

WALTER AND ELIZABETH RICHARDS FAMILY PAPERS, 1877-1998
1996.A.0444

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: Walter and Elizabeth Richards family papers

Dates: 1877-1998

Accession number: 1996.A.0444

Creator: Walter and Elizabeth Richards family

Extent: 0.5 linear foot (1 box)

Repository: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW,
Washington, DC 20024-2126

Abstract: The Walter and Elizabeth Richards family papers consist of biographical materials, correspondence, photographs, restitution files, and subject files documenting a German Jewish family from Berlin, some family members' escape to Argentina, the United States, and England, the deaths of Elizabeth Richards' parents at Theresienstadt and Auschwitz, and postwar efforts to receive restitution for confiscated money and property.

Languages: German, English, Spanish

Administrative Information

Access: Collection is open for use, but is stored offsite. Please contact the Reference Desk more than seven days prior to visit in order to request access.

Reproduction and use: Collection is available for use. Material may be protected by copyright. Please contact reference staff for further information.

Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Walter and Elizabeth Richards family papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Thomas Richards and Ann Herrmann-Richards donated the Walter and Elizabeth Richards family papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1996 with

three accretions the same year and another accretion in 2003. Accessions previously numbered 1996.A.507, 1996.A.533, 1996.A.534, and 2000.35 have been incorporated into this collection.

Accruals: Accruals may have been received since this collection was first processed, see archives catalog at collections.ushmm.org for further information.

Processing history: Julie Schweitzer, July 2013

Biographical note

Walter Richards (1901-1953) was born Walter Reich on the outskirts of Poznań (Posen). He married Elizabeth Lewin (1906-1994) who was born in Poznań to Heinrich (1869-1943) and Elsa Lewin (nee Lesser, 1881-1944). Elsa's father, Hermann Lesser, owned a successful iron wares and farm machinery business. The Lewin family had moved to Breslau (Wrocław) after World War I and then to Berlin. Walter and Elizabeth Reich moved to Buenos Aires in the mid-1930s and immigrated to the United States in 1938. They lived in Columbus, Ohio with Walter's brother Hans and had son Thomas in 1939 before moving to San Francisco and changing their last name to Richards. Walter Reich worked in the banking industry and then in the film industry.

Elizabeth Lewin had two sisters, Anne (born 1904) and Eva (born 1913). Anne married Hungarian Gyuri Olah and moved to Birmingham, England, before the outbreak of war and then to West Ealing. Eva never married and initially stayed with her parents in Berlin before joining the Olahs in Birmingham and West Ealing. Heinrich and Elsa Lewin were deported to Theresienstadt, where Heinrich Lewin died and from where Elsa Lewin was sent to her death at Auschwitz.

Walter's siblings were Arthur, Ellie, Charlotte, and Hans. Hans Reich immigrated to the United States in 1937 with his Catholic wife and settled first in Ohio and then in New Hampshire. Charlotte immigrated to the United States in 1940 and lived in Binghamton, working for the Agfa subsidiary Ansco, and then Brookline. Ellie emigrated to Palestine, and Arthur emigrated to India although he returned to Germany with his family after the war.

Scope and content of collection

The Walter and Elizabeth Richards family papers consist of biographical materials, correspondence, photographs, restitution files, and subject files documenting a German Jewish family from Berlin, some family members' escape to Argentina, the United States, and England, the deaths of Elizabeth Richards' parents at Theresienstadt and Auschwitz, and postwar efforts to receive restitution for confiscated money and property.

Biographical materials include a 1922 German citizenship form for the Lewin family, employment information for Gyuri Olah, Hans Reich, and Walter Richards, emigration forms and correspondence for the Lewins and Richards, a death certificate for the Richards' twenty-two-day-old baby in Argentina, and marriage certificate, naturalization, and death certificates for Elizabeth and Walter Richards.

Correspondence primarily documents relationships among the Lewin, Richards, and Olah families and their friends, follows their movements among Germany, Argentina, the United States, England, and Hungary, and records family news, efforts to emigrate, concerns about relatives, Heinrich and Elsa Lewin's deportation to Theresienstadt, and their deaths.

Photographs depict Elizabeth and Walter Richards, their son Thomas, their grandson Lawrence, Elizabeth's parents Heinrich and Else Lewin, and her sisters Eva Lewin and Anne Olah.

Restitution files include correspondence, property lists, and clippings documenting the Lewin and Richards families efforts to receive restitution for confiscated bank holdings, securities, properties, jewelry, and silverware and insurance policies.

Subject files include records documenting the Lewin family business, Lewin and Lesser family trees, refugees in Great Britain, and an invitation to an art exhibition in Berlin.

System of arrangement

The Thomas Richards family papers are arranged as seven series:

- Series 1: Biographical materials, 1920-1996
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1933-1946
- Series 3: Photographs, approximately 1890-1990
- Series 4: Restitution files, approximately 1938-1998
- Series 5: Subject files, 1877-1996

Indexing terms

Jews – Germany – Berlin.

Jewish refugees – United States.

Jewish refugees – England.

Jewish refugees – Argentina.

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945).

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945 – Reparations.

Berlin (Germany)

Buenos Aires (Argentina)

Columbus (Ohio)

San Francisco (Calif.)

Birmingham (England)

West Ealing (London)

Photographs

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Biographical materials, 1920-1996

Box	Folder	Title
1	1	Lewin, Eva, 1939-1942
1	2	Lewin, Heinrich and Else, 1922, 1939-1940

1	3	Olah, Gyuri, 1937-1939
1	4	Reich, Hans, 1937
1	5-6	Richards, Walter and Elizabeth, 1920-1938, 1944, 1952-1953, 1963, 1994-1996 (2 folders)

Series 2: Correspondence, 1933-1946

Box	Folder	Title
1	7	Lewin, Eva with Heinrich Lewin, 1940-1942
1	8	Lewin, Eva with Renate Strauss, 1942-1943
1	9	Lewin, Eva with miscellaneous, 1938-1945
1	10	Lewin, Heinrich and Else, 1936-1938
1	11	Olah, Annie with Gyuri Olah, 1936-1940
1	12	Olah, Annie and Gyuri with Heinrich and Else Lewin, 1938-1943
1	13	Olah, Annie and Gyuri with Klara Olah, 1936-1943
1	14	Olah, Annie and Gyuri with Rudolf Moos, Hilde, Teddy, and Trude, 1936-1945
1	15	Olah, Annie and Gyuri with Sue Olah, 1935-1938, 1946
1	16-18	Olah, Annie and Gyuri with miscellaneous, 1934-1945 (3 folders)
1	19	Richards, Elizabeth and Walter with Annie and Gyuri Olah, 1934-1940
1	20	Richards, Elizabeth and Walter with Annie and Gyuri Olah and Eva Lewin, 1939-1945
1	21	Richards, Elizabeth and Walter with Else and Heinrich Lewin, 1935-1942
1	22	Richards, Elizabeth and Walter with Eva Lewin, 1933, 1943-1946
1	23	Richards, Elizabeth and Walter with miscellaneous, 1935-1945
1	24	Salinger, Gerhard, 1941-1942
1	25	Miscellaneous, 1938-1942

Series 3: Photographs, approximately 1890-1990

Box	Folder	Title
1	26	Lewin, Eva, 1935
1	27	Lewin, Heinrich and Else, approximately 1890-1940
1	28	Olah, Anne, approximately 1907, 1921, 1927
1	29	Richards, Lawrence, approximately 1989
1	30	Richards, Thomas, Elizabeth, and Walter, 1921, 1933-1934, 1977, 1990

Series 4: Restitution files, approximately 1938-1998

Box	Folder	Title
1	31	Clippings, 1995-1998
1	32-34	Correspondence, 1946-1968, 1980, 1996-1997 (3 folders)
1	35	Lists of property, approximately 1938-1983

Series 5: Subject files, 1877-1996

Box	Folder	Title
1	36	Invitation to an exhibition of Jewish artists in Berlin, 1935
1	37	Lesser family business, 1877, approximately 1928
1	38	Lewin and Lesser family tree, approximately 1996
1	39	Lewin family business cards and calling card, approximately 1890-1940
1	40	Lewin family trees, approximately 1996
1	41	Refugee status and rules in Great Britain, 1938-1944
1	42	<i>Rescue the Perishing: A Summary of the Position Regarding the Nazi Massacres of Jewish and Other Victims and of Proposals for their Rescue</i> , 1943