

JOHN WILLIAM FISHER PAPERS, 1884-1974
2019.261.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: John William Fisher papers

Dates: 1884-1974

Accession number: 2019.261.1

Creator: Fisher, John William, 1935-2018.

Extent: .5 linear feet (8 folders, 2 oversize folders)

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

Abstract: The collection documents the Holocaust-era experiences of John Fisher (formally Hanus Fischer) and his family, originally from Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, and his mother Martha Fischer's (née Schwarz) family of Pilsen and Cham, Germany. Biographical material of the Fischer and Schwarz families includes identification documents; birth, marriage, and death certificates; report cards; restitution paperwork; employment papers; passport; and Josef Fischer's naturalization certificate. Correspondence primarily consists of pre-war and wartime letters from Josef and his family in Pilsen and Budapest to Josef's sister Erna and her husband Otto Dub in Shanghai, China. Photographs consist of a wartime depiction of John and his mother both wearing yellow stars on their clothing and of Wilhelm Schwarz's tombstone.

Languages: Czech, Hungarian, German, English, Yiddish

Administrative Information

Access: There are no known restrictions on access to this material.

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Preferred citation: (Identification of item), John William Fisher papers (2019.261.1), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The collection was donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum by Iris Fisher in 2019. Iris is the widow of John Fisher.

Related archival materials: Letter by Josef Fisher's brother-in-law Otto Dub to his relatives in the United States. Otto Dub letter (1994.A.0149)

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

Processing history: Adam Fielding, November 2019; updated by Adam Fielding, February 2023

Biographical note

John William Fisher (1935-2018) was born Hanus Fischer on 3 April 1935 in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia (Pilsen, Czech Republic) to Josef and Martha Fischer. Josef (later Joseph Fisher, 1905-1967) was born on 23 January 1905 in Guta, Komárno (Kolárovo, Slovakia) to Vilém (1861-1921) and Berta (née Schwarz) and had 10 siblings. He worked as a furrier. Martha Fischer (née Schwarz, also spelled Marta or Marte, b. 1910) was born on 25 December 1910 in Cham, Germany to Wilhelm and Hermina (née Lederer, d. 1917) Schwarz. Martha's father married Klara Löwy (b. 1895) after Hermina died and they had at least one child, Lieselotte (b. 1922)

Josef and Martha married in Pilsen in 1934. Around 1940 the family moved from Pilsen to Budapest, Hungary. Josef was arrested in June 1940 and released in November 1940. He was sent to a work camp in March 1941 and in March 1942 he was deported to the Mauthausen concentration camp. He was transferred to the Gunskirchen concentration camp in September 1944 and liberated in May 1945.

Martha and John were briefly safe in one of the safe houses established by Raoul Wallenberg. She was imprisoned from October-December 1944 in Sopron, Hungary and then in a forced-labor camp from December 1944-January 1945. John hid in the forest near Budapest until liberation.

After liberation, John was reunited with his parents in Budapest. They immigrated to the United States in June 1946 aboard the SS *Drottningholm* and settled in New York. John attended New York University and studied business. He met his future wife Iris Bronstein in school and they married on 6 July 1957. They had two daughters: Lisa and Mara. John owned a successful pharmaceutical packaging business.

Josef's sister Erna and her husband immigrated to Shanghai before the war and remained there until at least 1949. His sister Nelly and her husband Laci Reichenberg survived the Holocaust in Palestine. His mother Berta perished at Auschwitz, along with eight of his siblings and other relatives. Martha's father, stepmother, and sister Lieselotte were all deported to Warsaw from Pilsen in 1938 where they likely perished at an unknown date.

Scope and content of collection

The collection documents the Holocaust-era experiences of John Fisher (formally Hanus Fischer) and his family, originally from Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, and his mother Martha Fischer's (née Schwarz) family of Pilsen and Cham, Germany. Biographical material of the Fischer and Schwarz families includes identification documents; birth, marriage, and death certificates; report cards; restitution paperwork;

employment papers; a passport; and Josef Fischer's naturalization certificate. Correspondence primarily consists of pre-war and wartime letters from Josef and his family in Pilsen and Budapest to Josef's sister Erna and her husband Otto Dub in Shanghai, China. Photographs consist of a wartime depiction of John and his mother both wearing yellow stars on their clothing and of Wilhelm Schwarz's tombstone.

System of arrangement

The collection is arranged as a three series.

Series 1. Biographical material, 1884-1974

Series 2. Correspondence, 1928-1967 and undated

Series 3. Photographs, undated

Folders are arranged alphabetically and documents are arranged chronologically.

Indexing terms

Person:

Fisher, John, 1935-2018.

Fischer, Josef, 1905-1967.

Fischer, Martha, 1910-

Dub, Erna.

Dub, Otto.

Schwarz, Klara, 1895-

Schwarz, Lieselotte, 1922-

Schwarz, Wilhelm.

Topical Subject:

Jews--Czech Republic--Pilsen.

Refugees, Jewish--China--Shanghai.

Holocaust survivors.

Geography:

Plzeň (Czech Republic)

Cham (Germany)

Shanghai (China)

Prague (Czech Republic)

Budapest (Hungary)

Genre/Form:

Correspondence.

Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1. Biographical material, 1884-1974

Folder	Title
1 of 8	Fischer, Hanus (John Fisher), 1946
2 of 8, OS 1	Fischer, Josef, 1925-1967

3 of 8	Fischer, Martha, 1910-1946
4 of 8	Marriage certificates, 1915-1939
5 of 8	Restitution, 1946-1974
6 of 8, OS 2	Schwarz family, 1884-1942

Series 2. Correspondence, 1928-1967 and undated

Folder	Title
7 of 8	Family correspondence, 1928-1967 and undated

Series 3. Photographs, undated

Folder	Title
8 of 8	Photographs, undated