Eitel Frederick Proelss papers12176405

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on June 03, 2026.
Description is written in: English.
Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary

3041 Broadway
New York, NY 10027
Telephone: (212) 851-5606
burke@library.columbia.edu
URL: https://library.columbia.edu/locations/burke.html

Table of Contents

Summary Information 3
Biographical / Historical 3
Scope and Contents 4
Arrangement 4
Administrative Information 4
Controlled Access Headings 5
Burke Library record group: 6
Collection Inventory 6

Summary Information

Repository:	Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary
Creator:	Proelss, Eitel Frederick, 1906-1996
Title:	Eitel Frederick Proelss papers
ID:	12176405
Date [inclusive]:	1951 -- 1984
Physical Description:	1 box 1 box; 0.5 linear feet
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	Eitel Frederick George Proelss (1906-1996), born in Germany, Union Theological Seminary class of 1953, Episcopal priest in the Diocese of New York, and senior chaplain of Riker's Island Prison in New York. The collection contains writings by Proelss and others in the form of note cards, jottings, clippings, and one annotated manuscript, used to help Proelss gain an understanding of criminality so as to better assist the incarcerated people whom he served.

Preferred Citation

Item description, UTS1: Eitel Frederick Proelss papers, 1951-1984, series #, box #, and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Biographical / Historical

Reverend Dr. Eitel Frederick Proelss was born in Posen, Germany on May 27, 1906. Educated as a lawyer, he received his degree from the Friedrich Wilhem University in Breslau in 1933. While in Germany, he joined the WWII-era Confessing Church, whose best known member was Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and which resisted the Nazi regime. Because of his views, Proelss was sentenced to hard labor by the Nazi regime. After the war, Proelss left Germany and attended Union Theological Seminary, where he received his Bachelor of Divinity in 1953. He was ordained in the Episcopal Diocese of New York in 1955. He became a member of

the Episcopal Missionary Society in New York City, and was senior chaplain of Rikers Island during this period. As a clinical associate of Union Theological Seminary from 1951 to 1971, Proelss helped to develop academic programs in psychiatry and religion. Proelss's interests were centered on pastoral counseling. Proelss retired from Union Theological Seminary in 1971 and died on February 16, 1997.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Scope and Contents

This collection contains writings by Proelss and others in the form of note cards, jottings, clippings, and one annotated manuscript, used to help Proelss gain an understanding of criminality so as to better assist the incarcerated people whom he served. The approach to criminality attempts to be mainly anthropological, philosophical, and psychological, through authors like Sigmund Freud and St. Augustine.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Arrangement

This collection is arranged in original order.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary

3041 Broadway
New York, NY 10027
Telephone: (212) 851-5606
burke@library.columbia.edu
URL: https://library.columbia.edu/locations/burke.html

Conditions Governing Access

The following boxes are located offsite: Box 1. Please note that requests for use of boxes held in offsite storage must be made three business days in advance.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The Proelss collection was donated in 2016 by Rev. Peter Elvin of St. John's Episcopal Church on behalf of the heirs of E. Frederick Proelss, Delphine Proelss Lowe and Sibylee Proelss Baughan.

Processing Information

The Proelss papers were among a large group of unprocessed material that was organized in 2016-2017 with the support of the Henry Luce Foundation and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation; materials were placed in new acid-free folders, acidic items were separated by interleaving with acid-free paper, and materials that were folded within the manuscript were removed and flattened before refoldering. The finding aid was created by Paul Paulson in 2016 and edited by Leah Edelman in 2020.

Conditions Governing Use

Some material in this collection may be protected by copyright and other rights. Information concerning copyright, fair use, and reproduction requests can be consulted at Columbia's Copyright Advisory Office.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Controlled Access Headings

- Prison chaplains
- Clergy
- Proelss, Eitel Frederick, 1906-1996 -- : Archives

Burke Library record group:

Union Theological Seminary Archives: UTS 1, papers of faculty and students

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Content warning:

CONTENT WARNING: This collection contains language and materials that may be offensive, outdated or harmful, including possible mention of treatment of drug abuse and slurs and negative stereotypes related to sexuality and race. If you have concerns about language used in this finding aid, please contact us at burke@library.columbia.edu. [adapted from Tulane University Special Collections content warning]

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
Gnosticism, manuscript, notes, newspaper clippings, 1980 -- 1984 Physical Description: 1 folders	box 1	folder 1
M. Buber: "For the Sake of Heaven," Kilin, 1969 Physical Description: 1 folders	box 1	folder 2
J.W. Goethe: "Faust," Kilin, 1967 Physical Description: 1 folders	box 1	folder 3
S. Freud, Kilin, 1963 Physical Description: 1 folders	box 1	folder 4
Rudolph Bultmann, 1957 Physical Description: 1 folders	box 1	folder 5
E. H. Erikson: "Ghandi's Truth," Kilin, 1971 Physical Description: 1 folders	box 1	folder 6
"Reflections on the Nature of Crime and the Criminal", 1958 -- 1968	box 1	folder 7

Physical Description: 1 folders		
Essay on St. Augustine, 1958 Physical Description: 1 folders	box 1	folder 8
Freud (Fred Wood), 1951 -- 1962 Physical Description: 1 folders	box 1	folder 9
Drew lectures, psychology and pastoral care, 1959 -- 1961 Physical Description: 1 folders	box 1	folder 10