

ELLEN KAIDANOW PAPERS, 1938-CIRCA 1998
2017.525.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
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Descriptive summary

Title: Ellen Kaidanow papers

Dates: 1938-circa 1998

Accession number: 2017.525.1

Creator: Kaidanow, Ellen, 1936-

Extent: 4 folders

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

Abstract: The collection documents the Holocaust experiences of Ellen Kaidanow (born Shifra Lewiatin) and her family from Dubno, Poland (present day Dubno, Ukraine). Photographs include pre-war depictions of the Lewiatin family; post war images of Ellen with her paternal uncle's family in Germany, including in the Bad Reichenhall displaced persons camp; and a photograph of Ellen with her Christian nanny, Lena Dudzinski, who sheltered her during the German occupation. Documents include Ellen's report card from a school in the Bad Reichenhall DP camp; a 1991 letter from Lena's niece, Vera Karpin, written in Russian with a translation by the donor; and copies of documents about Ellen and her family from the International Tracing Service.

Languages: Hebrew, Russian, 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), Ellen Kaidanow papers (2017.525.1), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The collection was donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum by Ellen Kaidanow in 2017.

Related materials: Spoon (IRN# 562277)

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

Processing history: Adam Fielding, July 2017

Biographical note

Ellen Kaidanow (born Shifra Lewiatin, sometimes referred to as Alexandra in postwar documents) was born on 15 June 1936 in Dubno, Poland (now Dubno, Ukraine) to Joseph and Esther (née Greenzweig) Lewiatin. She had two sisters, Pearl and Bella. Joseph and Esther ran a kiosk that sold candy, and they had a Christian nanny, Lena Dudzinski, who helped care for their daughters.

After the German occupation of Poland, the Lewiatin family were sent to the Dubno ghetto. They lived with other relatives, including a grandmother and Joseph's brother Rubin (1911-1984), his wife Jenia (1914-2000), and their son Victor (b. 1939). Rubin and his family fled to Siberia and survived the war. Ellen's parents and sisters all perished at the Dubno ghetto.

Around the time of the liquidation of the ghetto, Ellen escaped with her nanny Lena with whom the family remained in contact. They visited one of the Lewiatins former neighbors in Dubno whom they had entrusted some of their possessions with prior to being sent to the ghetto. The neighbor returned one item, a spoon, and threatened to turn them in if they did not leave. Lena and Ellen then went to live with her sister Anya in Radziwiłłów, Poland (now Radyvyliv, Ukraine). Lena passed Ellen off as her daughter under the false name of Marusia Dudzinski for the duration of the war.

After the war, Rubin discovered that Ellen had survived, and he brought her to Siberia to join his family. They then returned to Poland and then went to the Bad Reichenhall displaced persons camp. In 1948, Ellen, posing as her cousin Victor's sister, and Victor were sent to an orphanage in Prien am Chiemsee, Germany. They immigrated with other orphans to the United States via the *USS General W.M. Black* on 10 October 1948.

Ellen and Victor were supposed to live with one of Jenia's sisters, but she died prior to their arrival in the United States. They lived with her husband until Rubin and Jenia were able to immigrate to the United States eight months later. The family settled in New York. Ellen later married Jerry Kaidanow.

Scope and content of collection

The collection documents the Holocaust experiences of Ellen Kaidanow (born Shifra Lewiatin) and her family from Dubno, Poland (present day Dubno, Ukraine). Photographs include pre-war depictions of the Lewiatin family; post war images of Ellen with her paternal uncle's family in Germany, including in the Bad Reichenhall displaced persons camp; and a photograph of Ellen with her Christian nanny, Lena Dudzinski, who sheltered her during the German occupation. Documents include Ellen's report card from a school in the Bad Reichenhall DP camp; a 1991 letter from Lena's niece, Vera Karpin, written in

Russian with a translation by the donor; and copies of documents about Ellen and her family from the International Tracing Service.

System of arrangement

The collection is arranged as four folders. Folders are arranged alphabetically and documents are arranged chronologically.

Indexing terms

Person:

Kaidanow, Ellen, 1936-
Lewiatin, Rubin, 1911-1984.
Lewiatin, Jenia, 1914-2000.
Lewiatin, Victor, 1939-
Dudzinski, Lena.

Corporate:

Bad Reichenhall (Displaced persons camp)

Topical Subject:

Jews--Ukraine--Dubno.
World War, 1939-1945--Jews--Rescue--Ukraine.
Jewish refugees—Germany
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Children.
Orphans--Germany--Prien am Chiemsee--1940-1950.

Geography:

Bad Reichenhall (Germany)
Dubno (Ukraine)
Prien am Chiemsee (Germany)

Genre/Form:

Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Folder	Title
1	Biographical materials, 1947-circa 1998
2	International Tracing Service records (copies)
	Photographs:
3	Lewiatin family, circa 1938-circa 1943
4	Lewiatin family, 1947-1948