

**U DX405 Photograph album relating to International Voluntary Service
for Peace [1945-1949]**

Accession number: 2019/28

Historical Background: The International Voluntary Service for Peace was formed in the 1930s as the British branch of Service Civil International. It sent several units of volunteers to Europe in 1944 and 1945 to work on civilian relief in Greece, Italy, Germany, France and The Netherlands.

Frank Reginald Thickins was born in Newport, Monmouthshire, in 1908, with four older siblings: Alf, Beatrice, Frederick and Ernest.

Reginald worked in the UK during the Second World War before applying to volunteer with the IVSP relief teams in early 1944, but was not immediately released for relief work by the Ministry of Labour. In September 1945, however, he was selected for appointment to the next unit to be sent to Europe. In November 1945 he joined IVSP Unit 5 and travelled to Germany.

Unit 5 was initially assigned to welfare work amongst displaced persons at Wenterf, near Hamburg, in a camp previously run by the Friends Ambulance Unit; although the unit felt their work there was useful, they also felt that the camp was almost running itself and their efforts might be better spent elsewhere. By February 1946 the unit had moved to Berlin, where they worked in conjunction with the Salvation Army and were responsible for four refugee camps (U DIVS/7/1/1). Reginald's report of the journey to Berlin, which included smuggling a German woman into the American sector of the city, can be found in U DIVS/7/3/3. During his time in Berlin Reginald was responsible for the clothing store which distributed clothing and shoes to displaced persons and refugees. He was appointed leader of Unit 5 in August 1948, and stayed with the unit until its return to Britain in early 1949.

Reginald Thickins died in 1985.

Custodial history: The depositor is the niece of Reginald Thickins.

Description: Contains photos taken during IVSP service in Germany after the Second World War.

Extent: 0.05 linear metres

Related material: Records of International Voluntary Service (IVS), previously International Voluntary Service for Peace (U DIVS). A file of correspondence from IVSP to Reg Thickins survives at U DIVS/7/3/2. Reports from Thickins and others describing the work of Unit 5 can be found in U DIVS/7/3/3 and U DIVS/7/3/5.

Archives of Service Civil International, <http://archives.sci.ngo/>.

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Photograph album relating to IVSP

U DX405/1

Photograph album relating to IVSP activities

[1945-1949]

Contains photos taken by F. Reginald Thickins when he was on IVSP service in Germany after the Second World War, as well as several postcards of Berlin. Images include IVSP volunteers, at work and during leisure time; IVSP trucks; German countryside; checkpoints; volunteers distributing food to children; children in a camp; displaced persons boarding trains; war damaged bridges and buildings, including the Berlin Palace and Brandenburg Gate.

1 item