Eduard Seelig papers 1988.1294

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Tauber Holocaust Library
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Storage Unit: Archives Box 5
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder(s)
Date: 1938-1939, 1946, 1983
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.

Language of Materials note: Materials are primarily in German. English language translations are available.
Creator: Seelig, Eduard
Creator: Seelig, Klaus
Conditions Governing Use note
There are no restrictions to use for this collection.
Conditions Governing Access note
There are no restrictions to access for this collection.
Preferred Citation note
Eduard Seelig papers. 1938-1983, Tauber Holocaust Library - JFCS Holocaust Center, San Francisco, California
Scope and Contents note
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.

Biography
Eduard Seelig 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 "Unterstüztung der Tarnung juedischer Geschäftsbetriebe 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.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Seelig family
Business enterprises -- Germany
Family papers -- Germany
Halle an der Saale (Germany)
Jewish families -- Germany
Jews -- Germany -- Correspondence
Prisoners -- Germany -- Correspondence

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Biographical information 1946, 1983, undated

“Lebenslauf von Eduard Seelig” [Eduard Seelig curriculum vitae] undated
“Namenserklärungen in Zusammenhang mit den Briefen” [List of names appearing in letters] undated
“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