

ROTTENBERG FAMILY PAPERS, 1913-1966
2018.661.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
Washington, DC 20024-2126
Tel. (202) 479-9717
e-mail: reference@ushmm.org

Descriptive summary

Title: Rottenberg family papers

Dates: 1913-1966

Accession number: 2018.661.1

Creator: Rottenberg (Family : Vienna, Austria)

Extent: 6 folders

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 the Rottenberg family of Vienna, Austria. Included are biographical materials and photographs of Eddy (born Elias) and Bertha Rottenberg and their son Bobby (born Robert), all of whom survived deportation to Auschwitz from the Mechelen transit camp by jumping off the train in April 1943. The collection also includes material related to Bertha's family, the Berkelhammers.

Languages: German, English, Polish

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), Rottenberg family papers (2018.661.1), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The collection was donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2018 by Audrey Rogers Furfaro and Scott Rogers, the children of Robert Rogers.

Separated material: The bloody shirt worn by Bobby Rogers during his escape from the train was also donated (2018.661.2)

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, December 2019

Biographical note

Robert “Bobby” Rogers (1928-2005) was born Robert Rottenberg on 31 December 1928 in Vienna, Austria to Elias and Bertha Rottenberg. Elias David Rottenberg (Eddy, 1906-1981) was born on 2 February 1906 in Stanisławów, Poland (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine) to Hersch Leib (1879-1949) and Golde (née Reinisch). Bertha Rothenberg (1909-1992) was born Bertha Berkelhammer recte Holländer on 25 June 1909 to Abraham b. 1885) and Sara (née Gutherz, b. 1888) Berkelhammer recte Holländer. She had one sister, Paula. Eddy and Bertha married on 15 January 1928 in Vienna.

The family lived in Vienna, but after the events of Kristallnacht in November 1938, the Rottenbergs fled to Brussels, Belgium. They were arrested in February 1943 and sent to the Mechelen transit camp. They were deported from Mechelen on 19 April 1943 on Transport XX to Auschwitz. During the trip, the family managed to open a window and jumped from the train. Bobby was shot twice by Nazi guards on the train. He was reunited with his parents and they hid in a barn. His father was also shot in the leg. They sold Eddy and Bertha’s wedding rings to the farmer. Bobby and his parents took separate trains back to Brussels where they survived in hiding until liberation in September 1944. Bobby’s bloody shirt from that night remained with the family for the rest of their lives.

The family lived in Brussels until December 1948 when they immigrated to the United States aboard the SS *Ernie Pyle*. Robert changed his name to Bobby after serving in the United States Army in the early 1950s.

Scope and content of collection

The collection documents the Holocaust-era experiences of the Rottenberg family of Vienna, Austria. Included are biographical materials and photographs of Eddy (born Elias) and Bertha Rottenberg and their son Bobby (born Robert), all of whom survived deportation to Auschwitz from the Mechelen transit camp by jumping off the train in April 1943. The collection also includes material related to Bertha’s family, the Berkelhammers.

Biographical material includes birth and marriage certificates, identification cards, a 1931 letter to Bertha authorizing her to trade in mineral oils and spirits, Eddy’s Austrian passport, an Austrian transit card, and four slips from the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien regarding grave site locations for members of the Rottenberg and Berkelhammer families. Also included are Bertha and Eddy’s Declaration of Intention forms after their immigration to the United States in 1948.

Photographs consist of pre-war, wartime, and post-war depictions of the Rottenberg family and Bertha’s family the Berkelhammers. Included are depictions of Bertha as a child with her parents Abraham and Sara and her sister Paula; wartime and post-war images of Robert and his parents in Brussels, Eddy’s father Hersch Leib Rottenberg, someone who may have been a priest Bobby knew while in hiding, and Bobby in his U.S. Army uniform.

System of arrangement

The collection is arranged as two series.

Series 1. Biographical material, 1921-1966

Series 2. Photographs, 1913-circa 1952

Folders are arranged alphabetically and documents are arranged chronologically.

Indexing terms

Person:

Rogers, Bobby, 1928-2005.

Rottenberg, Elias, 1906-1981.

Rottenberg, Bertha, 1909-1992.

Topical Subject:

Jews--Vienna--Austria.

Geography:

Brussels (Belgium)

Vienna (Austria)

United States--Emigration and immigration.

Genre/Form:

Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1. Biographical material, 1921-1966

Folder	Title
1 of 6	Berkelhammer family, 1928 and undated
2 of 6	Rottenberg, Bertha, 1930-1949
3 of 6	Rottenberg, Eddy, 1921-1966
4 of 6	Rottenberg family, 1929-1964

Series 2. Photographs, 1913-circa 1952

Folder	Title
5 of 6	Berkelhammer family, 1913-circa 1920
6 of 6	Rottenberg family, circa 1940-circa 1952