

Guide to the Gustav Gruener Papers

MS 257



compiled by Janet Elaine Gertz

October 1982

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 257

CREATOR: Gruener, Gustav, 1863-1928

TITLE: Gustav Gruener papers

DATES: 1879-1932

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 3 linear feet (9 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers consist of correspondence, professional papers, writings, notes taken as a student in Germany, and teaching materials of Gustav Gruener. Several hundred letters in the correspondence were written from Austria and Germany between 1919 and 1928 in thanks for packages and money sent by Gruener to friends and relatives abroad. The letters provide a description of the economic crisis in these countries and the effect on the academic community. Comments on politics discuss the end of the Weimar Republic, the rise of Hitler and the dangers of communism and nationalism. Among those writing are Ernst Mayer, Friedrich von der Leyen, Max Friedländer and Hanns Oertel. A large part of the papers document Gruener's career as professor of German and ultimately chairman of the department of Germanic languages at Yale University. Among his Yale correspondents are Arthur T. Hadley, Anson P. Stokes, Wilbur L. Cross, William Walker, Russell Chittenden, Henry S. Graves, James R. Angell and Charles Seymour. Included also are manuscripts and notes by Gruener in the field of German literature.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0257>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0257>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box

f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Largely the gift of Hollon A. Farr in the 1940s; a few items came from the estate of Gustav Gruener in 1929.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research. Due to its physical nature, the scrapbook in box 8 has been converted to microfilm. Researchers must use HM 88 instead of the original.

Conditions Governing Use

Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection are in the public domain. There are no restrictions on use. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Preferred Citation

Gustav Gruener Papers (MS 257). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Existence and Location of Copies

Scrapbook about German plays is available on microfilm (322 frames on 1 reel, 35mm.) from Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, at cost. Order no. HM 88.

Biographical / Historical

Gustav Gruener was born in New Haven, Conn., March 30, 1863, son of Leopold Gruener and Katharine Elisabeth (Kern) Gruener, who were married January 24, 1856, and had six other children: Leopold, Theodore, Edward Otto, Henry Robert, Hippolyte (Yale '91, Ph.D. '93), and Alfred George.

Leopold Gruener (born Hitzkofen, Province of Hohenzollern, Sigmaringen, Germany, died New Haven, March 1, 1884) came to this country after the Revolution of 1848 and settled in New Haven, where he was an upholsterer by trade.

Katharine Elisabeth (Kern) Gruener (born Morsheim, Rhenish Palatinate, Germany, June 5, 1828, died New Haven, October 3, 1902) was the daughter of an innkeeper and farmer, who left Germany on account of the Revolution of 1848.

Gruener attended the German-American and public schools, and graduated at the Hillhouse High School, New Haven before coming to Yale. In college he was a member of Kappa Sigma Epsilon, freshman debating society, Psi Upsilon and Skull and Bones, won the Woolsey scholarship, first Berkeley Latin composition prize, the Winthrop scholarship, had Philosophical Oration appointments both junior and senior years and, as the highest stand man of the class, delivered the valedictory address at Commencement.

After graduation he remained at Yale for graduate study, chiefly in German, holding the Clark and Foote scholarships for two years. In 1885 he was appointed instructor in German, and held this position while continuing his studies. The years 1887-1889 were spent in Germany, studying at Berlin and Munich, one year in the company of his classmate, Frederick S. Jones, and the vacations were spent in travel. In the fall of 1889 he returned to Yale as tutor of German, to which position he had been elected before leaving. Upon the expiration of the regular term he was made assistant professor of German in 1892. In 1897 he was appointed professor of German. One year (1893-1894) was spent farming to recover from a nervous breakdown, and one year (1904-1905) in Germany in further study. He took his Ph.D. at Yale in 1896 and was honored by the degree of Litt.D. in 1909, from Washington College, Md. He served as the Leavenworth Professor of German Language and Literature, 1924-1928. Gruener also served as chairman of the Department of Germanic Languages, 1920-1928.

He was an Independent Republican. He served in the Grays, Company F, 2d Regiment, C. N. G., was a member of the Lawn and Graduates clubs, of New Haven, and was twice elected first vice president of the Modern Language Association of America.

Gruener edited three German novels, with introduction and notes—"Gottfried Keller: "Dietegen," published by Ginn & Co., 1892; Hermann Sudermann: "Frau Sorge," published by Holt & Co., 1900; E. T. A. Hoffmann: "Fräulein Scuderi," published by Holt & Co., 1907.

He also wrote several technical articles on German literature and has edited German exercises and verb lists.

He was unmarried. He died in New Haven, Connecticut on December 5, 1928.

From *History of the Class of 1884, Yale College*.

Scope and Contents

The particular value of the Gustav Gruener Papers lies in several hundred letters written to Gruener from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland between 1919 and 1928. After World War I, Gruener began sending money and packages of food to relatives and friends, many of them in academic circles, and through them to musicians, students, and other academics in order to further their studies. Correspondence filed chronologically as "Letters from Germany" represents their letters of thanks. Over eighty letters come from Ernst Mayer, an old friend from Gruener's days at the University of Munich, and his wife, Bertha Mayer-Pantenius. A number of other correspondents have Yale ties, including Prof. Max Friedländer (Stanley Woodward lecturer, 1909-1910, and German Privy Councillor), Prof. Hollon A. Farr (Professor of German from 1905), Prof. Hanns Oertel (Professor of Germanic Linguistics and Comparative Literature until 1917, and Dean of the Graduate School, 1911-1916), Prof. Friedrich von der Leyen (visiting professor of German Language and Literature, 1913-1914), and Leslie Bissell (Y. 1887, and Yale Ph.D. 1890). Almost every letter provides a moving description of the hardships of daily life among even the relatively well-to-do in Germany in this period, and of the effects of the economic crisis on the academic community, coupled with commentary on political affairs. The election of Hitler receives mention (1924 Mar 21), as do anti-semitism (1924 Mar 1) and the dangers of nationalism (1926 May 29); the fall of the Weimer Republic is predicted (1927 Aug 21), and concern over Communism is voiced (1920 Apr 19, 20). Throughout, the writers express bitter resentment towards the French, whom they blame for the current hardships. While most of the letters are written in German, those of Farr, Oertel, and Bissell are in English. Their letters of 1920 Jan 23, Jul 17, and Dec 12, and 1922 Jun 20 are quite interesting. Several letters contain photographs.

Of the other materials in this collection, papers relating to Yale University and in particular to the Department of Germanic Languages make up the greater part. Included are departmental and university correspondence and memoranda, minutes of meetings, budgets and annual reports, and teaching materials such as schedules, examinations, and grade books. Among the correspondents are Arthur T. Hadley, Anson P. Stokes, Wilbur L. Cross, William Walker, Russell Chittenden, Henry S. Graves, James R. Angell and Charles Seymour. Topics include routine university and department business as well as discussion of possible new faculty members and budgetary questions.

The remainder of the papers consist of some professional correspondence with the Deutsche Vereinigung zu New Haven, the German Publication Society, and the Modern Language Association, drafts of writings by Gruener, and several of his notebooks. There are also several items of memorabilia, including a scrapbook pertaining to German plays given at Yale under the direction of Heinrich Conried.

Collection Contents

Inventory, 1879-1932, undated

Letters from Germany		
b. 1, f. 1-20	1919 August-1928, undated	1919 August-1928, undated
Professional Papers		
b. 2, f. 21	Deutsche Vereinigung zu New Haven	1914, 1923
b. 2, f. 22	German Publication Society	1913-1915
b. 2, f. 23-28	The Modern Language Association of America	1924-1928
b. 2, f. 29	Correspondence	1915-1932
b. 2, f. 30-33	Memoranda, minutes of committee meetings, etc.	1909-1928, undated
Yale University Department of Germanic Languages		
b. 2, f. 31-41	Correspondence	1919-1928, undated
b. 2, f. 42	Annual Reports	1921-1928
b. 2, f. 43	Budgets	1919-1927
b. 2, f. 44	Financial Papers	1922-1928
b. 2, f. 45	Miscellaneous	1887-1932
b. 2, f. 46	Memorabilia	1879, undated
<u>Writings</u>		
b. 3, f. 47	Honor thesis: "Railroad Subsidies in the United States"	1885
b. 3, f. 48	"Some Phases of German Student Societies": ms. draft and notes English	1902 April
b. 3, f. 49	"A famous German Satire": typed and ms. drafts, and notes English	1909 December
b. 3, f. 50	"The Political Parties in Germany": ms. draft and notes English	1913 March 28
b. 3, f. 51	"The Feeling for Nature in the Middle Ages": ms. draft English	1920 October 12
b. 3, f. 52	"Das Schlaraffenland": ms draft English	1921 June 3, October 18
b. 3, f. 53	Ms. draft	1923 July 10

Writings (continued)

b. 3, f. 54	Notes	[1923]
b. 3, f. 55	"Moss and Lichen": ms. draft English	1926 May 7
b. 3, f. 56	"German Secondary Schools": ms. draft and notes English	1928 June 8
b. 3, f. 57	"Outline of the History of the German Language": ms. draft and notes English	Undated
b. 3, f. 58	"Das Yiddische Drama": ms. draft and English translation; with printed copy of "God, Man, and the Devil," by Jacob Gordin, and a review of same English	Undated
Notebooks and notes		
b. 4, f. 59-61	re: courses taken in Germany	[ca. 1887-1888]
b. 4, f. 62	re: the German Novel	1894
b. 4, f. 63	"Notes for Schiller" English	1897-1902
b. 5, f. 64	Annotated copy of <i>Heine's Prosa</i> (German Classics, vol. VII), ed. by C. A. Buchheim, with loose notes	1899
b. 5, f. 65	re: Hans Sachs	Undated
b. 5, f. 66	re: Middle High German poets	Undated
b. 5, f. 67	re: Parzival	Undated
b. 5, f. 68	re: "Das Volkslied"	Undated
Teaching Materials		
b. 5, f. 69-73	Class schedules and enrollments; faculty worksheets	1891, 1915-1928, undated
b. 5, f. 74-76	Yale College printed German examinations	1885-1931, undated
b. 6, f. 77-78	Handwritten German examination	1890-1932, undated
b. 7, f. 79-80	Records of German examination grades	[ca. 1882]-1891
b. 7, f. 81	Record book of German entrance exams	1900-1912
b. 7, f. 82-85	Gradebooks	1880-1907
b. 7a, f. 86	Gradebooks	1907-1912
b. 7a, f. 87	Gradebooks	1912-1917
b. 7a, f. 88	Gradebooks	1918-1924

Teaching Materials (continued)

b. 8, f. 89-90reel 1U	Scrapbook of correspondence, memorabilia, and clippings pertaining to German plays directed by Heinrich Conried This material has been microfilmed. Patrons must use HM 88 instead of the originals The scrapbook is also available on microfilm (HM 88).	1901-1906
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Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Educators
German drama
German literature
Literature -- History and criticism

Geographic Names

Europe
Germany -- Economic conditions -- 1918-1945
Germany -- Politics and government --
1918-1933

Names

Angell, James Rowland, 1869-1949
Bissell, Leslie Dayton, 1861-
Chittenden, R. H. (Russell Henry), 1856-1943
Conried, Heinrich, 1855-1909
Cross, Wilbur L. (Wilbur Lucius), 1862-1948
Farr, Hollon Augustine, 1872-1958
Friedlaender, Max, 1852-1934
Graves, Henry Solon, 1871-1951
Gruener, Gustav, 1863-1928
Hadley, Arthur Twining, 1856-1930
Leyen, Friedrich von der, 1873-1966
Mayer, Ernst, 1862-1932
Mayer-Pantenus, Bertha
Oertel, Hanns, 1868-
Seymour, Charles, 1885-1963
Stokes, Anson Phelps, 1874-1958
Walker, William John, 1887-1939

Corporate Bodies

Yale University. Department of Germanic
Languages
Yale University -- Faculty