

FRITZ GRÜNBERG PAPERS, 1922-1979
2015.468.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
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Descriptive summary

Title: Fritz Grünberg papers

Dates: 1922-1979 (bulk 1940-1945)

Accession number: 2015.468.1

Creator: Grünberg, Fritz, 1911-

Extent: .5 linear feet (1 box, 1 oversize folder)

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

Abstract: The collection documents the Holocaust-era experiences of Fritz Grünberg, originally of Rheine, Germany, including his involvement with the Jewish Council and the Contact Afdeling (Contact Division) of the Westerbork transit camp. The collection consists of biographical materials, including identification papers, correspondence, and immigration documents; photographs; and material related to Westerbork including prisoner and deportation lists, administrative papers, post-war investigation papers regarding the Contact Afdeling, and a testimonial narrative about the Contact Afdeling and Westerbork.

Languages: Dutch, German, 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), Fritz Grünberg papers (2015.468.1), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The collection was donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2015 by Daniel James Gruen, Leana Ruth Gruen, and Cheryl Lee.

Related materials: A copy of the book *Deportaties : Westerbork, Theresiënstadt, Auschwitz, Gleiwitz* by S. van den Bergh, 1945 (D810.D5 B47 1945) was also donated and transferred to the USHMM library.

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

Processing history: Adam Fielding, September 2018

Biographical note

Fritz Grünberg (later Fred Gruen, b. 1911) was born on 15 December 1911 in Rheine, Germany to Adolf Wolf (1878-1941) and Helene (née Eichenwald, 1882-1939) Grünberg. He had one brother, Leo (1908-1987), and two sisters, Hedwig (b. 1909) and Bertha (b. 1916). All of his siblings immigrated to the United States prior to World War II. Fritz was a businessman and moved to Amsterdam around 1937. In 1939 he lost his German citizenship. He married to Ingeborg Köbner in 1941 and they divorced in 1947.

After the German invasion of the Netherlands in 1940, Fritz joined the Jewish Council (Joodse Raad), and in July 1942 was sent to work at the Westerbork transit camp where he registered the property of new prisoners. He was subsequently the leader in what was known as the Contact Afdeling (Contact Division). Despite working in the camp, the Contact Afdeling also claimed to have worked to keep people from deportation, sabotage trains, smuggle mail and photographs out of the camp, and falsify christening documents. After the liberation of the camp in April 1945, the Contact Afdeling was investigated and Fritz was treated as an outcast. He immigrated to the United States in November 1946 where he settled in San Francisco.

Scope and content of collection

The collection documents the Holocaust-era experiences of Fritz Grünberg, originally of Rheine, Germany, including his involvement with the Jewish Council and the Contact Afdeling (Contact Division) of the Westerbork transit camp. The collection consists of biographical materials, including identification papers, correspondence, and immigration documents; photographs; and material related to Westerbork including prisoner and deportation lists, administrative papers, post-war investigation papers regarding the Contact Afdeling, and a testimonial narrative about the Contact Afdeling and Westerbork.

Biographical materials include clippings; a small amount of correspondence; pre-war documents of Fritz's mother Helene Grünberg; identification papers such as driver's licenses, birth certificates, and citizen registration documents; immigration papers, and an undated poem in German.

Westerbork documents consist of documents related to the post-war investigation of the Contact Afdeling; miscellaneous documents including copies of letters Camp Commandant Albert Gemmeker, details of a lawsuit settled in 1944, memorandum, and blank identification cards; documents related Fritz's involvement with the Contact Afdeling including identification cards, travel permits, and ration cards; and several lists (some appear to be fragments) relating to prisoners at Westerbork, including deportations and individuals on the Stammliste who were protected from deportation, and individuals listed as "S" cases who held foreign passports or met other special criteria and were often exchanged for

German POWs; typed testimony about the Contact Afdeling's activities in Westerbork, signed by Fritz, Hans Eckmann, Hans Heinz Hanauer, and Walther Heijnemann.

Photographs consist of undated photographs of Fritz, likely taken in the 1940s.

System of arrangement

The collection is arranged as three series.

Series 1. Biographical material, 1922-1979

Series 2. Westerbork documents, 1940-1947

Series 3. Photographs, circa 1940s

Folders are arranged alphabetically and documents are arranged chronologically.

Indexing terms

Person:

Grünberg, Fritz, 1911-

Corporate:

Westerbork (Concentration camp)

Joodsche Raad voor Amsterdam.

Topical Subject:

World War, 1939-1945--Prisoners and prisons, Dutch--Registers.

World War, 1939-1945--Netherlands--Personal narratives.

World War, 1939-1945--Deportations from Netherlands.

Geography:

Westerbork (Netherlands)

Amsterdam (Netherlands)

United States--Emigration and immigration.

Genre/Form:

Photographs.

Testimonies.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1. Biographical material, 1922-1979

Box/Folder	Title
1.1	Clippings, 1962 and undated
1.2	Correspondence, 1944-1946 and undated
OS 1	Empty folders, 1940-1946
1.3	Grünberg, Helene, 1930-1939
1.4	Identification papers, 1922-1946
1.5	Immigration papers, 1946-1951
1.6	Immigration papers, financial, 1939-1946
1.7	Miscellaneous, 1951-1979

1.8	Poem, undated
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Series 2. Westerbork documents, 1940-1947

Box/Folder	Title
1.9	Contact Afdeling investigation, 1945-1947
1.10	Documents, letters, and memorandums, 1943-1944
1.11	Grünberg, Fritz: Westerbork documents, 1940-1945
1.12	Lists of prisoners and deportations, 1943-1945
1.13	Testimony: "The work of the Contact Afdeling (Contact Division) at Westerbork," 1945

Series 3. Photographs, circa 1940s

Box/Folder	Title
1.14	Photographs, circa 1940s