



# *Journey*

*The Story of  
Ernest and Sylvia Rapp*



*By Judith Rapp Hara*

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Dedicated to the victims and survivors of the Holocaust.

‘May their names be for a blessing.’

This is one family’s story...there are so many.

“In Jewish history there are no coincidences.”

Elie Wiesel

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# PROLOGUE

In 1973, my husband Bob and I spent time in Israel. While there, we met a delightful elderly gentleman from Belfast, Ireland. He was ill at the time and hoping to relocate to Israel. We became friends over the next two weeks and decided to remain in touch. He returned to Ireland and we came home to Orlando. Once home, we showed our pictures of our trip to Israel to our families. When we got to the picture of me and our elderly friend, my father paled. He said, “who is that man?” I told my father that his name was Harry Cohen and that he was from Belfast, Ireland. My father said “I have been looking for this man since the war. He is the man who saved our family.” I told my father that I would write Harry Cohen in Ireland and see if he was indeed this man. It took two weeks to get the letter to Ireland and two weeks for the return letter. Harry Cohen wrote that ‘yes, he remembered my father, grandfather and aunt’ and enclosed a photograph of my family and himself dated 1939. He was the man! We were overjoyed to get this news. I immediately wrote him that my family was deeply indebted to him for helping them, and that my father would write him so they could connect once again. There was no more contact with Harry Cohen. All the letters were returned after that. I believe that we were supposed to meet him in Israel so he could find out the Rapp family survived, thanks to him. Then his life was complete. That is when I learned that ‘there are no coincidences.’



Judith and Harry Cohen in Israel 1973

# CHAPTER ONE

## MY FATHER'S STORY - ERNEST DAVID RAPP

My father's parents, Osias and Ettel Melzer Rapp, were born in the late 1880's in Poland and emigrated to Austria in 1916. My grandfather fought in World War I as an airplane radio operator for Germany. He intercepted a Russian communication in Morse Code regarding an attack on Germany and was awarded the Iron Cross Medal from the Kaiser for this. Because my grandfather was fighting in the war, my grandmother decided to give birth to my father's sister, Berta, in Poland where her family still lived. A few months later, my grandparents reunited in Poland and returned with my aunt to Vienna, Austria. My father was born there in 1918. The family led a poor observant Jewish life in Vienna. They lived very modestly in a one room apartment with no running water. My grandmother developed a severe heart condition and died at age 42. My father was only 10 years old. Life was hard for the family of three. My father's older sister watched over my dad (a very active boy) while my grandfather worked selling textiles. As my father grew up, he developed an interest in art. For his high school years, my father attended the Vienna School of Art and Architecture. (See Appendix A.) To make a little extra money, my father designed ladies dress patterns that he sold to a clothing manufacturer in Belfast, Ireland.



The Rapp family Circa 1918 Vienna, Austria  
(From left to right) My father, Osias, Berta and Ettel

On March 12, 1938, the Nazis from Germany marched into Austria. This was called the Anschluss. At that time, the Austrians welcomed the Nazis, and in a vote 99% of the Austrians (excluding Jewish people and Roma Gypsies) voted to be annexed. Anyone opposing this was imprisoned, tortured, or killed. Under Nazi occupation, Jewish people were no longer allowed to go to school, parks, or sit on public benches. Jewish businesses were looted and seized. If the Jewish owners objected, they were arrested. My father recalled being ordered by the Nazis to clean the sidewalks with a toothbrush. He was thrown out the window of his school and told never to return. At this time, my grandfather was arrested. My aunt took my grandfather's Iron Cross Medal to the prison to show the Nazis that they had arrested a war hero. They let my grandfather go. Then the Nazis came looking for my 19-year-old father. My aunt gave the Nazis a few of my father's drawings and they left satisfied for the moment. My father knew he had to leave and soon. Since he was born in Austria, he was fortunate to get an Austrian visa to leave. The Belfast dress factory (that bought his dress designs) was willing to sponsor my father. This enabled him to get out of Austria in April of 1938. Because his father and sister were born in Poland, their options were more limited. With less Polish visas available, and no one to sponsor them, they could not leave. (See Appendix B.)



My father in Vienna 1938



My father, age 19, left for Ireland alone and knowing no English. (See Appendix C.) He arrived in Belfast with no money and knowing that his father and sister could die if he could not get them out. He went to the Orthodox synagogue in Belfast and met the president of the synagogue, Harry Cohen. Mr. Cohen offered to have my father stay at his house while he worked at the dress factory. My father told him about the conditions in Vienna, and that he feared for his father and sister's lives. Mr. Cohen got papers together to sponsor them and the synagogue raised the money to bring them to Ireland. In March of 1939, my grandfather and aunt arrived in Belfast where they lived with Mr. Cohen and worked as a cantor and maid.

Meanwhile, my father had a distant cousin in New Jersey, Isaac Epstein, who agreed to sponsor him to come to America. My father's U.S. visa ran out on December 29, 1938, so he had to leave for the U.S. on a steerage ship ticket before his father and sister arrived in Belfast. His hope was to earn enough money to bring them to the U.S. as soon as he could. In New York, my father worked many jobs and lived very modestly to save the money he needed to bring his family to America. Isaac Epstein also agreed to sponsor my grandfather and aunt.

On September 1, 1939 just six months after arriving in Belfast, my grandfather and aunt left Ireland and boarded the ship SS Athenia headed to America. Two days later, the ship was torpedoed in the Atlantic Ocean by a German submarine. (England declared war on Germany that day.) As the ship was going down, my grandfather and aunt got on separate lifeboats. My grandfather told my aunt to tie her arm to the oarlock of the boat so she would not be thrown overboard. Meanwhile in New York, my father heard that their ship was torpedoed and saw that they were not on the list of survivors. Because all my father had in his life were these two people, he had a nervous breakdown and was hospitalized for two weeks. Many hours later at sea, Britain's Royal Navy found their lifeboats. Because my grandfather and aunt did not speak English (only German) and had lost their documentation in the shipwreck, they were taken to Scotland and put in prison as 'enemy combatants'. There, they asked to speak to a rabbi who understood that they were refugees and not aliens. The rabbi in Scotland contacted Harry Cohen in Belfast. Mr. Cohen got the Belfast Jewish community to raise money and send a delegation to Scotland. My family was released and went back to Belfast for two weeks before the community sent them on the ship SS Manhattan to New York where they were reunited with my father.



SS Athena 1939  
(See Appendix D.)

My father, grandfather and aunt took a small apartment in The Bronx. My father worked during the day and at night went to school to learn English. In his free time, he started to draw buildings.

## CHAPTER TWO

### MY MOTHER'S STORY – HERTA LEHRER

My mother's parents, Jacob and Martha Wodak Lehrer were born in Vienna, Austria in the late 1890's. My grandfather came from a long line of successful Viennese merchants. My grandmother came from a family of ambassadors, professors, medical doctors, and merchants. The family was modern in their thinking and progressive in their Jewish religious life. My grandfather fought for Germany on the African front during World War I. He was injured in battle and awarded the Iron Cross Medal. After the war, my grandparents married and bought a small grocery store in Vienna. It grew into being the largest delicatessen in Vienna (one city block long with over 30 employees.) My mother was born in Vienna in 1922 at a prosperous time for the upper class. Her sister, Gretl, was born four years later. My mother remembered being raised by nannies, having the finest of things, private schools, best medical care, etc. They had a beautiful apartment in downtown Vienna.



The Lehrer family Circa 1934  
(From left to right) Gretl, Martha, Jacob, my mother

Then the Anschluss (Nazi Germany marched into Austria) came on March 12, 1938 when my mother was 16 years old. Her world came tumbling down. They were no longer allowed to move freely, could not go to school, and were humiliated. My grandfather believed that this would pass. He was a war hero. They would never come for him! Soon there was talk that Jewish men were to be rounded up, so my grandfather went into hiding in the countryside. My mother remembered a pounding on the door and the Nazis demanding to take my grandfather. When my teenage mother was questioned, she could not say where her father was because she was not told. At that time, my grandmother started to apply for visas and get sponsorship to America. Soon after, the Gestapo (Nazi police) moved into the apartment above my mother's family. They were terrified. On November 9, 1938, my mother witnessed Kristallnacht (The Night of the Broken Glass). She watched as Jewish stores, homes and synagogues were attacked. It was at this time that my grandmother waited days in line to get the papers she needed to get the family out. My grandfather had a brother, Sigmund 'Arthur' (who changed his name to Sam Friedman once he arrived in the U.S.) who agreed to sponsor the family. When my grandmother had all the papers in order, they signed over their store, their apartment and all their possessions to the Nazis and left during the night to take a ship to America. (See Appendix E.)



My mother in Vienna 1938

Many relatives did not get out. My grandmother's mother Rosa was too ill to travel and her daughter, Gabriele, stayed in Vienna to take care of her. Rosa was put in a nursing home, where she died of starvation on August 29, 1942. Gabriele was murdered at Maly-Trostinec on September 18, 1942. Other family members went to concentration camps and died there.



Rosa and Gabriele in Vienna Circa 1939

My grandparents, mother and aunt arrived in New York City in April, 1939. They knew no English and now were poor. My mother and aunt were enrolled in public school. My grandparents opened a small grocery store in Manhattan. They never could climb up to where they had been in Vienna, but they had an honest business and enough to eat and live. (See Appendix F.)



Grocery Store 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue New York Circa 1940  
Jacob Lehrer behind counter

# CHAPTER THREE

## IMMIGRATION

The United States had very strict immigration laws in the 1930-1940's. A poll was taken in 1938 in the U.S. with the following question: "Should we allow a larger number of Jewish exiles from Germany to come to the United States?" 72% of the American people answered "no". From the years 1933-1941, 110,000 refugees came to the United States. In 1941, the U.S. entered World War II. At that time, all immigration stopped. Hundreds of thousands of Jewish people had applied, were turned down and died. It was very difficult to get a U.S. visa. Some of the following requirements were:

1. Register with the consulate in your country.
2. Get on a very long waiting list.
3. Must have a U.S. sponsor who can guarantee that you will not be a burden to the U.S. The sponsor must provide their personal financial information to show that they can provide for you.
4. Must have personal identification including a police certificate, transit permission, financial affidavit, taxes paid and an exit certificate.
5. Valid ship ticket.

(See Appendix G1-4.)

Other countries had different requirements. My greater family went to whatever place would take them first. They went to the following countries and cities in the world: United States, Israel, England, Canada, Belgium, Peru, Australia, France, and Shanghai. They settled in those countries and became part of that society. Now three generations later, I have relatives all over the world. Each has been an asset to their new country.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## LIFE IN NEW YORK

My parents met in New York City taking English at night school. This is the story that they loved to tell. Their teacher, Professor Emerson, had assigned the class to write an English composition. When the Professor handed back the assignment, he said that Herta Lehrer (my mother) had the worst paper he had read. My mother started to cry. After class, my father went up to my mother and told her in German that his paper was much worse. They went out for coffee and that was the beginning of their relationship.

My father had many jobs, always with the goal of moving towards his dream to become an architect. His first job was given to him by his sponsor, Isaac Epstein. Mr. Epstein owned a store that sold sardines. My dad started working there for \$2.00 a week but hated it. Mr. Epstein understood my father had a dream and introduced him to a Newark, New Jersey architect, Mr. Sigler. My father started to work for him for \$5.00 a week. Most important was he had to learn how to convert the metric system that they used in Europe to what we use in America. His next job was with Professor Simon B. Zelnick. Professor Zelnick became my father's mentor. My father got \$10.00 a week cleaning his teacher's office, home and babysitting his children. In return, Professor Zelnick tutored him and encouraged him to become an architectural draftsman. Years later, he helped get my father into New York University School of Architecture. By then, my father kept moving up the ladder. He worked for several different firms as a draftsman designing the interior of department stores. After the war, my father joined the firm of Ross Frankel as a draftsman. One of the firm's partners was Morris Lapidus, the designer of the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach, Florida. He continued working days at the firm and attending night classes at New York University.

My father, age 25, was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1943. He did his basic training in Louisiana and then was stationed with the Army Corp of Engineers in Belvoir, Virginia. There, his commanding officer, Colonel Hinney, assigned him to design retractable radio towers and convertible barracks with lock joints that were easy to drop down and assemble for the



soldiers on Kodiak Island, Alaska. He became a U.S. citizen while serving in the Army and received an honorable discharge when the war ended.



My parents in New York 1943

My mother finished high school at the Julia Richman School in Manhattan. Her dream was to go to college. There was no money in the family for higher education and it was not a priority for girls. Determined to attend college, my mother applied and received a full scholarship with room and board to Bethany College in West Virginia. She earned spending money waiting tables, working at Barton's Candy Shop, and helping her German professor. My mother recalled that her years at Bethany College were some of her happiest. She and my father could visit each other as he was stationed in Virginia (not too far away). She obtained her bachelor's degree in 1945 graduating summa cum laude. When my mother returned to NY, she got another scholarship to New York University and earned a master's degree in psychology. It was at this time that my mother added Sylvia as her middle name and preferred to be called 'Sylvia'. She did not like her birth name of Herta as it was too German. (Her sister also changed her name from Gretl to Greta.) My mother did not want to speak German anymore and though struggling with English, she preferred to use it. She became a U.S. citizen during this time.

My parents married February 2, 1946 in a very small wedding performed by my father's army chaplain, Rabbi Golberman. (See Appendix H.) My father was 28 years old and my mother was 24 years old. My mother's

family's background was wealthy and progressive in their Jewish life. My father's family's background was poor and traditional in their Jewish life. They would have never met in Vienna. But in NY, they were equal – poor, motivated, and in love. It was a marriage that lasted 62 years, until my father's death in 2008.



My parents' honeymoon 1946

My older sister, Ethel, was born on December 29, 1946. By then, my parents were living in a small apartment. My father used the GI bill to attend New York University School of Architecture. One year later, my parents bought an attached row house in Astoria (Queens), NY. In 1949, I was born. My father told the story that he studied for his architectural boards with a cord hooked from his foot to my cradle so he could rock me to sleep while he studied. My father was one of only 3% of the applicants who passed the

architectural boards the first time. He then became a partner in the firm Siegel and Rapp. My younger sister, Sharon, was born in 1952. By then, my father designed our new home in Little Neck, NY. He and his partner, Herman Siegel, designed and built new homes, subdivisions, shopping centers, restaurants and became very successful.



Our home (designed by my father) in Little Neck, NY Circa 1954

My mother became ill in the winter of 1955 and was advised to leave New York to recover in a warmer climate. One of my father's business associates had a small house in Lake Mary, Florida and offered for our family to stay there for the winter. We went there, my mother recovered, and the family loved it.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## LIFE IN ORLANDO



Our family: Orlando, Florida Circa 1956  
Front row: Judith and Sharon  
Back Row: My father, mother, and Ethel

In 1956, our family moved to Orlando. My father found a job as a junior partner with Hugo Broleman, Architect. Their arrangement was that my dad would work for a year. If this worked out, he could become a full partner. It worked out very well and the firm Broleman and Rapp was created. After Mr. Broleman died in 1972, my father established his own architectural firm, Ernest D. Rapp, Architect. Over the next 20 years, he designed many of the high-rise buildings in Orlando and throughout the country. His specialty was

high-rise apartment buildings for lower income seniors. (See Appendix I.) My father was most proud of Kinneret Apartments, a senior high rise building for the Jewish elderly in Orlando. He found a U.S. government program with HUD (Housing and Urban Development) that would sponsor these buildings. In 1960, my father was designated one of the top 50 architects in the country. He and my mother were invited to President John F. Kennedy's inauguration. My father continued designing buildings until he retired at age 75. Even in retirement, my father volunteered to design a synagogue, Congregation Ahavas Yisrael (Chabad). His love of architecture kept him challenged and happy. My father died April 21, 2008 just 6 weeks short of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. His last wish to me before he died was 'to tell his story'.



Congregation Ahavas Israel in Orlando 1994



Congregation Ahavas Yisrael rededicated after my father's death



Kinneret Apartments in Orlando designed 1969

My father stated, "I would like to say that these apartments have given the Jewish Community not only good housing, but also a Jewish life. With all amenities available to them, I am sure that Kinneret has prolonged the independent lifestyle of many people for years in the past and will continue to do so."

My mother worked as head of psychology at Sunland Hospital, a former State of Florida residential facility for severely disabled children. She then became the principal at Primrose School for mentally handicapped children. When she retired, she volunteered at many organizations. Her favorite was helping women obtain jobs in the community. She was also a very talented artist specializing in weaving and painting. (See Appendix J.) All of us in the family have displayed her beautiful work. She was 'the woman behind the man.' She always supported my father's work and helped raise us. My mother died at age 95 on May 6, 2018, ten years after my father.



My mother's tapestry affixed to the Ark at Temple Israel

Life in Orlando was good for our family. My sisters and I went to public schools and religious school at our synagogue. We each went on to college and graduate school. In 1970, to fulfill my parents' dream to have a son, they adopted my brother Richard at age 7.



Our first Orlando home (designed by my father). It was featured in the Parade of Homes 2018.



Our second Orlando home (designed by my father).



## EPILOGUE

My parents each had to leave their home, culture, language, and all that they knew of life. They had to learn how hard and cruel life could be – all because they were Jewish. Although they did not go to the concentration camps like 6,000,000 others, they were victims as well. They lost family, friends, their homes, and their way of life. They lost their innocence. And they were the lucky ones. They survived!

My parents were immigrants arriving in the United States with no money and no knowledge of English. They had to overcome many of the hardships that immigrants must face. Through education, ambition, and drive, they made a life together raising their children. Their lives were enriched by strong family and deep religious values. 'Education, education, education' is how we were raised. I always remember them saying "no one can take away your education." The other quote that we heard all the time was "family is who you can count on." Those two quotes were how we lived our lives. Now we are in our family's third generation in America since my parents arrived. My parents would be so proud. Their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren have continued as good Jewish Americans and good honest people.



My parents 1988

# POSTSCRIPT

## 'THERE ARE NO COINCIDENCES' STORIES

### STORY 1

In 1983, my parents planned a trip to Israel. Their friends, the Shipleys, asked if they would bring a suitcase filled with things to the Begins. Prime Minister Menachem Begin and his wife, Aliza, were longtime friends of the Shipleys. When my parents arrived in Israel, they called the number Mrs. Shipley had given them of the Prime Minister's personal residence. Mrs. Begin answered the phone. She invited my parents over to their home for teatime and to deliver the suitcase. When my parents arrived, they were warmly welcomed by the First Lady. Mrs. Begin noticed that my parents had an accent and asked where they were from. My mother said Vienna, Austria. Mrs. Begin said that one of her dearest friends was also from Vienna. "Did they know Ernst Wodak?" My mother was shocked. She said that he was her cousin and she had not heard from him since the war. Mrs. Begin called Ernst on the phone and he came over immediately. What a wonderful reunion! Several years later, my family and I went to Israel. We met the Wodak family and became very close. I still have weekly contact with their daughter Naomi and her family.



Prime Minister Menachem Begin (left) and Cousin Ernst Wodak (right)  
in Israel Circa 1980

## STORY 2

In 2011, my mother received an international phone call from a young woman in Vienna, Austria who claimed to be a relative of hers. My mother was very worried and thought that this was a prank call. She asked me to deal with this woman and find out about her. I emailed her and asked her exactly who she was. She said her name was Jasmin Freyer and that her grandmother and my mother were first cousins. Jasmin's twin brother and mother had recently died, and she had wanted to find her family. She said that she had been going through her late mother's papers and photos and had found a picture of two young girls. On the back of the picture were the names 'Herta and Gretl'. She scanned the picture and emailed it to me. I was astonished! It was a photo of my mother and her sister. Once we established who she was, the floodgates opened. It was unbelievable! We had thought that my maternal grandfather's side of the family was lost! She said that it took six months of research to find my mother. After a few weeks of emails and Skyping, she agreed to come to Orlando to meet my mother and all of us. What a reunion we had! My mother, sisters and cousins all were there to meet her. We have since kept up a close relationship and are in contact almost every day.



(From left to right) Sharon, my mother, Ethel, Judith, and Jasmin  
Orlando, Florida 2011

## STORY 3

In 2016, my husband Bob and I went to our synagogue in New York City. I sat down next to a very attractive older woman that I had never seen before. She asked me who I was and where I was from. I told her that I was from Orlando. She then told me that many, many years ago she knew a young architect who moved to Orlando. I told her that my father was an architect. She asked, “was your father Ernest Rapp?” I told her “yes”. She then took my hand and told me that we had a lot to talk about. My husband and I were invited to her home the following Saturday night. For the next few days, we googled her name, checked with the synagogue staff, and asked all my relatives if they knew her. That Saturday night, we met her in her beautiful New York apartment. She also was a survivor of the Holocaust. She had met my father when he was a young architect in New York and was an admirer of his work. She had followed his career through the years. We have since become very close to Anne Addison and see her whenever we go to New York.



Anne Addison and Judith in New York 2016

## CONCLUSION

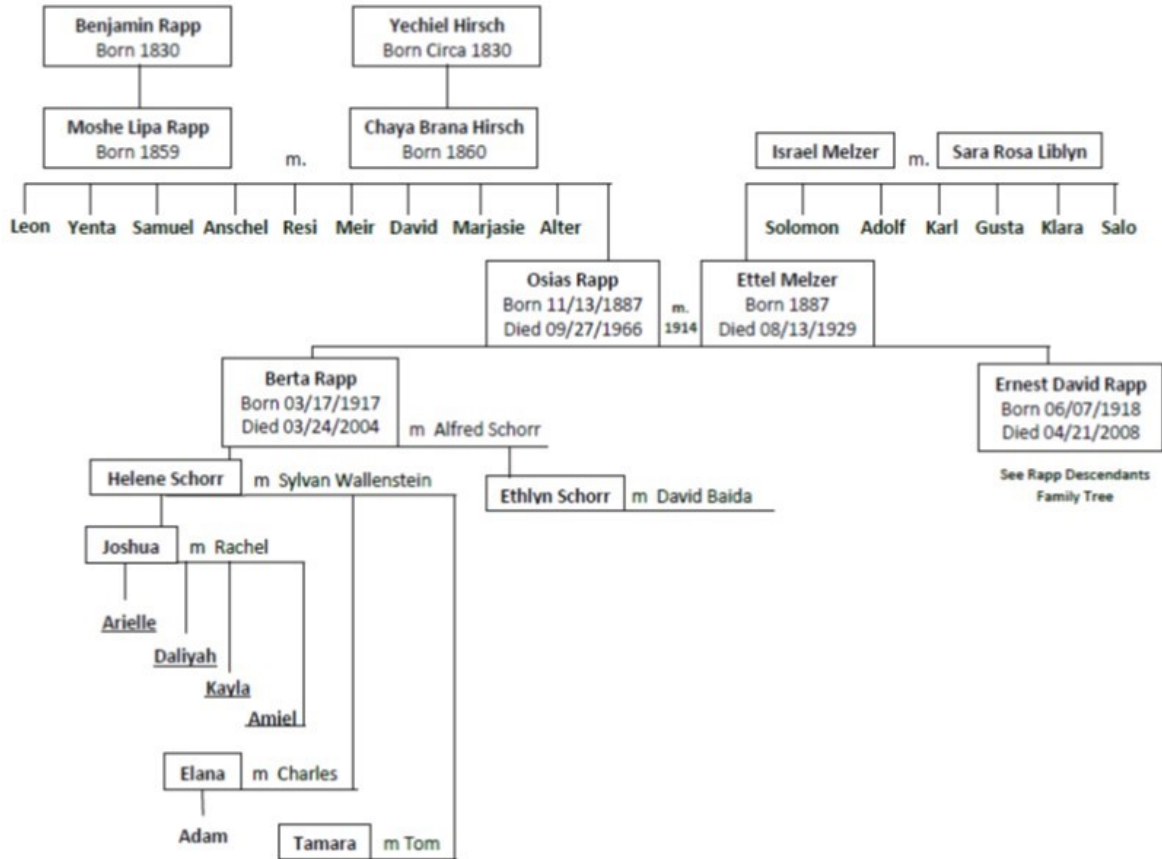
In my opening story, I stated that I had learned that 'there are no coincidences.' Throughout my journey in life, I continue to believe this.

# FAMILY TREES

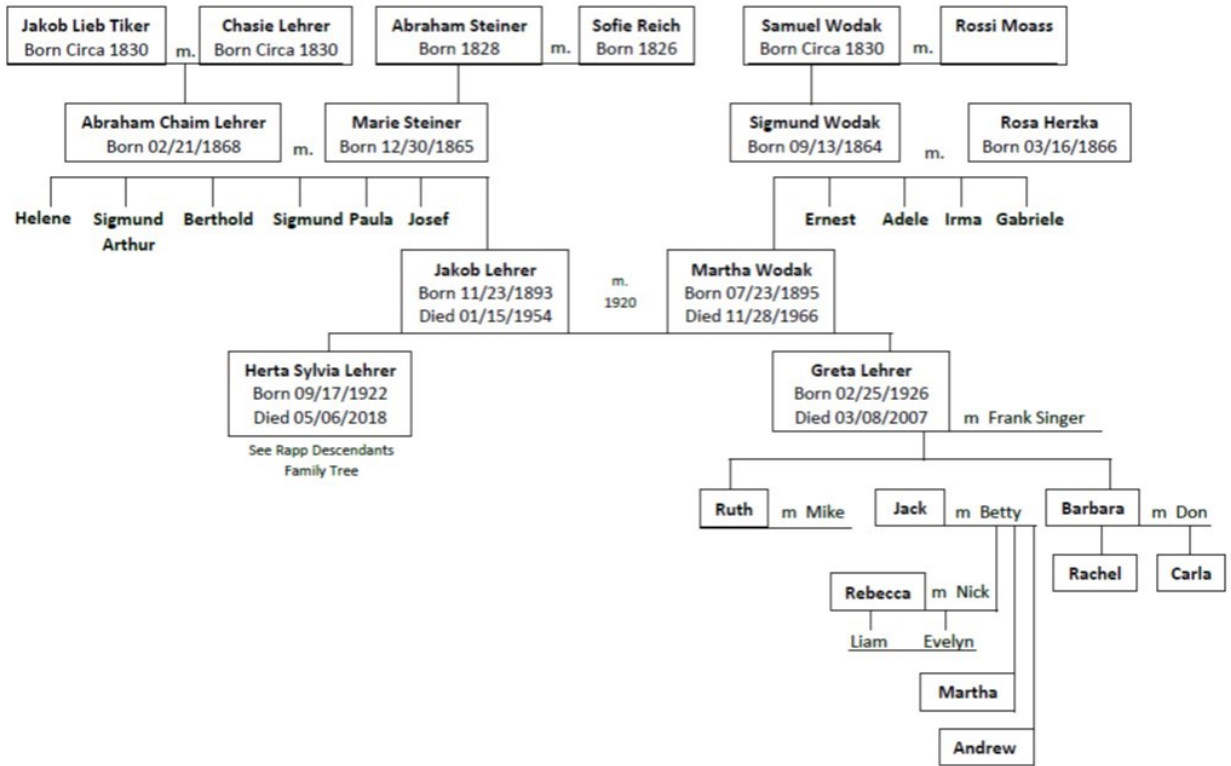
“Family is one of nature’s  
masterpieces.”

George Santayana

**Paternal Genealogy**  
Created 08/2020



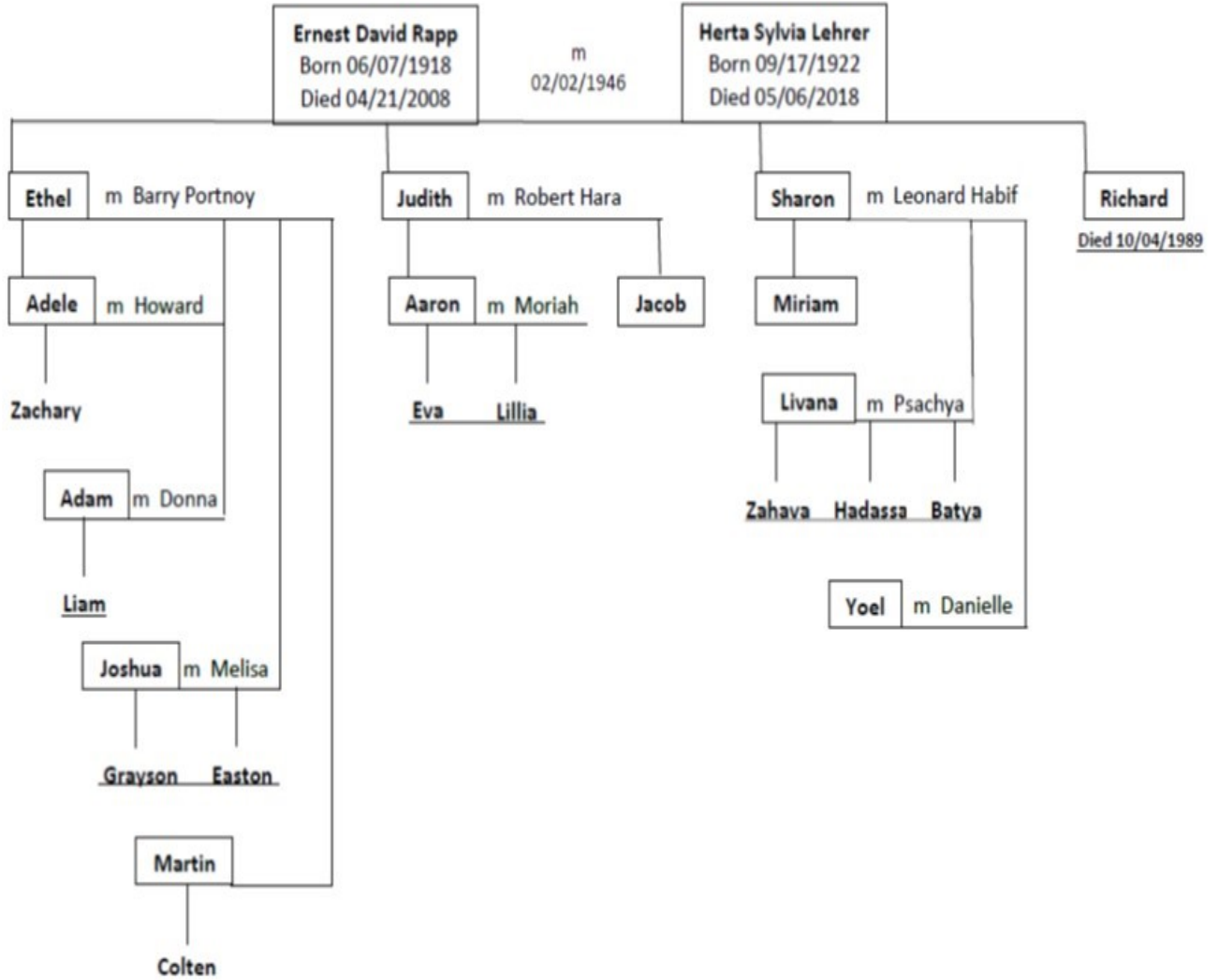
**Maternal Genealogy**  
Created 08/2020





# Ernest and Sylvia Rapp Descendants

Created 08/2020



# APPENDIX



**KUNSTGEWERBESCHULE**  
 DES ÖSTERR. MUSEUMS FÜR KUNST UND INDUSTRIE  
 (BUNDESLEHRANSTALT)  
**WIEN I. STUBENRING NR. 3**

**JAHRESZEUGNIS**

Herr *Ernst Rapp*

GEBOREN AM *7. Juni 1918*

ZU *Wien* IN *Nied. Österr.*



HAT IM SCHULJAHR 1935-1936 ALS ORDENTLICHER SCHÜLER DER KUNST-

GEWERBESCHULE DES ÖSTERR. MUSEUMS *die Werkstätte*

*für Möbel- und Innenbau* BESUCHT UND IN DEN EIN-

ZELNEN UNTERRICHTSGEGENSTÄNDEN NACHSTEHENDE NOTEN ERHALTEN:

GEGENSTAND	VERWENDUNG	ERFOLG	UNTERSCHRIFT
HAUPTTÄTIGKEIT <i>Planaufnahme Einrichtungsver- suche.</i>	<i>eifrig</i>	<i>genügend</i>	<i>W. Wimmer</i>
<i>Ornamentale Schrift I</i>	<i>sehr eifrig</i>	<i>vorzüglich</i>	<i>H. Rauscher</i>
<i>Kunstgeschichte</i>	<i>sehr eifrig</i>	<i>vorzüglich</i>	<i>S. Rauscher</i>
<i>Kirchliche Kunst</i>	<i>sehr eifrig</i>	<i>vorzüglich</i>	<i>S. Rauscher</i>
<i>Deutsche Sprache II</i>	<i>sehr eifrig</i>	<i>sehr gut</i>	<i>P. J. J. J.</i>
<i>Staatsbürgerkunde</i>	<i>sehr eifrig</i>	<i>sehr gut</i>	<i>H. J. J. J.</i>
<i>Körperliche Übungen</i>	<i>eifrig</i>	<i>sehr gut</i>	<i>W. J. J. J.</i>

SEIN BETRAGEN WAR *vollkommen entsprechend*

WIEN,  
 AM *30. Juni*,  
 1936.



*m. Fellner*  
 DIREKTOR

My father's excellent grades from the Vienna School of Art and Architecture

Appendix A

**STEUERADMINISTRATION**  
 für den II. XX. und XXI. Bezirk  
 II. Schiffsamtsquartier 2.

*Wien, 13. Sept. 1938*  
 (Ort und Datum)

(Dienststelle)  
**Ref. 9**  
 (Stempelzeichen)

(Straße)

**Steuerliche Unbedenklichkeitsbescheinigung**  
 (Gültigkeitsdauer: ein Monat ab Ausstellung)

Gegen die Ausreise des(z) *Rapp Ernst, Schüler*  
(Beruf oder Stand, Vor- und Zuname)


*Alte 35*, geboren am *7. II. 1918* in *Wien*  
(Wohnung)


und seiner Ehefrau \_\_\_\_\_, geborene \_\_\_\_\_, geboren am \_\_\_\_\_

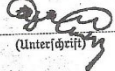
in \_\_\_\_\_, und seiner Kinder \_\_\_\_\_, geboren am \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, geboren am \_\_\_\_\_, geboren am \_\_\_\_\_

habe ich keine Bedenken.







(Unterschrift)

A 4 (Unbedenklichkeitsbescheinigung) 6. 88. — 500 — Österreichische Staatsdruckerei (G.) 3307 88

My Father's proof of Austrian taxes paid to leave Austria  
 Appendix B

BRITISH PASSPORT CONTROL OFFICE  
VIENNA, I. WALLNERSTRASSE 8

Date 18. 7. 38

Herr Ernst Rapp.

Das königlich Britische Passamt erlaubt sich  
Ihnen bekanntzugeben, dass <sup>für</sup> Sie für eine Einreise-  
bewilligung nach England vorgemerkt wurden.  
*angekommen ist. C.E.*



*C. E. Achy*

for  
British Passport Control Officer  
for Vienna.

DAS AMERIKANISCHE GENERALKONSULAT  
WIEN DEUTSCHLAND

JUL 29 1938

bestätigt, dass die vuer Ihre Auswanderung erforderlichen  
Papiere eingelangt sind. Sobald dieselben hieramts ueberprueft  
sind, werden Sie verstaendigt werden.  
Vorherige Anfragen sind zwecklos.

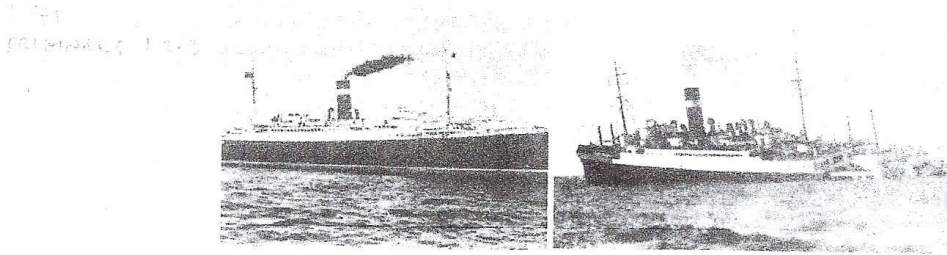
Ernst Rapp, Wien II.



My father's document to enter the United Kingdom  
Appendix C

## LINER ... S.S. ATHENIA

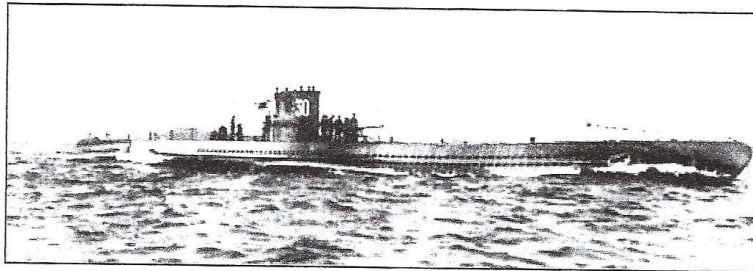
First victim of the War at sea – Battle of the Atlantic 3rd September 1939



### The Sinking of the S.S. Athenia

The first incident of the U-boat war occurred just hours after the declaration of hostilities between Britain and Germany on September 3, 1939, when Oberleutnant Fritz-Julius Lemp, commanding U-30, attacked and sank what he took to be an armoured cruiser. His target was, in fact, the S.S. Athenia, a 13,500 ton passenger liner carrying 1,103 civilians, including more than 300 Americans hurrying home ahead of the clouds of war. This case of mistaken identity set in motion a large-scale cover-up on the part of the Reich, and had far-reaching consequences both for the subsequent conduct of the U-boat war, and for some of the key players in the affair - Lemp, Dönitz, and Raeder.

On the afternoon war was declared, OKM sent three radio messages, at intervals of about an hour, to all Kriegsmarine vessels indicating that a state of war was in force, that attacks on enemy shipping were to commence in accordance with the Prize Rules, and that vessels should feel free to begin hostilities without awaiting provocation. Lemp at that time was patrolling the area north-west of Ireland. Having absorbed these instructions, Lemp spotted a ship on the horizon, heading away from Britain in a north-westerly direction. He ordered U-30 to dive to periscope depth, took a look at the ship, and observed that the vessel was blacked out and zigzagging, and appeared to carry guns on her deck, all indications that she was an armed merchant or auxiliary cruiser, and therefore a legitimate target.



U30 - On the surface

## Appendix D

Finanzamt Alsergrund Wien  
 9. Dorotheengasse 51a 38  
 (Dienststelle)  
 4. 1915  
 (Altenzeichen)

24. März 1939  
 (Ort und Datum)


(Straße)

**Steuerliche Unbedenklichkeitsbescheinigung**  
 (Gültigkeitsdauer: zwei Monate ab Ausstellung)

Gegen die Ausreise des(r) Lehrer Martha, Witw.  
 (Beruf oder Stand, Vor- und Zuname)  
9. Alserbachstr. 5/10, geboren am 23. XI. 1895 in Wien  
 (Wohnung)

und seiner Ehefrau Wladka, geboren am \_\_\_\_\_  
 in \_\_\_\_\_, und seiner Kinder Martha, geboren am 17. IX. 1922  
Paula, geboren am 05. II. 1926, geboren am \_\_\_\_\_

habe ich keine Bedenken.

 (Unterschrift)

Finanzamt Alsergrund Wien  
 9. Dorotheengasse 51a 38  
 (Dienststelle)  
 4. 1915  
 (Altenzeichen)

24. März 1939  
 (Ort und Datum)


(Straße)

**Steuerliche Unbedenklichkeitsbescheinigung**  
 (Gültigkeitsdauer: zwei Monate ab Ausstellung)

Gegen die Ausreise des(r) Lehrer Jakob Kaufm.  
 (Beruf oder Stand, Vor- und Zuname)  
9. Alserbachstr. 5/10, geboren am 23. XI. 1893 in Wien  
 (Wohnung)

und seiner Ehefrau \_\_\_\_\_, geboren am \_\_\_\_\_  
 in \_\_\_\_\_, und seiner Kinder \_\_\_\_\_, geboren am \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_, geboren am \_\_\_\_\_

habe ich keine Bedenken.

 (Unterschrift)

Martha and Jacob Lehrer's document of taxes paid to Austria to leave the country

Appendix E

## Success Story



Above: Gus Guckenberger is shown lecturing on "Related Selling." About sixty grocers completed the course of lectures and were graduated. Mrs. Lehrer could be seen during the sessions carefully jotting down every idea. "It certainly paid," says she.

Martha Lehrer's story is that of American opportunity and accomplishment.

Since 1939, when she came from Vienna, she has grasped the opportunity to learn all about American merchandising.

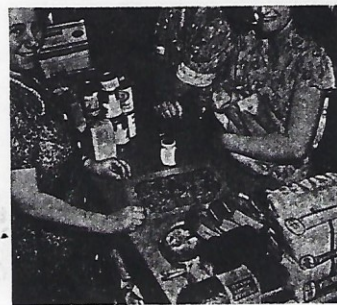
No stranger in the food field, she had successfully run a delicatessen and appetizing store in Vienna, employing twenty-two employees.

Modern sales technique was studied in the school for grocery merchandising conducted recently by Gus Guckenberger for the New York Retail Grocers Association.



"Please the eye and make sales," (Right) is the idea.

In slicing cold cuts, she is very careful to place one slice after the other till the entire paper is covered. Add a little parsley on top, and place it on the counter before wrapping. Waiting customers like how it looks, and several other orders result.



Above:

Putting theory into practice, at her dairy at 1386 Second Avenue, Manhattan, Mrs. Lehrer decided that related selling moves merchandise. During the strawberry season, accordingly, she arranged an attractive display of short-cakes, together with sweet cream and milk.

Every other day, she made a fresh strawberry short-cake. Seeing how easy it was, customers asked not only for the short-cake but also the cream, berries and sugar to be included in their order.

"I increased sweet cream sales by 40% and short-cake sales by 300%."

The display was hot-spotted on the counter where Mrs. Lehrer is shown with her daughters, Sylvia and Greta.

Mrs. Lehrer has found that associated item counter displays are the most effective medium to move merchandise.



Below:

From \$260 a month intake two years ago, the store was run up to a point where it now averages \$900 monthly. Mrs. Lehrer is always very attentive to the young ones coming in for groceries. "Treat them with special attention," says she. "Mother likes it, and that means more business." She is always sure to give the children a cookie from the cookie box.

When she realized that bread is the most profitable item in the store, she ordered a new bread display to be placed to the right of the doorway. Customers come in and pick their own bread—or going out are reminded they need bread. "It increased bread sales 30%."

Old customers were brought back by an Easter basket with a little note asking "Is anything wrong?" This novel idea brought back 50% of them, with one paying a back bill of \$4.15.

AUGUST, 1941

9

Article in the Food Merchants Advocate Magazine

2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Grocery Store NY

Appendix F



STUM: 31.10.1940

Unter Bezugnahme auf Ihre Bewerbung um ein Einwanderungsvisum nach den Vereinigten Staaten werden Sie bezüglich der fuer Sie hier erliegenden Bittschafftpapiere wie folgt aufmerksam gemacht ( besonders die mit Parastift bezeichneten Punkte sind zu beachten ).

DIE NOCH AN ABGABEGEBENE BEWEISE SIND UNGENUEGEND ZU VERSTEHEN  
MIT: VORNAME NACHNAME, ANWISSEN, GEBURTSDATUM -- GALT DER LEHN -- ALLEIN  
VORNAME NACHNAME,

- 1.) Die Buergerchaft ..... ist zu schwach.  
Es steht Ihnen frei, sich ein weiteres Affidavit von einem anderen Buerger zu beschaffen und es einzusenden.
- 2.) Es fehlen jegliche Beweisdokumente ueber die seitens Ihres Buerger in Affidavit gemachten Angaben. Punkte 4 und 5 sind zu beachten.
- 3.) Zusaeztliche Dokumente sind hier eingelangt aber kein Affidavit.
- 4.) Der Nachweis Ihres Buerger neben rein Netto-Einkommen ist nicht ausreichend. Ihr Buerger koennte wie folgt Beweise ueber sein Einkommen vorlegen.
  - a) Wenn er Angestellter ist, eine eidesstattliche Bestaetigung seines Arbeitgebers, in welcher ausser der Hohe seines Verdienstes noch angegeben wird, seit wann er in dem Betriebe beschaeftigt ist, und ob seine Stellung voraussichtlich eine dauernde ist.
  - b) wenn der Buerger selbststaendig ist, den Bericht eines beeideten Buchhaechterverstaendigen. Aus diesem Bericht sollen die privaten Einkommens- und Vermaegenverhaeltnisse klar ersichtlich sein.
  - c) er kann sein Einkommen auch nachweisen durch eine von einem beeidigten Buchhaechterverstaendigen oder einem Steuerbeamten beglaubigte Abschrift ( bzw. Photokopie ) der am Schatzamt erliegenden letztjaehrigen Einkommensteuererklärung oder durch einen Brief des Schatzamtes.
- 5.) Der Nachweis Ihres Buerger ueber seine privaten Vermaegenwerte ist nicht ausreichend. Ihr Buerger koennte wie folgt Beweise ueber seine Vermaegenwerte, soweit sie fluessig gemacht werden koennen, vorlegen.
  - a) eine eidesstattliche Erklärung des staetundigen Beamten seiner Bank ueber die Hohe seines Guthabens, worin auch angegeben wird, seit wann das Konto besteht und wann und wie die einzuehenden Zahlungen erfolgt sind.
  - b) eine Bestaetigung seiner Versicherungsgesellschaft ueber den gegenwaertigen Barwert seiner Versicherungspolizen.
  - c) eine eidesstattliche Erklärung einer Bank oder einer verantwortlichen Maklerfirma ueber sein Einkommen und den gegenwaertigen Marktwert seiner Wertpapiere.
  - d) Steuerquittungen neuesten Datums ueber seinen Grundbesitz ( Pacht, Miete) sowie glaubwuerdige Auskunft darueber, ob und in welcher Hohe der Grundbesitz belastet ist.

U.S. immigration visa application refusal letter clarifying what was needed to come to America and leave Austria (in German) (page 1 of 4)  
Appendix G1

1633-2898

6.) Es fehlen Einzelheiten Ihres Buergen über seine Vorkehrungen zu Ihrer Versorgung.

- a) Ihr Buerge sollte genau anführen, auf welche Weise er für Sie und Ihre Familie zu sorgen gedenkt; ob Sie bei ihm wohnen und von ihm verköstigt werden, wieviel er von seinem Einkommen ersparen und Ihnen zur Verfügung stellen kann.
- b) Da der Buerge gar nicht oder nur weitläufig mit Ihnen verwandt ist, soll er genau anführen, aus welchem Grunde er die Buergschaft für Sie übernimmt.
- c) Da der Buerge anscheinend bereits vorgerückten Alters ist, und das Gesetz vorschreibt, dass Ihr Lebensunterhalt für unbestimmte Zeit in gewissen Grenzen - sichergestellt sein muss, sollte Ihr Buerge angeben, welche Vorkehrungen er in dieser Hinsicht getroffen hat.

7.) Es ist nicht ersichtlich, in welchem Verwandtschaftsverhältniss Sie zu dem Buergen stehen.

8.) Ihr Buerge soll angeben, für wieviele Personen er derzeit zu sorgen hat.

9.) Ihr Buerge soll angeben, ob er bereits für andere Personen Affidavits ausgestellt hat. Wenn ja, soll er die Namen und Adressen derselben angeben und genau mitteilen, wie er für sie sorgt, bzw. zu sorgen gedenkt.

10.) ..... soll dem Affidavit beitreten und Beweismaterial über Einkommen, Vermögen etc. beibringen.

11.) Wenn Sie allein in die Vereinigten Staaten einwandern wollen, so ist die ausdrückliche Zustimmung Ihres Buergen unerlässlich.

12.) Wenn Sie allein nach den Vereinigten Staaten auswandern wollen, benötigen Sie hierzu eine notariell beglaubigte Zustimmung Ihrer Eltern. (Ihres Gatten.)

13.) Die Buergschaft bezieht sich nicht auf.....

14.) Es wird empfohlen, ein weiteres Affidavit eines anderen Buergen beizubringen. Alle Angaben, die in einem Affidavit gemacht werden, müssen durch Belege bewiesen werden.

15.) Nachweis über die rechtmässige Einwanderung: Um seine rechtmässige Einwanderung in die vereinigten Staaten nachzuweisen, sollte Ihr drüben lebender Gatte ( Vater ) das Formular 576 ausfüllen und dem Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. zwecks Bestätigung an dieses Generalkonsulat einsenden.

16.) Verwandtschaftsgesuch: ( Relative Position, Formular 633.) Ihr Angehöriger ( Vater, Mutter, Ehemann, Ehefrau, Sohn, Tochter ), der volljährige amerikanischer Staatsbürger sein muss, sollte vor einem amerikanischen Notar oder - im Ausland - vor einem amerikanischen Konsul ein Verwandtschaftsgesuch auf Formular 633 ausfüllen und dem Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. zwecks Prüfung und Genehmigung übersenden. Sobald das genehmigte Gesuch beim Generalkonsulat eintrifft, gehören Sie zur bevorzugten Klasse der Einwanderer und werden sofort benachrichtigt werden.

Nach Einlangen zusätzlicher Unterlagen, wie oben spezifiziert, wird Ihre Visumbewerbung nochmals zeitgerecht überprüft werden. Uenzen sind zwecklos. Es wird aber ausdrücklich darauf aufmerksam gemacht, dass die Beibringung von Dokumenten, auch zusätzlichen, noch nicht bedeutet, dass Sie für eine Visum qualifizieren können.

Wichtig: Es ist zwecklos, einzelne der oben angeführten Beweise einzusenden; dieselben sollen alle gleichzeitig übermittelt werden.

Das Amerikanische Generalkonsulat  
Wien.

Der Buerge Andrews soll sein Alter angeben. Rundstempel.

K.S.

Appendix G2 (page 2 of 4)

{1699-2390}

Name: Leo Bak  
Date: 31.10.1940

Nr. 1

In reference to your application for an immigration Visa to the US we want to draw your attention on your guarantee papers (especially pay attention to those points which are marked with a color-pencil).

ALL DOCUMENTS YOU STILL HAVE TO HAND IN MUST CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING: NAME, LAST NAME, ADDRESS, DATE OF BIRTH, PLACE AND COUNTRY FROM EVERY VISA APPLICANTS

1.) The guarantee.....is to weak.

You can try to get another Affidavit from another guarantor and send it in.

2.) All papers of proof about your guarantor are missing, pay attention to 4.) and 5.).

3.) Further documents arrived, but not the Affidavit.

4.) The proof of your guarantor's net income is not sufficient. Your guarantor could lay out the following proofs for his income.

a) If he is an employee, a sworn statement from his employer, in which he states his income, since when he is employed in his company and if his position will be available for a long time.

b) if the guarantor is self-employed, a statement from a sworn book expert. In this statement the private income and the assets must be clearly visible.

c) he can also proof his income through a sworn book expert or through a certified document from a finance clerk (photocopy) from the last version of his last year's income tax return or through a letter from the Ministry of Finance. (1939)

5.) The proof from your guarantor over his financial assets is not sufficient. Your guarantor could lay out the following proofs about his financial assets, in case they can monetized.

a) a sworn statement from his bank-clerk in which is stated how much money he has on his bank account, since when the bank account exists and when and how the different withdrawals and incomes were made.

b) a confirmation from his insurance company about the present value of his insurance policies.

c) a sworn statement from a bank or a certified broker company about his income and an up-to-date market value of his shares.

d) up-to-date tax confirmation of his land-properties (lease, rental) and a sworn information if his land-properties have a loan on them and if yes, how much it is.

{1699-

English translation by Dr. Jasmin Freyer

(Note: guarantor is the sponsor)

Appendix G3 (page 3 of 4)

- 6.) There are missing details from your guarantor about his precautions concerning your care.
  - a) Your guarantor should describe exactly how he can care for you ~~and for your family~~; if you can live with him and if he can feed you, how much money he can give you from his savings.
  - b) since your guarantor is far-away family or not at all family, he must state the exact reasons why he want to be your sponsor.
  - c) Since your guarantor is advanced in age, and the law states that your livelihood must be secured for an uncertain time under certain conditions - your guarantor must explain which precautions he has taken.
- 7.) It is not obvious, how you are related to your guarantor.
- 8.) Your guarantor must state, for how many persons he is currently in charge.
- 9.) Your guarantor must state\*, if he has already given to other persons Affidavits. If yes, then he must state their names and addresses and explain how he takes care of them. \*exactly
- 10.).....must sign the Affidavit and show proof of his income, his assets, aso.
- 11.) If you want to immigrate alone to the US, you must get the absolute approval of your guarantor.
- 12.) If you want to immigrate alone to the US, you must get a certified approval of your Parents. (from your spouse).
- 13.) The guarantee does not relate to.....
- 14.) It is recommended to get another Affidavit from another guarantor. All statements in an Affidavit must be proven through documents.
- 15.) Validation of a lawful immigration: In order to proof a lawful immigration to the US, your oversea living spouse (Father) must fill out the Formular 575 and send it to the Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. and the confirmation must be sent to this Consulate-General.
- 16.) Family request: (Relative Position, Formular 633.)  
Your relative (Father, Mother, Spouse, Son, Daughter), who must be of legal age and American Citizen, should go to an American notar or- in a foreign country- to an American Consulate and ask for a Family Request by filling out the Formular 633 and send it to the Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. for examination and approval. When the approved request arrives to the Consulate-General you will belong to the preferred class of immigrants and you will be notified immediatly.

After arrival of the additionally asked documents, as aboved described, your demand for a Visa will be rechecked in time. Prompting is useless. It is clearly stated, even though additional documents will be added, this does not mean you will qualify for a Visa.

Important: It is useless to send in sole documents of the above proofs: all documents must be send in together.

The American Consulate-General  
Vienna.

The guarantor Andrews must state his age.

Round Stamp.

{K.A.}

English translation by Dr. Jasmin Freyer  
(Note: guarantor is the sponsor)  
Appendix G4 (page 4 of 4)



THE CITY OF NEW YORK - OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
MARRIAGE LICENSE BUREAU, MANHATTAN

THIS IS TO CERTIFY, that a search has been made of the RECORDS  
OF MARRIAGE LICENSES in this office for the year(s) 1946

Groom: <u>E. Rapp</u>	License Number <u>3434 146</u>
Bride: <u>H. Lehren</u>	Type Copy: <u>D</u> How Many: <u>1</u>
Search Fee \$ <u>5.00</u> Copy Fee \$ <u>5.00</u>	City Clerk, Staff Member <u>RAC</u>
Total Fee Paid \$ <u>10.00</u>	Today's Date <u>Feb 2 1946</u>

Receipt N<sup>o</sup> 14686

( ) No Record Found this Borough

*(Title of the Marriage License under act of the City of New York and the State of New York)*

I, Joseph Gelachman RABBI  
(Title of person performing ceremony)  
residing at 142 Longfellow Ave. Bronx, N.Y.  
in the county of Bronx and State of New York, do hereby certify that I did on this  
2nd day of February in the year A. D. 1946 at 7 P. M. at Hotel Ritz-Carlton  
in the county of Manhattan and State of New York, solemnize the rites of matrimony between  
Israel David Rapp  
of 1646 Wake Ave. in the county of Bronx and State of New York, and  
Herta Sylvia Lehren  
of 89 Convent St. in the county of Manhattan and State of New York to the  
persons of HERMAN H. Siegel and Mrs. ANN Siegel  
(First Names)  
as witnesses and the license therefor is hereby granted.  
Witness my hand at 127 East 84th St. in the county of Manhattan  
on the 2nd day of February, 1946 A. D. 1946.  
In presence of Rudolph Goldfarbman  
Herman H. Siegel (Signature of Witness) Herbert R. Siegel (Signature of Person Performing Ceremony)  
Residence: 410 Ave. L. Bklyn Residence: 142 Longfellow Ave. Br. Co. N.Y.  
Ursula R. Siegel (Signature of Witness)  
Residence: 410 Ave. L. Bklyn

My parent's marriage license February 2, 1946  
Appendix H



My parents in front of CTA Towers Miami  
(This is an example of a HUD apartment building for  
low income seniors that my father designed)

Appendix I



My mother's tapestry, 'Jerusalem'



My mother's tapestry, 'North Carolina Woods'

## Appendix J