

## **ERWIN TEPPER PAPERS, 1929-2015, and undated 2015.590.1**

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

Title: Erwin Tepper papers

Dates: 1929-2015, and undated

Accession number: 2015.590.1

Creator: Tepper, Erwin.

Extent: 28 folders (0.4 linear foot)

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

Abstract: Documents, correspondence, photographs, and writings, related to the immigration of Erwin Tepper and his parents to the United States from Austria, as a result of Nazi persecution, in 1939. In particular, the material documents how Erwin Tepper was selected as one of 50 children by American philanthropists Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus, who sought to rescue Jewish children from Austria and resettle them in the United States. In addition to photographs of Tepper's family, and of his journey as one of the 50 children, the collection contains documents related to his parents' immigration, and later material collected or compiled by Tepper for presentations about the history of the "50 children" at reunions and conferences in the United States between 2002 and 2010.

Languages: 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), Erwin Tepper papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Gift of Erwin Pepper, 2015.

Related archival materials: One transit pass, city of Vienna, 1933, for Juda Pepper, housed in a metal frame, is cataloged separately as an artifact (2015.590.2).

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: Processed by Brad Bauer, January 2016.

### **Biographical note**

Erwin Pepper was born on 14 November 1931 to Juda Ber Pepper and Schifra (nee Heller) Pepper in Vienna, Austria. His parents were originally from Galicia, his father from Stryj (present-day Stryi, Ukraine), and his mother from Dolina. His parents moved to Vienna so Juda could pursue a university education, but he ended up working in a retail store selling women's lingerie, eventually becoming a manager. Following the German annexation of Austria in 1938, and the imposition of anti-Semitic laws, the Teppers sought to emigrate, as several of Juda's siblings lived in the United States and Argentina. In 1939, when they learned that an American couple, Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus, were planning to bring 50 Jewish children from Austria to the United States, Juda and Schifra applied to have their son Erwin accepted as one of this group, and he was. Erwin left Germany in May 1939, on the S.S. President Harding, and when the ship stopped in Southampton, England, he was able to meet with his father, who had left for Britain shortly before. Erwin and the other children arrived in New York in June 1939, and spent the summer at the Brith Sholom children's camp near Philadelphia. At the end of the summer, Erwin went to live with the family of his father's sister, Blima Eigenmacht, in the Bronx, New York. Schifra joined her husband in Britain in late 1939, and both of them subsequently arrived in New York by early 1941, reuniting with Erwin. By summer 1941 the family moved to Bridgeport, Connecticut, where Juda obtained a job in a women's coat factory. After completing high school, Erwin went to Yale University, where he obtained a bachelor's in zoology in 1953, and then went to medical school in Switzerland at the University of Basel, from which he obtained a doctor of medicine degree in 1959. He met his future wife, Silvia, while in Basel, and they married in New Haven in 1960, and raised three children. After service in the U.S. Army in the early 1960s, Erwin Pepper pursued a career as a radiation oncologist, holding positions at a number of hospitals, including the Monmouth Medical Center in Long Branch, New Jersey, where he worked from 1970 until his retirement in 1994. He was elected a fellow of the American College of Radiology in 1989.

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

The Erwin Pepper papers consist of documents, correspondence, photographs, and writings, related to the immigration of Erwin Pepper and his parents to the United States from Austria, as a result of Nazi persecution, in 1939. In particular, the material documents how Erwin Pepper was selected as one of 50 children by American philanthropists Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus, who sought to rescue Jewish children from Austria and resettle them in the United States. In addition to photographs of Pepper's family, and of his journey as one of the 50 children, the collection contains documents related to his parents' immigration, and later material collected or compiled by Pepper for presentations about the history of the "50 children" at reunions and conferences in the United States between 2002 and 2010.

The Presentations and Programs series contains material, largely compiled by Tepper, about the history of the 50 children who were brought to the United States by Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus, and include copies of slides or notes compiled by Kraus for use at speaking engagements or presentations given at reunions in the early 2000s. In addition, a program of a reunion held in Chicago in 2002, by an organization known as "One Thousand Children," whose focus is on children who were rescued during the Holocaust, is also included.

The Research series includes material collected by Kraus while researching the history of the "50 children," primarily in preparation for the speaking engagements and presentations documented in the previous series. Included are brief testimonies from some of the other children who had been rescued by the Krauses, solicited and collected by Tepper in 2002. Also included are copies of archival documents obtained by Tepper from the National Archives and Records Administration, showing the official response of the State Department to the request of the Krauses to bring children from Vienna to the United States, as well as other documents obtained from the Brith Sholom Home, related to the children's stay there in 1939.

### **System of arrangement**

The Erwin Tepper papers are arranged in the following series, by document type, and alphabetically by folder title within each series: I. Biographical, II. Photographs, III. Presentations and programs, IV. Research.

### **Indexing terms**

#### *Name:*

Kraus, Gilbert, -1975.

Kraus, Eleanor, -1989.

Tepper, Juda Ber.

Tepper, Schifra.

#### *Topical:*

Jews--Austria--Vienna.

Austria--Emigration and immigration.

Jews--Persecutions--Austria--Vienna.

Jewish refugees--New York (State)--New York.

Refugee children--United States.

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

## CONTAINER LIST

### I. Biographical, 1929-2015

- Tepper, Erwin
- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | Birth certificate, 1931                                 |
| 1 | 2 | Biographical narrative, and curriculum vitae, 2013-2015 |
| 1 | 3 | Education, 1937-1938                                    |
| 1 | 4 | Passport, German (for foreigners), 1938                 |
- Tepper, Juda and Schifra
- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | 5 | Identity card, Juda, United Kingdom, undated, circa 1939 |
| 1 | 6 | Letters of reference, Juda (copies), 1938-1940           |
| 1 | 7 | Visa application, U.S. Consulate, Vienna (copy), 1938    |
| 1 | 8 | Wedding invitation (copy), Dolina, Poland, 1929          |

### II. Photographs, 1939, and undated (circa 1910-1939)

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | 9  | Heller, Hirsch   |
| 1 | 10 | Tepper, Erwin: childhood photographs, circa 1932-1939  |
| 1 | 11 | Tepper, Erwin, with other children aboard the S.S. President Harding, 1939   |
| 1 | 12 | Tepper, Erwin, with aunt, Blima Eigenmacht, and cousin, at Brith Sholom, 1939  |
| 1 | 13 | Tepper family: Erwin with his parents, Juda Ber (Julius) and Schifra (Shirley), and<br>Extended family, undated, circa 1910-1939 |
| 1 | 14 | Tepper, Juda Ber   |

### III. Presentations and programs, 2002-2010

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | 15 | "The Children's Transport During the Shoa" by Erwin Tepper, 2002-2010            |
| 1 | 16 | "50 Children (1939): Recollections, Quotes, Photos by Now Senior Citizens," 2002 |
| 1 | 17 | "Reunion of One Thousand Children," Chicago, June 2002: Conference program       |

### IV. Research, 2002

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | 18 | Brith Sholom Archives, Philadelphia: Records copied in 2002, of power-of-attorney<br>documents used by Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus, typescripts of same, and news<br>clippings, 1939   |
| 1 | 19 | National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD: Documents copied in<br>2002 from RG-59, Department of State records, Central Decimal File<br>150.626J/610, concerning Gilbert Kraus and Brith Sholom, 1939<br>Testimonies solicited by Tepper, from other members of the "50 children," 2002 |
| 1 | 20 | Admon, Kurt  |
| 1 | 21 | Beller, Paul   |
| 1 | 22 | Braun, Robert  |
| 1 | 23 | Davis, Elizabeth (Zinger)  |
| 1 | 24 | Haber, Fred  |
| 1 | 25 | Herman, Kurt   |
| 1 | 26 | Milberg, Helga (Weiss)   |
| 1 | 27 | Steinbrecher, Kurt   |
| 1 | 28 | Tamar, Erika   |