



Guide to the Lasus Family papers

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Title:

Lasus Family papers

Dates:

1938-1965

Collection Number:

2005-0007

Creators:

Lasus, Erich and Mathilde

Extent:

2 folders

Languages:

English, German, French and Chinese

Repository:

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

Abstract:

The Lasus Family papers document the couple's experiences during the Holocaust, including Mr. Lasus's imprisonment in Dachau in 1938, the couple's residence in Shanghai from 1939-1948, and their eventual emigration to the United States. The Lasus Family papers provide insight into the experiences of those German and Austrian Jews who were forced to flee from Germany and Austria during Hitler's Third Reich and who spent the war years in Shanghai, China.

INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS

Access:

There are no restrictions on access to this collection

Preferred citation:

[Item] [date], Erich and Mathilde Lasus papers. 2005-0007, Holocaust Center of Northern California, San Francisco, California

Acquisition information:

This collection was donated to the Holocaust Center of Northern California by Mathilde Lasus in 1987. In addition to the papers, Mrs. Lasus also donated various silver, gold and

ornamental artifacts that were auctioned to benefit the Holocaust Center of Northern California.

Processing history:

Processed by Judith Janec, 2006.

Biography:

The collection documents the experience of German and Austrian Jews forced to flee from Germany and Austria during Hitler's Third Reich. Denied admittance to most countries, thousands of German and Austrian Jews found their way to Shanghai, where visas and passports were not required until the Japanese occupation. After 1941, the occupying Nazi-aligned Japanese ghettoized the Jewish refugees in Shanghai into an area known as the Shanghai Ghetto.

Mr. Erich Lasus and Mrs. Mathilde Lasus were Austrian Jews who fled Nazi-occupied Austria for Shanghai, China in May 1939, where they lived until 1948.

Documents indicate that Mr. Lasus was imprisoned at Dachau concentration camp from November 10, 1938 (immediately after the Kristallnacht pogrom) until February 27, 1939. In May 1939, the Lasuses left for Shanghai. Mr. and Mrs. Lasus opened a dress shop in Shanghai in 1943.

Mr. and Mrs. Lasus left Shanghai and traveled by boat to Ellis Island in February and March 1949, where they were interned before being transported to Naples, Italy. They remained in Italy until 1951, when they were able to emigrate to the United States.

Collection Scope and Content summary:

The collection is comprised of documents and artifacts pertaining to the Lasus's residency in Shanghai during World War II, and their subsequent emigration to the United States. Documents are in English, German, French and Chinese. Also included is a memoir, written in German, by Mr. Lasus, *Episode Shanghai*.

This collection documents the experience of those German and Austrian Jews who fled to Shanghai. Papers include certificates, identification cards, travel passes and other documents issued to Shanghai residents. Photographs, letter and documents provides insight into the post-war emigration process. Of particular interest is a letter written by Mr. Lasus to his sister and brother-in-law recounting his trans-Atlantic voyage from Ellis Island to Naples, Italy aboard a United States army transport, the General Steward.

Collection arrangement:

Collection is arranged in chronological order; items that are undated follow those that are dated.

Related collections:

Consult archivist for information about other Holocaust Center collections relating to the experiences of European Jews in Shanghai during the Holocaust era.

Indexing terms:

Subjects:

Lasus family.
Jews, Austrian--China--Shanghai--Migrations.

Refugees, Jewish--China--Shanghai.
World War, 1939-1945--Refugees--Austria.
Austria--Emigration and immigration.
Shanghai (China)--Emigration and immigration.
Shanghai (China)--Newspapers.

Genres and Formats of Materials:

Family papers.
Immigration records.
Memoirs.
Newspapers--China--Shanghai.

COLLECTION CONTENTS

[Folder 1]

Mathilde Lasus photo ID, Vienna.
1938 September 17

Erich and Mathilde Lasus contract for Passage Ticket, departure from Trieste to
Shanghai on Vessel Conte Verde on 1939 May 10.
1939 April 21

Erich Lasus and Mathilde Lasus Shanghai Residence Certificates
Probably 1938

Eugen and Cylia Geiter certificate issued by Shanghai Municipal Council for entry into
Shanghai (copy).
1939 December 9

The China Press, English language Shanghai newspaper.
1941 September 30

Professional license for clothing store, issued by the Concession Francaise of Shanghai.
1943 January 1

Erich and Mathilde Lasus tailor's shop licenses, issued by Shanghai Special Municipality-
First District Administration for Erich and Mathilde Lasus
1944 April 13

Mathilde Lasus receipts for charitable donations, Shanghai
1944 June 4, 1944 June 17

Herald clipping describing Mathilde Lasus Dress Salon
1945 October 18

Erich Lasus travel pass (?) within Shanghai
1946 February 2

Erich Lasus Temporary Certificate in lieu of Passport issued by the Austrian Community,
Shanghai, China
1946 August 12

Mathilde Lasus Temporary Certificate in lieu of Passport issued by the Austrian
Community, Shanghai, China
1946 August 11

Erich Lasus Austrian passport
1948 June 14

Mathilde Lasus Austrian passport
1948 December 4

Erich Lasus International Certificates of Inoculation and Vaccination, Shanghai
1949 January 28

Photograph of Erich and Mathilde Lasus with signature of opera singers who entertained
Shanghai refugees on Ellis Island
1949

Eight (8) photographs depicting Ellis Island, leaving Ellis Island for Italy, and in Italy
1949 February-March

Eric Lasus letter written to sister and brother-in-law describing voyage by US Army
transport boat from Ellis Island to Naples, Italy
1949 March 16

Henry Henigson of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, British Studios letter to Erich Lasus
regarding a possible meeting in Italy
1950 February 22

Erich and Mathilde Lasus passage contract, American Export Lines, on the Laguardia,
from Naples to New York
1951 February 1

Mathilde Lasus Declaration of Intention to apply for citizenship, issued in New York
9 July 1951

Erich Lasus Declaration of Intention to apply for citizenship, issued in New York
11 July 1951

Eric Lasus City of New York Air Warden Service card
1950s

Copy of statement applying for benefits from the Austrian government [?], testifying to
persecution because of religious reasons, including imprisonment in Dachau from 10
November 1938 and until 27 February 1939
1965 February 18

Erich Lasus Chinese identification book
Undated

Erich Lasus automobile license issued in Shanghai
undated

Air Raid Warden armband, Shanghai
undated

Ration stamps, Shanghai
undated

Coins, Shanghai
undated

[Folder 2]

Episode Shanghai, a memoir by Erich Lasus
undated