

MARTIN DANNENBERG PAPERS, 1942-1945
2011.395.1

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

Title: Martin Dannenberg papers

Dates: 1942-1945

Accession number: 2011.395.1

Creator: Dannenberg, Martin, 1915-2010

Extent: 0.5 linear foot (1 box)

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

Abstract: The Martin Dannenberg papers include Dannenberg's Counter Intelligence Corps basic training materials, his records from an advanced security intelligence course, his motor vehicle operator's permit, and photographs of Nuremberg and of Dannenberg with a fellow officer in the bank vault in Eichstatt where he recovered the original texts of the Nuremberg Laws, as signed by Adolf Hitler.

Languages: 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: (Identification of item), Martin Dannenberg papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Margery Dannenberg donated the Martin Dannenberg papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2011.

Related materials: Margery Dannenberg also donated a Minox B subminiature camera and case (2011.395.2), a US Army Military Intelligence ID badge (2011.395.3), and a leather document holder with CIC credentials (2011.395.4) to the Museum.

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, April 2018

Biographical note

Martin Ernest Dannenberg Jr. was born on November 15, 1915, in Baltimore, Maryland, to a Jewish couple, Martin Ernest (1891-1946) and Wilhelmina Wilfson (1889-1954) Dannenberg. He had a younger brother, Wilbur (1921-1935). His father Martin worked in the clothing business. His paternal grandparents were German immigrants. In 1842, his maternal great grandfather Charles Winternitz helped found the Har Sinai synagogue in Baltimore, the oldest Reform synagogue in the United States. Martin graduated from City College high school in 1931. He worked as a mail clerk at Sun Life Insurance Company and attended John Hopkins University and University of Baltimore's Law School at night. On May 29, 1941, Martin married Esther Anne Salzman.

On December 8, 1941, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States entered World War II. On August 20, 1942, Martin enlisted in the Army. He expressed interest in and was accepted into the Counter Intelligence Corps. After training, Martin was assigned to intelligence cases in the US. In August 1944, Martin, a Master Sergeant, shipped out from Boston to Normandy, France, arriving in September. He was a Special Agent in Charge, 203rd Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment, attached to the III Corps, Third Army, under General Patton. He fought in the Battle of the Bulge and reached Germany in early February 1945. One of Martin's duties was to discover evidence for the planned war crimes trials. In April, Martin apprehended a German official in Regensburg, who told Martin he knew the location of the Nuremberg Laws and would take him there if Martin returned him to Eichstatt. On April 27, the informant took Martin and his two man team to a farm near Eichstatt, where Hans Rauch, a Finance Ministry official, was hiding from the Gestapo. Rauch had been told to store the documents by the Waffen SS security chief and had placed them in a bank vault in Eichstatt. Rauch took Martin and his team to the bank vault, where Martin found the original texts of the Nuremberg Laws, as signed by Adolf Hitler, inside a manila envelope. They took photographs of the documents inside the vault. On April 28, Martin turned the document over to a member of General Patton's staff, who gave it to General Patton. Martin thought the documents would be used as evidence in war crimes trials, but Patton kept them as a personal souvenir. In late April or early May, Martin was sent to investigate the recently liberated Dachau concentration camp. The war ended when Germany surrendered on May 7. Martin was awarded a Bronze Star for his service.

In May 1945, Martin returned to Baltimore, where he gave speeches about his war experience to his synagogue. Martin and Esther had three children. He continued working for Sun Life Insurance Company and eventually became chairman of the Board. After Esther's death in 1989, Martin married Margery Singer Dopkin on October 21, 1990. Martin, age 94, died on August 18, 2010, in Baltimore. General Patton had given the Nuremberg Laws to the Huntington Library in Pasadena, CA, in June 1945. The existence and provenance of the document was not known until 1999 when the Library lent them for

display. In August 2010, the Library donated the document to the National Archives and Records Administration.

(Biographical note by Amanda Eckstein)

Scope and content of collection

The Martin Dannenberg papers include Dannenberg's Counter Intelligence Corps basic training materials, his records from an advanced security intelligence course, his motor vehicle operator's permit, and photographs of Nuremberg and of Dannenberg with a fellow officer in the bank vault in Eichstatt where he recovered the original texts of the Nuremberg Laws, as signed by Adolf Hitler.

System of arrangement

The Martin Dannenberg papers are arranged as a single series:

- Series 1: Martin Dannenberg papers, 1942-1945

Indexing terms

United States--Army--Counter Intelligence Corps.

World War, 1939-1945--Secret service--United States.

World War, 1939-1945--Participation, Jewish.

Jewish soldiers--United States.

Eichstatt (Germany)

Nuremberg (Germany)

Photographs

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Martin Dannenberg papers, 1942-1945

Box	
1.1	Advanced Security Intelligence Course records, 1944
1.2-1.5	CIC Basic Training material, 1942 (4 folders)
1.6	Motor Vehicle Operator's Permit, 1943
1.7	Photographs, 1945
1.8	Empty accordion envelope, 1942