

## **LEWIS SHABASSON COLLECTION, CIRCA 1910-CIRCA 1948 1999.88**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives  
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW  
Washington, DC 20024-2126  
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### **Descriptive summary**

Title: Lewis Shabasson collection

Dates: circa 1910-circa 1948

Accession number: 1999.88

Creator: Shabasson, Lewis, 1914-2006.

Extent: .5 linear feet (1 box)

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

Abstract: The photograph collection documents the prewar lives of Lewis Shabasson (born Levi Szabason) and his family in Kozenice, Poland; wartime life in the Kozenice ghetto; and postwar life in the Föhrenwald displaced persons camp and Munich, Germany. The collection also documents the prewar and postwar lives of Lewis's wife, Lifcia Najman, and her family, originally from Radom, Poland, and her relatives in the Birenbaum family.

Languages: Yiddish, Polish, Hebrew, English, German

### **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), Lewis Shabasson collection (1999.88), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The collection was donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum by Lewis Shabasson in 1999.

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: Adam Fielding, October 2017

### **Biographical note**

Levi Itzhak (Lewek) Szabason (now Lewis Shabasson, 1914-2006) was born on 10 March 1914 in Kozienice, Poland to Ezra Zelig Szabason (b. 1881) and Faigal Laja Gruman Szabason. Lewek had four older siblings -- Chaja (b. 1901), Jakub (b. 1903), Motl Mordechai (b. 1908) and Etel (b. 1912), and one younger sister Ruchl (Rosa, b. 1919). His father owned a saw mill and a small construction business. He was also the president of a local Zionist organization. Lewek worked for his father and belonged to the 'Meshek Grochow' group of the General Zionist youth organization.

One week after the German invasion of Poland, they occupied Kozienice. Bargaining that only the men would suffer under the Nazis, Ezra Zelig fled to the Soviet Union with Etel and Motl and their respective spouses. Lewek, Chaja and Ruchl remained in Kozienice with their mother. Jakub also remained behind with his wife and son. The Germans established a ghetto in Kozienice, and Jews were required to wear white armbands and perform slave labor. Lewek worked for a brewery until June 1942, and he smuggled wood into the ghetto in order to have extra money for food. Lewek's older sister, Chaja, convinced him and Ruchl to escape from the ghetto sensing that they were the only two who stood any chance of surviving. Their escape was unsuccessful, and Lewek was taken to the Wolanów labor camp where he worked on an airfield. After one year, he was transferred to the Radom labor camp, where he was forced to work in an ammunition factory. In July 1944 as the Soviet Army approached the vicinity of Radom, he was sent to Auschwitz. From Auschwitz, he was deported to the Wittenberg labor camp near Stuttgart. In March 1945 he was forced on a death march and on 30 April 1945 he was liberated by the US Army.

Chaja, her husband Mordechai Rubinsztajn, and their daughter, Gila (Genusha) perished in Treblinka in 1942. Motl Mordechai, his wife Rozalia, and Etel and her husband Aron Erlichman all had fled Poland in 1939 to the Soviet Union. All four were killed in 1941 after Germany invaded the Soviet Union, as was Etel's infant child. Lewek's father, Zelig, fled to Lvov in September 1939; he perished there after the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. Lewek's mother, Faigal Laja, was deported to Treblinka in September 1942 and either perished there or en route.

Lewek went back to Kozienice sometime before 1945 and was reunited with his sister Ruchl and his brother Jakub, both of whom had survived the Skarzysko-Kamienna camp. In 1946 they left Poland for Germany, and spent some time in the Föhrenwald and Feldafing DP camps and in Munich. On 27 October 1946, Lewek married a fellow survivor, Lifcia Najman, originally from Radom, Poland. Their daughter, Emily, was born in Munich on 16 January 1948. On 1 October 1948, the Szabason family sailed on board the *USS General S.D. Sturgis* for the United States. A second daughter, Zella, was born in the US.

Lifcia Najman was born on 26 May 1918 in Radom, Poland to Fruma (née Gotman) and Szmuel Najman. She had two sisters and one brother. Her father worked as a leather broker. Lifcia worked as a seamstress when the Germans invaded Poland in 1939. After the Radom ghetto was liquidated in 1942,

her parents were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp where they perished. Lifcia was deported to Auschwitz where she worked as a seamstress for the family of a SS officer. She survived in part by stealing dog biscuits intended for the family pet.

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

The photograph collection documents the prewar lives of Lewis Shabason (born Levi Szabason) and his family in Kozenice, Poland; wartime life in the Kozenice ghetto; and postwar life in the Föhrenwald displaced persons camp and Munich, Germany. The collection also documents the prewar and postwar lives of Lewis's wife, Lifcia Najman, and her family, originally from Radom, Poland, and her relatives in the Birenbaum family.

### **System of arrangement**

The collection is arranged as one series. Folders are arranged alphabetically.

### **Indexing terms**

Person:

Rubinsztajn, Mordechai.  
Rubinsztajn, Geniusia.  
Rubinsztajn, Chaja Szabason.  
Szabason, Zelig.  
Szabason, Avrum.  
Szabason, Ester.  
Szabason, Yeshayahu.  
Szabason, Baruch Aron.  
Szabason, Motl.  
Szabason, Szprinca.  
Szabason, Jakub.  
Szabason, Chiel.  
Szabason, Tova Orbach.  
Szabason, Lewek.  
Szabason, Duba.  
Rafalowicz, Ruchl Szabason.  
Shou, Szaja.  
Shou, Mala Szabason.  
Kestenberg, Edzia.  
Kestenberg, Bronka.  
Kestenberg, Felix.  
Sandmer, Yetta Szabason.  
Schwartzberg, Levi.  
Shwartzberg, Ida Bron.  
Erlichman, Etel Szabason.  
Erlichman, Aaron.  
Erlichman, Chaim.  
Weintraub, Gitl Szabason.  
Stock, Ewa Rozencwajg.  
Medalion, Chaja.  
Medalion, Sonia.  
Mune, Szaja.

Borensztajn, Gershon.  
Wildenberg, Chaja.  
Gotman, Rifka.  
Gotman, Melech.  
Gotman, Etel.  
Gotman, Chaim.  
Fagen, Tzirilie Gotman.  
Najman, Fruma Gotman.  
Najman, Szmuel.  
Najman, Etel.  
Najman, Motl.  
Shabasson, Lifcia Najman.  
Shabasson, Lewis.  
Shabasson, Emily.  
Birenbaum, Mosze.  
Birenbaum, Adolf Izak.  
Birenbaum, Chaim Henius.  
Birenbaum, David.  
Birenbaum, Irene.  
Birenbaum, Szaje.  
Birenbaum, Mindl Gotman.  
Wassersztrum, Dorcia Birenbaum.  
Aleksandrowicz, Edzia Birenbaum.  
Aleksandrowicz, Michal.  
Aleksandrowicz, Helena.  
Block, Ethel Fadem.  
Block, Sandra.  
Block, Leonard.  
Wildenberg, Jakub.  
Sierota, Mendel.  
Mandelbaum, Jakub.  
Mandelbaum, Hanka.  
Mandelbaum, Dorit.  
Miller, Szlomo.  
Spiegel, Jakub.  
Spiegel, Feiga.  
Bronsztajn, Surale.  
Bronsztajn, Franka.  
Frejlich, Zosia.  
Zalcberg, Nechamia.  
Zalcberg, Sima.  
Zalcberg, Anna.  
Silver, Charles.  
Silver, Herszl Heniek.  
Silver, Edzia Najman.  
Waserman, Paula.  
Waserman, Tsvia Cesia.  
Teitelbaum, Luba Frisch.

Potasznik, Wewel.  
Berneman, Bezalel.  
Wolke, Gitl Najman.  
Friedman, Bella.  
Flamenbaum, Joseph.  
Korman, Israel.  
Rosen, Dina Szabason.  
Yachid, Nina.  
Grosfeld, Rafal.  
Zylber, David.  
Zylber, Perla Berenman.  
Berenman, Zelig.  
Huberman, Eli.

Corporate:  
Föhrenwald (Displaced persons camp)  
Feldafing (Displaced persons camp)

Topical Subject:  
Jews--Poland--Kozienice.  
Jews--Poland--Radom.  
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Poland--Kozienice.  
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Poland--Radom.  
Jewish refugees--Germany.  
Refugee camps--Germany.  
Weddings.  
Forced labor.  
Jewish ghettos--Poland--Kozienice.

Geography:  
Föhrenwald (Germany : Refugee camp)  
Feldafing (Germany : Refugee camp)  
Munich (Germany)  
Kozienice (Poland)  
Radom (Poland)

Genre/Form:  
Photographs.

## CONTAINER LIST

Folder	Title
1	Birenbaum, David: Germany, 1946
2	Birenbaum family: Poland, circa 1930-circa 1938
3	Birenbaum, Szajek: Radom ghetto, Poland, 1940
4	Family and friends: Baltimore, MD, undated

5	Family and friends: Germany, 1946-1947
6	Najman family: Germany, 1945-1946
7	Najman family: Radom, Poland, circa 1910-circa 1938
8	Szabason family: Föhrenwald DP camp, 1946
9	Szabason famiy: Kozienice ghetto, Poland, 1942
10	Szabason family: Munich, Germany, 1946-circa 1948
11	Szabason family: Poland, circa 1930-circa 1938
12	Szabason, Lewek: Identification papers, 1945