

HERMAN NEUDORF PAPERS, 1912-1949
1994.83.2

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: Herman Neudorf papers

Dates: 1912-1949

Accession number: 1994.83.2

Creator: Neudorf, Herman, 1925-

Extent: 27 folders

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

Abstract: The Herman Neudorf papers contain the papers of Herman Neudorf, a former concentration camp prisoner and Holocaust survivor. Documents include papers related to his internment at Kaiserwald and Buchenwald including identification cards and personal testimony. Other documents include identification and passes collected while he was a refugee after liberation, and numerous documents pertaining to his emigration to Paris and later Colombia. Also included are various items relating to relatives including death and marriage certificates.

Languages: English, German, Spanish

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: Herman Neudorf papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The Herman Neudorf papers were donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum as a result of three separate donations made by Herman Neudorf in 1994 and 1995.

These three donations were given separate accession numbers: 1994.83, 1995.112, and 1995.A.0274. These accessions have since been merged, and can be located under the accession number 1994.83.2.

Related archival materials: The USC Shoah Foundation houses an oral history interview given by Herman Neudorf.

Accruals: Accruals may have been received since this collection was first processed, see archives catalog at collections.ushmm.org for further information.

Processing history: Michael Folkerts, August 2015

Biographical note

Herman Neudorf (1925-) was born in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, to Simon and Frieda Naidorf. His family owned a clothing business, while Herman attended school amidst a growing sensation of anti-Semitism. He persevered, however, until he was taken from school in October, 1938 by the Gestapo and placed in jail with his parents. Soon after, the family was shipped to Poland with no possessions, and forced to live in the border town of Zybąszyn, while neither Poland nor Germany would allow admittance. After contacting relatives, they eventually lived with family in Łódź, while they attempted to acquire visas for immigration to the United States. Herman stayed with his aunt in Łódź, while his parents were able to return to Germany, in an attempt to sort out the liquidation of their business. Their hope was that they could emigrate by the time their business matters were finalized. This was not the case, however, and in September 1939, Simon was arrested and sent to Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

Frieda, living alone in Essen, requested her son return to live with her, and received permission. Herman moved back and lived with his mother in Essen, as they attempted to obtain visas to flee the country. In 1941, the family received an urn from the Gestapo containing the ashes of Simon. In 1942, Frieda and Herman were deported to Riga, Latvia, where they lived in the ghetto, while Herman worked in forced labor. They managed to survive the several rounds of mass executions, and were transferred in late 1943 to Kaiserwald concentration camp. Herman was separated from his mother at the camp, and was transported on a ship to Stutthof concentration camp before subsequently being sent to Buchenwald. Frieda was eventually killed at Kaiserwald.

Herman worked physical labor in a quarry while at Buchenwald through March 1945. As Allied forces approached the camp, Herman and hundreds of others were put on a prison train, which became disabled en route by Allied aircraft. The prisoners were taken off the train and forced on a death march. One evening, Herman and a few others snuck away from the march at night and were able to hide from their captors in a field, as the sounds of combat were only a few miles away. Herman and the others waited in the field until the American forces arrived. Following liberation, Herman was taken back to Buchenwald before returning to Gelsenkirchen and Essen to find family. He eventually went to Paris before immigrating to Colombia to live with his aunt and uncle. Herman moved to the United States in 1949, and changed his last name to Neudorf.

Scope and content of collection

The Herman Neudorf papers contains documents related to Herman Neudorf's imprisonment in concentration camps, and his subsequent liberation and immigration to Colombia. Items collected from the concentration camps include issues of Buchenwald News, prisoner cards, personal testimony of Herman's experience at Kaiserwald and liberation, poems handed out at Buchenwald, and a copy of the confession given by Heinrich Müller, commandant of Kaiserwald. The identification and passes series

contains various passes obtained by Herman after his liberation, such as military and motor vehicle passes. Other documents include police and military government registration. The "Immigration" series consists of primarily visas and transit passes to France and Colombia. Other documents include a certificate of residency, and documents verifying Herman Neudorf's residency with the British Search Bureau and Central Tracing Bureau. The "Relatives" series contains various items related to family members, including the marriage certificate of his uncle Robert Grünwald and aunt Rosie Michaelis-Jena, death certificates of his grandparents Herman and Sara Grünwald, and photographs of family members. The correspondence included in this series contains letters regarding the seizure of Herman's parents' business, and a letter sent to his uncle in Colombia, transcribed by a rabbi days after Herman was liberated.

System of arrangement

The Herman Neudorf papers are arranged as four series:

- Series 1: Concentration camps and liberation, 1941-1945
- Series 2: Identification and passes, 1945-1946
- Series 3: Immigration, 1946-1949
- Series 4: Relatives, 1912-1945

Indexing terms

Neudorf, Herman
Naidorf, Simon
Naidorf, Frieda
Grünwald, Herman
Grünwald, Sara
Grünwald, Robert
Grünwald, Rosie
Michaelis-Jena, Herman

Kaiserwald (Concentration camp)
Buchenwald (Concentration camp)
Stutthof (Concentration camp)
Sachsenhausen (Concentration camp)
Allied Forces—Supreme Headquarters

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)
Holocaust victims.
Concentration camps--Germany--History--20th century.
Jewish ghettos--Latvia--Rīga.
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Latvia.
Jewish refugees--Germany.
Jewish refugees--Colombia.

Germany--Emigration and immigration--History--20th century.
Rīga (Latvia)
Essen (Germany)
Colombia.
Zbąszyń (Poland)

Gelsenkirchen (Germany)
Łódź (Poland)

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Concentration camps and liberation, 1941-1945

Folder	Title
1	Buchenwald News, 1945
2	Buchenwald prisoner cards, 1944-1945
3	Buchenwald visitor's leaflet, undated
4	Confession of Commander Heinrich Müller of Kaiserwald, 1945
5	Deutsche Aufrüstungswerke, 1941
6	Personal testimony, 1945
7	Poems handed out at Buchenwald, 1945
8	Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, 1945

Series 2: Identification and passes, 1945-1946

Folder	Title
9	Amenities, 1945-1946
10	British Search Bureau employment passes, 1945
11	Military government registration, 1945
12	Military passes, 1945
13	Motor vehicle passes, 1945-1946
14	Police registration, 1946

Series 3: Immigration, 1946-1949

Folder	Title
15	British Search Bureau, 1946
16	Central Tracing Bureau, 1947
17	Certificate of residency, 1946-1948
18	Transit pass to Colombia, 1946
19	Transit pass to France, 1946
20	Transit visa, 1946-1949

Series 4: Relatives, 1912-1945

Folder	Title
21	Birth register for Herman Michaelis-Jena, 1941
22	Correspondence, 1939-1945
23	Death certificates for Herman and Sara Grünwald, 1916-1941

24	Marriage license for Robert Grünwald and Rosie Michaelis-Jena, 1938
25	Missing persons advertisement, undated
26	Photographs, 1935-1944
27	Report card for Rosie Michaelis-Jena, 1912