Behrendt Manuscript Collection

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2016
Descriptive Summary

Title: Behrendt Manuscript Collection
Dates: 1538-1939
Collection Number: GC 1325
Creator/Collector: Behrendt, Samuel
Extent: (Boxes: 7 legal; 1 flatbox; 2 ov and 1 ov folder; L.C.)
Repository: Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
Los Angeles, California 90007-4057

Abstract: A collection of historical papers, primarily of legal documents, forms, pamphlets, booklets and serial publications relating to Southern California and the United States. The dates range from ca. 1538-1939, with its bulk dates between 1850-1920.

Language of Material: English

Access
Research is by appointment only

Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
Behrendt Manuscript Collection. Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Biography/Administrative History
Sam Behrendt was a successful insurance salesman in Los Angeles in the teens and twenties. As early as 1924 he operated the Behrendt-Levy Company, which underwrote about 75% of the movie industry's insurance. He was a second-generation Angeleno, as his father was German-born Los Angeles pioneer of 1852, Caspare Behrendt.

Scope and Content of Collection
A collection of historical papers, primarily of legal documents, forms, pamphlets, booklets and serial publications relating to Southern California and the United States. The dates range from ca. 1538-1939, with its bulk dates between 1850-1920. There are two original letters by Spanish Franciscan missionaries: one by Junipero Serra (1713-1784) and the other by Fermin Francisco De Lasuen (1736-1803); documents from the Californio ranching era including those by Pio Pico and Bernardo Yorba. There are publications pertaining to places and events in Los Angeles and San Francisco, such as commemorative souvenirs and telephone directories. There are ephemeral items relating to the Civil War Confederacy and the Ku Klux Klan. There is a small number of autographs for prominent people, and one faded bill of sale for six slaves from New Orleans. Also are legal documents, both blank forms and ones filled in, such as real estate deeds, a bankruptcy proceeding, liquor licenses, and shipping bills of lading originating from United States and foreign locales. There are items on the early motion picture industry including ephemera for the opening of Universal Studios and publications by the film company, Selig Polyscope. Most of the map items have been integrated into the General Map Collection (GC 1310). Photographic items have been separated into Sam Behrendt Collection, ca.1870-1920 (P-10) and the Portrait Collection (P-78).

Finding Aid