

AR 25550

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BY WAY OF A PREFACE: A TRIPE LOVE STORY 1997

ARCHIVES

## By Way of a Preface

### A Triple Love Story



Upper left: marriage of Coralie Weill and Albert Herz, February 3, 1936

Upper right: Ruth Holländer and Sigmund Fischler, August 27, 1939 (marriage, March 19, 1939)

Bottom: marriage of Eliane Herz and Roger Fischler, April 12, 1964



I had heard the voyage part of the following story from my mother, but it wasn't until 1996 that we could piece everything together. This is because some of the pictures were scattered—and not completely identified—in my mother's album, and others were only found in a shoe box after my mother-in-law died.

My father Sigmund Fischler was born in Leipzig and had emigrated to the U.S. in 1925(?). He had however returned to Germany and Poland several times, including two extended stays in the 1930s.

My father-in-law Albert Herz from Haiger (Hessen) had—thanks to a warning from the mistress of a local SS officer—fled to France in early September 1935. In Belfort he met Coralie Weill, a friend of his sister. The couple were married on February 3, 1936 and they eventually moved to Paris.

Ruth Holländer, my mother, came from the small town of Hilchenbach (Westphalia). She left Germany on November 1, 1937 and her last photographic record of Germany is a picture of her father Joseph taken in Cologne on that day. The next day, November 2, she was in Paris where she stayed with her cousin Albert Herz. They took three photographs in front of a Parisian park. Then on November 3 Coralie Weill took my mother to the boat train and my mother took a picture from her compartment.

From November 3 to November 9, my mother sailed to the USA on the *Aquitania*. The man standing on the right in the photograph with the little girl is my father. The story that I had heard was that some US sailors wished to speak to my mother, but not being conversant in German they asked my father to act as an interpreter . . . .

My parents were married on March 19, 1939 and in February 1940 I was born. Three years later, in January 1943, in a tiny hamlet near Limoges, France—where Albert Herz had been demobilized from the French Foreign Legion in 1941—Eliane Herz was born. The Herz family emigrated to the US in 1958 and on their second day in their new country, Albert Herz reversed the 1937 roles and took his family to see his cousin Ruth Holländer. Eliane Herz and Roger Fischler were married on April 12, 1964.

Contact print 11: Munich, November 1, 1937; Joseph Holländer is on the right

Contact print 12: Albert Herz, Coralie Weill; Paris, November 2, 1937

Contact print 13: Coralie Weill, Ruth Holländer; Paris, November 2, 1937

Contact print 14: Albert Herz, Ruth Holländer; Paris, November 2, 1937

Contact print 27: Sigmund Fischler, third from the right; *Aquitania*, November 3-9, 1937

Contact print 28: Sigmund Fischler, third from the right; Ruth Holländer, second from the right; *Aquitania*, November 3-9, 1937

Contact print 30: Sigmund Fischler on the right; *Aquitania*, November 3-9, 1937 (a note on the back of the picture says that the name of the little girl is Gretl Schlesinger)

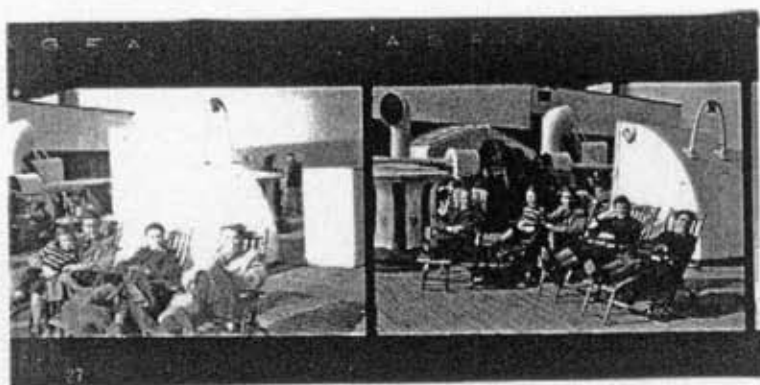






photo 12: Albert Herz, Coralie Weill, Paris, November 2, 1937; album



photo 13: Coralie Weill, Ruth Holländer, Paris, November 2, 1937; sent to Paris





photo 15?: Coralie Weill, Paris, November 3, 1937; sent to Paris

photo 30: Sigmund Fischler, on the right; *Aquitania*, November 3-9, 1937; album



## Eine dreifache Liebesgeschichte

Passagen dieser Geschichte wurden mir von meiner Mutter erzählt, doch erst 1996 konnten wir diese Teile zu einem Ganzen zusammenfügen. Einige der überlieferten Bilder befanden sich verstreut und nicht vollständig identifiziert im Fotoalbum meiner Mutter, andere wurden in einem Schuhkarton gefunden, nachdem meine Schwiegermutter gestorben war.

Mein Vater, Sigmund Fischler, wurde in Leipzig geboren und emigrierte 1925 in die USA. Mehrere Male kehrte er nach Deutschland und Polen zurück, zwei längere Aufenthalte in den dreißiger Jahren eingeschlossen.

Mein Schwiegervater, Albert Herz von Haiger (Hessen), floh—dank einer Warnung durch die Geliebte eines ortsansässigen SS-Offiziers—im September 1935 nach Frankreich. Im Elsaß traf er eine Freundin seiner Schwester, Coralie Weill, die er später heiratete. Schließlich zog das junge Paar nach Paris.

Ruth Holländer, meine Mutter, stammte aus der kleinen Stadt Hilchenbach im Siegerland. Sie verließ Deutschland am 1. November 1937. Auf dem letzten Foto, das sie an diesem Tag im deutschen Köln machte, ist ihr Vater Joseph (der zweite von links) zu sehen. Schon am folgenden Tag, dem 2. November, war sie in Paris, wo sie bei ihrem Cousin Albert Herz wohnte. Von diesem Besuch in Paris existieren drei Fotografien, die im Hintergrund einen Pariser Park zeigen. Meine Mutter trägt ein helles Kleid auf diesen Bildern. Am 3. November begleitete Coralie Weill meine Mutter zum Zug, der sie zur Fähre bringen sollte. Ihr Zugabteil verewigte meine Mutter ebenfalls auf einem Foto.

In der Zeit vom dritten bis zum neunten November segelte meine Mutter auf der Aquitania Richtung USA. Der Mann, der rechts im Bild neben dem kleinen Mädchen steht (ein Vermerk auf dem Bild verrät uns den Namen des Mädchens – Grete Schlesinger) und im mittleren Foto auf der linken Seite meiner Mutter sitzt, ist mein Vater. Auf dem Schiff begab es sich, daß einige US-Matrosen mit meiner Mutter sprechen wollten. Da sie des Deutschen nicht mächtig waren, fragten sie meinen Vater, ob er für sie übersetzen könnte . . .

Meine Eltern heirateten am 19. März 1939. Im Februar 1940 wurde ich geboren. 1943 kam dann in einem kleinen Dorf in der Nähe von Limoges (Frankreich), wo Albert Herz 1941 aus der französischen Legion entlassen wurde, Eliane Herz auf die Welt. Die Familie Herz emigrierte 1958 in die USA. An ihrem zweiten Tag in der neuen Heimat vertauschte Albert Herz die Rollen von 1937 und besuchte mit seiner Familie seine Cousine Ruth Fischler. Eliane Herz und Roger Fischler heirateten am 12. April 1964.

Roger Herz-Fischler, Ottawa, Kanada, 1997

## Ancestors of Eliane Herz and Roger Fischler

group. Sarah Katzenstein in turn was—along with her sister Fransiska Katzenstein (121) of the Haiger group—one of the daughters from the common ancestors group.

Items: Documents and photographs related Ruth Holländer's life as an apprentice and worker in the clothing industry in Germany from 1929 to 1937.\*

For letters and documents related to her relatives still in Germany and her search for missing relatives after the war see the Heinebach group.

### 5. Heinebach

This group includes Sarah Katzenstein (2111), the daughter of Amelia Marx and Abraham Katzenstein of the Common Ancestors group, and Koppel Sommer (2112) of Heinebach, their ancestors and children.

Items: A copy of a photograph of Susmann Sommer (211222) and Ethel Katz (211221) dating from ca. 1865. This is a very early picture of *Landjuden*.\* [there may be a copy in:

AR 11345 Katzenstein-Herz-Fischler Family Collection undated, 1992-1998.]

Letters from Else Sommer, Heinebach to Ruth Holländer in New York (1937-1939).

Ruth Holländer emigrated from Germany on 1937.11.01. Just before she left she received a letter, dated 1937.10.27 and a photo from her cousin Else Sommer, born 1914.07.01 in Heinebach. After she left she received at least seven more letters. Some of these also had messages from other members of Else Sommer's family.\* [Horst Hecker (the archivist of Frankenberg) discusses the sequel in his *Jüdisches Leben in Frankenberg*, p. 334 (CJH: f 113)].\*

### 6. Leipzig-Poland-Lithuania

Roger's father Sigmund Fischleiber/Fischleber (22) was born in Leipzig in eastern Germany. His mother was from Lithuania and his father was from Poland.

Items: School diplomas etc. from the Jewish schools in Leipzig,\* [See: St 1973 Kowalzik, B. *Das Jüdische Schulwerk in Leipzig, 1912-1933*, p. 163]. Other documents\*

### 7. Selma Holländer and Fritz Furcht

Selma Holländer was the younger sister of Roger's mother Ruth Holländer (21). Her husband Fritz (Freddy) Furcht was born in Frankfurt.

Items: Documents and photographs related to Selma Holländer's stay in Great Britain (1939-1948?)\*. Documents and photographs related to Fritz Furcht departure from Germany and his life in Shanghai.\* Letters from his mother.\*