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Guide to the Samuel Rosenwald Papers 1830-1987



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.ROSENWALDS
Title	Rosenwald, Samuel. Papers
Date	1830-1987
Size	2 linear feet (1 box)
Repository	Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract Samuel Rosenwald (1828-1899) was father of businessman and philanthropist Julius Rosenwald. He immigrated from his Jewish community in Bünde, Germany to the United States as a young man and worked as a merchant and salesman. He eventually moved to Springfield, Illinois, in 1861 with his new wife, Augusta (Hammerslough) Rosenwald. He managed a successful clothing store in Springfield which specialized in uniforms for Union soldiers during the Civil War. He bought a house near Abraham Lincoln's house and became an active member in the business and Jewish communities of Springfield. This collection consists primarily of personal papers from 1830-1986 and business papers from 1862-1886. Most documents are written in English but a few of the personal papers are written in German.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Rosenwald, Samuel. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

Acquisition Information

The Samuel Rosenwald Papers were acquired along with an addenda to the Julius Rosenwald Papers. The Samuel Rosenwald Papers were separated from the Julius Rosenwald Papers addenda at the time of processing.

Biographical Note

Samuel Rosenwald was born on June 18, 1828 into the Jewish community of Bünde, Germany (formerly the Kingdom of Hanover). He was raised and educated there and worked as a merchant as an adult. He immigrated to the United States in 1854, landing in Baltimore, Maryland, on the ship Wilhemine. He worked as a traveling salesman for his first year before opening a store in Winchester, Virginia. After a year he returned to Baltimore to open a new store.

He then entered into a partnership with the clothiers Hammerslough around 1856. He married a member of the Hammerslough family, Augusta Hammerslough (1833-1921), on August 23, 1857 in Baltimore, Maryland. After the wedding, the couple moved to Peoria, Illinois, to manage a clothing store for the Hammerslough family. The store flourished and Rosenwald bought out the Hammerslough shares within six months. He managed the store in Peoria until 1860 when he left to briefly try opening stores in Talladega, Alabama, and Evansville, Indiana.

In 1861 he moved to Springfield, Illinois, and opened a new clothing store in partnership with the Hammerslough Brothers. The business was prospering, especially in the sales of uniforms to Union soldiers during the Civil War. Once again, he bought up the Hammerslough shares in February 1868 and re-established the store as his own business in 1876. He later sold his business to the Myers family in 1886 in order to relocate to Chicago in support of his son Julius's new clothing business, Rosenwald & Weil.

While in Springfield, the family lived near the Abraham Lincoln family home, first a block away, then across the street. Samuel Rosenwald was very active in his community and in 1867, despite being relatively new to the area, he served as the president of the family's Jewish place of worship, the congregation of B'rith Sholom. Samuel Rosenwald and his wife Augusta (Hammerslough) Rosenwald had six children: Benjamin S., Julius S., Maurice S., Selma S., Sophie, and Lewis S. Rosenwald. The family attended the synagogue B'rith Sholom on North Fifth Street in Springfield and Samuel was a member of the Ancient Order of United Workmen (A.O.U.W.), Capital City Lodge, No. 38, the International/Independent Order of B'Nai B'Rith (I.O.B.B.) Emes Lodge No. 67, and a Freemason in Peoria, Lodge No. 15. In his later years, he suffered from declining health, including a stroke in January 1894. He died October 19, 1899 in Springfield, Illinois.

Scope Note

The collection is divided into two series: Series I: Personal Papers; Series II: Business Papers.

The documents and correspondence in this collection are written primarily in English with a few handwritten in German. The collection contains correspondence, legal documents, patent papers, and financial summaries of business activity. The materials range from 1830 to 1987 with the bulk of the material dating from Samuel Rosenwald's time in Springfield, Illinois, 1863 to 1886.

Related Resources

Rosenwald, Julius. Papers

Subject Headings

- Rosenwald, Samuel
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- Independent Order of B'nai B'rith
- B'nai B'rith International
- Hammerslough Brothers
- Jewish businesspeople
- Jewish families -- United States
- Jews--Migrations
- Corn planters (Machines)
- Clothing trade
- Illinois--Springfield (Township)

INVENTORY

Series I: Personal Papers, 1830 - 1987

Series I: Personal Papers, 1830-1986 - this series consists of personal letters and documents of Samuel Rosenwald including his citizenship certificate for the United States, his activity in the Emes Lodge of B'nai B'rith, his transfer between Freemason lodges, and a letter sent to Samuel's grandson sharing a photograph of his grandfather's old storefront.

Box 1

Folder 1

Handwritten document in German, stamped and sealed, c. 1830 1836

Box 1

Folder 2

Samuel Rosenwald certificate of American citizenship issued by Sangamon County, Illinois, 1863

Box 1

Folder 3

Freemason lodge transfer papers; a petition for membership to the lodge in Springfield and recommendation letter from Rosenwald's former lodge in Peoria, Illinois, 1863

Box 1

Folder 4

Letter and resolution to Samuel Rosenwald from B'nai B'rith, Emes Lodge, handwritten, 1884

Box 1

Folder 5

Life Insurance document for Samuel Rosenwald, 1884

Box 1

Folder 6

Two handwritten letters to the Rosenwalds from family in Bünde, Germany, 1886

Box 1

Folder 7

Photograph print (black and white) of Rosenwald's old storefront after it was sold and accompanying correspondence between William Rosenwald and Irving Bernstein, typewritten with a photocopy of a handwritten note, 1986-1987

Series II: Business Papers, 1862-1886

This series consists of the patent papers and correspondence for an improvement to corn planters, documents and correspondence of the Hammerslough Brothers business in Springfield, Illinois, and ledger summaries dating from 1862 to 1886.

Box 1

Folder 8

Patent Papers, handwritten agreements, and correspondence with Willian R. Iles and Henry Neer regarding an improvement for corn planting equipment, 1880-1881

Box 1

Folder 9

Empty envelop for S. Rosenwald, Esq. from Hawley & Grant, Insurance Agents, undated

Box 1

Folder 10

Hammerslough Brothers documents, 1864-1886: a handwritten letter from Julius Rosenwald to his father on Rosenwald Brothers stationary dated October 11, 1886, a certificate dated December 24, 1864 acknowledging a charitable donation to the Springfield Home for the Friendless, and receipts for the purchases of stock in the Springfield Hotel Company dated April 28, 1865 - July 16, 1866

Box 1

Folder 11

Fiscal/ledger summaries: primarily annual summaries of finances, handwritten 1862-1886