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Guide to the Offenbach Archival Depot Collection 1946-1951



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.MS1393
Title	Offenbach Archival Depot. Collection
Date	1946-1951
Size	1 linear foot (2 boxes)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract The Offenbach Archival Depot Collection contains bookplates, stamps, and monograms, arranged by countries in Eastern Europe, the Americas, and Western Europe. These bookplates, stamps, and monograms served as identifiers in restoring materials stolen by the Nazis to their original repositories following World War II.

Information on Use

Access

This collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Offenbach Archival Depot. Collection , [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Historical Note

Captain Isaac Bencowitz was a Russian émigré who graduated from the University of Chicago in 1922 with a degree in Chemistry and completed a M.A. (1922) and PhD. (1924) at Columbia University. As a Captain in the U.S. Army's Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives division (which formed part of OMGUS – Office of Military Government, U.S. Zone (Germany)), he was responsible for the Offenbach Archival Depot from May to October of 1946. He developed a method of identifying books and artifacts stolen by the Nazis to allow for their return to their original repositories.

The Offenbach Archival Depot held millions of looted books that were successfully restored to their repositories between 1944 and 1951 as part of the U.S. Book Restitution effort. Volumes that could not be traced to a repository were given to legitimate Jewish successor organizations.

In 1927, Captain Bencowitz began a thirty-four year career at the Texas Gulf Sulphur Company. He was a member of the American Chemistry Society, the American Institute for Chemical Engineering, and the New York Academy of Sciences.

Scope Note

The Offenbach Archival Depot Collection contains bookplates, stamps, and monograms that served as identifiers in restoring stolen materials to their original repositories following World War II. The bookplates are arranged by the country of the repository, with Eastern European countries in the first volume, and the United States, Western European countries, and Argentina in the second volume. The second volume also contains stamps and monograms.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

Subject Headings

- Bencowitz, Isaac
- World War, 1939-1945 – Destruction and pillage
- Bookplates
- Restitution and indemnification claims (1933-) – Germany
- Cultural Property
- World War, 1939-1945 – Confiscations and contributions

INVENTORY

Box 1

Volume 1: Library markings

Box 2

Volume 2: Library markings