

JOSEPH G. ROWLEY COLLECTION, 1931-1946 AND UNDATED [BULK 1944-1945] 1995.A.0624

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: Joseph G. Rowley collection

Dates: 1931-1946 and undated [Bulk 1944-1945]

Accession number: 1995.A.0624

Creator: Joseph Gilmor Rowley (1915-2004)

Extent: 12 folders plus 1 oversized folder

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

Abstract: The Joseph G. Rowley collection contains documents and photographs related to Joseph Gilmor Rowley (1915-2004) a Special Agent with the Counterintelligence Corps who served in central Europe at the time of German surrender. His collection is comprised of material presumably collected during his tour in Germany and France between 1944 and 1945. Included is a series of photographs which document the liberation of Dachau, images of Allied forces at Adolf Hitler's "Eagle's Nest" (Kehlsteinhaus), and one image of the German surrender at Brest, France, among others. Also comprised in this collection is an affidavit given by Manfred Rommel (1928-2013) in April 1945 certifying his father, German General Field Marshall Erwin Rommel's (1891-1944) death and the circumstances surrounding it, various postcards from Nazi Germany, identification cards, and identification papers belonging to German nationals, one of which is a soldier's identification book, Deutscher Volkssturm.

Language: English, German, 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 if item), Joseph G. Rowley collection (1995.A.0624) United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: The Joseph G. Rowley collection was donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1995 by Joseph G. Rowley.

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

Processing history: Colleen Benoit, December 2015

Biographical note

Joseph Gilmor Rowley (1915-2004) was born in Baltimore, Maryland to Gilmore and Margaret Rowley. He graduated from Calvert Hall College High School, a Catholic college preparatory school for boys located in Towson, in 1933 and then from the Baltimore Business College. Joseph worked as a bookkeeper and cashier for Shavitz & Sons, a furniture company, before enlisting in the United States Army in 1941 at the age of 26. Joseph enlisted as a private and was later joined the Counterintelligence Corps (CIC), a precursor to the U.S. Army Intelligence Agency, now known as the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command. He was stationed in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. During World War II, he participated in campaigns in Normandy, Rhineland, and Central Europe. He was a sergeant first class when he received an honorable discharge in 1951.

After the war, Joseph returned to Baltimore and worked for Retail Stores Service for several decades, as a buyer and merchandiser for furniture, outdoor equipment and electronics. He married Elva Sission in 1943 and with her had two children, Joseph Jr. (1947-) and Jane (1956-). In retirement, he was a consultant to the company and a notary. Joseph died in 2004 in Baltimore.

Scope and content of collection

The Joseph G. Rowley collection is comprised of documents and photographs presumably collected by Joseph during his tour in Germany and France between 1944 and 1945. Included in his collection is a series of photographs which document the liberation of Dachau sometime after 1945, images of Allied forces at Adolf Hitler's "Eagle's Nest" (Kehlsteinhaus) months after its capture in June 1945, one image of the German surrender at Brest, France in 1944, among other images of Germany and France toward the end of the Second World War. Also comprised in this collection are documents identifying Joseph as a Special Agent for the Counterintelligence Corps, several postcards from Nazi Germany's "Winter Help Work" (Winterhilfswerk or WHW) charity campaign, a German propaganda postcard, and an affidavit given by Manfred Rommel (1928-2013) in April 1945 certifying his father, German General Field Marshall Erwin Rommel's (1891-1944) death and the circumstances surrounding it. A United States passport and certificate of United States Citizenship for a German man by the name of Wilhelm Weiss is also included in this collection, as well as a soldier's identification book for a man by the name of Frank Wilhelm who was conscripted into the Deutscher Volkssturm in 1944. Newspaper clippings about the war are also comprised in this collection.

System of arrangement

The Joseph G. Rowley collection is arranged as a two series:

- Series 1: Papers, 1931-1946 and undated
- Series 2: Photographs, 1944-1945 and undated

Indexing terms

Rowley, Joseph G, 1915-2004.
Rommel, Erwin, 1891-1944.
Knittel, Gustav, 1914-1976.
Wilhelm, Weiss, 1901-
Hitler, Adolf, 1889-1945.

Dachau (Concentration camp).
Winterhilfswerk des Deutschen Volkes.
United States--Army--Army Intelligence & Security Command.
Kehlsteinhaus (Germany).

World War II.

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Germany.
Propaganda, German--1930--1950.

Brittany (France)--History.
Berchtesgaden (Germany).

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Papers, 1931-1946 and undated

Folder	Title
1	Identification papers, 1943-1945
2	Frank, Wilhelm, soldiers identification book, Deutscher Volkssturm, 1944
3	Newspaper clippings, 1939 and 1946 [see oversized folder]
4	Postcard, propaganda leaflet, letter, 1944 and undated
5	Rommel, Manfred affidavit and postcard, 1942 and 1945
6	Weiss, Wilhelm passport and citizenship certificate, 1931 and 1936
7	"Winter Help Work" postcards, 1933-1937

Series 2: Photographs, 1944-1945 and undated

Folder	Title
8	Brest, France surrender, 1944
9	Dachau liberation, approximately 1945
10	Eagle's Nest and Berchtesgaden, 1945
11	Knittel, Gustav, approximately 1945
12	Nazi Germany, 1944 and undated

Oversized folders

Folder	Title
1	Newspaper clippings, 1939 and 1946 (Not Digitized)