

**SHADUR FAMILY PAPERS, 1913-1997**  
**1997.A.0316.1**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives  
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**Descriptive summary**

Title: Shadur family papers

Dates: 1913-1997

Accession number: 1997.A.0316.1

Creator: Shadur family

Extent: 4 boxes and 5 oversize folders

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

Abstract: The Shadur family papers document the experiences of Michael Shadur and his family, including their relocation to Belgium after anti-Semitic boycotts began to undermine his family business in Berlin, and following the German invasion of Belgium in 1940, their subsequent escape through France, Spain, and Portugal before immigrating to the United States. The contents of the papers contain various documents of Michael and Manya Shadur, their children Joseph and Benita, and their extended family. These include travel documents, identification materials, school notebooks and report cards, and other various material. Also included are photographs, records concerning Michael's time serving with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, and publications such as newspapers and road maps used by the family as they drove to Portugal.

Languages: English, Russian, French, Italian, Spanish, German, Latvian

**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: Shadur family papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Related material: Joseph Shadur donated a number of objects along with his papers, which can be found under the 2005.379 accession number.

Acquisition information: The papers were donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum through two separate donations made in 1997 and 2005 by Joseph Shadur. These two donations were given separate accession numbers (1997.A.0316 and 2005.379.1). The papers were unified using the first baseline number, 1997.A.0316. To reflect its relation to the collection, all of the Shadur family papers can be accessed through 1997.A.0316.1.

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

Processing history: Michael Folkerts, May, 2015

### **Biographical note / Administrative history**

Michel Shadur was born in 1897 in Livani, Latvia. He had an older brother, Isaac, who died in Crimea in 1916, and two younger sisters, Gitta and Sonja. Michel attended school at the University of Latvia, in Riga, where he would meet and marry Manya Hasenson. The couple married in 1927 and moved to Berlin where Michel operated an international wholesale fruit business with his brother-in-law, Josef Hasenson. Michel and Manya had two children, Joseph and Benita, born in 1928 and 1932 respectively. They were not a particularly religious family, and only attended synagogue on the Jewish high holidays. As anti-Semitism spread in Germany, boycotts and restrictions began to undermine Michel's ability to do business. While travelling for work in Belgium, Michel made the decision not to return. He obtained visas for his family and re-established his fruit business in Antwerp, Belgium. Michel's sister, Gitta, lived in Italy at this time, where she met and made friends with members of the Fascist Party. She would later leave Italy to return to Berlin before leaving for the United States in 1939. Following Kristallnacht, Michel's sister Sonja and her husband Bernard, along with their daughter Janet came to live in Belgium as well, before leaving for the United States in March, 1940. By May, Germany occupied Belgium and the Shadur family was forced to leave. The family packed their 1938 Oldsmobile Sedan and drove through France. On the way, the family encountered British troops, when Michel told a soldier he had no plans on where to go, and was advised to go south towards Bordeaux. Michel found a place to stay in a village just outside Bordeaux called Bruges. While there, the family finally received their US visas. They drove south towards Portugal, and after spending two months in Lisbon, they sailed on the SS Exeter on February 21, 1941. The Shadur family settled near Michel's sister Gitta near St. Paul, MN, and Michel changed his name to Michael. After the war, Michel joined the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. He was sent to Germany and served as a supply officer for the Württemberg district, and later as the director of the Jewish displaced persons camp in Backnang.

### **Scope and content of collection**

The Shadur family papers primarily contain documents kept by Michel and Manya Shadur, and their children Joseph and Benita, during their time in Belgium and France. Included in Michel and Manya's records are identification materials, such as passports and travel permits, birth and marriage certificates, and automobile registration. Other items include correspondence with family members, diplomas, and Michel's editorialized account of his journey written by a reporter soon after arriving in the United

States, entitled *The Story of my Flight for Refuge*. The records pertaining to Joseph and Benita Shadur are mainly school related, such as notebooks and report cards. There are also booklets that contain sketches made by Joseph. The documents pertaining to extended family include various material related to Michel's sister Sonja and her family, and Manya's brother-in-law Jacob Chankin. The bulk of material relates to Michel's other sister Gitta, and contain personal papers, passports, and correspondence from her time in Italy and while she lived in the United States. The United National Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) series relates to Michel's work with the UNRRA, and includes correspondence, letters of recommendation, re-assignment orders, and various other material. The photographs are of the Shadur's and extended family, and are from their time from Riga, Germany, Belgium, France, and the United States, as well as Michel's work with the UNRRA. The publications series contains a souvenir book from Bruges, France, road maps the family used as they traveled to Lisbon, newspaper clippings, and Joseph Shadur's memoir, *A Drive to Survival*.

### **System of arrangement**

The Shadur family papers are arranged into six series:

- Series 1: Michael and Manya Shadur, 1913-1941
- Series 2: Joseph and Benita Shadur, 1938-1942
- Series 3: Extended family, 1915-1979
- Series 4: United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, 1945-1948
- Series 5: Photographs, 1920-1979
- Series 6: Publications, 1939-1997

### **Indexing terms**

Shadur, Michael.

Shadur, Manya.

Shadur, Joseph.

Shadur, Benita.

Shadur, Gitta.

Chankin, Jacob.

Goldstein, Bernhard

Goldstein, Sonja Shadur

Hasenson, Josef

United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.

Backnang (Displaced persons camp)

World War, 1939-1945--Refugees--France.

World War, 1939-1945--Refugees--Portugal.

World War, 1939-1945--Refugees--Spain.

World War, 1939-1945--Refugees--Belgium.

Jewish Refugees--Spain.

Jewish Refugees--France.

Jewish Refugees--Portugal.

Jewish Refugees--Belgium.

United States--Emigration and immigration--History--20th century

Riga (Latvia)  
Antwerp (Belgium)  
Berlin (Germany)  
Bruges (Gironde, France)  
Lisbon (Portugal)

## CONTAINER LIST

### Series 1: Michael and Manya Shadur, 1913-1941

| Box | Folder | Title  |
|-----|--------|--|
| 1   | 1      | <a href="#">Application for marriage license, 1927</a> |
| 1   | 2      | <a href="#">Automobile documents, 1934-1940</a>        |
| 1   | 3      | <a href="#">Birth certificate, 1927</a>                |
| 1   | 4      | <a href="#">Contract, 1937</a>                         |
| 1   | 5      | <a href="#">Correspondence, 1937-1941</a>              |
| 1   | 6      | <a href="#">Finances, 1940-1941</a>                    |
| 1   | 7      | <a href="#">Hanukkah gift, 1940</a>                    |
| 1   | 8      | <a href="#">Military service booklet, 1922</a>         |
| 1   | 9      | <a href="#">Patent, 1939</a>                           |
| 1   | 10     | <a href="#">Police registration, 1924-1934</a>         |
| 1   | 11     | <a href="#">Ration cards, 1939</a>                     |
| 1   | 12     | <a href="#">School documents, 1913-1924</a>            |
| 1   | 13     | <a href="#">SS Exeter, 1941</a>                        |
| 1   | 14     | <a href="#">Story of my Flight for Refuge, 1941</a>    |
| 1   | 15     | <a href="#">Travel documents, 1935-1940</a>            |
| 1   | 16     | <a href="#">Various, 1940</a>                          |
| 1   | 17     | <a href="#">Work permit, 1938</a>                      |

### Series 2: Joseph and Benita Shadur, 1938-1942

| Box | Folder | Title  |
|-----|--------|--|
| 1   | 18     | <a href="#">Bar Mitzvah certificate, 1942</a>            |
| 1   | 19     | <a href="#">Correspondence, 1940-1941</a>                |
| 1   | 20     | <a href="#">Drawings, 1940</a>                           |
| 1   | 21     | <a href="#">Notebook – Assignments, 1940-1941</a>        |
| 1   | 22     | <a href="#">Notebook – Composition, 1940-1941</a>        |
| 1   | 23     | <a href="#">Notebook – English, 1940-1941</a>            |
| 1   | 24     | <a href="#">Notebook – Ethics, 1940-1941</a>             |
| 1   | 25     | <a href="#">Notebook – French composition, 1940-1941</a> |
| 2   | 1      | <a href="#">Notebook – Geography, 1940-1941</a>          |
| 2   | 2      | <a href="#">Notebook – Math, 1940-1941</a>               |
| 2   | 3      | <a href="#">Notebook – Multiple subjects, 1940-1941</a>  |
| 2   | 4      | <a href="#">Notebook – Recitation, 1940-1941</a>         |

|   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| 2 | 5  | <a href="#">Notebook – Science, 1940-1941</a>         |
| 2 | 6  | <a href="#">Notebook – Spelling, 1940-1941</a>        |
| 2 | 7  | <a href="#">Notebook – Various, 1940-1941</a>         |
| 2 | 8  | <a href="#">Red Cross card, 1939</a>                  |
| 2 | 9  | <a href="#">Report cards, 1939-1940</a>               |
| 2 | 10 | <a href="#">Scrapbook, approximately 1940</a>         |
| 2 | 11 | <a href="#">Statement of character – Benita, 1940</a> |

**Series 3: Extended family, 1915-1979**

| Box | Folder | Title  |
|-----|--------|--|
| 2   | 12     | <a href="#">Bernhard and Sonja (Shadur) Goldstein, 1915-1940</a> |
| 2   | 13     | <a href="#">Gitta Shadur – Correspondence, 1933-1937</a>         |
| 2   | 14     | <a href="#">Gitta Shadur – Passports, 1931-1979</a>              |
| 2   | 15     | <a href="#">Gitta Shadur – Personal papers, 1923-1979</a>        |
| 2   | 16     | <a href="#">Gitta Shadur – Story, approximately 1950</a>         |
| 2   | 17     | <a href="#">Jacob Chankin, 1925-1966</a>                         |

**Series 4: United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, 1945-1948**

| Box | Folder | Title   |
|-----|--------|---|
| 3   | 1      | <a href="#">Correspondence, 1946-1947</a>           |
| 3   | 2      | <a href="#">Employment history, 1947</a>            |
| 3   | 3      | <a href="#">Finances, 1947</a>                      |
| 3   | 4      | <a href="#">Identification, 1945-1946</a>           |
| 3   | 5      | <a href="#">Letter of recommendation, 1946-1947</a> |
| 3   | 6      | <a href="#">Post-UNRRA employment, 1947-1948</a>    |
| 3   | 7      | <a href="#">The Story of the UNRRA, 1948</a>        |
| 3   | 8      | <a href="#">Various, 1946-1947</a>                  |

**Series 5: Photographs, 1920-1979**

| Box | Folder | Title  |
|-----|--------|--|
| 3   | 9      | <a href="#">Antwerp, 1936-1937</a>   |
| 3   | 10     | <a href="#">Bruges, France and Antwerp, Belgium, 1940</a>                          |
| 3   | 11     | <a href="#">France, 1940</a>   |
| 3   | 12     | <a href="#">Gitta Shadur and friends, 1940-1979</a>                                |
| 3   | 13     | <a href="#">Gitta Shadur and friends in Italy, 1934-1936</a>                       |
| 3   | 14     | <a href="#">Gitta Shadur and friends in Riga, Latvia, 1920-1931</a>                |
| 3   | 15     | <a href="#">Italian Fascist Society, 1931-1938</a>                                 |
| 3   | 16     | <a href="#">Italy, 1931-1939</a>   |
| 3   | 17     | <a href="#">Pre-war Latvia and Berlin, 1925-1939</a>                               |
| 3   | 18-19  | <a href="#">United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, 1945-1947</a> |
| 3   | 20     | <a href="#">United States, 1940-1979</a>   |

**Series 6: Publications, 1939-1997**

| Box | Folder | Title   |
|-----|--------|---|
| 4   | 1      | <a href="#">A Drive to Survival, 1997</a>                           |
| 4   | 2      | <a href="#">Bruges picture book, 1995</a>                           |
| 4   | 3      | <a href="#">Newspapers, 1939-1941 [see also oversized folder 1]</a> |
| 4   | 4      | <a href="#">Road maps, 1940</a> [see also oversized folders 2-5]    |

**Oversized folders:**

| Folder | Title  |
|--------|--|
| 1      | <a href="#">Newspapers, 1939-1941 [oversized folder]</a> |
| 2      | <a href="#">Remainder of Maps</a>                        |
| 3      | <a href="#">Essolube Map of Belgium</a>                  |
| 4      | <a href="#">Italian Map of Europe</a>                    |
| 5      | <a href="#">Map of Antwerp (yellow and green)</a>        |