

HENRY BLUMENSTEIN FAMILY PAPERS, 1916-1994
2000.388.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
Washington, DC 20024-2126
Tel. (202) 479-9717
e-mail: reference@ushmm.org

Descriptive summary

Title: Henry Blumenstein family papers

Dates: 1916-1994

Accession number: 2000.388.1

Creator: Henry Blumenstein 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 Henry Blumenstein family papers consist of wartime and postwar correspondence among members of the Blumenstein family, with other relatives and friends, and with the Dijkstra family; photographs of the Blumenstein and Dijkstra families in Austria, the Netherlands, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic; and subject files including Franz Blumenstein's date book, Henry Blumenstein's identification papers, and emigration and immigration papers.

Languages: German, Dutch, 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), Henry Blumenstein family papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Henry Blumenstein donated the Henry Blumenstein family papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2000 and 2002. The accession previously numbered 2002.317.1 has been incorporated into this collection.

Related materials: Henry Blumenstein also donated a small wallet labeled "OSE CHILDREN TRANSPORT/France to U.S./ATHOS II - SEPT. 1946" to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. An oral history interview with Henry Blumenstein conducted November 13, 1996 that forms part of the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive can be viewed onsite at the Museum. Digital images of some of the photographs and documents in this collection can be viewed on the Museum's website.

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

Henry Blumenstein was born Heinz Georg Blumenstein in 1935 in Vienna to Feri (Franz, 1901-1978) and Elsa Blumenstein (1905-approximately 1943). Franz was born in Navezansky, Czechoslovakia, married Elsa in Austria, and operated a successful perfume business in Vienna. He was imprisoned in Dachau following Kristallnacht and, upon his release, emigrated via Venezuela to Cuba where he lived with his sister Fini Hillburn. Henry sailed to Cuba with his mother and grandmother, Regina Blumenstein (1866-approximately 1942), aboard the *SS St. Louis*, but the ship was returned to Europe. The Blumensteins disembarked at Rotterdam and spent two months in the Heijplaat Quarantine Center before moving to Amsterdam. In November 1940, Elsa and Heinz received entry visas for the Dominican Republic, where Franz had joined a Jewish agricultural colony in Sosúa, but they could not obtain exit visas from German-occupied Holland. Regina was arrested and sent to Auschwitz but saved Henry by hiding him in a closet. Elsa and Henry fled to northern Holland where Heinz was hidden by Johannes and Sjoukje Dijkstra of Rauwerd (Raerd) under the false name Hans Bakker. Elsa's separate hiding place was discovered, and in 1943 she was deported to Auschwitz where she perished. Franz immigrated to the United States in April 1946 and Henry joined him in September.

Scope and content of collection

The Henry Blumenstein family papers consist of wartime and postwar correspondence among members of the Blumenstein family, with other relatives and friends, and with the Dijkstra family; photographs of the Blumenstein and Dijkstra families in Austria, the Netherlands, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic; and subject files including Franz Blumenstein's date book, Henry Blumenstein's identification papers, and emigration and immigration papers.

Correspondence primarily consists of letters, postcards, and telegrams between Franz and Elsa Blumenstein and, after the war, between Franz and Henry Blumenstein and between Franz Blumenstein and Johannes and Sjoukje Dijkstra. Additional correspondence includes messages from Regina Blumenstein, Fini Hillburn, and other family members and friends. This series includes a postcard from Franz en route to Venezuela, descriptions of Henry, Elsa, and Regina's plans to emigrate, letters from aboard the *SS St. Louis*, letters from quarantine in Holland, and notifications to Franz of the death of his

mother and wife. Many of the letters from Henry to Franz are written on printed stationery that Franz had sent Henry.

Photographs depict Franz, Elsa, and Henry Blumenstein, Regina Blumenstein-Frank, the Dijkstra family, Adolf Frankenstein, and the homes where Elsa and Henry Blumenstein were hidden in the Netherlands. The photographs were taken in Vienna, Havana, Sosúa, and the Netherlands.

Subject files include Franz Blumenstein's date book, Henry Blumenstein's identification papers, and emigration and immigration papers. Franz Blumenstein used the date book as a general purpose notebook to record contact information, his emigration from Austria to the United States via Latin America and eventual return to Austria, correspondence, and accounts. Henry Blumenstein's identification papers include an Austrian birth certificate, a Dutch child evacuee card in Henry's false name, and a Dutch identity card for aliens. Emigration and immigration papers include Cuban and Dominican papers regarding the Blumenstein's emigration plans, correspondence with the Hamburg-America Line, the Dominican Republic Settlement Association, the Comité voor Joodsche Vluchtelingen, and the Department of State, and a registration certificate documenting Franz Blumenstein's return to Austria.

System of arrangement

The Henry Blumenstein family papers are arranged as three series:

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1938-1967 (bulk 1938-1946)
- Series 2: Photographs, 1916-1994
- Series 3: Subject files, 1935-1973

Indexing terms

St. Louis (Ship)

Jews – Austria – Vienna.

Jewish refugees – Netherlands.

Jewish refugees – Cuba – Havana.

Jewish refugees – Dominican Republic – Sosúa.

Jewish refugees – United States.

Hidden children (Holocaust).

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945).

Vienna (Austria)

Havana (Cuba)

Sosúa (Dominican Republic)

Rotterdam (Netherlands)

Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Raerd (Netherlands)

Photographs

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Correspondence, 1938-1967 (bulk 1938-1946)

Box	Folder	Title
1	1	Correspondence, 1938
1	2-5	Correspondence, 1939 (4 folders)
1	6-9	Correspondence, 1940 (4 folders)
1	10-12	Correspondence, 1941 (3 folders)
1	13-14	Correspondence, 1942 (2 folders)
1	15	Correspondence, 1943
1	16-17	Correspondence, 1945 (2 folders)
1	18-19	Correspondence, 1946 (2 folders)
1	20	Correspondence, 1967

Series 2: Photographs, 1916-1994

Box	Folder	Title
1	21	Blumenstein, Franz, in Havana, 1939
1	22	Blumenstein, Franz, in Sosúa, 1940
1	23	Blumenstein, Franz and Elsa, approximately 1930-1938
1	24	Blumenstein, Henry, 1936-1940
1	25	Blumenstein, Henry, Quarantined in the Netherlands, 1939
1	26	Blumenstein, Henry, Wedding, 1957
1	27	Blumenstein, Henry, with Eijse Tropp, 1946, 1979
1	28	Blumenstein, Henry, with his parents, 1935-1940
1	29	Blumenstein-Frank, Regina, approximately 1916-1940
1	30	Dijkstra family, 1946, 1954, 1978, approximately 1994
1	31	Frankenstein, Adolf and his wife, approximately 1920s-1930s
1	32	Hiding places, approximately 1974-1994
1	33	Miscellaneous, approximately 1925-1940
1	34	Photo album, approximately 1935-1946

Series 3: Subject files, 1935-1973

Box	Folder	Title
1	35	Blumenstein, Franz, Date book, approximately 1938-1972
1	36	Blumenstein, Henry, Identification papers, 1935, 1943, 1946
1	37	Emigration and immigration papers, 1939-1945, 1973