scrapbooks, bibliography cards of Jessen's research, and other ephemera.

**Cite as:**

[Description and date of item], [Box/folder number], Karl D. Jessen papers, 1872-1980, Bryn Mawr College Canaday Library Special Collections.

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## **Biography/History**

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Karl Detlev Jessen (1872-1919) was a professor of German Literature at Bryn Mawr College from 1910 to 1919. As a young man, Jessen traveled to the United States in 1892 to teach for a time at the University of Iowa. Upon receiving his Ph.D. from Berlin in 1901, he took up a teaching position at Harvard until he came to Bryn Mawr in 1910. He married Ilona Benda in 1901, although the two later separated and divorced at an unknown date. In 1915, he married Myra Richards, a fellow professor at Bryn Mawr. Together they had one daughter, Ingeborg, in 1917. He was involved with the American and German Socialist movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As a German immigrant, Jessen was subjected to harassment as a result of anti-German sentiment caused by World War I. He died of acute appendicitis when he was only forty-seven years old.

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## **Scope and Contents**

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The Karl D. Jessen papers house the records of Dr. Karl D. Jessen, a professor of German Literature at Bryn Mawr College. This collection dates from 1872 to 1980, with bulk dates of 1890 to 1917. This collection consists mostly of correspondence between Jessen and his family, friends, and colleagues, with manuscripts and manuscript drafts, clippings, scrapbooks, bibliography cards of Jessen's research. These records provide insight into Jessen's research interests, political beliefs, career, and family life, especially leading up to his marriage to Myra Jessen. Researchers interested in the German-American experience on the United States home front during World War I will find this collection of particular interest.

This collection is arranged into three series: ?I. Correspondence, 1890-1967,? ?II. Research, writings, lectures, 1872-1946,? and ?III. Personal, 1890-1980.?

Series ?I. Correspondence? dates from 1890 to 1967, with bulk dates of 1890 to 1919. Records in this series include letters and postcards to and from Karl Jessen, some regarding Socialism in the United States and the political situation in Germany. The majority of the letters in this series deal with his

career as a professor, especially regarding research, publication, administrative tasks, and professional relationships with both professors and students. Notable correspondents include M. Carey Thomas, Franklin Vonnegut, the Teller family, various university colleagues, and numerous publishers. Of particular interest are several letters detailing Jessen's experiences of harassment by both citizens and the government because of his status as a German immigrant during WWI. There is some overlap in material with Series ?III. Personal? since the exact form of his relationships to some correspondents is unknown. The majority of the materials in this series are handwritten in German although there are some materials in English and French; some are typed. This series is arranged chronologically.

Series ?II. Research, writings, lectures? dates from 1872 to 1946, with bulk dates of 1895 to 1917. This series includes many of Jessen's diaries and date books, bibliography cards, manuscripts and manuscript drafts, lecture drafts and notes, and German-American newsletters and clippings. Most of the materials relate to German culture, Socialism, anti-Imperialism, and Jessen's professional research interests. Researchers interested in German-American Socialism and German romantic nationalism leading up to World War I will find this series particularly useful. The majority of the materials in this series is in German; both typed and autograph records are present. This series is arranged chronologically.

Series ?III. Personal? dates from 1890 to 1980, with bulk dates of 1890 to 1912. This series includes scrapbooks, diplomas and certificates, correspondence with close friends and family members, and genealogical notes. Also included are several photographs of Jessen and various colleagues, as well as personal mementos from professional events and official documents regarding immigration and citizenship. Notable correspondents include Myra Jessen, Berta and Marie Muller, Maria Jessen (Karl Jessen's mother), Heinrich Freese, and Illona Benda (Jessen's first wife). There is some overlap in material with Series ?I. Correspondence,? as Jessen's relationship with several correspondents is not immediately discernable. The bulk of the materials in this series are typed, printed, or handwritten in German. This series is arranged chronologically.

This collection is especially significant in its evidence of anti-German sentiment early in World War I, as well as documentation of the growing Socialist movement in the United States before the Bolshevik Revolution. Researchers may also find this collection useful to trace the study of German romantic and mystic literature. Additionally, those interested in Jessen's family and personal life will find many letters, especially to Berta Muller, particularly abundant.

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## Administrative Information

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Bryn Mawr College

2014 September 26

Finding aid prepared by Annalise Berdini, Christiana Dobrzynski Grippe, and Megan Evans.

### Sponsor

The creation of the electronic guide for this collection was made possible through generous funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, administered through the Council on Library and Information Resources? ?Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives? Project.

### **Access Restrictions**

This collection is open for research use.

### **Use Restrictions**

Copyright restrictions may apply. Please contact the Archives with requests for copying and for authorization to publish, quote or reproduce the material.

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition note**

Gift of Ingeborg Jessen Shields; 1984, 2013.

### **Processing Information note**

The processing of this collection was made possible through generous funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, administered through the Council on Library and Information Resources? ?Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives? Project.

This collection was minimally processed in 2013-2014, as part of an experimental project conducted under the auspices of the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries to help eliminate processing backlog in Philadelphia repositories. A minimally processed collection is one processed at a less intensive rate than traditionally thought necessary to make a collection ready for use by researchers. When citing sources from this collection, researchers are advised to defer to folder titles provided in the finding aid rather than those provided on the physical folder.

Employing processing strategies outlined in Mark Greene's and Dennis Meissner's 2005 article "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Processing Approaches to Deal With Late 20th-Century Collections," the project team tested the limits of minimal processing on collections of all types and ages in 16 Philadelphia area repositories. A primary goal of the project, the team processed at an average rate of 4 hours per linear foot of records, a fraction of the time ordinarily reserved for the arrangement and description of collections. Among other time saving strategies, the project team did not extensively review the content of the collections or complete any preservation work.

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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### **Form/Genre(s)**

- Clippings
- Correspondence.
- Diaries.
- Photographs.

### **Subject(s)**

- German Americans--Biography.
- War and socialism--United States--History.
- World War I

## Series I. Correspondence

## Collection Inventory

### Series I. Correspondence, 1890-1967 (Bulk, 1890-1919) .

	Box	Folder
Drafts of letters from Jessen to various individuals, 1890-1908.	1	1
Letters to and from various correspondents especially from Mid-Western friends and Teller family regarding socialism; and press clippings, 1892-1902.	1	2
Letters to various correspondents especially regarding socialism in the United States and Germany, 1892-1904.	1	3
Letters to and from various correspondents especially regarding academics, press clippings, and other assorted materials, undated.	1	4
Letters and postcards from various correspondents especially from Indianapolis, Chicago, Iowa City, and Springfield, 1893-1897.	1	5
Letters to various correspondents, press clippings, programs, playbills, and business cards relating to socialism, 1893-1900.	1	6
Letters to Jessen from Indiana, with accompanying notes, 1894-1896.	1	7
Letters from E. Viewegh, mostly from Indianapolis, 1894-1901.	1	8
Letters from Richard Lieber and others, mostly from Indianapolis, 1894-1905.	1	9
Letter copying book, 1895.	1	10

## Series I. Correspondence

Letters to and from Paul H. Grumann and others, mostly from Indianapolis, 1895-1896.	1	11
To and from various; locations include Eureka College; Springfield, MA; University of Chicago and others, 1895-1897.	1	12
Letters to Jessen, mostly from city of Indianapolis, 1895-1904.	2	1
Letters and postcards from various correspondents, 1895-1907.	2	2
Letters to and from Carl Albert Krause, 1896-1901.	2	3
Incoming letters "R", 1896-1905.	2	4
Letters from various students and colleagues from Harvard, University of Chicago, and Iowa City, 1896-1910.	2	5
Letter to Charlotte Teller from Karl D. Jessen, 1897 May 13.	2	6
Letters to and from various; includes University of Chicago and State University of Iowa, 1897.	2	7
Assorted letters regarding socialism, publications, and Bayard Holmes, 1897-1902.	2	8
Letters to and from various correspondents especially regarding WWI and immigration; press clippings, 1897-1906.	2	9
Letters to and from various including M. Carey Thomas; press clippings; and other personal memorabilia, 1897-1913.	2	10
Incoming letters "F", woodcut prints autographed by Fidus, and pamphlet, 1897-1914.	2	11

## Series I. Correspondence

Incoming letters "G", 1897-1915.	2	12
Letters to and from H. Collitz especially regarding publications; manuscripts; press clippings; and typescript, 1897-1916.	2	13
Letters to and from members of the Teller family and press clippings, 1897-1916.	2	14
Assorted letters and postcards to and from various correspondents, 1898-1905.	2	15
Letters from various colleagues, students, and others; press clippings; programs; and announcements, 1898-1907.	2	16
Incoming letters "C" including from Starr Willard Cutting, 1898-1917.	2	17
Letters from various publishers, with related research notes by Jessen, 1898-1917.	3	1
Incoming letters "K", 1898-1919.	3	2
Letters to and from Adolph Horn, 1899-1900.	3	3
Letters from Franklin Vonnegut, mostly from Indianapolis, 1899-1910.	3	4
Letters to and from various publishers, 1899-1912.	3	5
Incoming letters and postcards "N-O", 1899-1915.	3	6
Incoming letters "H", 1899-1916.	3	7
Letters to and from various colleagues and others from Harvard and Boston; and press clippings, 1900-1905.	3	8

## Series I. Correspondence

Letters to and from various correspondents especially from Berlin, 1900-1905.	3	9
Incoming letters "L" and calling cards, 1900-1911.	3	10
Incoming letters "B" and press clippings, 1900-1916.	3	11
Incoming letters "W" especially regarding WWI and Bryn Mawr College, 1900-1916.	3	12
Incoming letters "M" especially from H. Munsterberg and regarding fellowships for German women, 1900-1917.	3	13
Letters to and from various especially publishers, 1901.	3	14
Postcards from various and research notes, 1901-1902.	3	15
Letters regarding publications, Germanic Museum, and Chicago, 1902-1903.	3	16
Letters to and from H.C.G. von Jagemann, 1902-1903.	3	17
Letters and postcards to and from Harvard and Bryn Mawr College, 1902-1905.	3	18
Incoming letters "U-W", 1902-1910.	4	1
Incoming letters "D-E", press clippings, and draft to A. Garneg, 1902-1913.	4	2
Letters from various correspondents, calling cards, and assorted manuscripts, 1903-1904, 1914-1915.	4	3
Incoming letters "S" especially Elisabeth Spreckles and Agathe Lasch, 1903-1914.	4	4

## Series I. Correspondence

Letters to Jessen from various individuals from Philadelphia, 1903-1916.	4	5
Letters and drafts to various correspondents and notes, 1903-1917.	4	6
Incoming letters "P", 1903-1918.	4	7
St. Louis World's Fair letters, programs, booklet, notes, clippings, and other memorabilia, 1904.	4	8
Letters to and from A.P. Raggio, 1904-1911.	4	9
Letters to and from Philipp Seiberth, 1904-1911, 1915, 1918-1919.	4	10
Incoming letters "A", 1904-1912.	4	11
Letters to and from various especially regarding academics and St. Louis Exposition and assorted membership cards and professional documents, 1904-1915.	4	12
Letters to and from various especially publishers; press clippings, pamphlets, and other materials, 1904-1917.	4	13
Letters to and from various including M. Carey Thomas; assorted poetry and notes, 1905-1919.	4	14
Letter drafts to various publishers, colleagues, and others, 1906.	4	15
Letters and postcards to and from Bryn Mawr College faculty, 1906-1908.	4	16
Letters to various colleagues at Bryn Mawr College, 1907-1908.	4	17
Letters to and from various especially regarding Bryn Mawr College German Department and scholarships, 1907-1909.	5	1

## Series I. Correspondence

Letters and drafts to various Bryn Mawr College and Harvard correspondents, 1907-1909.	5	2
Letters to various, notes, and clippings, 1907-1911.	5	3
Letters to and from various relatives, 1908.	5	4
Letters to and from various relatives in Midwest, 1908.	5	5
Letters to M. Carey Thomas, William James, and other colleagues at Bryn Mawr College, 1908-1910.	5	6
Letter drafts to various and notes, 1908-1916.	5	7
Letter drafts especially regarding publications, 1908-1915.	5	8
Letters from John Reber, 1908-1919.	5	9
Letters from Louise Busse, 1909-1910.	5	10
Letters and memoranda to various especially regarding Bryn Mawr College, 1909-1912.	5	11
Incoming letters "T", 1909-1917.	5	12
Academic letter drafts to various, 1910.	5	13
Letters and drafts to M. Carey Thomas and others, 1910-1913.	5	14
Letters and drafts to M. Carey Thomas, colleagues, and others, particularly regarding Bryn Mawr College scholarship, 1911.	5	15
Letters and drafts to M. Carey Thomas and others; assorted press clippings, 1912.	5	16

## Series II. Research, writings, lectures

Letters and drafts to Woodrow Wilson, various colleagues, and others, 1914.	6	1
Letters and drafts to M. Carey Thomas, colleagues in Bryn Mawr College German Department, and others especially regarding leave of absence, 1915.	6	2
Letter drafts to various, 1915-1917.	6	3
Letter drafts to M. Carey Thomas, various colleagues, publishers, and others, 1916.	6	4
Letters and postcards from Alexandra H. Stappert and others, 1916-1917.	6	5
Letter drafts to various colleagues, publishers, M. Carey Thomas, and Louis J. Livingston especially regarding WWI and Livingston pamphlet, 1917.	6	6
Letters to various especially regarding United States citizenship, naturalization, and WWI harassment, 1917-1919.	6	7
Draft letter to M. Carey Thomas, 1918 April 23.	6	8
Letter drafts to various especially regarding harassment, 1919.	6	9
Letter to Myra Jessen from "Frieda B.B.", 1967.	6	10

## Series II. Research, writings, lectures, 1872-1946 (Bulk, 1895-1917) .

	Box	Folder
Letters, pamphlets, and posters regarding university admission, education, and employment; grade books, 1872, 1888-1910.	6	11
Research notes and correspondence, bibliography, clippings, business card, and articles, 1887, 1894, 1901, 1903, 1913, undated.	6	12

## Series II. Research, writings, lectures

Diary, 1889-1897.	6	13
Assorted manuscript drafts and galley proofs, 1890, 1903, 1908, 1910.	6	14
Day book, 1891, 1900-1901.	6	15
Date book, 1892-1893.	6	16
Chronological bibliography cards, 1894-1898.	7	1
Publishers and publication materials and Boston press clippings, especially regarding Nicholas Lenav, 1895-1898, 1902.	7	2
Unpublished manuscripts bibliography cards, circa 1895-1915.	7	3
Lecture given at Germanic Club, 1896.	7	4
Diary, pamphlets, notes, and letters, 1896, 1906-1912, 1918.	7	5
Lecture notes and research bibliography, 1897.	7	6
Manuscript draft, 1897-1898.	7	7
"The Confession of a Socialist" translation manuscripts and related correspondence, 1898.	7	8
Diary, 1898.	7	9
Robert Reitzel notes and articles, 1898, 1901, undated.	7	10
Alphabetical cultural bibliography cards, 1898-1907.	7	11
Notes, clippings, and related correspondence regarding "Heinse", 1888-1911.	7	12

## Series II. Research, writings, lectures

Mostly unpublished bibliography cards, circa 1900.	7	13
Diary, 1900-1901.	7	14
Clippings, research notes, and related letters regarding Theodor Mommsen, 1900-1904.	7	15
Chronological bibliography cards; philosophical and pedagogical bibliography cards, 1900-1917.	8	1
Manuscript draft, 1901.	8	2
Alphabetical bibliography cards, 1901-1908.	8	3
Manuscript draft, 1902.	8	4
Manuscript draft and lecture notes regarding H. Grimm, 1902.	8	5
Manuscript drafts, notes, and related letters, 1902-1916.	8	6
Speech bibliography cards, 1902-1917.	8	7
"Der Deutsche und die deutsche Kultur" drafts with Myra Jessen's notes, 1903.	8	8
Diary, 1903.	8	9
"Germanic Museum and Coeducation" draft and related correspondence with publisher, 1903.	8	10
"Itzenhoer Nachrichten" 8/11/1907 and program (Boston?) 5/9/1903, 1903, 1907.	8	11
Assorted newspaper articles and pamphlets, 1903-1905.	8	12

## Series II. Research, writings, lectures

Letters to and from various correspondents and research notes, 1903-1909.	9	1
"Friedrich Hebbel's Tagebucher" draft, 1904.	9	2
Manuscript draft, 1904.	9	3
Manuscript drafts and Harvard lecture notes, 1904.	9	4
Research notes and letters, 1904-1907.	9	5
Assorted clippings, 1904-1909.	9	6
"Deutsche Wissenschaftliche" typescript, letters, press clippings, and notes, 1904-1910, 1913.	9	7
Linguistics bibliography cards, circa 1904-1905.	9	8
"Sonntagsblatt der N.Y. Staats-Zeitung" clipping, 1905 September 24.	9	9
Manuscript "Frauerbildung in der Ver Staaten," newspapers clippings, notes, and publisher's correspondence and galley proofs, 1905, 1909-1910.	9	10
Assorted clippings regarding Schiller and Harvard anniversary program, 1905, undated.	9	11
Diary, 1906.	9	12
"Goethe's Poems" manuscript, circa 1906.	9	13
Galley proofs of essay and foreword by Jessen, 1906, 1908.	9	14
Letter from Henry Holt and Company publishers, and printed copies of foreword by Jessen, 1906, 1908.	9	15

**Series III. Personal**

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Assorted publications and clippings, 1906, undated.	9	16
Manuscript draft, 1908.	9	17
Manuscript draft, 1912.	9	18
Student song drafts, 1913.	9	19
"The American-German Review" and "Walhalla" volume 1, 1915, 1946.	9	20
Krieg und Religion typescript (retyped by Myra Richards Jessen), 1916.	9	21
Clippings regarding anti-German actions, 1917.	10	1
Education notes and clipping, 1917.	10	2
New York Staats-Zeitung 10/28/1917 and manuscript with clippings, 1917, undated.	10	3
Chronological bibliography, list of speeches, and list of unpublished manuscripts, undated.	10	4
Research notes, undated.	10	5

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**Series III. Personal, 1890-1980 (Bulk, 1890-1912) .**

	Box	Folder
Letters and post cards to and from various family members, 1890-1892.	10	6
Correspondence from various family members; postcards, 1891, 1900-1906.	10	7
Letters from Heinrich Freese, 1891-1907.	10	8

## Series III. Personal

Assorted articles, notes, pamphlets, and other materials regarding Hermann Grimm, 1893, 1901.	10	9
Scrapbook especially pertaining to German nationalism and militarization, 1893-1898.	10	10
Correspondence from various family members, 1893-1902.	10	11
Correspondence from various family members, 1893-1906, 1909, 1914-1915.	10	12
Genealogy notes, letters from Ingeborg Jessen, clippings, and writings, 1894-1895, 1899, 1900-1911, 1918, 1952.	11	1
Correspondence from various family members, 1894-1898, 1901.	11	2
Letters to and from various correspondents, especially regarding WWI harassment, biographical notes, and memorabilia, 1896-1919.	11	3
Various programs and bulletins from Berlin, especially regarding academics and activism, 1897-1899.	11	4
Scrapbook, 1897-1903.	11	5
Assorted letters and postcards to various family members, 1898-1899.	11	6
Letters and postcards to and from various family members, 1900.	11	7
Correspondence with and regarding Ilona Benda, 1900-1912.	11	8
Photograph of Karl D. Jessen, circa 1900-1901.	11	9
Press clippings and obituaries for Hermann Grimm, 1901.	11	10

## Series III. Personal

Letters and postcards to and from various family members, 1901-1902.	12	1	
Correspondence to and from various family members, 1902-1912.	12	2	
Photographs by F. Gutekunst, Philadelphia, of the International Congress of Arts and Science, 1904 September.	12	3	
Map of Hzehoe, business card, and assorted press clippings, 1904, 1905, undated.	12	4	
			Box
Diplomas and certificates, 1905, undated.		1	
Scrapbook, 1905-1906.		2	
Scrapbook, 1906-1917.		3	
	Box		Folder
Letters to Myra Jessen from Karl D. Jessen, 1908.	12	5	
Letters from M. Carey Thomas, 1908, 1919.	12	6	
Scrapbook, 1908-1911.	12	7	
Letters and postcards to "Mother" (Maria Jessen), 1908-1912.	12	8	
Letters to Berta Muller from Karl D. Jessen, 1909.	12	9	
Letters to and from Marie Muller, 1909-1913, 1915.	13	1	
Letters from Berta Muller and pressed four-leaf clover, 1909-1915.	13	2	
Letters and notes from Karl D. Jessen to "Berta", 1910-1911.	13	3	

## Series III. Personal

Letters from Karl D. Jessen to "Berta", 1910-1911.	13	4
Letters and notes to Berta Muller from Karl D. Jessen, 1910-1911, 1914.	13	5
Letters to Berta Muller from Karl, Myra, and Ingeborg Jessen, 1912-1918.	13	6
German Publication Society dinner program and menu, 1913.	13	7
Letter drafts to brother and sister, 1913-1915.	13	8
Laura Hourtienne photographs, circa 1958.	13	9
Letters to Myra Jessen from various correspondents, article on Winterthur, and Bryn Mawr College German Department newsletter, 1961, 1976, 1979-1980.	13	10
Evergreen branch, undated.	13	11
Herman Grimm envelope and wooden artifact, undated.	13	12
Photograph of Karl D. Jessen, undated.	13	13
Photographs of Winnemark, Schleswig Holstein, and other German scenes, undated.	13	14