

**DAVID C. PORTER PAPERS, approximately 1944-2010**  
**2011.75.1**

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

Title: David C. Porter papers

Dates: approximately 1944-2010

Accession number: 2011.75.1

Creator: Porter, David C., 1926-2010

Extent: 1.0 linear foot (6 folders, 1 oversize box)

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

Abstract: The David C. Porter papers include military records, photographs, news clippings, and speech notes documenting Porter's experiences as a member of the United States Army during World War II and as a guard at the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg from 1945-1946. The papers also include a 1946 photograph book, *Nurnberg*, which includes signatures of tribunal defendants, prosecution and defense staff, translators, press corps (including Betsy and Walter Cronkite), and the guard staff.

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.

Physical access: A negative in the collection has been placed in cold storage and would require additional time for temperature acclimation before it could be served at the reference desk.

Reproduction and use: Collection is available for use. Material may be protected by copyright. Please contact reference staff for further information.

Preferred citation: David C. Porter papers (2011.75.1), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Ethel Kemmerer, sister of David C. Porter, donated the David C. Porter papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2011.

Separated material: A number of patches, badges, ribbons, pins, dog tags, and items of Nazi memorabilia to the Museum Ethel Kemmerer also donated have been cataloged separately as objects 2011.75.2 through 2011.75.15.

Related material: A film of outtakes related to the script in the David C. Porter papers is cataloged in the Museum's collection (2001.358.1, RG-60.2972, Film ID: 2380).

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

Processing history: Julie Schweitzer, December 2018

### **Biographical note**

David C. Porter (1926-2010) was born in Abington, Pennsylvania. He was the second of seven children born to Mary C. and William J. Porter. His parents were both born in Pennsylvania, and married in 1921. William worked as an iron clerk, and Mary was a secretary at a construction company.

Soon after the December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States entered World War II. In spring 1944, David completed high school. On September 11, he enlisted in the US Army and was assigned to the 102nd Combat Infantry Division, nicknamed the Ozarks Division. He was deployed to Germany in February 1945 and advanced with his unit through central Europe to the Rhineland and then toward Berlin. David rose to the position of mortar crew chief for Company A, 26th Infantry Regiment. On April 15, the Division was placed on patrol along the Elbe River. On May 7, 1945, Germany surrendered. The 102nd was placed on occupational duty in Gotha, Germany.

In August 1945, the United Nations War Crimes Commission authorized a military tribunal to be convened by eighteen Allied Nations, and conducted by the four major powers, the United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union in Nuremberg, Germany. The purpose of the International Military Tribunal was to seek justice for crimes against humanity, evidenced by the Holocaust, perpetrated by Nazi Germany. Twenty-four defendants were indicted in October 1945 for the first trial, the Major German War Criminals trial. There were four counts: crimes against peace, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and conspiracy to commit these crimes. The trial began on November 20, 1945. The verdicts were delivered on October 1, 1946: twelve defendants were sentenced to death; three to life imprisonment; four to prison terms ranging from 10-20 years; three were acquitted.

The 1st Infantry was assigned the task of guarding the defendants. There were three types of guards: Special, Regular and Prison. Initially, David was responsible for guarding defendants in their cells. Cell guards were equipped with white helmet liners and nightsticks. David received his promotion to Sergeant on September 5. In late December, David was promoted to Special escort and court guard and was assigned to stand guard behind the prisoners in the courtroom in the Palace of Justice. Other duties included escorting the defendants to and from their cells in the morning and evening, and transporting evidence. The guards supervised the lunches, where the defendants were separated into four groups of

five, with Goring eating alone. In early July 1946, David returned to the US and was honorably discharged on July 29.

David returned to Pennsylvania and worked as a comptroller at a manufacturing company. He married Violet Andrews and the couple had one child. David regularly presented lectures about his experiences as a guard during the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials.

(Biographical note by Margaret Mariani)

### **Scope and content of collection**

The David C. Porter papers include military records, photographs, news clippings, and speech notes documenting Porter's experiences as a member of the United States Army during World War II and as a guard at the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg from 1945-1946. The papers also include a 1946 photograph book, *Nurnberg*, which includes signatures of tribunal defendants, prosecution and defense staff, translators, press corps (including Betsy and Walter Cronkite), and the guard staff.

### **System of arrangement**

The David C. Porter papers are arranged as a single series.

### **Indexing terms**

Nuremberg Trial of Major German War Criminals, Nuremberg, Germany, 1945-1946.

Soldiers--United States.

War crime trials--Europe--History--20th century.

## **CONTAINER LIST**

### **Series 1: David C. Porter papers, approximately 1944-2010**

<b>Folder</b>	<b>Title</b>
1 of 6	<i>International Military Tribunal: Nurnberg Germany, 1945-1946</i> pamphlet, 1946
2 of 6	Military records, 1944-1952
3 of 6	News clippings, 1945-1946, 1960, 1977, 1993, 1999
4 of 6	Notes for speeches, approximately 1946-2010
Box 1	<i>Nurnberg</i> , by Charles W. Alexander, with participant autographs, 1946
5 of 6, negative stored separately	Photographs, 1945-1946 (negative stored separately)
6 of 6	"Translating System" script, 1945 or 1946