

WILLIAM BUCKHANTZ PAPERS, 1945-1947
2014.73.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: William Buckhantz papers

Dates: 1945-1947

Accession number: 2014.73.1

Creator: William Buckhantz

Extent: 0.4 linear feet (1 box, 1 oversize folder)

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

Abstract: Consists of documents and photographs from the collection of William Buckhantz, the UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) deputy director of the Deggendorf displaced persons camp from 1945-1946, and director of the Ellwangen displaced persons camp from 1946-1947. Includes photographs of life in the camps and of UNRRA personnel, blank UNRRA forms, Buckhantz's personnel paperwork, documents related to the administration of Deggendorf and Ellwangen, and cables relating to the fate of Buckhantz's family.

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), William Buckhantz papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Diana Buckhantz donated her father's collection to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2014.

Related archival materials: This collection also includes several original books: an Army Song Book, Menu Pattern for United Nations Displaced Persons in Approved Camps and Assembly Centers in the United States Zone of Germany, and a booklet in Hebrew, which were transferred to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum Library. Please also see 2007.162, the Carl Atkin collection, as Atkin was the UNRRA director of the Deggendorf displaced persons camp and a colleague of Buckhantz.

Processing history: Rebecca Erbelding, April 2014.

Biographical note

Vladimir (William) Buckhantz (the father of the donor) was born in Kaunas, Lithuania on September 24, 1902. William Buckhantz immigrated to South Africa in 1939 and then came to the United States. He was conscripted into the American Army and sent overseas during the occupation to serve as an UNRRA officer in the Regensburg and Deggendorf displaced persons camps. While working for UNRRA, he reunited with his brother Boris (Benzion, b. 1901), his wife Jenny (nee Faros, b. 1906) and their son Abba (later Allen, b. 1923) who had survived the Kovno ghetto and Dachau concentration camp. After returning to the States in 1949, William Buckhantz married Araxia Margery Gulbenkian who he met while in training at Fort Slocum before leaving for Europe.

Besides William only one other sister Rochelle (later Zeidel) entirely escaped the Holocaust. She had immigrated to Palestine before the war. William's mother Cecilia died in the Kovno ghetto. His father Solomon was taken from the synagogue never to be seen again. Another brother Jascha survived in hiding in France. A third brother, Naum (Noah) was killed by Lithuanian fascists shortly after the German invasion in 1941. His younger sister Sonia perished during the Holocaust with her husband and two children after the Germans blew up their bunker.

Scope and content of collection

The William Buckhantz collection is an excellent resource for those studying the experiences of UNRRA personnel working in displaced persons camps. The collection includes extensive photographs depicting life in the Deggendorf and Ellwangen displaced persons camp. It also includes blank UNRRA forms, including blank AEF Displaced Persons forms and identity cards. Buckhantz also received letters written by displaced persons asking for his assistance; a remarkable document written and illustrated by a survivor cartoonist, Georg Feier, gives his identifying information and describing his wartime experiences is included in the collection.

Indexing terms

Buckhantz, William.

Deggendorf (Displaced persons camp)

Ellwangen (Displaced persons camp)

United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1 (10 folders)

Box	Folder	
1	1-2	Photographs, 1945-1947 (2 folders)
1	3	Documents related to Buckhantz's family, 1945-1946
1	4	William Buckhantz personnel papers, 1945-1947
1	5	General UNRRA reports, 1945-1947
1	6	Documents related to Deggendorf displaced persons camp, 1945-1946
1	7	Documents related to Ellwangen displaced persons camp, 1946-1947
1	8	Letters pleading on behalf of individual refugees, 1946-1947
1	9	Jewish Ex-Concentration Camp Orchestra, 1946
1	10	Miscellaneous, 1945-1947
OS	1	Blank UNRRA forms, 1945-1947