

## **Leonard and Edith Ehrlich collection**

### **Introductory note by Anatol Steck, Project Director in the International Archival Programs Division of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum:**

These summary transcription notes of the digitized interviews recorded by Leonard and Edith Ehrlich in the 1970s as part of their research for their manuscript about the Jewish community leadership in Vienna and Theresienstadt during the Holocaust titled "Choices under Duress" are a work in progress. The project started in April 2016 and is ongoing. The summary notes are being typed while listening to the recordings in real time; this requires simultaneous translation as many of the interviews are in German, often using Viennese vernacular and/or Yiddish terms (especially in case of the lengthy interview with Benjamin Murmelstein which the Ehrlichs recorded with Mr. and Mrs. Murmelstein over several days in their apartment in Rome and which constitutes a major part of this collection). The summary notes are intended as a tool and a finding aid for the researcher; researchers are strongly encouraged to consult the digitized recordings for accuracy and authenticity and not to rely solely on the summary notes. As much as possible, persons mentioned by name in the interviews are identified and described in the text; however, as persons are often referred to in the interviews only by last name, their identification is sometimes based on the context in which their names appear within the interview (especially in cases where different persons share the same last name). In case of the interview with Benjamin Murmelstein, unless specifically stated at the beginning of the tape by Leonard Ehrlich, it is not always clear whether a particular interview segment continues in the correct order or, as the interview was recorded over several days, a particular interview segment continues where the interview was concluded on the previous day. It is possible that the individual interview segments are not in their correct order. – Washington, D.C., July 2016

#### **RG-50.862\*0021**

##### **Oral history interview with Clara Caro**

#### **RG-50.862.0021.01.01.mp3**

Interview in German with an **unnamed female survivor** from Theresienstadt recorded in her home in Palisades, New York (the name and date are cut off from Leonard Ehrlich's introduction at the start of the interview). The woman worked for the Jewish community in Cologne before her deportation. Talks about the relationship in Theresienstadt with the Council of Elders. Discusses the compilation of the deportation lists. Maintains that Edelstein was deported to Auschwitz and shot because he tried to falsify deportation lists. Calls Edelstein a true leader and a hero. Says that Robert Stricker warned her of Murmelstein. Maintains that Murmelstein was always friendly to

her. She headed the WIZO, they held secret meetings every Shabbat in the home of Mrs. Murrelstein. When they learned about the transport to Switzerland, the survivor was informed that Murrelstein had placed her name as the first on the list. Says that Murrelstein got a bad rap, recalls that the Viennese in Theresienstadt called Murrelstein "Murrelschwein." Asks Leonard Ehrlich and Edith Ehrlich why they are interested in Murrelstein. Leonard Ehrlich answers that he was bar mitzweh by Rabbi Murrelstein.

Sound quality: Excellent