

**ERWIN SCHATTNER FAMILY PAPERS, 1914-1998  
(bulk, 1920-1948)  
2015.595.2**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives  
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**Descriptive summary**

Title: Erwin Schattner family papers

Dates: 1914-1998 (bulk, 1920-1948)

Accession number: 2015.595.2

Creator: Schattner, Erwin.

Extent: .5 linear feet (1 box, 1 oversize folder)

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

Abstract: Documents and correspondence related to the career of Dr. Erwin Schattner, a Polish-born physician in Vienna, his wife Ernestine, and their two daughters, Ruth and Hanna. Includes birth, education, residency, citizenship, academic, legal, and professional documents related to Erwin Schattner's education and career in Austria, his emigration with his wife and daughters from Vienna to the United States in 1938-1940, his establishment as a physician in New York, and attempts to gain restitution in the 1960s. Also contains correspondence related to efforts to assist Ernestine's sister, Emma Spirer, to immigrate to the United States after the war, and correspondence from Ernestine's parents, Samuel and Sala Weil, from Stanisławow, Poland, 1940.

Languages: German, English, Polish

**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 Schattner family papers (2015.595.2), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: The collection was donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2015 by Ruth Switzer, daughter of Erwin and Ernestine Schattner. An accretion was donated in 2018. The accessions previously numbered 2015.595.1 and 2018.391.1 have been incorporated into this collection.

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. Updated by Adam Fielding, September 2018

### **Biographical note**

Erwin Schattner (1893-1977) was born Eisig Schattner in Kolomea in eastern Galicia (present-day Kolomyia, Ukraine) on 13 April 1893, the son of Jankel and Schewa (née Ringelblum) Schattner. He was educated at secondary schools in Czernowitz (Chernivtsi, Ukraine) and Prague, graduating in 1917 and serving in the Austrian army in World War I. Following the war, when his native eastern Galicia became part of Poland, he opted for Austrian citizenship and settled in Vienna, where he began his studies at the University of Vienna, leading to medical school there and graduating with a doctor of medicine degree in 1931. During his university studies, he was active in the central office of Poale-Zion in Vienna and Berlin. In 1931 he legally changed his first name from "Eisig" to "Erwin," and in 1933 he married Ernestine Weil (born 29 May 1905, Monasterzyska, Galicia, present-day Monastyrzyska, Ukraine), who went to school in Stanisławow and later studied at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. The Schattners had two daughters, Ruth (born 1934) and Hanna (born 1938), while Erwin initially served as a house physician and surgeon at the municipal hospital of Vienna (1931-1936) as well as in private practice, until his practice was taken away from him due to the Aryanization laws following the Nazi takeover of Austria in 1938. The Schattners left Vienna for London in October 1938, since Erwin's half-brother, Berl Locker, was head of the Jewish Agency there, and helped them immigrate. They lived in England until May 1940, when they immigrated to the United States, leaving Liverpool on the S.S. Samaria, and rejoining Schattner's brother, Marcus Schatner, who had arrived in New York in 1904 (Marcus had also received their belongings, which they had shipped from Austria in 1938). Erwin was able to reestablish a medical practice, working initially at Israel Zion (now Maimonides) Hospital in the Borough Park section of Brooklyn, before he set up a private practice in the same area. He and Ernestine became naturalized citizens in 1945. They lived the remainder of their lives in Brooklyn, where Ernestine died in 1972, and Erwin in 1977.

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

The Erwin Schattner family papers contain documents and correspondence related to the career of Dr. Erwin Schattner, a Polish-born physician in Vienna, his wife Ernestine, and their two daughters, Ruth and Hannah. Includes birth, education, residency, citizenship, academic, legal, and professional documents related to Erwin Schattner's education and career in Austria, his emigration with his wife and daughters from Vienna to the United States in 1938-1940, his establishment as a physician in New York, and attempts to gain restitution in the 1960s. Also contains correspondence related to efforts to assist

Ernestine's sister, Emma Spirer, to immigrate to the United States after the war, and correspondence from Ernestine's parents, Samuel and Sala Weil, from Stanisławow, Poland, 1940.

The bulk of the documents trace the education and professional career of Erwin Schattner, and were likely preserved and used following emigration, to establish his credentials as a physician first in the United Kingdom, and subsequently in the United States. Such documents attest to his completion of his secondary education in Prague and Vienna, his enrollment at the University of Vienna Medical School, coursework he completed there, special examinations he took in various specialties, the completion of his medical degree in 1931, and his assignments as a physician in the municipal hospital of Vienna from 1931 until the Nazi occupation of Austria in 1938, when he was barred from further practicing his profession. In regard to the latter, one document (folder 17) records the steps taken by the authorities to remove him from his practice and confiscate his office and property, as a result of his Jewish heritage. Records pertaining to his military service show that he was awarded a decoration in 1935 for his service during World War I, and that he was certified as being Jewish in 1938, which excluded him from further military service.

Other documents relate to the immigration of the Schattner family to the United States, including documentation of the transport and storage of their household goods; their residency and citizenship status, both in Austria and the United States; and Erwin Schattner's legal change of his first name from "Eisig" to "Erwin" in 1931.

In addition to such personal documents, additional materials in the collection document the birth-family of Ernestine Schattner. Correspondence includes letters from her parents, Samuel and Sala Weil, in Soviet-occupied Stanisławow, Poland in the fall of 1940; and a post-war letter from Karol and Lusja Celler, friends of Ernestine and her family, describing their eyewitness account of the "Bloody Sunday" massacre on 12 October 1941 in the Stanisławów ghetto as well as using vague language to seek assistance in emigrating from Poland. There are also documents related to efforts to help the family of her sister, Emma Spirer, both during her exile in Siberia in the early part of World War II, and in attempts to immigrate following the war. One file also contains an affidavit from a Weil family relative in the United States, for Ernestine's parents, in what was ultimately an unsuccessful attempt to get them out of Poland.

The accretion includes documents related to Erwin Schattner's identity, medical school studies, medical practice in Vienna and the United States, immigration to England and the United States, and marriage; Ernestine Schattner's birth certificate, her master's degree in philosophy at Jagiellonian University, and an identification card; Marcus Schattner's medical practice in New York; a childhood photograph of Ruth Schattner (now Ruth Switzer), alien registration receipt card, and personal narrative; and a letter of support Murray Weil for the immigration of his uncle and aunt Samuel and Sara Weil from Poland to the United States

### **System of arrangement**

The Erwin Schattner family papers consist of one series, that is arranged in alphabetic order by topic or person, and then by file title within subseries.

### **Indexing terms**

Schattner, Ernestine (1905-1972).

Schattner, Erwin, 1893-1977.

Jews--Ukraine--Kolomyia.

Jews--Austria--Vienna.  
Physicians--Austria--Vienna.  
Jews--Persecutions--Austria--Vienna.  
Jewish refugees--New York (State)--New York.  
Vienna (Austria)  
United States--Emigration and immigration.  
Photographs.  
Personal narratives.

## CONTAINER LIST

Box/Folder	Title
1.1	Correspondence: Celler, Karol and Lusia, 1945
1.2	Correspondence: Weil, Samuel and Sala, 1940 (September-December)
1.3	Correspondence: Zakrszewska, Czesława, 1971
1.4	Schattner, Ernestine: Birth documents
1.5	Schattner, Ernestine: Education
1.6	Schattner, Ernestine: Identification documents (for self and children), 1934-1939
1.7	Schattner, Erwin: Birth certificate, reproductions and translations, 1920-1934
1.8	Schattner, Erwin: Curriculum vitae, undated, circa 1940
1.9	Schattner, Erwin: Education, secondary, 1917-1920
1.10	Schattner, Erwin: Education, medical school, University of Vienna, various, 1922-1931
1.11	Schattner, Erwin: Education, medical school, University of Vienna, proofs of examinations, 1930-1938
1.12	Schattner, Erwin: Financial: Oesterreichische Creditanstalt (copies), 1938
1.13	Schattner, Erwin: First name, change of, 1930-1933
1.14	Schattner, Erwin: Insurance, receipts for, 1935-1938
1.15	Schattner, Erwin: Military service, Austria: 1935-1938
1.16	Schattner, Erwin: Professional, Austria, 1932-1938
1.17	Schattner, Erwin: Professional, Austria: Aryanization of his practice, 1938
1.18	Schattner, Erwin: Professional, United Kingdom and United States, 1939-1941
1.19	Schattner, Erwin: Residency and citizenship in Austria, 1920-1931
1.20	Schattner, Erwin: Restitution, 1964-1968, 1998
1.21	Schattner, Erwin: War ration book, 1943
1.22	Schattner family: Belongings, transport and storage, 1938-1940
1.23	Schattner family: Immigration and citizenship, United States, 1939-1946
1.24	Spirer, Emma, 1941-1948
1.25	Weil, Samuel and Sara, affidavits for, 1941
1.26	Accretion: Schatner, Marcus, 1938-1939
1.27	Accretion: Schattner, Ernestine, 1914-1935
1.28, OS 1	Accretion: Schattner, Erwin, 1920-1968 (2 folders)
1.29	Accretion: Schattner, Ruth, circa 1937-circa 1940 and undated
1.30	Accretion: Weil, Samuel and Sara, 1941

