

THEODORE AND MARTHA BURIAN PAPERS, 1885-1946
1995.A.0261

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
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Descriptive summary

Title: Theodore and Martha Burian papers

Dates: 1885-1946

Accession number: 1995.A.0261

Creator: Theodore and Martha Burian

Extent: 13 folders

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

Abstract: The Theodore and Martha Burian papers contain identification documents concerning Theodore and Martha Burian, a Jewish family who managed to escape Nazi transport in 1941, walked to Spain, and later traveled to Lisbon where they were able to immigrate to the United States. Documents include birth and marriage certificates, police registration, passports, and various other identification certificates.

Languages: Czech, German, Portuguese, English

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: Theodore and Martha Burian papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: The Theodore and Martha Burian papers were donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1993 by their daughter, Lucie Liebman

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, September 2015

Biographical note

Theodore Burian (1885-1974) was one of five children born to Leopold and Jenny (nee Fischer) Burian. A citizen of Czechoslovakia, Theodore left at an early age for the United States, going to school in New York and becoming an athletic teacher. After some time he returned to Europe, settling in Vienna, Austria and marrying Martha Freund in 1921. The couple had two children, Paul and Lucie. Theodore originally was employed as the secretary of the Austrian Jockey club, but was forced to change professions under pressure from Martha's father. Theodore transitioned his career to become a buyer's representative for an import/export company, and which resulted in a lucrative lifestyle for his family.

In 1938, Hitler's army marched into Vienna. In order to escape the oppressive Nazi regime, the family moved to Prague. However, it was only a year later when Czechoslovakia was also annexed by Germany, and the family made efforts to flee. Paul was 15 at this time, an age where children could be taken away to labor camps. Rather than wait for him to be taken, he was dressed as a child and accepted by one of the last Kindertransports from Prague to Scotland. In April 1941, Theodore, Martha, and Lucie were rounded up and placed on a passenger car with hundreds of others to Paris. En route, an allied air raid near Paris damaged the railroad tracks, forcing the train to a stop. Once the car stopped, everyone emptied the train and fled.

The family walked to the Spanish border, where they were taken in and medically examined. Once in Spain, Theodore was able to procure tickets to Lisbon, and eventually tickets to the United States aboard the refugee ship Nyassa. They arrived in the United States in May 1941, where they were confined to Ellis Island, under suspicion that Lucie had Tuberculosis. Upon clearance, the family moved into New York City.

Scope and content of collection

The Theodore and Martha Burian papers contain primarily identification documents, which the family used for verification purposes as they immigrated to the United States. Contained in the collections are birth and marriage certificates, citizenship papers, passports, and police registration documents. Also included are boarding passes for the Nyassa passenger ship, and residency certificates for the town of Pohořelice in the Czech Republic.

System of arrangement

The Theodore and Martha Burian papers are arranged as a single series.

Indexing terms

Burian, Theodore
Burian, Martha
Burian, Paul
Liebman, Lucie Burian
Burian, Leopold
Burian, Jenny Fischer

Kindertransports (Rescue operations)
Jews--Austria--Vienna.
Jews--Austria--History--20th century.
Jews--Czechoslovakia--History--20th century.
Jewish refugees--Austria.
Jewish refugees--Czechoslovakia.
Jewish families--Austria--Vienna.
Holocaust victims' families.

Pohořelice (Jihomoravský kraj, Czech Republic)
Vienna (Austria)
Ellis Island (N.J. and N.Y.)
United States--Emigration and immigration--History--20th century.
Lisbon (Portugal)

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Theodore and Martha Burian papers, 1885-1946

Folder	Title
1	Birth certificates, 1885-1924
2	Czechoslovakian citizenship, 1938-1939
3	Household goods directory, approximately 1940
4	Marriage certificates, 1887-1921
5	Medical certificates, 1941
6	Naturalization certificate, 1946
7	Nyassa passenger tickets, 1941
8	Passports, 1941
9	Pohořelice residency, 1938-1939
10	Police registration, 1939-1941
11	Ration card, 1941
12	Statutory declaration, 1940
13	Tax clearance certificate, 1941