

HELEN KULKA FANTA COLLECTION, 1916-1997
2007.195.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: Helen Kulka Fanta collection

Dates: 1916-1997

Accession number: 2007.195.1

Creator: Helen Kulka Fanta

Extent: 19 folders

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

Abstract: The Helen Kulka Fanta collection contains material related to Helen Kulka Fanta, a Jewish secretary from Prague who was deported to Theresienstadt by the German authorities in 1942. She was later imprisoned at Auschwitz, Neuengamme, and Bergen-Belsen before being liberated in 1945. The collection consists primarily of identification forms, references, and other forms of verification documenting Helen Kulka as a refugee and concentration camp survivor. A diary written during her time at Bergen-Belsen is included as well. Other material includes poems collected and written, notes, and music sheets.

Languages: English, German, Czech

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: Helen Kulka Fanta collection, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The Helen Kulka Fanta collection was donated in 2007 to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum by Ann-Margaret Frija, the niece of Helen Fanta.

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, May 2015

Biographical note / Administrative history

Helen Kulka (1907-2005) was born in Opava, Czechoslovakia. At the age of 9 she moved to Vienna, Austria, where she acquired an interest in music. The Kulka family owned several stone quarries outside the city, and though they were Jewish, the family was non-observant. In 1930, Helen moved to England to work as a nanny. Three years later, she was hired as a secretary by an export firm in Prague, whose English correspondence she handled. She worked in that position until May 1942, when she, as a Jew living in German-occupied Prague, was arrested and deported to the Theresienstadt concentration camp, where she was imprisoned until December 1943. From there, Helen was deported to Auschwitz where she was imprisoned until June 1944. She was then taken to Neuengamme before finally being sent Bergen-Belsen in March 1945, where she was liberated by British forces a month later. Though malnourished, Helen assisted the British military with administrative functions as the camp was liberated, before serving as a secretary and interpreter for the same detachment while stationed in Eutin, Germany. After the war, Helen moved to England, where she met her future Husband Erich Fanta. In 1952, the couple immigrated to the United States

Scope and content of collection

The Helen Kulka Fanta collection contains primarily documents relating to the identification and verification of Helen Kulka as a concentration camp survivor and refugee. Included in the collection are a birth certificate, identity cards, references, curriculum vitae, certificates of identity, displaced persons verification, and copies of her passport. A diary, kept by Helen Kulka while incarcerated at Bergen-Belsen, accompanied by translations, are also in the collection. Other items are music sheets and poems collected by Helen Kulka Fanta.

System of arrangement

The Helen Kulka Fanta collection is arranged as a single series.

Indexing terms

Fanta, Helen Kulka
Fanta, Erich

Theresienstadt (Concentration camp)
Neuengamme (Concentration camp)
Bergen-Belsen (Concentration camp)
Auschwitz (Concentration camp)

Holocaust survivors.
World War, 1939-1945--Refugees.
Holocaust survivors--Czech Republic--Prague
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)

Jews—Czech Republic--History--20th century.
Jewish refugees—Czech Republic

Prague (Czech Republic)
Opava (Czech Republic)
Eutin (Germany)

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Helen Kulka Fanta collection, 1916-1997

Folder	Title
1	Birth certificate, 1916
2	British visa application, 1945
3	Certificate of identity, 1940-1951
4	Certificate of naturalization, 1951-1957
5	Correspondence, 1948-1962
6	Curriculum vitae, 1954-1997
7	Czechoslovakian citizenship, 1946
8	Diary, 1945
9	Displaced persons verification, 1955
10	Identity cards, 1931-1945
11	Immigration permit, 1945
12	Leaving certificate, 1925
13	Memo book, approximately 1945
14	Music sheets and review, 1950 [see oversized folder]
15	Notes, approximately 1945
16	Passport copies, 1939
17	Poems, 1935-1947
18	References, 1939-1952

Oversized folders

Folder	Title
1	Music sheets and review, 1950 [oversized folder]