

OSCAR KOPPEL PAPERS, 1912-1947, UNDATED
1995.A.0402

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
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Descriptive summary

Title: Oscar Koppel papers

Dates: 1912-1947, undated

Accession number: 1995.A.0402

Creator: Oscar Koppel, 1886-

Extent: 11 folders plus 1 oversized folder

Repository: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW,
Washington, DC 20024-2126

Abstract: The Oscar Koppel papers contain documents relating to Oscar Koppel, a Jewish lawyer who lived with his wife and daughter in Bochum, Germany at the time of the Nazi rise to power in the early 1930s. After being disbarred and banned from practicing law in 1933, Oscar moved his family to Washington, D.C. Included in his collection is paperwork concerning his disbarment, correspondence regarding seized property and assets, various testimonies accounting for Oscar's service in the military and as a legal assistant in Germany, and correspondence seeking war crime charges against guilty parties and those responsible for the mistreatment of his brother during Kristallnacht.

Languages: German, English

Administrative Information

Access: Collection is open for use, but is stored offsite. Please contact the Reference Desk more than seven days prior to visit in order to request access.

Reproduction and use: Collection is available for use. Material may be protected by copyright. Please contact reference staff for further information.

Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Oscar Koppel papers (1995.A.0402), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: The Oscar Koppel papers were donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1994 by his daughter, Lore K. Schneider. The majority of the collection was donated in 1994, however the diploma was donated in 2008 and given the accession number 2008.330.1. It has since been unified with this collection under accession number 1995.A.0402.

Related archival materials: An oral history interview conducted with the donor, Lore Schneider, is also held by The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum under accession number 2003.204.

Accruals: Accruals may have been received since this collection was first processed, see archives catalog at collections.ushmm.org for further information.

Processing history: Colleen Benoit, November 2015

Biographical note

Oscar Koppel was born in Letmathe, Germany in December 1886. After obtaining his law degree from Heidelberg University in 1912 and serving in the German military in 1914, Oscar embarked on a career as a lawyer and notary. For nearly ten years, from 1923-1934 he served as a legal advisor to coal mining unions, including the Association of Metal and Raw Product Wholesale Merchants. Oscar was living in Bochum with his wife, Elsa (1891-1966) and daughter, Lore (1924-), at the time of the Nazi rise to power. In April 1933, as a result of the Nuremberg laws, Oscar was disbarred and banned from practicing law because of his Jewish faith. In an effort to escape further persecution, Oscar moved his family to the United States. In June of 1934 the family left Germany for Amsterdam, Netherlands, and subsequently sailed from South Hampton, England to New York City on the RMS *Carinthia*.

Once in the United States, Oscar and his wife and daughter settled in the Van Ness neighborhood of Washington, D.C. Unable to practice as a lawyer, Oscar took a job as a bookkeeper for a local liquor store and taught German lessons on the side, at one point teaching President Franklin D. Roosevelt's son. After declaring his intent to seek citizenship in 1937, Oscar obtained a job as an economist for the United States government, focusing on industrial production and coal mining. In 1939, the entire family was granted citizenship.

Source: Schneider, Lore, interview by Esther Finder 14 August 2003 (2003.204), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Oral History Volunteer Collection,
<http://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn514099>.

Scope and content of collection

The Oscar Koppel papers contain a variety of documents pertaining to Oscar's professional life and assets in Germany. Material documenting Oscar's career as a lawyer range from his diploma from Heidelberg University to correspondence regarding his disbarment, to testimonies applauding his representation of labor unions. Also comprised in his collection are documents pertaining to the family's property and assets in Germany. This includes asset registration forms and a series of telegrams regarding the seizure of his property in 1943 and his attempts for reclamation immediately following the end of World War II. Additionally, the Oscar Koppel papers include facsimile correspondence to the Office of the United States Chief of Counsel for the Persecution of Axis Criminality requesting war crimes be brought against a number of journalists who participated in promulgating Nazi propaganda and a

request for war crimes to be brought against the mayor of Letmathe for mistreatment of his brother, Julius during Kristallnacht.

System of arrangement

The Oscar Koppel papers are arranged as a single series.

Indexing terms

Koppel, Oscar.

Koppel, Elsa.

Schneider, Lore Koppel.

Koppel, Julius.

Holocaust survivors--United States.

Lawyers—Germany.

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Germany--Personal narratives.

Holocaust survivors--United States.

Jewish families--Germany--Bochum.

Jews--Germany--Bochum.

United States--Emigration and immigration--History--20th century.

Bochum (Germany).

Washington (D.C.).

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Oscar Koppel papers, 1912-1947, undated

Folder	Title
1	Asset form and instructions, 1938
2	Correspondence, 1938
3	Correspondence seeking war crime charges, 1945
4	Diploma, 1912 [See oversized folder 1]
5	Disbarment papers and related correspondence, 1933
6	Kristallnacht memoir, undated
7	Notices regarding seized property, 1943-1947
8	Police registration form, 1934
9	Tax bill, 1939
10	Testimony of service as a legal advisor, 1934
11	Testimony of volunteer military service, 1933

Oversized folders

Folder	Title
1	Diploma, 1912