

PETER MANSBACHER PAPERS, 1934-1991
1998.A.0148

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: Peter Mansbacher Papers

Dates: 1934-1991

Accession number: 1998.A.0148

Creator: Peter Mansbacher

Extent: 0.5 linear foot (1 document box)

Repository: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Abstract: The Peter Mansbacher papers document Mansbacher's efforts to obtain a visa to the United States, his passage to England on a *Kindertransport* and subsequent internment in England, further internment in Canada, and eventual immigration to the United States. His papers include a 1991 memoir relating his childhood in Lübeck, his wartime experiences as an emigrant and internee, and his eventual move to Chicago; correspondence describing efforts to assist Mansbacher and his family; and subject files documenting Mansbacher's emigration efforts and his experience as a refugee, internee, student, and employee in England and Canada.

Languages: English, German

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), Peter Mansbacher Papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The Peter Mansbacher papers were donated in 1998 by Ursula Mansbacher, Peter Mansbacher's widow.

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

Processing history: Julie Schweitzer, 2012

Biographical note

Peter Mansbacher (1922-1994) was born Fritz Ludwig Mansbacher in Lübeck, Germany to Martin and Juliane Mansbacher. His mother always called him Peter, and he formally changed his name to Peter Mansbacher as an adult. Under the National Socialist government, he was not allowed to complete his education, and he was dismissed from his machinist apprenticeship following *Kristallnacht*. He managed to receive an immigration quota number from the American Consulate based on the Affidavit of Support of his father's cousin, but his wait was estimated at four years. Concerned for his safety, his parents secured him a place on a *Kindertransport* to England in December 1938. He passed through several refugee camps in 1939 and spent a brief time at the Southwest Essex Technical College before being housed with the Norman family in Over. When England declared war with Germany in 1939, Mansbacher was classified as a category C alien and labeled a "Refugee from Nazi Oppression," but he was arrested and interned when Germany launched major operations in Western Europe in April 1940. He was moved through several internment camps in England before being relocated to Canada via the MS Sobieski. He passed the rest of 1940 and most of 1941 in three different Canadian internment camps before securing his release through the sponsorship of a Canadian family. Mansbacher completed his secondary education in Canada and worked on farms and for engineering firms. He became a naturalized Canadian citizen in October 1946 and graduated from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Applied Science in Mechanical Engineering in 1948. He moved to Chicago in 1949 where he met and married Ursula Dengel. He worked for Chas. A. Stevens & Co. until his retirement in 1987.

Scope and content of collection

The Peter Mansbacher papers measure 0.5 linear foot and date from 1934-1953 and 1991. The collection includes a memoir, correspondence files, and subject files documenting Mansbacher's efforts to obtain a visa to the United States, his passage to England on a *Kindertransport*, subsequent internment in England and Canada, and eventual immigration to the United States.

Mansbacher's 1991 memoir, *Refugee from Nazi Oppression: an Autobiography by Peter Mansbacher*, describes his childhood in Lübeck, his wartime experiences in England, the completion of his education in Canada, and his eventual move to the Chicago, Illinois area. It includes photographic copy prints and photocopies of original photographs of Mansbacher, his family, and friends, and photocopies of original documents, many of which are included elsewhere in the collection. The bulk of the memoir focuses on Mansbacher's arrival in England on a *Kindertransport* at the end of 1938, his time at Kitchener Camp, his efforts to obtain a visa for entry into the United States, his 1940 arrest and internment as an enemy alien at Bury St. Edmunds and then the Isle of Man, his transfer to and further internment in Canada at Camp T (near Trois Rivières), Camp B (near Fredericton), and Camp N (near Sherbrooke), and his school and work experiences in Canada. The memoir concludes with descriptions of Mansbacher's move to

Chicago in 1949, his marriage to Ursula Dengel, their children and family life, and his career at Chas. A. Stevens & Co.

Correspondence files include letters and telegrams from family members and friends during the war. The letters provide updates about the welfare of loved ones and document efforts to assist Mansbacher and his family in their emigration efforts.

Subject files document Mansbacher's efforts to immigrate to the United States and to get his parents out of Germany, as well as his experiences in English and Canadian internment camps, education and employment, and interactions with refugee aid organizations, American Consulates, and Canadian government agencies. Records include letters, telegrams, postcards, forms, ID photos, poems describing children at a Canadian internment camp, clippings, and receipts.

System of arrangement

The Peter Mansbacher papers are arranged as three series:

- Series 1: Autobiography, 1991
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1939-1944
- Series 3: Subject Files, 1934-1953

Indexing terms

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945) -- Personal narrative.

Kindertransports (Rescue operations) -- England.

World War, 1939-1945 -- Children.

Jews -- Germany -- Lübeck -- Biography.

Jewish refugees -- Biography.

Germans -- Canada -- Evacuations and relocation.

Germans -- England -- Evacuations and relocation.

Photographs

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Autobiography, 1991 (Box 1; 8 folders)

Box	Folder	
1	1-8	<i>Refugee from Nazi Oppression, 1991</i>

Series 2: Correspondence, 1939-1944 (Box 1; 10 folders)

Box	Folder	
1	9	Freund, Mathilde, 1939-1940
1	10	Mansbacher, Julius, Käte, and Hannelore, 1940-1941
1	11	Mansbacher, Martin, circa 1939
1	12	Meyer, Ludwig, 1939-1940
1	13	Mosse, Mr. and Mrs., 1939
1	14	Norman, Horace and Violet, 1939-1944
1	15	Oettinger, Ruth, 1939
1	16	White, Nancy and Mrs. Powell, 1939
1	17	Wicks, Ron, 1939-1943
1	18	Miscellaneous, 1939-1940

Series 3: Subject Files, 1934-1953 (Box 1; 0.3 linear feet)

Box	Folder	
1	19	Banking, 1941-1944
1	20	The Cambridge Refugee Committee, 1939-1940
1	21	Canadian Government, 1942-1946
1	22	Canadian Internment Camps, 1940-1942
1	23	Canadian Naturalization, 1943-1946
1	24	Central Committee for Refugees, 1941-1943
1	25	Dover Isolation Hospital, 1939
1	26	Emigration Efforts for Parents, 1939
1	27-29	Emigration to America, 1939-1941, 1946-1953
1	30	Employment, 1938-1944
1	31	Firma Martin Mansbacher, 1939
1	32	Holland Africa Line, 1939
1	33	Kitchener Camp, 1939
1	34	Loughton Refugee Fund, 1939-1944
1	35	Movement for the Care of Children from Germany, 1939-1941
1	36	National Socialist Government, 1938-1939
1	37	Pontiac Sedan, 1943-1944
1	38	Printed Materials, circa 1938-1945
1	39	Receipts, 1939-1944
1	40	Resumes and References, 1940-1948
1	41	School Records, 1934-1944, 1949
1	42	Telegrams, circa 1939-1945
1	43	United Jewish Refugee & War Relief Agencies, 1943-1944
1	44	Miscellaneous, circa 1939-1944