

Findaid 2/115

A.0529

Otto Busch

**Compiled by S. Vollmer
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National Archives of Namibia
Findaid 2/115: A.0529 Otto Busch
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Private Accession A.0529 Otto Busch

Introduction

Otto Busch worked for the German government as a secret agent during the colonial time in German Southwest Africa and the Northern Cape. His reports that were sent to the German Consul in Cape Town (Dr Friedrich von Lindequist) cover intelligence work and official journeys to collect information about the southern border situation of the colony during the German-Namibian war of 1904-1908, as well as about Angola around the outbreak of the First World War, 1914. This accession includes several manuscripts of reports and of two essays, additional financial accounts and a book with photos and pictures he made or bought during his travels. All reports are typed or handwritten in German language.

The material consists of 14 folders and one photo album.

Related material

It can be assumed that Busch's reports were forwarded by the German Consul Cape Town to Berlin, either to the Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*), its colonial department (*Kolonialabteilung / Reichskolonialamt*) or the military (*Kommando der Schutztruppen*). However, so far such reports have not yet been located in the archives of the Foreign Office (*Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Berlin*) or the Reichskolonialamt files (*Bundesarchiv, Berlin*), while the military files are known to have perished entirely in World War II.

The *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes* (PAAA) has an archival fonds Generalkonsulat Kapstadt that might be useful to research in this connection, however no detailed finding aid of that fonds exists (see NAN Foreign Findaid D/1/55). Busch's letters from Angola can be found in PAAA, Luanda 3 "Südwest, Krieg 1914" (information from J. Zollmann, 11.9.2013).

Provenance and ownership

The material had remained in family custody and was deposited at the National Archives by Mr Willi Busch in 1989. It remains the property of the depositor.

Werner Hillebrecht, 2013

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|----------|---|----------------|---------|
| 1 | Erlebnisse und Skizzen aus meiner Studienreise auf kaufmännischem Gebiet von Südwest nach Angola | 1914 | 21 fol. |
| | Journal of Busch's journey into Angola to study the possibility of labour recruitment for diamond fields of German South West Africa. This report also includes broad descriptions about character and landscape of Angola during the early 20th century. | | |
| 2 | Erlebnisse und Eindrücke während meiner Tätigkeit im vaterländischen Interesse in Portugiesisch-Westafrika (Angola) von Anfang August bis 24. Dezember 1914 | 1914 | 60 fol. |
| | Journal of O. Busch's journey into Angola in order to organize the supply of German South West Africa with provisions during World War I. It contains Busch's impressions of different groups in Angola and the treatment of Germans during the war. | | |
| 3 | Erinnerungen an Afrika 1897 - 1900 | 1897 -
1900 | 59 fol. |
| | A photo album including only some images from Namibia; most photos are from South Africa and Madeira or the Canary Islands.. | | |
| 4 | Briefe an das Kaiserliche Generalkonsulat | 1906 | 16 fol. |
| | Letters addressed to the German Consulate in Cape Town, regarding to offences against Busch during his third journey. | | |
| 5 | Meine Reise von Keetmanshoop nach Warmbad | | 13 fol. |
| | Journal of his journey from Keetmanshoop to Warmbad. Busch is describing general conditions and tries to give advice for future travelers. | | |
| 6 | Meine Reise von Kapstadt nach Rahmannsdrift am Oranjefluss | | |
| | Report on his journey from Cape Town to Ramansdrift, marked with broad descriptions about the way to travel. | ca. 1905 | 14 fol. |

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| 7 | Meine Reise von Port Nolloth nach der Oranjefflussmündung (erste Reise) | 1905 | 12 fol. |
| | Journal of Busch's first journey from Port Nolloth to the Orange River. The English government blocked the border for all transport into G.S.W.A., Busch was sent by the German government to find a way to cross the border. This journal is mainly about his experiences with the Boers who lived near the border. | | |
| 8 | Berichte über den Grenzschnuggel | 1905 | 32 fol. |
| | Report on various border violations, smuggling and stock theft across the eastern border of German South West Africa for the military commando in Keetmanshoop. This file also includes some recommendations on rules and new regulations to secure the border. | | |
| 9 | Meine Reise an die Grenze im Juli 1905 | 1905 | 16 fol. |
| | Report on his journey from Upington to the border in order to look into smuggling and general conditions at the border. Problems between several groups - Boers, Oorlam groups and German settlers - are highlighted, Busch is looking for ways to solve these problems. | | |
| 10 | Reise von Upington nach Hasuur | 1905 | 57 fol. |
| | Report on Busch's journey from Upington to Hasuur in connection with smuggling, a.o. Scotty Smith. Often similar to number 13, but more details about several persons - especially spies and smugglers. | | |
| 11 | Meine dritte Reise nach der britisch-deutschen Ostgrenze im Geheimdienste des Kaiserlichen Generalkonsulats, Kapstadt | 1906 | 51 fol. |
| | Report on Busch's journey along the eastern border on behalf of the German government, including descriptions of cattle raiding and problems arising between settlers and Oorlam groups. He insists on better control and finally a closing of the border to stop smuggling and raiding. Busch also highlighted several transport problems, which could have been avoided through more governmental engagement. | | |

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| 12 | General von Trotha | 1906 | 5 fol. |
| | <p>Description of the general's actions as seen through the eyes of a German settler. In his eyes the treatment of von Trotha's decisions through the German press and the government were not realistic. According to this article the general used all opportunities and will remain a hero for the colony.</p> | | |
| 13 | Transportverhältnisse an der östlichen Grenze unserer Kolonie | 1906 | 13 fol. |
| | <p>Report on transport across the eastern border from Upington to Hasuur. Indicators and examples are listed and advice for a reorganization is given by Busch. Also the influence of several transport companies is criticised.</p> | | |
| 14 | Deutschlands Kleinkrieg | 1906 | 11 fol. |
| | <p>Article about the Herero and Nama wars and conditions in which German troops were operating, mainly focussing on transport problems due to the environmental conditions.</p> | | |
| 15 | Abrechnungen | 1905-1915 | 12 fol. |
| | <p>Financial accounts on his various expeditions 1905-1915, without further comments.</p> | | |