

**RABBI JUDAH NADICH PAPERS, 1939-1997**  
**1994.A.0250.3**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives  
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW  
Washington, DC 20024-2126  
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**Descriptive summary**

Title: Rabbi Judah Nadich papers

Dates: 1939-1997

Accession number: 1994.A.0250.3

Creator: Nadich, Rabbi Judah, 1912-2007.

Extent: 0.7 linear foot (6 folders, 1 book enclosure, 1 oversize box), 6,634 digital images, 7.41 GB

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

Abstract: The Rabbi Judah Nadich papers consist of material related to Rabbi Nadich's work as a Jewish chaplain in the United States Army from 1942-1945, and his work as the Senior Jewish Chaplain at SHAEF from 1945-1946 reporting to General Dwight D. Eisenhower on the conditions in former concentration camps and in displaced persons camps. Includes Rabbi Nadich's wartime and post-war diaries and planners; publications given to Jewish soldiers; correspondence; statistical charts relating to Jewish displaced persons in postwar Germany and Austria; and information regarding Rabbi Nadich's post-war work regarding World War II and Holocaust commemoration.

Languages: English, French

**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), Rabbi Judah Nadich papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Rabbi Judah Nadich and the Estates of Judah Nadich and Martha Hadassah Nadich donated the Rabbi Judah Nadich papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1994, 1996, and 1998. The accessions previously cataloged as 1996.A.0262 and 1998.A.0181 have been incorporated into this collection.

Custodial history: In 2008, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives began a project to digitize the Rabbi Judah Nadich papers related to his wartime experiences and work regarding displaced persons camps in 1945-1946. This digitization project encompassed Rabbi Nadich's donations to USHMM (1994.A.0250, 1996.A.0262, and 1998.A.0181) as well as material his family has donated to the Jewish Theological Seminary. The digital papers consist of the entire archival collection. The physical papers housed at USHMM consist of only a portion of the entire archival collection. The location of the original material, either USHMM or JTS, is noted in the inventory.

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

Related materials: Rabbi Judah Nadich also donated eight Star of David badges and an envelope from Buchenwald to the Museum. His daughter donated a Tallit to the Museum.

Processing history: Rebecca Erbelding, 2008.

### **Biographical note**

Rabbi Judah Nadich (1912-2007) was the first Adviser on Jewish Affairs to General Dwight Eisenhower, the commander of the US forces in Europe. Rabbi Nadich was born in Baltimore, MD on May 12, 1912. He was the son of a Jewish socialist and member of the Workmen's Circle. At the age of 14 he was awarded a scholarship to study at the Yeshiva high school in New York City. After graduating, Rabbi Nadich attended a number of universities: Yeshiva College during the day, City College of New York in the evenings, and the Johns Hopkins University during the summers. Upon completion of his undergraduate studies he enrolled in the rabbinical school of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and in a master's program in history at Columbia University, where he studied with the renowned Jewish historian, Salo Baron. In 1936 Rabbi Nadich received both his rabbinical ordination and his master's degree. He later received a doctorate in Hebrew Literature at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Between 1936 and early 1942 Rabbi Nadich served as an assistant rabbi in two congregations: Temple Beth David in Buffalo, New York and Anshe Emet in Chicago, Illinois. Shortly after Pearl Harbor, Rabbi Nadich enlisted in the army as a chaplain. By the end of the summer of 1942 he was already on his way to England as the first Jewish chaplain in the European Theater of Operations. For the next two years he was stationed in Northern Ireland and England, where he was responsible for supplying the religious needs of Jewish soldiers and officers and for training and assigning duties to new Jewish chaplains as they arrived in the United Kingdom. In 1944 Rabbi Nadich was sent to France, where he was put in charge of the procurement of supplies for all religious purposes. When the Allies marched into Paris in August, Rabbi Nadich followed them. Immediately upon his arrival he sought out the Jewish community, driving his chaplain's jeep into the old Jewish quarter. He was the survivors' first contact with the outside Jewish world, and their meeting was highly emotional. Rabbi Nadich met with the new Jewish leadership and helped them secure their immediate goals of opening up a public kitchen, establishing a free loan society and making contact with relatives in the U.S. The American chaplain also participated in the first religious service held after the liberation at the rue de la Victoire synagogue. Rabbi Nadich preached to the assembled congregation of Jewish GIs and survivors in both French and English. On Passover 1945 Rabbi Nadich conducted seders for 6,000 Jewish troops in the largest

night club on the Champs d'Elysee. While in Paris (and later in Germany), Rabbi Nadich provided help to the Bricha organization in its efforts to move Jewish DPs to coastal ports and board them on ships to Palestine. On several occasions he was able to secure badly needed supplies to help sustain the DPs while they waited for transport to Palestine. In August 1945, after serving in France for a year, Rabbi Nadich was transferred to Frankfurt. There he assumed the new post of Adviser on Jewish Affairs to the commander of US forces in Europe, which was created in the wake of the Harrison Report that condemned the army for its treatment of Jewish displaced persons. Rabbi Nadich was sent by Eisenhower and his chief of staff, Walter Bedell-Smith, to visit the displaced persons camps in the American zone of Germany, report back on conditions and make recommendations for their improvement. For the next three months Rabbi Nadich made repeated tours of the camps. His recommendations to move Jews into separate camps, provide better nutrition, ease restrictions on travel, remove camp fences, set up Jewish committees, and the like were generally supported by Eisenhower, but not always quickly implemented by military units working directly with the DPs. During the fall of 1945 Rabbi Nadich also had occasion to tour the DP camps in Austria and meet with representatives of the Bergen-Belsen DP camp in the British zone of occupation. On October 19th Rabbi Nadich accompanied Jewish Agency Executive Chairman David Ben-Gurion on a tour of the Zeilshheim DP camp, his first visit to a displaced persons camp. It was Rabbi Nadich who convinced Eisenhower to grant Ben-Gurion's request to visit the American zone and meet with survivors. It was also Rabbi Nadich who advised Eisenhower to permit the Jewish refugees (infiltrates) from Eastern Europe to cross into the American zone and take up residence in the Jewish DP camps when they first started to arrive in the fall of 1945. In November the post of Adviser on Jewish Affairs was passed on to a civilian appointed by President Truman, Judge Simon H. Rifkind, and Rabbi Nadich returned to the US. For the next year and a half, he worked as a spokesperson and fundraiser for the Joint Distribution Committee and the United Jewish Appeal. He also did a four-month tour of duty in Rhodesia/South Africa raising funds for the South African Jewish War Appeal. In 1947 he married and resumed his rabbinical career. He served as the rabbi of Congregation Knesset Israel in Brookline, MA for ten years, followed by another ten years at the prestigious Park Avenue Synagogue in Manhattan. Rabbi Nadich maintained his friendship with Eisenhower after his military service. The former chaplain wrote a special Rosh Hashanah message for Eisenhower's presidential campaign, gave the invocation at the Republican National Convention where Eisenhower was nominated, attended the inauguration, and invited him to speak at his synagogue on the twentieth anniversary of the liberation of Europe in 1965. [Source: "Interview with Judah Nadich," February 22, 1990, Holocaust Museum Oral History Project.]

### **Scope and content of collection**

This collection consists of material related to Rabbi Judah Nadich's work as a Jewish chaplain in the United States Army from 1942-1945, and his work as the Senior Jewish Chaplain at SHAEF from 1945-1946 reporting to General Dwight D. Eisenhower on the conditions in former concentration camps and in displaced persons camps. Includes Rabbi Nadich's wartime and post-war diaries and planners; publications given to Jewish soldiers; correspondence; statistical charts relating to Jewish displaced persons in postwar Germany and Austria; and information regarding Rabbi Nadich's post-war work regarding World War II and Holocaust commemoration.

### **System of arrangement**

The Rabbi Judah Nadich papers are arranged thematically.

### **Indexing terms**

Allied Forces. Supreme Headquarters.

World War, 1939-1945--Chaplains--United States.

Refugee camps--Germany.

Refugee camps--Austria.

Jewish refugees--Germany.

Jewish refugees--Austria.

Photographs

## CONTAINER LIST

| <b>Folder</b>                   | <b>Title</b>   | <b><u>Former physical arrangement</u></b> |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Digital only 1                  | Loose Photographs, 1939-1960   | <i>Folder 1</i>                           |
| Digital only 2                  | Military Paperwork, 1942-1991  | <i>Folder 2</i>                           |
| Digital only 3                  | Pre-war and wartime correspondence, 1940-1994  | <i>Folder 3</i>                           |
| Digital only 4                  | Book, <i>My Stretch in the Service</i> , June 10, 1942—August 30, 1942   | <i>Folder 4</i>                           |
| Digital only 5                  | Wartime sermons and services, 1942-1946  | <i>Folder 5</i>                           |
| Digital only 6                  | Photograph, Prayer shawl   | <i>Folder 6</i>                           |
| Digital only 7                  | Brochure, Yom Kippur USO, written by Rabbi Nadich, approximately 1942-1945   | <i>Folder 7</i>                           |
| Digital only 8                  | Brochure, "GI Holy Days," 1944   | <i>Folder 8</i>                           |
| Digital only 9                  | Book, <i>Abridged Prayer book for Jews in the Armed Forces</i> , 1941  | <i>Folder 9</i>                           |
| Digital only 10                 | Book, <i>History of the Jews</i> , by Paul Goodman, 1944   | <i>Folder 10</i>                          |
| Digital only 11                 | Wartime and post-war decorations, 1945-1997  | <i>Folder 11</i>                          |
| <b>Folder 1 of 6</b>            | Photographs: French medal commemorating D-Day; French medal commemorating the liberation of France; French medal commemorating 50 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day ( <i>CD with digital images</i> ) | <i>Folder 12</i>                          |
| Digital only 12                 | Daily accomplishments, Nov. 20, 1942—Dec. 31, 1942   | <i>Folder 13</i>                          |
| Digital only 13                 | Daily accomplishments, Jan. 1, 1943—May 22, 1943   | <i>Folder 14</i>                          |
| Digital only 14                 | Daily accomplishments, May 23, 1943—June 30, 1944  | <i>Folder 15</i>                          |
| Digital only 15                 | Daily accomplishments, July 1, 1944—Nov. 15, 1945  | <i>Folder 16</i>                          |
| Digital only 16                 | Billfold with various wartime currencies and scrip, 1942-1946  | <i>Folder 17</i>                          |
| <b>Box 1,<br/>folder 6 of 6</b> | Binder of notes regarding DP camp visits, 1945   | <i>Folder 18</i>                          |
| <b>Folder 2 of 6</b>            | Loose notes regarding DP camp visits, 1945   | <i>Folder 19</i>                          |
| Digital only 17                 | Scrapbook, July 1945—Dec. 1945   | <i>Folder 20</i>                          |
| Digital only 18                 | Photograph album of displaced persons camp visits, 1945-1946   | <i>Folder 21</i>                          |
| <b>Folder 3 of 6</b>            | Letter commending Rabbi Nadich, November 13, 1945  | <i>Folder 22</i>                          |
| <b>Folder 4 of 6</b>            | Notes and reports prepared and submitted to the Nuremberg trials, 1945   | <i>Folder 23</i>                          |
| <b>Folder 5 of 6,<br/>BE 1</b>  | Bound pamphlets and books related to the Nuremberg trials, 1945-1946 (2 folders)   | <i>Folder 24</i>                          |

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|--------------------|---|---------------------|
| Digital only 19    | Book, <i>D.E. Ledger</i> with notes regarding speaking trips and loose pages related to a December 1946 trip to South Africa, 1945-1947 | <i>Folder 25</i>    |
| Digital only 20    | Newspapers regarding trip to South Africa, 1946   | <i>Folder 26</i>    |
| Digital only 21    | South African published journal, "Jewish Affairs," June 1974  | <i>Folder 27</i>    |
| Digital only 22    | AJDC work, Jewish War Veterans  | <i>Folder 28</i>    |
| Digital only 23    | Post-1945 event programs and correspondence, 1946-1997  | <i>Folder 29</i>    |
| Digital only 24    | Book, <i>My Stretch in the Service</i> , 1953-1955  | <i>Folder 30</i>    |
| Digital only 25    | Magazine, "The Jewish Digest," April 1962   | <i>Folder 31</i>    |
| Digital only 26    | Post-war sermons and speeches, approximately circa 1990s  | <i>Folder 32</i>    |
| Digital only 27    | United States Holocaust Memorial Council Days of Remembrance Observance Guide, 1989   | <i>Folder 33</i>    |
| Digital only 28    | Transcript of an oral history with Rabbi Judah Rabbi Nadich conducted by the Department of the Army, 1992                               | <i>Folder 34</i>    |
| Digital only 29-31 | Department of Defense 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of WWII Advisory Committee and Notes, 1992-1995 (3 folders)                          | <i>Folder 35-37</i> |
| Digital only 32    | Clippings and programs related to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1990-1994  | <i>Folder 38</i>    |
| Digital only 33    | Rabbi Nadich family, 1994   | <i>Folder 39</i>    |