

KLEINFELD FAMILY PAPERS, 1908-1963
2018.640.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
Washington, DC 20024-2126
Tel. (202) 479-9717
e-mail: reference@ushmm.org

Descriptive summary

Title: Kleinfeld family papers

Dates: 1908-1963

Accession number: 2018.640.1

Creator: Kleinfeld (Family : Vienna, Austria)

Extent: .83 linear feet (2 boxes, 4 oversize folders)

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

Abstract: The collection documents the Holocaust-era experiences of Isidor and Regina Kleinfeld and their children Hedda and Liane in Vienna, Austria including Isidor's arrest after Kristallnacht and his brief imprisonment in the Dachau concentration camp, the family's emigration from Austria in 1939 to Cuba and to the United States in 1940. Included are biographical material regarding education, employment, and Isidor's restitution claims against the Hamburg-Amerika Line; immigration paperwork regarding efforts to leave Austria, their stay in Cuba, and the process of receiving visas to immigrate to the United States; correspondence; and pre-war family photographs.

Languages: Polish, 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), Kleinfeld family papers (2018.640.1), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The collection was donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum by Hedda Kleinfeld Schachter in 2018.

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, June 2019

Biographical note

Isidor Kleinfeld (1894-1975) was born on 29 September 1894 in Stanislawów, Poland to Jakob and Ettl (née Braubart) Kleinfeld. He had at least one brother, Leonard, and at least three sisters, Ida, Laura, and Diana. Isidor married Regina Reich in 1920. Regina Kleinfeld (née Reich, 1895-1945) was born on 13 December 1895 in Stanislawów to Schmaje and Freuda (née Hecht) Reich. Isidor and Regina had two daughters in Vienna, Austria: Hedda (later Hedda Schachter) was born on 5 February 1924, and Liane (later Liane Schwarz, 1927-2015) was born in 1927.

Isidor served with the Austrian Army during World War I. After the war he worked in the fur industry, primarily with leather. At one point he worked for his father's furrier business. Regina trained to become a hat maker.

After the German annexation of Austria in March 1938, Hedda and Liane could no longer attend public school, and enrolled in the only Jewish school in Vienna. The family made plans to emigrate and Isidore applied for visas for the United States with the help of relatives already there. During Kristallnacht, Regina had a non-Jewish relative pick up Hedda and Liane from school. Isidor and his brother Leonard were arrested and released on 18 November on the condition of leaving Germany. In December he was caught trying to cross the border into Belgium without a visa and deported to the Dachau concentration camp. After Isidor was released from Dachau he purchased visas for Shanghai and Cuba on the black market, all of which were fake (visas were not required for immigration to Shanghai).

The Kleinfelds emigrated from Austria aboard the MS *Orinoco* and arrived in Havana, Cuba around February 1939. They remained there until May 1940 when they sailed to the United States aboard the SS *Mexico*. In September 1941 Hedda married Jack Schachter, who emigrated from Poland to the United States as a child in the 1920s.

The Kleinfeld and Schachter families opened a furrier business on Fifth Avenue in the Bay Ridge section of Brooklyn and the family lived above the store. At Hedda's suggestion, they started selling bridal wear and eventually became the very successful Kleinfeld Bridal.

Isidor's mother and his siblings immigrated to Cuba and then the United States. Regina's father immigrated to Palestine by 1940 as did some of her siblings.

Scope and content of collection

The collection documents the Holocaust-era experiences of Isidor and Regina Kleinfeld and their children Hedda and Liane in Vienna, Austria including Isidor's arrest after Kristallnacht and his brief imprisonment in the Dachau concentration camp, the family's emigration from Austria in 1939 to Cuba and to the United States in 1940. Included are biographical material regarding education, employment, and Isidor's restitution claims against the Hamburg-Amerika Line; immigration paperwork regarding

efforts to leave Austria, their stay in Cuba, and the process of receiving visas to immigrate to the United States; correspondence; and pre-war family photographs.

Biographical material includes clippings from Cuban newspapers, identification papers, report cards, employment documentation, papers related to Isidor's service in the Austrian Army during World War I, copies of Isidor and Regina's marriage certificate, Isidor's imprisonment in Dachau, and a small amount of papers related to the Reich family. Also included is extensive paperwork regarding Isidor's efforts to receive compensation from the Hamburg-Amerika Line for having to purchase roundtrip tickets to Cuba despite the family's intention to stay in Cuba until they could go to the United States.

Immigration papers include documents related to the family's emigration from Austria in early 1939, immigration cards from Cuba, and correspondence, affidavits, and related paperwork for the family's immigration to the United States in May 1940. There is also a small amount of documents regarding David Reich's immigration from Austria.

The bulk of the correspondence is from 1938-1939 with relatives and friends, including Sigmund Reich in the United States, who was possibly Regina's brother or cousin.

Photographs primarily consist of pre-war depictions of the Kleinfeld family. Also included are depictions of Isidor's relatives including his father and sisters Ida, Laura, and Diana. There is also a photograph of Regina's father Siegmund Reich.

System of arrangement

The collection is arranged as four series.

- Series 1. Biographical material, 1908-1963
- Series 2. Immigration, 1938-1941
- Series 3. Correspondence, 1916-1940
- Series 4. Photographs, circa 1914-circa 1940

Folders are arranged alphabetically and documents are arranged chronologically.

Indexing terms

Person:

- Kleinfeld, Isidor, 1894-1975.
- Kleinfeld, Regina, 1895-1945.
- Kleinfeld, Liane, 1927-2015.
- Schachter, Hedda Kleinfeld, 1924-

Corporate:

- Dachau (Concentration camp).

Topical Subject:

- Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Reparations.
- Refugees, Jewish--Cuba.
- World War, 1914-1918--Veterans.
- Holocaust survivors.

Geography:
Vienna (Austria).
Cuba--Emigration and immigration.
United States--Emigration and immigration.

Genre/Form:
Letters.
Newspaper articles.
Photographs.
Affidavits.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1. Biographical material, 1908-1963

Box/Folder	Title
1.1, OS 1	Clippings, 1939-1940
1.2	Kleinfeld, Hedda: biographical papers, 1938-1942
1.3	Kleinfeld, Hedda: report cards, 1931-1938
1.4, OS 2	Kleinfeld, Isidor: Austrian army, 1914-1935
1.5	Kleinfeld, Isidor: biographical papers, 1913-1931
1.6	Kleinfeld, Isidor: Dachau imprisonment, 1938-1939
1.7, OS 3	Kleinfeld, Isidor: education, 1913-1927
1.8	Kleinfeld, Isidor: employment, 1923-circa 1943
1.9	Kleinfeld, Liane: report cards, 1934-1937
1.10	Kleinfeld, Regina: biographical papers, 1908-1944
OS 4	Kleinfeld, Regina: education, 1912-1915
1.11	Kleinfeld, Regina: employment, 1915-1939
1.12	Kleinfeld, Regina: work books (arbeitsbuch), 1913-1918
1.13	Marriage certificates, 1920-1921
1.14	Miscellaneous, 1919-1938 and undated
1.15	Reich family: biographical papers, 1914-1919 and undated
1.16	Restitution, 1947-1963
1.17	Restitution: photocopies, 1943-1961

Series 2. Immigration, 1938-1941

Box/Folder	Title
2.1	Emigration from Austria, 1938-1939
2.2	Cuba, 1938-1939
2.3-2.4	United States, 1938-1941 (2 folders)
2.5	Reich, David: Cuba and United States, 1939

Series 3. Correspondence, 1916-1940

Box/Folder	Title
2.6	Kleinfeld, Hedda, 1937
2.7	Kleinfeld, Isidor, 1938-1940

2.8	Kleinfeld, Isidor: Reich, Sigmund, 1938-1939
2.9	Kleinfeld, Liane, 1939
2.10	Kleinfeld, Regina, 1916-1940

Series 4. Photographs, circa 1914-circa 1940

Box/Folder	Title
2.11	Kleinfeld, Hedda, circa 1929-circa 1934
2.12	Kleinfeld, Isidor, circa 1914-circa 1940
2.13	Kleinfeld, Liane, circa 1930-circa 1939
2.14	Kleinfeld, Regina, circa 1920s
2.15	Kleinfeld family, 1922-1939 and undated
2.16	Reich family, circa 1920s