

RUTH ENGELHARDT SPIVACK MEYERS PAPERS, 1934-2015 (bulk 1934-1970) 2017.311.1

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

Title: Ruth Engelhardt Spivack Meyers papers

Dates: 1934-2015 (bulk 1934-1970)

Accession number: 2017.311.1

Creator: Engelhardt, Ruth (1934-2015)

Extent: 1.5 linear feet (2 boxes and 1 book enclosure)

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

Abstract: The Ruth Engelhardt Spivack Meyers papers consist of biographical material, correspondence, subject files, and photographs relating to the experiences of Ruth Engelhardt who lived in the Montmorency OSE home in France prior to being sent on a 1941 USCOM transport to the United States, where she lived with the Spivack family in Cleveland. After the war, her mother, Helene Engelhardt, immigrated to the United States and they lived in New York.

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), Ruth Engelhardt Spivack Meyers papers (2017.311.1), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: Debbie Smith and Glenn Meyers, Ruth's children, donated the Ruth Engelhardt Spivack Meyers papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2016.

Related materials: Debbie Smith and Glenn Meyers donated a charm bracket and charms (2017.311.2 a-e), an embroidered handkerchief (2017.311.3), a ORT Educational Center award with a box (2017.411.4 a-b), a jewelry box with lock and key (2017.211.5 a-c), a red felt heart with the name 'Ruth' (2017.311.6), and a silver napkin ring engraved with the name 'Ruth' (2017.311.7).

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

Processing history: Morgan Voth, March 2018

Biographical note

Ruth Engelhardt (1934-2015) was born in Frankfurt, Germany, to Helene (Lena) Engelhardt. Ruth's father, whose name she never learned, was Jewish and, according to Helene, was killed on Christmas Day 1933. Helene was not Jewish but was politically opposed the Nazi party. A month after Ruth's birth, they moved to the Netherlands, and then to Paris. In 1940, Helene was imprisoned for stealing military supplies and later kept as a foreign prisoner at Gurs. Ruth was separated from her mother and spent time in the Montmorency OSE (Œuvre de secours aux enfants) home in France. In 1942 she arrived in the United States on the *Mouzinho*, a USCOM (US Committee for the Care of European Children) transport. Ruth was placed with Joe and Gladys Spivack, who lived in Cleveland with their daughter Sherry. They were told that Ruth's mother would likely not survive the war, and they could adopt Ruth when the war was over. In September 1943, Helene was released from Gurs and went to Le Chambon before going to Switzerland where she stayed until the end of the war. Helene immigrated to the United States in 1947 and Ruth moved to New York to be with her mother. Ruth referred to Joe and Gladys as her parents and to Sherry as her sister for the rest of her life. In 1956, Ruth married Tony Meyers and they had three children. They lived on Long Island, where Tony ran a bait and tackle shop. Ruth and Tony both passed away in 2015.

Scope and content of collection

The Ruth Engelhardt Spivack Meyers papers consist of biographical material, correspondence, subject files, and photographs relating to the experiences of Ruth Engelhardt who lived in the Montmorency OSE home in France prior to being sent on a 1941 USCOM transport to the United States, where she lived with the Spivack family in Cleveland. After the war, her mother, Helene Engelhardt, immigrated to the United States and they lived in New York.

Biographical materials include a certificate of naturalization for the United States, a United States passport, and ID photographs for Helene Engelhardt as well as a baby book, birth certificate, certificate of naturalization for the United States, and a death certificate for Ruth Engelhardt.

Correspondence includes Ruth's wartime and post-war correspondence with her mother. During the war they were able to exchange several Red Cross letters and after the war Ruth wrote weekly letters to her mother. This series also includes letters from Joe, Gladys, and Sherry Spivack to Helene and Ruth.

Subject files include school records relating to Ruth's education and career as a nurse and certificates for Helene and Ruth's inscriptions on the American Immigrant Wall of Honor from The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation. This series also includes material regarding the Spivack's involvement in the Organization for Rehabilitation through Training (ORT). They were very involved in Jewish philanthropy.

Photographs include wartime photographs of Ruth and the Spivack's and post-war photographs of Ruth as well as several photo books and a photo album.

System of arrangement

Ruth Engelhardt Spivack Meyers papers are arranged as four series:

- Series 1: Biographical material, 1943-2015
- Series 2: Correspondence, approximately 1943-1969
- Series 3: Subject files, approximately 1946-1999
- Series 4: Photographs, approximately 1934-2005

Indexing terms

Meyers, Ruth Engelhardt Spivack.

Engelhardt, Helene.

Spivack, Joseph.

Spivack, Gladys.

Spivack, Sherry.

Oeuvre de secours aux enfants (France)

Gurs (Concentration camp)

Mouzinho (Ship)

United States Committee for the Care of European Children.

Refugee Children--United States.

World War, 1939-1945.

Cleveland (Ohio)

Paris (France)

Switzerland.

New York (N.Y)

Correspondence.

Passports.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Biographical material, 1943-2015

Box/Folder	Title
1.1	Engelhardt, Helene, 1953-1967
1.2-1.3	Engelhardt, Ruth, 1943-2015 (2 folders)

Series 2: Correspondence, approximately 1943-1969

Box/Folder	Title
1.4	Engelhardt, Helene, 1967

1.5-1.7	Engelhardt, Ruth, 1945-1969 (3 folders)
1.8	Spivack family, approximately 1947-1969
1.9	Red Cross, 1943-1945
1.10	Miscellaneous, approximately 1946

Series 3: Subject files, approximately 1946-1999

Box/Folder	Title
1.11-1.14, 2.1-2.2	School records, approximately 1946-1981 (6 Folders)
2.3	Organization for Rehabilitation through Training (ORT), approximately 1983-1994
2.4	The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc., approximately 1996-1999

Series 4: Photographs, approximately 1934-2005

Box/Folder	Title
2.5-2.8	Engelhardt, Ruth, approximately 1934-2005 (4 folders)
2.9	Spivack family, approximately 1940s
2.10-2.15	Photo books, approximately 1950s (6 folders)
BE 1 & 2.16	Photo album, approximately 1940s-1950s
2.17	Miscellaneous, approximately 1940s-1950s