

Haakon Maurice Chevalier Diary MS-0403

Special Collections & University Archives

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Contributing Institution: Special Collections & University Archives

Title: Haakon Maurice Chevalier Diary

Creator: Chevalier, Haakon Maurice

Identifier/Call Number: MS-0403

Physical Description: 0.20 Linear Feet

Date (inclusive): 1945-1946

Language of Material: English , French .

Scope and Contents

Haakon Chevalier's diary is comprised of two hand-written notebooks kept during his time working as a French-English translator at the Nuremberg war crimes trials in 1945 and 1946, and a partial transcript of the notebooks' English-language portions. The diaries begin on the first day of the trial, November 20, 1945, and end on March 17, 1946. His account includes vivid descriptions of trial participants (including facial expressions while testifying, unusual physical features, and personality traits), and personal interpretations of testimony. He mentions challenges to the court's competence, pleas entered by the defendants, Nazi treatment of Jewish peoples in occupied territories, the Anschluss, and myriad other topics, including individual cases against Goering, Ribbentrop, Streicher, and others. Descriptions of day and weekend trips Chevalier took to Paris and Prague during the course of the trial are also included, as well as doodles, notes he wrote to himself, addresses, and scores from card games.

Arrangement Note

Two notebooks and accompanying transcriptions in portfolio.

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Source of Acquisition

Willis Thompson

Related Materials

Hitler Memorabilia Collection

Preferred Citation

Identification of item, folder title, box number, Haakon Maurice Chevalier Diary, Special Collections and University Archives, San Diego State University Library.

Biographical Note

Haakon Maurice Chevalier was a translator and professor of French at the University of California-Berkeley. After working as a translator for the French government at the first meeting of the United Nations in 1945, he was asked by the War Department to serve as interpreter at the Nuremberg Trials. He was later responsible (with Leon Dostert) for the introduction of simultaneous interpretation at the United Nations. Chevalier was friends with the atomic physicist Robert Oppenheimer; these relations led to his appearance before the House Subcommittee on Un-American Activities. He later authored a memoir of these events, entitled *Oppenheimer: The Story of a Friendship*.

Accruals

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Subjects and Indexing Terms

World War, 1939-1945--War Criminals

Nuremberg Trial of Major German War Criminals, Nuremberg, Germany, 1945-1946--Personal narratives

Personal Papers

