

Sidney Goldman War Letters

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Finding aid written in english

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

University Archives and Special Collections

Pollak Library South
800 N. State College Blvd.
Fullerton, , CA 92831-3599

uasc@fullerton.libanswers.com

<http://www.library.fullerton.edu/services/special-collections.php>

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Summary Information

Repository: University Archives and Special Collections

Title: Sidney Goldman War Letters

Identifier: SC-2018-08

Date: 1945 - 1946

Physical Description: 3 boxes

Biographical / Historical

Sidney Goldman was born April 12, 1912 in Chicago, Illinois at home. He was the fourth of five children of Rose Mesigal Goldman and Abraham Goldman, and the second son. When he went to grammar school he was asked if he was the brother of Minnie and Frieda. When he said yes, they expected him to be a good student. When they learned he was the brother of Irving, they groaned.

His younger sister Shirley was born in 1916, while Sid had the measles. The doctors sent him to the Con-tagious Disease hospital. He always spoke of his mother coming to visit through a snowstorm and of the cruel woman who ran the children's ward.

Sid played basketball with the Catholic boys in the neighborhood. They had to go to Mass before playing, and Sid went with them. Because he was Jewish, the priest, Father Toomey, was concerned. He came to the family's grocery to speak with Sid's father and assure him they were not trying to convert his son. He entered high school but in his first year he was assigned a book report. Sid didn't like the subject of the book and asked for a different one. His request was refused, so he left school.

Afterwards, he helped out in his father's grocery. He tried to get his father to price items ending in \$.99 and to put paper on the scale in order to encourage more business. His father told him he was a hoodlum and would end up in jail.

He met his future wife, Lillian Weinberg, at a picnic sitting in the shade under a wagon. They dated until her family decided to return to the Boston area in about 1929 where they had family and better prospects for work in the depression. They married so as not to be separated and stayed in Chicago. Sid and Lil moved in with his parents and all pooled their money to make ends meet. Sidney ran numbers and worked in a gambling establishment. He started worked as a jewelry salesman near State Street in Chicago. Eventually he opened a tire retread shop near Riverview, a famous amusement park, with an uncle.

After 7 years of marriage and some fertility treatments, their daughter, Rhoda Thalia was born in 1939. Things went well until a Pearl Harbor. Sidney was told by friends that he could avoid the draft by work-ing in a draft-exempt job. He did not want that and enlisted about 1943. Lil and Rhoda went to Revere, MA where they lived with Lil's mother and visited with Sid when he was on leave.

Sid soon found he didn't like the army, though when his IQ was tested, the army tried to make a clerk typist of him. He fought it, insisting he was a tire man and more useful to the war effort in that capacity. By then known as "Curly", because of his bald head, he made several life long friends in his unit. He first served in Great Britain, and later in France. He was in Marseille and Metz. He met a Jewish family who he helped as he could. They remained friends all his life. He spoke with them in a mixture of English, Yiddish and French

which he picked up quickly. He also had a difficult time with his Sergeant Murphy. Sidney was too old and too independent to take orders easily. He would trade with other units for food and supplies, run card games, commandeer a Jeep for a trip to meet his brother-in-law, help the aforementioned family, etc. The sergeant would often retaliate. After one caper he was sent to a camp for prisoners. They asked for anyone who spoke German. He raised his hand. He spoke to the prisoners in Yiddish which is mostly German. The prisoners obeyed him as they recognized he was Jewish and feared him. His unit followed General Patton's army behind the lines, repairing tires for their forward movement. When the war was over, troops were being moved from Europe to Japan to help with the occupation and reconstruction. Sidney was on one of the last boats to go to Japan. They left Europe, going through the Panama Canal. During this transit Sidney made friends with the radio operator. He listened on the radio to evening baseball games. Armed Forces radio would re-broadcast the games the next afternoon, and with fore-knowledge, he ran a betting pool. He sent home enough money to buy a fur coat for Lillian. The ship stopped in the Philippines and went on to Yokohama, Japan. Sidney set up a tire repair shop and taught local Japanese how to use the machines. He really liked the people and the country but he was ready to come home, as were most of the soldiers. There was a point system in place that determined when that would happen. Then Congress changed the point system, making soldiers stay longer. The soldiers were furious and against all orders put on a demonstration in front of the general's office. Sidney borrowed a Jeep to go and see what was happening. Things were getting out of control when a lieutenant started to get up on the Jeep to try to quiet things down. Sidney suggested he not do so as he could be hurt. Sidney got up instead. He told the crowd they had made their point. He suggested they look around at the MPs ringing the crowd and return to base before anyone was hurt. The crowd slowly dispersed. Reporters were interviewing him. He asked if anyone was from a Chicago paper. Unfortunately the answer was no. The family could never find an article about it.

The next day there was a call from the general's office for Sidney, asking him to report there. He was understandably nervous. He had to be in his finest uniform. One friend loaned him a shirt, another pressed his pants, and all spruced him up for this meeting. He arrived at the office and the adjutant informed him how to enter, stand and salute. When he was sent in, he did as asked. The general asked if he was the soldier who dispersed the crowd. He answered affirmatively. The general told him he had seen the whole incident and was very pleased. He told Sidney if he ever needed help to contact his adjutant. Sidney was dismissed.

Some time later Sidney's father became very ill, and Sid wanted to get home to help his mother and family. He spoke with the chaplain and the Red Cross to no avail. He called the adjutant who arranged to get him on a boat to the states. He asked for a plane ride but was told he would probably be bumped in Guam and not get out. He took the boat, then a train from the west coast and arrived in Chicago. He, his wife and daughter found a tiny apartment in the same building as his parents. He helped his mother wash and move his father. He shaved him and cared for him in every way. When his father entered the hospital and the doctors said they must amputate his leg to save his life, Sidney was the one to decide, as his siblings were concerned their father would be angry because Jewish law didn't approve. His father was upset but forgave him before he passed away.

Sidney went back into the tire business with his brother, Irving. He and Lil saved and bought a home. Their daughter married, moved to California, returned and presented them with a granddaughter. After his father's death, his mother lived with them. He and Irving disbanded their business. Sidney worked with his wife in her dress shop, Lil's Sample Shop, as bookkeeper and as a bookie on the side. Later he went into business with Irv's son-in-law and hired his own son-in-law. By now he was the grandparent of three granddaughters. When this business closed, Sidney went to work at Carter Brother's Jewelers on State Street in Chicago, then retired. When Lillian became ill with breast cancer, they moved to the San Fernando valley in CA. They moved to Orange County to be near their daughter and son-in-law's family. They settled in Leisure World. Lillian died and Sidney met Sylvia. They spent about 16 years together traveling in the U.S. and abroad. Both families bonded and enjoyed each other. Sidney had a series of TIAs. Sylvia had cancer of the esophagus and died in May 2008. Sidney had a stroke in October and died peacefully at 96

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Controlled Access Headings

Collection Inventory

1944 letters	Document box 1 (Text)
Biographical and collection information	Document box 1; Folder 1 (Text)
January to May 1944	Document box 1; Folder 2 (Text)
June 1944	Document box 1; Folder 3 (Text)
July 1944	Document box 1; Folder 4 (Text)
August 1944	Document box 1; Folder 5 (Text)
September 1944	Document box 1; Folder 6 (Text)
October 1944	Document box 1; Folder 7 (Text)
November 1944	Document box 1; Folder 8 (Text)

December 1944

Document box 1; Folder 9 (Text)

1945 letters

Document box 2 (Text)

January 1945

Document box 2; Folder 1 (Text)

February 1945

Document box 2; Folder 2 (Text)

March 1945

Document box 2; Folder 3 (Text)

April 1945

Document box 2; Folder 4 (Text)

May 1945

Document box 2; Folder 5 (Text)

June 1945

Document box 2; Folder 6 (Text)

July 1945

Document box 2; Folder 7 (Text)

August 1945

Document box 2; Folder 8 (Text)

September 1945

Document box 2; Folder 9 (Text)

October 1945

Document box 2; Folder 10 (Text)

November 1945

Document box 2; Folder 11 (Text)

December 1945

Document box 2; Folder 12 (Text)

1946 letters and war memorabilia

Document box 3 (Text)

January 1946

Document box 3; Folder 1 (Text)

European theater memorabilia

Document box 3; Folder 2 (Text)

General

Currency, stamps, uniform epaulet, etc.

Pacific theater memorabilia

Document box 3; Folder 3 (Text)

General

Includes postage, photographs, a Christmas card, etc.

Maps

Document box 3; Folder 4 (Text)

General

Includes strike map of Manila, Phillippines. Includes folded map highlighting the Theater of War in Europe, Africa, and Western Asia during WWII.

Newspaper clippings and cartoons, 1945 - 1946

Document box 3; Folder 5 (Text)

General

Includes "hashmarks" comics.

Oral histories, 1981 - 2007

Cassette box 4 (Audio - cassette)

General

One (1) cd-r. Twelve (12) cassette tapes. Most tapes do not have dates.