

RUDOLPH DANIEL SICHEL PAPERS, approximately 1903-1978
2003.149.1

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

Title: Rudolph Daniel Sichel papers

Dates: approximately 1903-1978

Accession number: 2003.149.1

Creator: Rudolph Daniel Sichel

Extent: 3.2 linear feet (6 boxes and 2 oversize folders)

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

Abstract: The Rudolph Daniel Sichel papers measure 3.2 linear feet and date from approximately 1903-1978. The collection includes biographical materials, correspondence, military papers, photographs, printed materials, prisoner of war and witness reports, and a sketchbook containing drawings by German prisoners of war. The records documents Sichel's immigration to the United States, training in Military Intelligence, service in the United States Army as an interrogator, and efforts to obtain restitution for the persecution of his family under Nazi Germany.

Languages: English, German, French

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), Rudolph Daniel Sichel papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The Rudolph Daniel Sichel papers were donated in 2003 and 2004 by Sichel's children, Dr. Howard Sichel and Linda Sichel Strohmer.

Related archival materials: The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum also holds a military uniform, insignia, medals, ribbons, and camera equipment which were donated by Sichel and Strohmer along with the archival collection. Records for these items are available through 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 2012

Biographical note

Rudolph Daniel Sichel (1915-1978) was born in Frankfurt, Germany to clothing store owner Ernst Sichel (1874-1962) and Frieda Sichel (nee Oppenheimer, 1876-1963). He worked in the family clothing shop, S. Sichel, until he left Germany in 1934 for England and then immigrated to the United States in 1936. He worked for R.H. Macy & Co from 1936 to 1943. His father was arrested during Kristallnacht, sent to Buchenwald for a couple of months, forced to sell his store at a loss, and immigrated to the United States with his wife shortly after. Sichel joined the United States Army in 1943 and attended courses at the Military Intelligence Training Center at Camp Ritchie, MD. He landed on Utah Beach in July 1944 and was assigned by the Military Intelligence Service to Interrogation of Prisoners of War (IPW) Team 13 as Chief Interrogator. He was second in command of his team, which was attached to the 104th (Timberwolf) Infantry Division in October 1944, and interrogated prisoners in France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany. He returned to the United States in May 1946, continued his work at Macy's, and married Sylvia Ruth Eisenkraft on January 18, 1948.

Scope and content of collection

The Rudolph Daniel Sichel papers measure 3.2 linear feet and date from approximately 1903-1978. The collection includes biographical materials, correspondence, military papers, photographs, printed materials, prisoner of war and witness reports, and a sketchbook containing drawings by German prisoners of war. The records document Sichel's immigration to the United States, training in Military Intelligence, service in the United States Army as an interrogator, and efforts to obtain restitution for the persecution of his family under Nazi Germany.

Biographical materials include records related to the Sichels' family history, clothing store in Frankfurt, immigration, and efforts to obtain restitution, Sichel's passport and membership cards, and certificates for military service from Presidents Harry S. Truman and Jimmy Carter.

Most of the correspondence files are comprised of letters from Sichel to his parents during the war. Of particular interest are Sichel's selection of letters labeled "Highlights," which describe his training, advance through Europe, meeting with Empress Hermine, visit to Nordhausen/Dora-Mittelbau, efforts to begin restitution proceedings for the family store, the deaths of relatives at Theresienstadt, the Deggendorf displaced persons camp, and the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg. Correspondence files also include letter of introduction and recommendation for Sichel before the war and correspondence with family, friends, and Macy's co-workers before, during, and after the war.

Military papers include awards, commendation, and separation papers, Camp Ritchie training materials, and correspondence including orders, accounts of activities, reports to the Timberwolf Division, and lengthy communications between Sichel and the military after the war regarding his status and desire to be transferred to the Military Intelligence section of the Officers' Reserve Corps. Military papers also include leaflets air-dropped by the Allies, ten marks in Allied Military Currency, maps, history and stationery related to the Timberwolves (104th Infantry Division), German organizational charts, Jewish prayer books for the American Armed Forces, and a newsletter distributed aboard the S.S. Sheephead Bay Victory which brought Sichel back home.

Photographic materials include three albums of snapshots taken by or of Sichel in Europe and hundreds of loose photographs documenting Sichel's life in Germany, pre-war life in the United States, and wartime and postwar experiences. The albums trace Sichel's progress, not necessarily in chronological order, through cities including Krostitz, Cologne, St. Brieu, Muir de Bretagne, Pontivy, Vannes, Atteln, Brakel, Halle, Teutenthal, and Naumburg, and a post-war trip to the French Riviera. Of particular interest are Sichel's snapshots taken at the Nordhausen/Dora-Mittelbau and Buchenwald concentration camps. Loose wartime photographs include landscapes, bombed out buildings and bridges, corpses, and airplane nose art. Additional photographs depict Sichel and his family and friends in Europe and the United States before, during, and after the war as well as the Sichels' clothing store in Frankfurt, Macy's employees, the S.S. Sheephead Bay Victory, and the 1948 St. Moritz Olympics. The negatives in the collection correspond to some of the photographs of Nordhausen/Dora-Mittelbau, bombed out buildings, landscapes, military personnel, parades in England, and miscellaneous photographs as well as unidentified images of a family with young children.

Printed materials include postcards from England, Belgium, France, and Germany, an English restaurant menu, stamps, handbills printed by the Christliche-Soziale Union, German-English and German-French dictionaries, and a newsletter published by the Textile Salesmen's Association. The collection also includes clippings from American, British, and German newspapers including *Yank*, *Die Neue Zeitung*, *Mittelbayerische Zeitung*, and *Tägliche Rundschau*, and *Passauer Neue Presse*, *New York Sun*, *Daily News*, and *Deggendorf Center Revue* mentioning Sichel or describing the war and its aftermath.

Prisoner of war and witness reports document people and subjects including Dr. Friedrich Weber, Dachau Commandant Martin Weiss and other concentration camp personnel, cleanup after the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, euthanasia at Hartheim, the war in Russia, and the Kovno Ghetto.

The sketchbook in the collection was presented to Sichel by prisoners of war Kodak, Weigand, and Plettenberg describing themselves as "Der Unfreie Künstlerbund." The book contains original pencil, ink, and watercolor drawings signed by the artists and depicting Sichel and prisoner of war camp life.

System of arrangement

The Rudolf Daniel Sichel papers are arranged as seven series:

- Series 1: Biographical Materials, approximately 1903, 1924, 1934-1947, 1952, 1978
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1934-1948, 1953, 1958-1961, 1971
- Series 3: Military Papers, approximately 1939-1950
- Series 4: Photographs, approximately 1910s-1950
- Series 5: Printed Materials, 1910, approximately 1930s, 1935-1946
- Series 6: Prisoner of War and Witness Reports, 1945-1946

- Series 7: Sketchbook, approximately 1945

Indexing terms

Weber, Friedrich, 1892-1955.

Weiss, Martin Gottfried, 1905-1946.

Reuss, Hermine von, 1887-1947.

United States. -- Army. -- Infantry Division, 104th.

Nordhausen (Concentration camp)

Buchenwald (Concentration camp)

Schloss Hartheim (Austria)

Macy's (Firm)

Deggendorf (Displaced persons camp)

Sheepshead Bay Victory (Steamship)

Jewish refugees -- Germany.

Holocaust survivors.

Jews -- Germany -- History -- 1933-1945.

Prisoners of war -- Germany.

Buildings -- War damage.

Bridges -- War damage.

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945) -- Reparations.

Jewish merchants -- Germany.

Jewish property -- Germany.

Jewish ghettos -- Lithuania -- Kaunas.

Camp Albert C. Ritchie (Md.)

Frankfurt am Main (Germany)

Warsaw (Poland) -- History -- Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, 1943.

Photographs

Sketchbooks

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Biographical Materials, approximately 1903, 1924, 1934-1947, 1952, 1978

Box	Folder	
1	1	Calling Cards, approximately 1936-1946
1	2	Certificates of Naturalization, 1943, 1945
1	3	Emigration Clearance Certificate, 1939
1	4	<i>Familien Stammbuch</i> , approximately 1903
1	5	Memberships, approximately 1934-1947
1	6	National Life Insurance, 1943, 1945
1	7	Passport, 1934
1	8	Pocket Calendar, 1946

1	9	Poetry and Songs, approximately 1936-1946
1	10	Presidential Certificates from Truman and Carter, 1945, 1978
1	11	Registration of S. Sichel Company [1874], 1924
1	12	Restitution, 1946, 1952
1	13	Silk Primer, approximately 1940

Series 2: Correspondence, 1934-1948, 1953, 1958-1961, 1971

Box	Folder	
1	14-15	Friends and Family, 1936-1947, 1953, 1958, 1971 (2 folders)
1	16-20	Letters Home, 1943 (5 folders)
1	21-28	Letters Home, 1944 (8 folders)
1	29-32	Letters Home, 1945 (4 folders)
1	33	Letters Home, 1946
2	1-4	Letters Home, Highlights, 1943-1946 (4 folders)
2	5	Letters Home, Undated and Fragments, approximately 1943-1946
2	6	Letters of Introduction and Recommendation, 1934-1936
2	7	Macy's Co-Workers, 1944-1948, 1961

Series 3: Military Papers, approximately 1939-1950

Box	Folder	
2	8	Air-Dropped Leaflets, approximately 1944-1945
2	9	Allied Military Occupation Ten Mark Note, 1944
2	10	Awards and Commendations, 1945-1946
2	11	Camp Ritchie Training Materials, 1943
2	12	Correspondence, 1943-1944
2	13	Correspondence, 1945
2	14	Correspondence, 1946
2	15	Correspondence, 1947
2	16	Correspondence, 1948
2	17	Correspondence, 1949
2	18	Correspondence, 1950
2	19	German Organizational Charts, approximately 1939-1945
2	20	Jewish Prayer Books for the Armed Forces, 1938, 1941
2	21	Maps, approximately 1942-1945
2	22	Printed Materials, 1943-1945
2	23	Separation and Honorable Discharge, 1945-1946
2	24	"Sheepshead Bleat" Newsletter, 1946
2	25	Timberwolves History and Stationery , approximately 1944-1945

Series 4: Photographs, approximately 1910s-1950

Box	Folder	
2	26	Album I. France-Germany War 1944/45, 1944-1945
2	27	Album I Duplicates, 1944-1945 (Not Digitized)
2	28	Album I Duplicates, Buchenwald, 1945 (Not Digitized)
3	1	Album II. Germany War 1944-45, 1945
3	2	Album II Duplicates, 1945
3	3-6	Album II Duplicates and Enlargements, Nordhausen/Dora-Mittelbau, 1945 (4 folders)
3	7	Album III. French Riviera, Lyon, Avignon, 1945
3	8	Album III Duplicates, 1945
3	9	Airplane Nose Art, approximately 1944-1946
3	10	Archbishop Michael Cardinal Faulhaber, approximately 1946
3	11	Bombed Out Buildings and Bridges, approximately 1944-1946
3	12	Corpses, approximately 1945
3	13	England, approximately 1934-1936
3	14	Ernst and Frieda Sichel, approximately 1910s
3	15	German Military, approximately 1945
3	16	Landscapes, 1929, 1960
3	17-25	Landscapes, approximately 1915-1960 (9 folders)
4	1-16	Landscapes, approximately 1944-1945 (16 folders) (see also Oversize, Folder 2)
4	17	Macy's Employees, approximately 1940
4	18	Parades in England, approximately 1945
4	19-20	Paris, Commercially Produced, approximately 1930s (2 folders)
4	21-22	Rudolph Sichel, approximately 1930-1950 (2 folders)
4	23-25	Rudolph Sichel, approximately 1943-1946 (3 folders) (see also Oversize, Folder 2)
4	26-27	Rudolph Sichel and American Military Personnel, approximately 1943-1946 (2 folders)
4	28	Rudolph Sichel with Family, approximately 1940s
5	1-3	Rudolph Sichel with Family and Friends, approximately 1913-1940 (3 folders)
5	4-12	Rudolph Sichel with Family and Friends, approximately 1935-1950 (9 folders)
5	13	Rudolph Sichel with Friends in the US, approximately 1940s
5	14	Sichels' Clothing Store, approximately 1924
5	15	Ski Holiday, 1932
5	16-17	S.S. Sheepshead Bay Victory, 1946 (2 folders)
5	18	St. Moritz Olympics, 1948
5	19	U.S. Army Signal Corps Photographs, 1945
5	20	Miscellaneous, approximately 1935-1945
5	21	Negatives, approximately 1944-1946

Series 5: Printed Materials, 1910, approximately 1930s, 1935-1946

Box	Folder	
5	22	"Aunestick," Published by the Textile Salesmen's Association, 1946
5	23	Christliche-Soziale Union Handbills, approximately 1945
5	24	Clippings, approximately 1936, 1945-1946
5	25	Dictionaries, approximately 1940
5	26	Oversize British and German Newspaper Sections, 1944-1946 (See Oversize, Folder 1)
6	1	Postcards from the Victoria and Albert Museum Collection, approximately 1930s
6	2	Postcards of Brussels, approximately 1940s
6	3	Postcards of Paris, approximately 1940s
6	4	Postcards, Miscellaneous, approximately 1930s-1940s
6	5	Restaurant Menu, 1935
6	6	Stamps, 1910, 1935, 1945
6	7	Theater Program, 1944
6	16	2013 accretion to collection: Army Officers Notebook, 1941, 1943

Series 6: Prisoner of War and Witness Reports, 1945-1946

Box	Folder	
6	8	Dr. Friedrich Weber, 1945
6	9	Franz Richter and Concentration Camp Personnel, 1945
6	10	Hans Lintz and the Euthanasia Facility in Hartheim, Austria, 1945
6	11	Hermann Foertsch and Treatment of Prisoners at the CIE, Natternberg, 1946
6	12	Karl Heinz Henning, Russia, and the Kovno Ghetto, 1945
6	13	Martin Weiss and Dachau, 1945
6	14	Wilhelm Duckow and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising Aftermath, approximately 1945

Series 7: Sketchbook, approximately 1945

Box	Folder	
6	15	POW Sketchbook, approximately 1945

Oversize, 1944-1946

Folder	
1	Oversize British and German Newspaper Sections, 1944-1946 (see Box 5, Folder 26)
2	Oversize Photographs of Rudolph Daniel Sichel, approximately 1944-1945 (see also Box 4, Folders 23-25) Oversize Photographs of Landscapes, approximately 1944-1945 (see also Box 4, Folders 1-16)