

EMIL OETTINGER PAPERS, circa 1870-1963
2004.634

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: Emil Oettinger papers

Dates: circa 1870-1963

Accession number: 2004.634

Creator: Oettinger, Emil, 1901-1966

Extent: 1.6 linear feet (1 box, 2 oversize boxes, 1 oversize folder)

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

Abstract: The Emil Oettinger papers consist primarily of correspondence and photographs documenting the family of Emil Oettinger from Hamburg, Germany, and his plans to emigrate with his wife Käthe in 1939. The collection also includes biographical materials documenting their parents as well as emigration and immigration files including some of the records they needed to prepare in order to emigrate.

Languages: German, English

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.

Physical access note: Negatives in the collection are kept in cold storage for preservation reasons and would require additional time for acclimatization before they can be served to researchers.

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), Emil Oettinger papers (2004.634), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Irma Chorvinsky donated the Emil Oettinger papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2004 as power-of-attorney for the Oettinger family estate.

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 2019

Biographical note

Emil Oettinger (April 28, 1901-February 25, 1966) was born in Krumbach, Germany to Salomon (Sally, 1850-1908) and Dolce Ullmann Oettinger (1862-1934). He had three siblings (Karl, Ricka, and Lilli Oettinger) and several half-siblings from his father's first marriage. He lived in Hamburg and married Käthe Cohn Oettinger (January 3, 1897-December 25, 1974) in July 1938. Käthe was born in Lüneburg to John Cohn (1867-1911) and Ernestine Becker Cohn (1870-1936) and had a brother named Martin. Emil had found contact information for people with his last name in New York, Chicago, Washington, DC, and Boston, and began writing them in July 1938 for help emigrating. Bertha Oettinger of Washington, DC, discovered that she was a distant cousin of Emil's, and with the help of her brother, James E. Rosenthal, and her daughter and son-in-law, Dorothy and Allen DeFord, she was able to provide the necessary affidavit for Emil and Käthe. Emil also investigated leaving for England, India, and Trinidad and Tobago. The couple sailed from Hamburg aboard the SS *President Harding* in April 1939 and arrived in New York in May.

Scope and content of collection

The Emil Oettinger papers consist primarily of correspondence and photographs documenting the family of Emil Oettinger from Hamburg, Germany, and his plans to emigrate with his wife Käthe in 1939. The collection also includes biographical materials documenting their parents as well as emigration and immigration files including some of the records they needed to prepare in order to emigrate.

Biographical material include announcements and poems documenting the wedding of Martin and Bertel Cohn and of Emil and Käthe Oettinger; notices, memory cards, and a mourning album documenting the deaths of John and Ernestine Cohn and Dolce Oettinger; attestations documenting Käthe's employment history; and a certificate documenting Emil Oettinger's relinquishment of his driver's license according to the Nuremberg laws.

Correspondence files document Emil and Käthe's efforts to find support for the emigration from Germany, particularly from Americans named "Oettinger" who might be relatives. These records also include correspondence with the American Consulate in Hamburg and the German Jewish Aid Committee in London.

Emigration and immigration files include some of the correspondence, forms, and notices Emil and Käthe prepared while seeking to emigrate to India, Trinidad and Tobago, or the United States.

Photographic materials include three photograph albums and many loose photographs depicting Emil and Käthe Oettinger, the Oettinger and Cohn families, and friends, in prewar Germany. Most of the photographs date from the 19th century, World War I, and the interwar years.

System of arrangement

The Emil Oettinger papers are arranged as four series:

Series 1: Biographical material, 1911-1938

Series 2: Correspondence, 1938-1940

Series 3: Emigration and immigration files, 1936-1939

Series 4: Photographic material, approximately 1900-1963

Indexing terms

Personal Names

Oettinger, Emil, 1901-1966.

Oettinger, Käthe, 1897-1974.

Topical Terms

Jews--Germany--Hamburg.

Jewish refugees.

World War, 1939-1945--Jews--Rescue--Germany.

Geographic Names

Hamburg (Germany)

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

Genre Terms

Correspondence.

Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Biographical material, 1911-1938

Box/Folder	Title
1.1	Cohn, Bertel and Martin, 1936-1937
1.2	Cohn, Ernestine and John, 1911, 1936
1.3	Oettinger, Dolce, 1934
1.4	Oettinger, Käthe and Emil, 1918-1938

Series 2: Correspondence, 1938-1940

Box/Folder	Title
-------------------	--------------

1.5	American Consulate, Hamburg, 1938-1939
1.6	DeFord, Dorothy and Allen, 1938-1940
1.7	German Jewish Aid Committee, 1939
1.8	Oettinger, Bertha, 1938-1939
1.9	Oettinger, Emil, letters to possible relatives, 1938
1.10	Oettinger, Esther, 1938
1.11	Oettinger, Jeannette, 1938
1.12	Weil, Mina, 1939

Series 3: Emigration and immigration files, 1936-1939

Box/Folder	Title
1.13	Emigration and immigration files, 1936-1939

Series 4: Photographic material, circa 1870-1963

Box/Folder	Title
1.14	Beach photos, circa 1918
1.15-1.16	Cartes de visite and cabinet cards, circa 1870-1900 (2 folders)
1.17-1.18	Family and friends, circa 1900-1950 (2 folders)
1.19	Picture and photo postcards, circa 1900-1963
1.20	SS President Harding, circa 1939
1.21	Tintypes, circa 1880
1.22	Weddings, 1962-1963
1.23	World War I soldiers, circa 1914-1918
1.24	Photograph album 1, wedding album, approximately 1938
2	Photograph album 2, approximately 1900-1939
1.25	Photograph album 2, loose photographs, approximately 1900-1939
3	Photograph album 3, approximately 1900-1930
OS 1	Negatives (negatives stored separately in cold storage)
1.26	Negatives sleeves