Descriptive Summary
Title: W. L. Prussia & Son Records
Dates: 1918-1959
Collection Number: 1997-366
Creator/Collector: Prussia, Willard L., Prussia, Leland S., W. L. Prussia & Son (San Jose, Calif.)
Extent: 4 linear feet
Online items available https://historysanjose.pastperfectonline.com/
Repository: History San Jose Research Library
San Jose, California 95112
Abstract: Financial records of the Prussia & Co. store, the first women's apparel store in San Jose. Willard L. Prussia founded Prussia & Co. in 1903, and opened the location at 129-133 South First Street in 1909.
Language of Material: English
Access
Open to the public for research by appointment.
Publication Rights
Contact History San Jose's Research Library & Archives for information on reproduction and publication.
Preferred Citation
W. L. Prussia & Son Records. History San Jose Research Library
Acquisition Information
Donated to the San Jose Historical Museum in 1993.
Biography/Administrative History
W. L. Prussia was a native of Danville, N.Y., where his father was a wholesale merchant. Prussia came to California by himself at the age of 16, and worked as a window trimmer for Taft & Penneyer in Oakland. Between 1884 and 1904 he was employed by stores in Los Angeles, San Diego, Oakland and San Jose. He was associated with L. Loeb & Bros. in San Jose before going into business for himself. He founded Prussia & Co. in 1903, and opened the location at 129-133 South First Street in 1909. He died in 1937. The firm changed its name to W. L. Prussia & Son in January, 1933. Son Leland S. Prussia was added as a full partner in the firm, and they bought out the interests of original partner S. M. Grier of New York, thereby making Prussia's a wholly family-owned business. Leland Prussia continued to run operations with his wife Doris Fowler Prussia until they retired in 1954. In 1953 the store was taken over by chain menswear firm Harris & Frank.
Scope and Content of Collection
Financial records of the Prussia & Co. store, the first women's apparel store in San Jose. The records document operations from the 1920s through the mid-1950s when Leland Prussia retired and the store was taken over by Harris & Frank menswear. The collection also includes the personal papers of Leland Prussia, Sr. documenting his community service, especially during World War II.
Indexing Terms
Clothing stores
Family-owned business enterprises
Pioneers--California
World War, 1939-1945--War work
Nineteen thirties
Nineteen forties
W. L. Prussia & Co.
San Jose (Calif.)
W. L. Prussia & Son Records Container List