

SCHWARZ AND ROSENWALD FAMILIES PAPERS, 1834-2006
(Bulk, 1920-1960)
2017.167.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: Schwarz and Rosenwald families papers

Dates: 1834-2006 (bulk, 1920-1960)

Accession number: 2017.167.1

Creator: Richard Schwarz family (Hannover: Germany)

Extent: 2.92 linear feet (4 boxes, 1 oversize box)

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

Abstract: Correspondence, immigration and identification documents, financial records, news clippings, photographs, printed materials, and other related materials, which primarily document the experiences of the family of Richard and Bertha (née Rosenwald) Schwarz, of Hannover, Germany, who fled that country in 1936 due to anti-Semitic persecution, and were able to do so with the assistance of the family of Julius Rosenwald, the co-founder of the Sears, Roebuck and Company, who were distant American relatives of theirs. The collection includes correspondence among family members, records of the financial assistance that the Schwarz family received from their American relatives; records documenting the efforts of Richard Schwarz to bring his brother, Alfred, who had been interned as an enemy alien in Australia, to the United States; news clippings about members of the American branch of the Rosenwald family; and pre-war documents, including some from the 19th century, related to the history of the Schwarz and Rosenwald families in Germany.

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.

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Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Schwarz and Rosenwald families papers (2017.167.1), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC.

Acquisition information: Gift of Susan Pearl Stollman, Ruth Pearl and David Sperling, the grandchildren of Richard and Bertha Schwarz, in 2017.

Related archival materials: The Rosenwald, Block and Kupferschlag families papers (1999.A.0278) document the families of Fritz (Fred) Rosenwald, the brother of Bertha Rosenwald Schwarz. That collection also includes material about Fritz and Bertha's parents, Bendix and Emma Rosenwald. Additional collections that contain material related to the role of the family of William Rosenwald in rescuing relatives from Germany include the Rosenwald and Stahl families papers (IRN 554022), which document the emigration from Germany of Otto and Elfriede Rosenwald and their daughter, Helene.

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

Processing history: Brad Bauer and Adam Fielding, January 2017.

Biographical note

Richard Schwarz (1883-1951) was born on 22 September 1883 in Hannover, Germany, the son of Samuel (1841-1922), a horse dealer, and Bertha (née Cussel, ca. 1854-1928) Schwarz. He was one of five siblings, which included brothers Gustav and Alfred, and sisters Emmy and Else. After obtaining a doctorate degree from the University of Leipzig in 1909, Richard began his teaching career in Linden (1911-1913) and then in secondary school in Hannover (1913-1914), which was interrupted by World War I, when he was conscripted into the German Army and served until 1918. Both of Richard's brothers also served, and each of them were awarded the Iron Cross, 2nd Class. Alfred also received the medal of the Knight of the Iron Cross, 1st Class, and Richard the *Hindenburgkreuz für Frontkämpfer*. Gustav, who was stationed in East Africa (modern-day Tanzania), was killed in action there in 1916. Following the war, Richard returned to Hannover and resumed his teaching career. He met Bertha Rosenwald around this time, and the two were married on 21 May 1920 in her hometown of Bünde. Richard meanwhile attained the rank of *Studienrat* in 1919, and continued teaching in Hannover until his forced retirement in April 1933 due to anti-Semitic regulations of Nazi government. At this time, he was hired to teach at a Jewish school in that same city, where he remained for the next three years.

Bertha Schwarz was born on 2 March 1895, in Bünde, Herford, Westphalia, the daughter of Bendix (1862-1919), who owned a cigar-making factory, and Emma (née Weinberg, 1878-1938?) Rosenwald. Shortly after Bertha's marriage to Richard Schwarz, she and her new family settled in Hannover, where she bore two daughters, Gertrud (born 17 October 1922) and Margrit (1 September 1928). Distant relatives of hers had emigrated from Westphalia to the United States in the mid-19th century, and one of them, Julius Rosenwald (born in Springfield, IL, 1862-1932), a businessman and philanthropist, became

one of the co-partners and leaders of the Sears, Roebuck, and Company. The family in Bünde had maintained some contact with their American relatives, as evidenced by congratulatory letters from Julius Rosenwald in this collection, but following the Nazi seizure of power in 1933, Bertha and Richard began to look increasingly to the American Rosenwalds, chiefly through Julius' son, William, for help to immigrate to the United States. They were able to do so in 1936, arriving on the S.S. *Washington* on 15 October 1936 and settling in Chicago, where members of the Rosenwald family, both individually and through the William Rosenwald Family Association (or WRFA), helped Richard find a job at the Francis W. Parker School and provided financial assistance to them on an as-needed basis. The WRFA also helped all of Bertha's surviving siblings and their families escape Germany and immigrate to the United States, including Fritz (Fred) Rosenwald, who had run the family cigar-business following their father's death until its forced sale under the Nazis, Hilde Rosenwald Cahn, and Käthe Rosenwald Schloss.

During this time, Richard also worked to successfully bring his brother Alfred (1876-1946) to the United States. Alfred, who had worked as a veterinarian in Germany, fled to Britain in 1939, where he was subsequently interned as an enemy-alien and sent on the *Dunera* to Australia, where he was interned in camps for two years. Upon his release and immigration to the United States, he joined his brother in Chicago, and worked as a food inspector there until his death in 1946. Richard's sister, Else Rosenbaum, along with her husband and son, were also able to leave Germany, and settled in New York. Richard worked at the Francis W. Parker School until his own retirement in 1947, and died in Chicago on 29 December 1951.

Scope and content of collection

The Schwarz and Rosenwald families papers consist of correspondence, immigration and identification documents, financial records, news clippings, photographs, printed materials, and other related materials, which primarily document the experiences of the family of Richard and Bertha (née Rosenwald) Schwarz, of Hannover, Germany, who fled that country in 1936 due to anti-Semitic persecution, and were able to do so with the assistance of the family of Julius Rosenwald, the co-founder of the Sears, Roebuck and Company, who were distant American relatives of theirs. The collection includes correspondence among family members, records of the financial assistance that the Schwarz family received from their American relatives; records documenting the efforts of Richard Schwarz to bring his brother, Alfred, who had been interned as an enemy alien in Australia, to the United States; news clippings about members of the American branch of the Rosenwald family; and pre-World War II era documents, including some from the 19th century, related to the history of the Schwarz and Rosenwald families in Germany. The collection is divided into several series, including groupings of Biographical documents (with separate series for the Schwarz and Rosenwald families), Correspondence, Immigration documents, Financial records, and Photographs.

The Biographical series is divided into two subseries for the Rosenwald and the Schwarz families. The first subseries, regarding the Rosenwalds, consists largely of newspaper clippings about the American branch of the Rosenwald family, including clippings from both German and American newspapers about Julius Rosenwald, ranging from his obituary as covered by German newspapers in 1932, to centennial commemorations in the American press in 1962. Also documented in these clippings are the family of Julius' sister, Sophie Adler, and her husband, Max, as well as the families of some of Julius's children, including Lessing Rosenwald and Edith Rosenwald Stern. In this series are also documents pertaining to Bertha Schwarz's birth family, including a song composed for the wedding of her parents, Bendix and

Emma Rosenwald, in 1894, an announcement about the establishment of her father's business, and a printed eulogy for Bendix Rosenwald.

The Biographical subseries that covers the Schwarz family includes material about Richards' parents, Samuel and Bertha (née Cussel) Schwarz; his siblings, Emmy, Alfred, Gustav, and Else (or Elsie); and himself and his wife Bertha (née Rosenwald). Such materials include documents related to the education of Richard Schwarz and Bertha Rosenwald, their wedding in 1919, and extensive documents related to Richard's career as a teacher in Germany and the United States. Included in the latter group are documents related to Richard's forced retirement from the public schools in Hannover in 1933 due to anti-Semitic regulations, his employment in the following years at a Jewish school in the same city, and his position at the Francis W. Parker School in Chicago, which he obtained with the help of the Rosenwald family in Chicago. Also of note are the documents related to Richard's brother, Alfred, which document his internment as an enemy alien in Australia, and his employment after release from internment there, as well as his employment in the United States. Richard's brother Gustav is also represented in this series, with documents related to his service in the German Army during the First World War.

The Correspondence series contains letters from various members of the Rosenwald and Schwarz families, arranged by correspondent. Notable groupings of correspondence include letters sent by Richard Schwarz to Bertha Rosenwald during their engagement in 1919, correspondence between Richard and Alfred from 1938 to 1944, when Richard was trying to help Alfred immigrate to the United States, including the period of Alfred's internment in Australia; as well as correspondence to Richard and Bertha Schwarz from members of the American branch of the Rosenwald family who had assisted them financially, in particular Sophie Adler and her daughter, Rose "Buddie" (née Adler) Sperry.

The Immigration series consists primarily of affidavits and related correspondence with various relatives who Richard Schwarz was trying to help emigrate from Germany, between 1936 and 1940. Among those people were his brother, Alfred, who Richard eventually brought to Chicago in 1944. Additional files of documents related to the immigration of Richard and Bertha Schwarz and their daughters are included in this series as well.

The Financial series contains material that documents the financial assistance that the Schwarz family received from the American branch of the Rosenwald family, at the time of their immigration to the United States in 1936, and in the succeeding decades, as well as German pensions received by Richard and Bertha Schwarz, and restitution claims that Bertha Schwarz filed for family property that was confiscated by the Nazis. The correspondence in this series, filed by name, was between the Schwarz family and representatives of the various firms that disbursed funds from the Rosenwald family trust to the Schwarz family over the years, documenting how such contributions from the Rosenwalds supplemented their salaries, pensions, and restitution payments as necessary from 1936 through 1958. Remaining documents in this series relate to efforts to receive pension and restitution payments from German authorities. Among the efforts to receive restitution, Richard Schwarz initially pursued claims to recover his late brother Alfred's property in Germany following the latter's death in 1946. Most of Richard's efforts though, were focused on obtaining pension funds that had been frozen after his emigration from Germany. Due to his forced retirement as a result of anti-Semitic laws in 1933, Richard initially received pension payments from the city of Hannover, which ceased at the time of his emigration. Following the war, he resumed efforts to obtain access to these funds, first by contacting occupation authorities, and then the city of Hannover. He was successful, and following his death in 1951, these benefits transferred to Bertha. Although Richard also began exploring how to receive

compensation for the family's lost property after the war, the bulk of the restitution documents date from the mid-1950s onward, when Bertha was encouraged, by Rosenwald family representatives, to file applications for restitution from the West German government.

The Photograph series contains primarily pre-war images of members of the Schwarz and Rosenwald families in Germany, but also contains a few later photographs, including those taken at a Rosenwald family reunion in 2006.

System of arrangement

The Schwarz and Rosenwald families papers are arranged in the following series, and within each series largely in alphabetic order by folders title: I. Biographical, Rosenwald family, II. Biographical, Schwarz family, III. Correspondence, IV. Financial and restitution, V. Immigration, VI. Photographs.

Indexing terms

Personal names:

Schwarz, Richard, 1883-1951.

Schwarz, Bertha, 1895-- .

Schwarz, Alfred, 1876-1946.

Rosenwald, Julius, 1862-1932.

Topical headings:

Jews--Germany--Hannover.

Jews--Germany--Bünde.

Germany--Emigration and immigration.

Jewish refugees--Illinois--Chicago.

Philanthropists--United States.

Jewish philanthropists.

World War, 1939-1945--Concentration camps--Australia.

Geographic headings:

Hannover (Germany)

Bünde (Germany)

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| 1 | 5 | Rosenwald family reunion, 1961 (25 years since immigration) |
| 1 | 6 | Rosenwald family reunion, 2006 |
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