



Guide to the Eduard Seelig papers

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Title:

Eduard Seelig papers

Date:

1938-1939, 1946, 1983

Collection Number:

1988-1294

Creator:

Eduard Seelig
Klaus Seelig, compiler

Extent:

1 folder

Languages:

German, English, Hebrew

Repository:

Holocaust Center of Northern California
121 Steuart Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Abstract:

The Eduard Seelig papers document the imprisonment of Mr. Eduard Seelig of Halle, Germany and the confiscation by the Nazi government of the retail business of which he was a partner. The collection includes nine letters written to his wife while Mr. Seelig was imprisoned, from July 1938 to March 1939, as well as biographical material created by his son, Klaus Seelig, who compiled the collection.

INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS

Access:

There are no restrictions on access to this collection

Preferred citation:

[Item] [date], Eduard Seelig papers. 1938-1983, Holocaust Center of Northern California, San Francisco, California

Acquisition information:

The collection was donated to the Holocaust Center of Northern California by Klaus B. Seelig, son of Eduard Seelig, in January 1984.

Processing history:

Processed by Judith Janec, December 2007

Biography:

Eduard Selig was born on May 23, 1868 in Leipzig to Louis Seelig, born August 18, 1829, and Rosa Seelig nee Hirschfeld, born December 13, 1844 in Hohenems (Vorarlberg). Both died in Halle on Saale.

Eduard Seelig attended school in Leipzig and became an apprentice in a curtain factory in Plauen, and later in a textile printing plant in Leipzig. He then went to Berlin where he acquired further knowledge of knitted goods, curtains and carpets.

In 1888 he entered the firm of A. Huth & Co. as a junior employee. He married Martha Huth, the daughter of the company founder. In 1903 he became manager, and a full partner in 1906. His training, expertise and ability contributed significantly to the growth of the company. Among other things he took charge of purchasing knitted goods from the factories in Saxony, and he traveled frequently to Istanbul to purchase oriental carpets. He was a specialist in oriental carpets and the enormous carpet department of the new store contained a large selection of them.

He held a number of honorary offices in the Halle community, was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, and until 1933 presiding and/or associate judge of the Commercial Court.

Mr. and Mrs. Seelig had three daughters – Hildegard, born in Halle in 1904, Lilli, born in Halle in 1905, and Erika, born in Halle in 1908 – and a son, Klaus Seelig, born in Halle in 1919.

After several difficult years under Nazi rule, A. Huth & Co. was attacked by Nazis early on the morning of June 30, 1938, and its owners, Eduard Seelig, Dr. Hermann Huth, and Dr. Hans Volhard (Eduard Seelig's son-in-law – the husband of Hildegard) were imprisoned for the crime of "Unterstützung der Tarnung juedischer Geschaeftsbetriebe vom 22 April 1938 (Helping to Conceal Jewish Business Enterprises)".

Mr. Seelig spent 9 months in prison. According to his son, he suffered greatly from the psychological and physical mistreatment to which he was subjected, and from which he never recovered. Relatives in Belgium sheltered him and his wife. Eduard Seelig died on February 14, 1941. His wife, Martha, died in London in 1969.

Collection Scope and Content summary:

This collection primarily comprises correspondence written by Mr. Seelig from July 1938 to March 1939, while he was imprisoned in Halle by the Nazi government. The letters are written to his wife Martha, and concern business and family matters. They illustrate his experiences during imprisonment, and include thanks to his wife for providing good food, clean laundry and funds for his prison account. The letters also describe plans for future emigration and for selling of real estate and personal property. The letters reveal Mr. Seelig's close and loving relationship with his wife, and his concern for the well being of his children and grandchildren.

The letters document the increasing marginalization of German Jewish citizens and their eroding status in Germany in late 1938 and early 1939. Mr. Seelig's correspondence with his wife provides insight into the complex financial negotiations that took place, as Jewish businesses were Aryanized, Jewish property was confiscated and Jews were subject to onerous taxes and fees.

Also included is biographical material created by Klaus Seelig, including a guide to all names mentioned in the letters. Typescript of a speech and clippings describe a 75th anniversary commemoration of A. Huth & Co., which includes a history of the store and its confiscation by the Nazi regime.

Materials are primarily in German; one clipping is in Hebrew. English translations of all material are available.

Indexing terms:

Subjects:

Seelig family.
Business enterprises -- Germany.
Jews -- Germany -- Correspondence
Jewish families -- Halle an der Saale.
Prisoners -- Germany -- Correspondence.
Halle an der Saale (Germany)

Genres and Formats of Materials:

Family papers.

Collection contents

"Lebenslauf von Eduard Seelig"
[Eduard Seelig curriculum vitae]
Undated

"Namenserklärungen in Zusammenhang mit den Briefen"
[List of names appearing in letters]
Undated

Eduard Seelig letters
1938 July 15
1938 July 22
1938 August 4
1938 August 12
1938 August 19
1938 August 26
1938 September 1
1938 September 15
1939 March 13

"Ansprache zur Feier des 75-jährigen Geschäftsjubiläums – A. Huth & Co., jetzt Modehaus Herrmann, am 31 Oktober 1946"
Transcript of speech by Armin Hohmann
1946 October 31

"75 Jahre Modehaus Huth"
Newspaper clipping regarding transcript of speech by Armin Hohmann
1946 October 31

"Gröbzig: Museum of Jewish Life"
Newspaper clipping from Israeli newspaper *Maariv* with English translation
1983 November 18