

EMANUEL SCHERER PAPERS, 1941-1963
2018.395.1

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

Title: Emanuel Scherer papers

Dates: 1941-1963

Accession number: 2018.395.1

Creator: Scherer, Emanuel, 1901-1977

Extent: 0.5 linear foot (8 folders)

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

Abstract: The Emanuel Scherer papers include documents, correspondence, and photographic material documenting Emanuel Scherer's work as a member of the International Jewish Bund during the Holocaust. The papers include two false Swedish passports used by Scherer and his wife; notes on the participation of the Jewish Bund in the 1944 Warsaw ghetto uprising by Tomasz Arciszewski (Socialist, Roman Catholic, Prime Minister of Poland from 1944-1947); a list of Polish fighters in the Warsaw ghetto uprising, including Bund members; and a 1963 speech by Scherer about the Bund's positions on disarmament, peace, and antisemitism in the USSR, as well as Moshe Sharett's notes to Scherer following his speech. The papers also include a ration card, certificate, and two vaccination cards documenting Ella Lewald, Johanna Feiner, and Joel Abel Feiner, three Theresienstadt survivors sent to Canton St. Gallen in February 1945.

Languages: English, Polish, Yiddish, Hebrew, German, Swedish

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), Emanuel Scherer papers (2018.395.1), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Gail Scherer donated the Emanuel Scherer papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2018.

Separated materials: Gail Scherer also donated a Star of David badge (2018.395.2) and six pieces of Theresienstadt scrip (2018.395.5-2018.395.10) to the Museum.

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, December 2018

Biographical note

Emanuel Scherer (1901-1977) was born in Krakow, Austria-Hungary (now Poland), to Jewish parents. He also had multiple younger siblings. During this time, Jews comprised almost a quarter of the Krakow population and Emanuel became familiar with Yiddish culture as a child. He attended the gymnasium of St. Jacka in Krakow, a classical school founded in 1857. He went on to earn a law degree from Jagiellonian University in Krakow.

As a student, Emanuel had joined the Jewish Labor Bund, a social-democratic organization devoted to strengthening Yiddish culture and socialist values through their network of schools and cultural and fraternal institutions. The Bund was founded in 1897, to organize opposition to repression of Jewish workers in Russia, and was generally hostile to Zionism and Communism. Emanuel joined the Central Committee of Krakow's Bundist youth movement. In 1930, he moved to Warsaw and joined the Warsaw Committee, and was the youngest man elected to the Central Committee in 1935. In 1938, he was elected to the Warsaw City Council, and worked as Secretary of the Trade Union of Office Workers. Emanuel worked as co-editor for multiple Bundist publications, also contributing numerous articles and essays.

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded western Poland, prompting Britain and France to declare war on Germany. Around the same time, the Soviet Union invaded eastern Poland, under a nonaggression pact (the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact) with Germany. During the Blitzkrieg (lightning war), German forces defeated the Polish, and by the end of the month, Warsaw had surrendered. The Germans terrorized the Polish people, shooting thousands of civilians and requiring men to participate in forced labor. They also aimed to destroy Polish political, religious, and intellectual leadership. Beginning in May 1940, the Germans enacted a plan, called AB-Aktion, to swiftly kill Polish leaders and intellectuals in Warsaw, including those in Jewish roles.

Shortly after the war began, Emanuel and his wife, Bronka (1902-?), escaped to Vilno (in modern-day Lithuania), and immigrated to Sweden with their son, Victor (1940-2012). They eventually made their way east, ending up in Japan. In April 1941, they sailed from Japan to San Francisco, California, under

the false identities of Zygmunt, Ewa, and Ryszard Lieberfreund, eventually settling in New York. In 1943, Emanuel became the Bund representative to the Polish National Council in London, England, where the Polish government operated in exile. He stayed there until the end of the war in 1945, and a year later, he returned to his family in New York. He became secretary of the coordinating committee for the Jewish Labor Bund and editor of the Bund monthly, *Unzer Zeit*. He also served as a representative in the Socialist International, an organization of social democratic, socialist, and labor parties formally established in 1951, and as vice-president of the Jewish Labor Committee, which was founded in 1934. He continued to attend meetings and debates related to his activism until his death.

(Biography by Jenn Briggs)

Scope and content of collection

The Emanuel Scherer papers include documents, correspondence, and photographic material documenting Emanuel Scherer's work as a member of the International Jewish Bund during the Holocaust. The papers include two false Swedish passports used by Scherer, his wife, and their son; notes on the participation of the Jewish Bund in the 1944 Warsaw ghetto uprising by Tomasz Arciszewski (Socialist, Roman Catholic, Prime Minister of Poland from 1944-1947); a list of Polish fighters in the Warsaw ghetto uprising, including Bund members; and a 1963 speech by Scherer about the Bund's positions on disarmament, peace, and antisemitism in the USSR, as well as Moshe Sharett's notes to Scherer following his speech. The papers also include a ration card, ration coupons, two vaccination cards, and a colored map of Theresienstadt documenting Ella Lewald, Johanna Feiner, and Joel Abel Feiner, three Theresienstadt survivors sent to Canton St. Gallen in February 1945.

System of arrangement

The Emanuel Scherer papers are arranged as two series:

- Series 1: Emanuel Scherer and Bund material, 1941-1963
- Series 2: Theresienstadt material, 1943-1945

Indexing terms

Arciszewski, Tomasz.

Scherer, Emanuel, 1901-1977.

Sharett, Moshe, 1894-1965.

International Jewish Labor Bund.

Theresienstadt (Concentration camp)

Jews--Poland--Warsaw.

Jewish refugees--Sweden.

Warsaw (Poland) History Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, 1943

Correspondence.

Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Emanuel Scherer and Bund material, 1941-1963

| Folder | Title |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1 of 8 | Arciszewski, Tomasz, on the participation of the Jewish Bund in the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, 1944 |
| 2 of 8 | Correspondence (Nowogrodzki), 1941 |
| 3 of 8 | False Swedish passports, 1941 |
| 4 of 8 | List of Polish fighters in the Warsaw Ghetto, including indications of which were members of the Bund, approximately 1944 |
| Negatives stored Separately | Negatives (Negatives stored separately) |
| 5 of 8 | Photographs, 1946 |
| 6 of 8 | Scherer, Emanuel, Speech about the International Jewish Labor Bund's positions on disarmament, peace, and antisemitism in the USSR, 1963 |
| 7 of 8 | Sharette, Moshe, notes following Scherer's speech, 1963 |

Series 2: Theresienstadt material, 1943-1945

| Folder | Title |
|--------|--|
| 8 of 8 | Theresienstadt material documenting Ella Lewald and Johanna Feiner, two Theresienstadt survivors sent to Canton St. Gallen in February 1945, 1943-1945 |