

WERNER KLEEMAN COLLECTION, 1941-2010
2010.157

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

Title: Werner Kleeman collection

Dates: 1941-2010

Accession number: 2010.157

Creator: Kleeman, Werner, 1919-2018

Extent: .3 linear feet (6 folders 1 oversize folder)

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

Abstract: The collection consists of material collected by Werner Kleeman, originally of Würzburg, Germany, who was imprisoned at Dachau before immigrating to the United States in 1939 and was later drafted into the 4th Infantry Division of the United States Army. The collection includes a typed copy of the diary of Col. Norborne P. Gatling about his experiences in the American Army including a tour of the Ohrdruf concentration camp; information about wartime in Würzburg; copies of Werner's postwar correspondence from Würzburg and with Ulrich Strauss and Leila Levinson; restitution material relating to Werner's father, Louis Kleeman; and a copy of the G-5 diary of the 4th Infantry Division, listing detailed information of division activities between 20 February 1944 and 27 May 1945.

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.

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), Werner Kleeman collection (2010.157), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: The Werner Kleeman collection was donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum by Werner Kleeman in 2010.

Related material: The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Oral History Branch conducted an oral history interview with Werner Kleeman on March 19, 2008 (2008.38) and the Museum's Library hold a copy of *From Dachau to D-Day*, by Werner Kleeman (DS135.G5 K538 2006). The Leo Baeck Institute, Center for Jewish History holds the Werner Kleeman Collection, 1877-2010 (AR 25113).

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

Processing history: Morgan Voth, December 2019

Biographical note

Werner Kleeman (1919-2018) was born in Würzburg (Gaukönigshofen), Germany to Louis Kleeman (also spelled Kleemann, 1884-1963) and Lina Kleeman (née Bamberger b. 1886). Werner was one of five children including two older brothers, Theo and Sigfried, and his father was a grain dealer. Theo immigrated to Palestine, while Sigfried went to the American Consulate in Stuttgart to apply for a visa to enter the United States. In 1936 Werner also applied for a visa, sponsored by a distant relative in Nebraska, and was approved in 1938.

Before Werner could leave Germany he was arrested during Kristallnacht and imprisoned along with his family members. His father was soon released because of his service in World War I, but Werner was sent to the Dachau concentration camp. He was released from Dachau in January 1939 because he previously obtained a visa to emigrate. A few days later he traveled to England via the Netherlands, where he procured visas for his parents and siblings. In December 1939 he immigrated to the United States aboard the SS *Scythia* to New York where he worked at a department store.

Werner was drafted into the United States Army in August 1942. He served in the 4th Infantry Division and took part in the D-day invasion of Normandy. In the spring of 1945, just days after Germany's surrender, Werner received permission to travel to his hometown where he witnessed the destruction. He returned to the village a few weeks later, this time without the permission of his superiors. For several weeks, he worked for the United States Army captain in charge of the district's military occupation government. After the war he returned to the United States and married Lore Heiman (1927-1979) in 1948 and had two daughters, Susan and Deborah. He worked as an interior decorator. Werner did not share the story of his experiences in Germany before the war and as a U.S. soldier until later in life. With the help of the author Elizabeth Uhlig, Werner wrote the book *From Dachau to D-Day*.

Scope and content of collection

The collection consists of material collected by Werner Kleeman, originally of Würzburg, Germany, who was imprisoned at Dachau before immigrating to the United States in 1939 and was later drafted into the 4th Infantry Division of the United States Army. The collection includes a typed copy of the diary of Col. Norborne P. Gatling about his experiences in the American Army including a tour of the Ohrdruf concentration camp; information about wartime in Würzburg; copies of Werner's postwar correspondence from Würzburg and with Ulrich Strauss and Leila Levinson; restitution material relating to Werner's father, Louis Kleeman; and a copy of the G-5 diary of the 4th Infantry Division, listing detailed information of division activities between 20 February 1944 and 27 May 1945.

System of arrangement

The collection is arranged as a single series.

Indexing terms

Person:

Gatling, Norborne.

Kleeman, Werner, 1919-2018.

Cooperate:

United States. Army. Infantry Division, 4th.

Topical Subject:

Jewish soldiers--United States.

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

United States--Armed Forces--Germany--History.

World War, 1939-1945--Participation, Jewish.

World War, 1939-1945--Prisoners and prisons, German.

World War, 1939-1945--Concentration camps--Liberation.

Geographic:

Gaukönigshofen (Germany)

Normandy (France)

United States--Emigration and immigration--History.

Würzburg (Germany)

Genre/Form:

Correspondence.

Photographs.

Diaries.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Werner Kleeman collection, 1941-2010

Folder	Title
1 of 6 OS 1	Kleeman, Werner, circa 1950-2010
2 of 6	Correspondence, 1941-2007
3 of 6	Restitution, 1998-2005
4 of 6	G-5 diary of the 4th Infantry Division, 1944-1945
5-6 of 6	Norborne P. Gatling diary, 1941-1945 (2 folders)