



# FOR THE PRIDE AND JOY OF ERETZ YISRAEL

The Untold Story of a “Nameless” Hero of Israel - Collection  
Overview

By David M. Baron  
2019

An Immigrant · A Wrestler · A Secret Agent

**Zalman Sigmund Unreich On - Collection Overview**

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This photo was taken around the early 1950's of Zalman in the Israeli Embassy or known at the time as the Israeli Legation in Prague or the Israeli Foreign Relations Office. Zalman is in his office, where every important postal service or parcel was reviewed and sealed by Zalman with a special sealing wax that prevented tampering and stamped. In the background there's a photo of Moshe Sharett, Prime Minister of Israel at the time.

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The Untold Story of a "Nameless" Hero of "Eretz Yisrael" is a work of nonfiction.

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First Edition

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## Zalman Sigmund Unreich On - Collection Overview

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**Date:** August 13, 2019

**Creator:** David M. Baron

**Brief:** This is a brief summary of the life of my grandfather, Zalman On (Unreich), who lived from 1912 to 1978. Growing up I heard bits and pieces of stories about him and his heroism in helping to found the state of Israel, but the details were previously shrouded in mystery. After many months of research, and with the amazing power of the internet, I have pieced together a detailed biography based on interviews, written stories, photos, letters, and some vintage historical film, learning a lot about this incredible hero. Zalman has always been a mystery - no one knows where he came from or what his next move might be; one moment he appeared to enter a room and next nobody seemed to know where he went. Like a real life “James Bond” - there is a Hebrew word used to describe Zalman, pronounced “al-mo-nim” (אלמונים), which means “undercover” or “anonymous” or “nameless.” He has never been recognized for much of the amazing deeds he undertook – until now.

**Tags:** Israel, Palestine, Displaced Person, Camps, Holocaust, Jewish Culture, Media, Jewish Heritage, American Jews, Labor, Zionism, 20th century, Pioneers, Yiddish, World War II, Diplomatic Relations, Immigrant, and more.

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### Profile:



<b>Birth Name:</b>	Zalman Sigmund Unreich (On)
<b>Also Known As:</b>	Zalman On
<b>Call Names:</b>	Z., S., Salman, Sigmund, Zigmund, Zalmi, Salmi, Sidney or last name spellings: Unreikh or Unrieck
<b>Age at Death:</b>	66 years
<b>Father/Mother:</b>	Rabbi Sulim (Shalom) Jonas Unreich and Regina Rakhel (Rachel) (surname Grünhut)
<b>Siblings</b>	Reitzi, Moshe, David, Alex, Shlomo, Manny and Tzvi Yehuda

### Biographical Note:

Zalman On (Unreich) (September 21, 1912 – April 21, 1978) was a nameless hero by recorded history, and his whereabouts were often unknown. He died at the relatively young age of 66. These are his untold stories and the events surrounding this unsung hero of “Eretz Yisrael.” Remarkably, Zalman was best known as an exceptional athlete, as a champion medalist in freestyle and Greco Roman wrestling, but he was so much more: a fierce protector of the Jewish community, an immigrant, founder of a youth Zionist movement and a member of Israeli intelligence organizations, a diplomat, Statesmen, rescuer of Jews and more. Zalman contributed in many ways during two historical periods: the pre-State Jewish community in Palestine and post-State of Israel in and after 1948.

Zalman was born in Bratslavia, Czechoslovakia (now Slovakia), to parents Regina Rakhel (Rachel) and Rabbi Sulim (Shalom) Jonas Unreich and he was one of eight children. Before World War II, in his youth, Zalman lived in Czechoslovakia. His family was extremely athletic. Indeed, his older brother, David Unreich, was a world-famous wrestler in the 1930s, and Zalman himself was also recognized as a star wrestler. He competed against champion wrestling athletes at the time, including the person who later founded the martial arts called Krav Maga. As time went on, however, he and his family experienced significant Anti-Semitism. The experience of dealing with this Anti-Semitism laid the foundation for his extraordinary story. Sadly, his parents and oldest sister ultimately perished in Auschwitz during the Holocaust. His remaining siblings fled Europe and immigrated to various other countries. He and a few of his brothers immigrated to Palestine in 1933.

In Palestine, Zalman played an instrumental role in the creation of the State of Israel and took part in various high-profile events. Beginning with serving in the Notrim, the Jewish Police Force pre-state Israel and later joined the Haganah, known as the Jewish paramilitary organization during the British Mandate. Later he served in several leadership roles in the Histadrut, and after the founding of the state of Israel, he served his country as diplomat and director of security, eventually working for a so-called Independent Tourism Agency at what’s known today as the Ben Gurion International Airport. In Palestine, Zalman met and eventually married (Tova Gertrude Sussman) and together they had a son and two daughters.

When you read about the personalities involved in the founding of the state of Israel, such as David Ben-Gurion, Moshe Sharett, and Golda Meir, you will hear no mention of Zalman, but he was an

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influential member of this esteemed group. He participated in secret missions while with foreign dignitaries like Jan Masaryk, who is known as a key Czechoslovakian diplomat and politician. He had close relationships with master spies, like Reuven Shiloah, founder of the Mossad Israeli Secret Service Intelligence Agency and Eli Cohen. Zalman played a key role during the Israel arms negotiations with Czechoslovakia, finding the paratrooper Haviva Reik remains, rescuing Jews and later was a recognized diplomat, welcoming foreign dignitaries and diplomats at the Histadrut Tourist & Travel office. Zalman influenced so many and his interests remained diverse. He was philanthropic and helped to start youth sports organizations in Israel, acknowledged for saving holy Jewish artifacts and he even had a friendship with one of the most iconic musical artists of all time, Frank Sinatra.

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### Scope and Content:

Zalman's collection contains photos, correspondence, letters, newspaper clippings, and historical films. Spanning multiple languages, such as English, Hebrew, German, Yiddish, Hungarian, Czech and Latin. The artifact collection includes approximately 180 photos, 40 correspondence, 10 newspaper articles, 20 documents, 5 media (films or audio) and over 60 named social connections. We have about 60 chronological noted events (i.e. event dates, descriptions, places and sources) and still counting of Zalman, spanning two historical periods: the pre-State Jewish community in Palestine and post-State of Israel in and after 1948. Available upon request.

### Arrangement:

The collection is divided into five series or boxes:

Series I: Photographs (1900 – 1978)

Series II: Scrapbook and Photos (1947-1950s)

Series III: Wrestling Artifacts and Documents (1920s – 1970s)

Series IV: Correspondence (1920s – 1970s)

Series V: Newspaper Clippings (1937 – 1977)

Series VI: Books

### Detailed Description of the Collection:

#### **Series I: Photographs (1900 – 1978) Box 1**

Folder Description

- 1 1920s Bratislava
- 2 1930s Palestine, Israel
- 3 1940s Palestine, Israel
- 4 1950 – 1960s Israel
- 5 1970s – Israel
- 6 Frank Sinatra
- 7 Unreich Family Photos
- 8 Gertie Sussmann On Photos

#### **Series II: Scrapbook and Photos (1947-1950s) Box 2**

Folder Description

- 1 Prague Diplomatic Photos
- 2 Haganah Papers
- 3 Czech Republic Secret Police File
- 4 Haganah Scrapbook

#### **Series III: Wrestling Artifacts and Documents (1920s – 1970s) Box 3**

Folder Description

- 1 Wrestling Photos and Olympic Medals
- 2 1926 Czech Republic Fitness Booklet
- 3 Histadrut Visitors Book



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- 4 Military Badges
- 5 Passports and Diplomatic Papers
- 6 Hapoel Award Certificate

### Series IV: Correspondence (1920s – 1970s) Box 4

### Series V: Newspaper Clippings (1937 – 1977) Box 5

Folder Description

- 1 1937 Newspaper Article
- 2 1938 Newspaper Article
- 3 1943 Newspaper Article
- 4 1944 Newspaper Article
- 5 1945 Newspaper Article
- 6 1947 Newspaper Article
- 7 1959 Newspaper Article
- 8 1966 Newspaper Article
- 9 1973 Newspaper Article
- 10 1977 Newspaper Article
- 11 Sports, Newspapers and Promotional Papers

### Series VI: Books Box 6

Folder Description

- 1. Guard and Sport (המשמר וספורט) in Hebrew – Palamach – 1930's
- 2. Wife of the Israel minister to Prague and Warsaw by Miriam Kubovy – 1950's in Hebrew
- 3. Story About the Family by Shlomo Unreich – 2008 in Hebrew

### Index Terms:

This collection has been indexed under the following terms:

#### Organizations:

Bratislava Maccabi Youth group

Bratislava Olympics Team

Shomrim – a neighborhood watch group that guarded and defended the Jewish Community

Hapoel Tel Aviv

Notrim – the Jewish Palestine Police Force pre-state Israel

Sherut Yediot – was the intelligence and counter-espionage arm of the Haganah

Haganah – known as the Jewish paramilitary organization during the British Mandate

The Histadrut

Shai – the unit within the Haganah that predated the Mossad

The Mossad

Israel European Embassy in Prague and Russia

Histadrut Tourist & Travel at Lod Airport

#### Places:

Austria

Czech Republic



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Israel  
Palestine  
Slovakia  
United States

### Subjects:

American Jews  
Diplomatic Relations  
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945) – Europe and Personal Narratives  
Immigration  
International amateur boxing & wrestling  
Israel  
Jewish Heritage  
Labor Union  
Palestine  
Refugees, Jewish  
The post-State of Israel after 1948.  
The pre-State Jewish community in Palestine before 1948  
World War II  
Wrestling – Israel  
Zionism

### Document Types:

Clippings  
Correspondence  
Photographs  
Scrapbooks  
Video recordings

### Persons:

Important names identified in Zalman's archive collection.

Alan King (born Irwin Alan Kniberg)	Dr. Uriel Otto Doron (Felix)	General Sir James Newton
Aron Grünhut	Edgar Krasa	Rodney Moore
Asher Ben-Natan	Ehud Avriel (George A. Uiberall or Überall)	Golomb
Barbara Sinatra	Einhorn	Hannah Senesh
Beba Idelson	Elchanan Gafni	Haviva Reik
David "Dufi" Unreich (Ben Shalom)	Eli Eliyahu Ben-Shaul Cohen	Hirschel
David Ben-Gurion	Emma Lazaroff Schaver	Imrich (Imi) Lichtenfeld
David Dubinsky	François Mitterrand	Israel (Yisrael) Carmi (born Weinman)
David Remez	Frank Sinatra	Issac (Yitzhak) Berman
Doctor Yonzman	Frantisek Kraus	Isser Harel
Dov Hoz	Gaynor Israel Jacobson	Jack Zabel from Maccabi Berlin
Dov Hozal		Jakub Gazit

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Jan Masaryk	Miriam Kubovy	Walter Reuther
John Greville Stanley Beith	Moshe Sharett	Walworth Barbour
Joseph (Yosef) Dekel (Kraessmer)	Ogden Reid	Willy Brandt
Juraj Revesz	Rabbi Yaakov Herzog	Yaakov Levinson
Kadmon	Rafael Halperin	Yehuda Levinger (Rabbi)
Konrad Adenauer	Rafi (Raphael) Friedl	Yeruham Meshel
L. Feldstein	Regina Rakhel (or Rachel)	Yeshayahu Shaiké Dan
Lena Küchler-Silberman	Unreich (Grünhut)	Yigal Allon
Leon Kubowitzki (later Aryeh Leon Kubovy)	Reichenberg from MIT in Budapest	Yisrael Galili
Leonard Leon	Reuven Shiloah	Yisrael Kesar
Maurice (Moshe) Enright (Unreich)	Rolf Friedemann Pauls	Yitzhak Ben-Zvi
Michael Hutter	Shaul Avigur	Yosef Sprinzak
Michael Kubovy	Shimon Orenstein	Yossi (Josi) Gerson
Mickey Herschel from Vienna	Shlomo Goren (Mordechai Goren)	Zdeněk Toman
Mickey Marcus	Sulim (Shalom) Jonas	Zeev Sherf
Miriam (Mira) Unreich (Blumenstock)	Unreich	Zeev Vilém Shek (Scheck)
	Theodor Braun, MD, PhD	Zvi Ben Yaakov (Jindrich or Heinrich Grünhut)
	Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk	
	Vladimír Clementis	