



## University Libraries Special Collections & University Archives

### Leopold Sekeles Papers

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#### Collection Summary

<b>Title:</b>	Leopold Sekeles Papers
<b>Call Number:</b>	MS 93-05
<b>Size:</b>	6.5 linear feet
<b>Acquisition:</b>	Gift of Dorothy Grafly
<b>Processed By:</b>	JLT, 12-8-1992; Reprocessed by JEF: 11-3-1998; MN, 10-2008
<b>Note:</b>	Related collections: MS 90-02, Charles Grafly Papers; MS 93-04, Dorothy Grafly Papers
<b>Restrictions:</b>	None

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#### Literary Rights

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#### Restrictions

None

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#### Content Note

The Leopold Sekeles collection contains numerous business and personal correspondences and receipts, between Sekeles and a variety of people. Materials in the collection cover a large time span from the 1860s through the 1930s. Business correspondences and dividend announcements from a plethora of companies are included in the collection. Much of life during this time period is presented in the observations of people who wrote to the man. The most poignant letters to the couple come from his children, Frances and Frank. Frank wrote letters from several locations across the United States where he was engaged in taking "the cure" for his ailments. Frances's letters are written from numerous cities including Paris, where she and her husband Charles Grafly were living in an artistic endeavor. There is also a series of letters in the collection from numerous extended family members, primarily nieces and nephews to the couple. The collection is arranged topically then chronologically.

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#### Biography

Leopold Sekeles was born in Waldorf, Baden, Germany on 23 November 1830 and died at Folly Cove, Massachusetts on 23 September 1912. His wife, Philomina Hirsh Sekeles was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, 16 October 1844 and died at Folly Cove, Massachusetts, 12 September 1922. As a young man, Sekeles immigrated to the United States and took up residence in Oxford, Mississippi. During the American Civil War, Sekeles was registered as a loyal confederate soldier. After the war the couple were married and established their home in Corinth, Mississippi. While in Corinth, Sekeles was a partner in the mercantile business of Sekeles and Rubel with partner and relative Abe Rubel. Sekeles also served as president of a bank in Corinth.

The Sekeles's had four children in Mississippi, but only one survived to adulthood; their daughter Frances. Samuel was born in 1866 and died in 1867. Bernard Lee was born in 1871 and died in 1875. Frank, the couple's third son survived the longest and died after a long and complicated battle with rheumatism at the age of 19. He was born in 1869. Sometime in the late 1800s, the couple and daughter moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where they remained until their respective deaths. Leopold had diversified his financial portfolio extensively and lived quite well off of his investments and stock dividends. Leopold, Philomina and son Frank's bodies were buried at the Congregation Adath Jeshurun Cemetery in Frankford, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In 1926, all three bodies were disinterred from the cemetery and were reinterred at Congregation Children of Israel Cemetery in Memphis, Tennessee.

Sekeles was the father-in-law of American sculptor Charles Grafly through the marriage of his daughter, Frances Sekeles, to Grafly. The Graflys had one daughter, Dorothea Grafly, born in Paris.

Sekeles was quite generous to both his family and to non-profit religious and charitable organizations and the collection contains much documentation on this. What is available from the documentation is that Sekeles was a kind and generous man who respected the value of a dollar and believed in the traditions of his religious and cultural heritage.

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## Detailed Description: Series Listing

<a href="#">Series 1</a>	Box 1-Box 7	Personal Correspondence to Leopold Sekeles. Topically and chronologically arranged, this series includes letters from Sekeles' daughter and son and several nieces and nephews. Other correspondence is from family friends and other friends from his days in Corinth, Mississippi.
<a href="#">Series 1.1</a>	Box 1-Box 2	Personal Correspondence from Daughter Frances Sekeles Grafly.
<a href="#">Series 1.2</a>	Box 3	Personal Correspondence from Son Frank Sekeles and Others.
<a href="#">Series 1.3</a>	Box 4-Box 5	Personal and Business Correspondence from Mr. Strauss.
<a href="#">Series 1.4</a>	Box 6	Personal Letters to Sekeles and His Family.
<a href="#">Series 1.5</a>	Box 7	Leopold Sekeles' Correspondence in German and Yiddish.
<a href="#">Series 2</a>	Box 8-Box 10	Business Correspondence and Receipts to Leopold Sekeles. Materials from a variety of individuals and institutions. Topically and chronologically arranged. A long series of letters from partner and friend Abe Rubel is included.
<a href="#">Series 3</a>	Box 11-Box 14	Various Materials from Leopold and Philomena Sekeles Estates.
<a href="#">Series 3.1</a>	Box 11 FF 1-4	Legal and Other Business Related Documents.

<a href="#">Series 3.2</a>	Box 11 FF 5	Newspaper Articles Regarding William Goldsmith.
<a href="#">Series 3.3</a>	Box 11 FF 6	Correspondence.
<a href="#">Series 3.4</a>	Box 11 FF 7-8	Materials Regarding the Deaths of Leopold and Philomena Sekeles.
<a href="#">Series 3.5</a>	Box 12	Encapsulated Documents.
<a href="#">Series 3.6</a>	Box 13	Ledger Books.
<a href="#">Series 3.7</a>	Box 14	Items Related to Sekeles and Rubel. Includes artifacts from Sekeles and Rubel, a mercantile in Corinth, Mississippi.

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## Detailed Description: Box and Folder Listing

### Series 1 – Personal Correspondence to Leopold Sekeles

#### Series 1.1 – Personal Correspondence from Daughter Frances Sekeles Grafly

Box 1	FF 1	Correspondence, 1889-1890. Letters written from Corinth, Mississippi; Memphis; Knoxville; Chattanooga; Still Pond, Maryland.
Box 1	FF 2	Correspondence, 1891. Letters written from Still Pond, Maryland; Paris; Switzerland. Charles Grafly is mentioned.
Box 1	FF 3	Correspondence, 7 August to 19 August 1892. Letters written from Still Pond, Maryland. Charles Grafly is mentioned.
Box 1	FF 4	Correspondence, 1 July to October 1893. Letters written from Still Pond, Maryland and other locations. Relationship with Grafly progressing.
Box 1	FF 5	Correspondence, 30 May to 31 August 1894. Letters written from Hotel Bay Head in New Jersey and Thornhurst, Pennsylvania. Comments on death of brother Frank.
Box 1	FF 6	Correspondence, 3 January to 29 December 1895. Letters written from Paris. She and Grafly are living there in artistic climate.
Box 1	FF 7	Correspondence, 6 January to 27 April 1896. Letters written from Paris. Tours Paris and the catacombs. Grafly working on Griffith memorial.
Box 1	FF 8	Correspondence, 4 May to 16 September 1896. Letters written from Paris. She and Grafly have baby daughter, Dorothea, around 8 August 1896.
Box 2	FF 1	Correspondence, 14 July to 4 November 1897. Letters written from Island Heights, New Jersey.
Box 2	FF 2	Correspondence, 15-30 September 1898. Letters written from Island Heights, New Jersey.
Box 2	FF 3	Correspondence, 26-29 September 1899. Letters written from Island Heights, New Jersey.

Box 2	FF 4	Correspondence, 17-29 September 1900. Letters written from Island Heights, New Jersey.
Box 2	FF 5	Correspondence, 2-29 September 1901. Letters written from Island Heights, New Jersey. Much information about Dorothy's growth.
Box 2	FF 6	Correspondence, 22 May to 2 October 1902. Letters written from Boston and Salem, Massachusetts.
Box 2	FF 7	Correspondence, 15 September to 1 October 1903. Letters written from Folly Cove, Massachusetts.
Box 2	FF 8	Correspondence, 13 September to 8 October 1904. Letters written from Folly Cove, Massachusetts and Corinth, Mississippi. Discusses exposition in St. Louis.
Box 2	FF 9	Correspondence, 20 September to 8 October 1905. Letters written from Folly Cove, Massachusetts, some from granddaughter Dorothy.
Box 2	FF 10	Correspondence, 1915 and 1916. Postcards from Wellesley College where Dorothy is a student. Letters to Philomena about visiting Dorothy at Wellesley.

### **Series 1.2 – Personal Correspondence from Son Frank Sekeles and Others**

Box 3	FF 1	Correspondence, 1883 to 27 June 1888. Letters primarily written from Hot Springs, Arkansas where he taking "the cure" for rheumatism in his legs. Comments on Wichita and its 40,000 population. Letters from Herman Rothschild, cousin, requesting peace between the two.
Box 3	FF 2	Correspondence, 4 October 1881 to 26 October 1896. Letters regarding Herman Rothschild's health.
Box 3	FF 3	Correspondence, 10 December 1903 to 7 September 1904. Letters from niece Willa Hirsh in Dayton, Ohio.
Box 3	FF 4	Correspondence, 3 December 1903 to 6 September 1904. Letters from niece Jenny Brenner in San Francisco.
Box 3	FF 5	Correspondence, 7 September 1885 to 28 February 1895. Letters from Net Lederer, friend of daughter Frances.
Box 3	FF 6	Correspondence, 27 September 1892 to 5 December 1897. Letters from Mary Stokes, family friend. Comments on the birth of Dorothea.
Box 3	FF 7	Correspondence, 13 July 1888 to 6 January 1893. Letters from Gene, family friend in Corinth. Discusses death of Frank.
Box 3	FF 8	Correspondence, 23 March 1902 to 5 September 1904. Letters from Wichita and St. Louis by three writers: Frances and Belle, nieces, and Joe, nephew. Frances and Belle live in Wichita and Joe travels there from St. Louis. Discuss health and weather in Wichita as well as the boom of the area, an epidemic of measles, orchestra work, and the fact there are no religious services for Jewish people because there is no resident rabbi.

### **Series 1.3 – Personal and Business Correspondence from Mr. Strauss**

Box 4	FF 1	Correspondence, 27 August 1886 to 4 August 1888. Strauss was a family friend who also provided business support. He had connections with the Guarantee Trust Co., and handled deposits for Leopold, Philomena and Frances. He assisted Frances with business transactions through 1939.
Box 4	FF 2	Correspondence, 20 May 1889 to 4 August 1891.
Box 4	FF 3	Correspondence, 18 June 1894 to 3 September 1897.
Box 4	FF 4	Correspondence, 23 February to 10 September 1898.
Box 4	FF 5	Correspondence, 8 June to 25 September 1899.
Box 5	FF 1	Correspondence, 14 February 1900 to 29 August 1901.
Box 5	FF 2	Correspondence, 11 June to 11 September 1902.
Box 5	FF 3	Correspondence, 17 June 1903 to 7 September 1904.
Box 5	FF 4	Correspondence, 29 May 1905 to 18 September 1906.
Box 5	FF 5	Correspondence, 2 June 1907 to 20 September 1909.
Box 5	FF 6	Correspondence, 3 June 1910 to 7 September 1911.
Box 5	FF 7	Correspondence, 25 October 1917 to 31 May 1939.

### **Series 1.4 – Personal Letters to Sekeles and his Family**

Box 6	FF 1	Invitations, 19 September 1883 to 23 November 1904.
Box 6	FF 2	Correspondence from S & M Davidson and Co., 7 September 1872 to 24 March 1883.
Box 6	FF 3	Correspondence from Mary Price, 10 February to 4 March 1896.
Box 6	FF 4	Correspondence from Sue Jump, 15 March to 10 September 1896.
Box 6	FF 5	Correspondence from "Nell," family friend, 17 July 1895 to September 1896.
Box 6	FF 6	Correspondence from L. M. Taylor, family friend, 16 March 1884 to 29 December 1888.
Box 6	FF 7	Correspondence from J. M. Crumby, friend of Leopold, 10 December 1891 to 19 May 1893.
Box 6	FF 8	Correspondence.
Box 6	FF 9	Correspondence from Freida Rubel, 14 April to 7 September 1896.
Box 6	FF 10	Correspondence from Hirsh family members, 15 April 1875 to 7 July 1903.

Box 6	FF 11	Postcards, 26 December 1876 to 13 August 1913.
Box 6	FF 12	Correspondence, 11 December 1870 to 14 April 1906.

### **Series 1.5 – Leopold Sekeles’ Correspondence in German and Yiddish**

Box 7	FF 1	Correspondence, 14 February 1871 to 10 August 1890.
Box 7	FF 2	Correspondence, 15 April 1891 to 5 October 1894.
Box 7	FF 3	Correspondence, 3 February 1895 to 5 October 1898.
Box 7	FF 4	Correspondence, 6 February 1899 to 23 June 1904. Letters and receipts from Sekeles’ contributions to religious and other organizations.
Box 7	FF 5	Hospitals, including Jewish Hospital, Mount Sinai Hospital, the National Jewish Hospital for Consumptives; 10 November 1893 to 30 March 1904.
Box 7	FF 6	Jewish Publication Society of American, 26 April 1904 to 29 May 1906.
Box 7	FF 7	Society of the United Hebrew Charities, 8 October 1889 to 7 October 1897.
Box 7	FF 8	Congregation Adath Jeshurun, 8 September 1889 to 31 August 1890.
Box 7	FF 9	Foster homes and orphanages, January 1891 to December 1905.
Box 7	FF 10	Jewish Chautauqua Society, 19 February 1898 to July 1899.
Box 7	FF 11	Congregation Children of Israel, May 1895 to 11 May 1898.
Box 7	FF 12	Reform Congregational Kenneseth Israel, March 1891 to 21 September 1899 and 2 March 1903 to September 1906.
Box 7	FF 13	Miscellaneous receipts for contributions, 5 November 1883 to 1 May 1905; postcards from Oscar Klonower, 1 February 1895 to 18 February 1896; invitations and literature, November 1903 to 28 November 1905.
Box 7	FF 14	Miscellaneous letters and literature, October 1895 to 22 May 1899.

### **Series 2 – Business Correspondence and Receipts to Leopold Sekeles**

Box 8	FF 1	Correspondence, Memphis Trust Co., June to 23 August 1905.
Box 8	FF 2	Correspondence, Harry Hochstadter, 7 January 1893 to 15 May 1903.
Box 8	FF 3	Correspondence, New York Life Insurance Co., 24 February 1891 to 4 March 1904.
Box 8	FF 4	Correspondence, Mutual Life Insurance Co. of New York, 1863 to 25 May 1906.
Box 8	FF 5	Correspondence, Memphis National Bank, 13 January 1890 to 23 August 1905.

Box 8	FF 6	Correspondence, Manhattan Savings Bank and Trust Co., 18 September 1895 to 23 February 1898.
Box 8	FF 7	Correspondence, German Bank of Memphis, 15 February 1887 to 22 December 1899.
Box 8	FF 8	Correspondence, Keystone Watch Case Co., 29 June 1899 to 1 August 1906.
Box 8	FF 9	Correspondence, Pennsylvania Railroad Co., 20 March 1897 to 29 May 1906.
Box 8	FF 10	Correspondence, Franklin National Bank, 12 December 1900 to 20 April 1901.
Box 8	FF 11	Correspondence, Continental National Bank of St. Louis, 10 May 1889 to 24 May 1902.
Box 8	FF 12	Correspondence, Warwick Iron and Steel Co., 9 November 1900 to 9 June 1906.
Box 8	FF 13	Correspondence, Catawissa Railroad Co., 2 December 1895 to 19 May 1906.
Box 9	FF 1	Miscellaneous stock and bank information, 16 September 1884 to 3 August 1906.
Box 9	FF 2	Correspondence, W. T. Adams Co., 2-10 March 1892.
Box 9	FF 3	Medical business, 1 April 1881 to 1 January 1917.
Box 9	FF 4	Correspondence; Mitchell, Fletcher and Co.; 14 October 1899 to 26 May 1904.
Box 9	FF 5	Legal information, 29 November 1887 to 11 June 1902.
Box 9	FF 6	Taxes and treasury information, 31 January 1884 to 26 December 1889.
Box 9	FF 7	Correspondence, Dick Brothers, 19 May to 30 June 1898.
Box 9	FF 8	Miscellaneous business receipts, 28 January 1876 to 3 January 1924.
Box 9	FF 9	Miscellaneous business correspondence, 11 April 1875 to 23 June 1912.
Box 9	FF 10	Miscellaneous banking transactions, Guarantee Trust and Sage Deposit Co., 30 June 1896 to 4 August 1921.
Box 9	FF 11	Miscellaneous items, Bank of Commerce, 10 January 1890 to 4 July 1896.
Box 9	FF 12	Miscellaneous items, National Bank of Commerce in Memphis, 12 February 1897 to 11 July 1905.
Box 10	FF 1	Correspondence, J. Rubel and Co., 25 February to 24 March 1884.
Box 10	FF 2	Correspondence, Charles Meyer, 23 December 1884 to 9 December 1888.

Box 10	FF 3	Correspondence, E. Rubel and Co., 18 June 1887 to 25 July 1898.
Box 10	FF 4	Correspondence, B. Lowenstein and Bros., 15 August 1888 to 29 May 1890.
Box 10	FF 5	Correspondence, United States Attorney's Office, 21 November 1888 to 26 February 1889.
Box 10	FF 6	Correspondence, Abe Rubel and also Abe Rubel and Co., 30 August 1882 to 6 January 1906.
Box 10	FF 7	Correspondence, miscellaneous, 1884-1892.
Box 10	FF 8	Miscellaneous items, Guarantee Trust and Safe Deposit Co., 1896-1921.
Box 10	FF 9	Correspondence, H. Gronauer, 1897-1900.

### **Series 3 – Various Materials from Leopold and Philomena Sekeles Estates**

#### **Series 3.1 – Legal and Other Business-Related Documents**

Box 11	FF 1	Legal documents.
Box 11	FF 2	Foreign travel documents.
Box 11	FF 3	Documents with Fan Grafly acting as power of attorney concerning Knights of Pythias correspondence.
Box 11	FF 4	Documents from Guarantee Trust and Safe Deposit Co. after death of Leopold Sekeles.

#### **Series 3.2 – Newspaper Articles Regarding William Goldsmith**

Box 11	FF 5	Newspapers articles on the death of William Goldsmith.
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#### **Series 3.3 – Correspondence**

Box 11	FF 6	Correspondence and other documents written by Leopold Sekeles to various recipients, 19 March 1884 to 9 September 1900.
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#### **Series 3.4 – Materials Regarding the Deaths of Leopold and Philomena Sekeles**

Box 11	FF 7	Information regarding deaths of Leopold and Philomena Sekeles and their reinterment in Memphis. Documents and financial data about bronze memorial markers which son-in-law Charles Grafly designed. Obituary for Philomena Sekeles included.
Box 11	FF 8	Continuation of FF 7.

#### **Series 3.5 – Encapsulated Documents**



Box 12

Encapsulated documents: Confederate States of America, District of Mississippi; Congregation of the Children of Israel; Stanley and Co., funeral directors and embalmers; and Thos. Maydwell marble markers.

### **Series 3.6 – Ledger Books**

Box 13

Ledger books: Ledger pages from Sekeles and Rubel's store, Corinth, Mississippi; Ledger books, bound, with personal finances of Sekeles; and Letter-copying book, Sekeles' handwriting.

### **Series 3.7 – Items Related to Sekeles and Rubel**

Box 14

Items related to Sekeles and Rubel business in Corinth, Mississippi, including small letter books and artifacts.

For information, please contact us at:

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