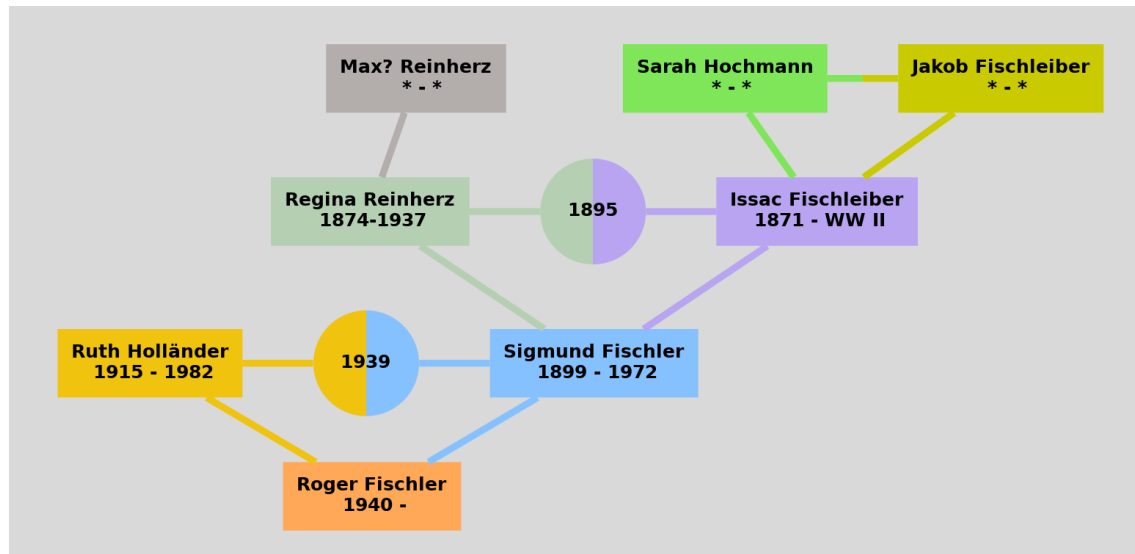


# The Leipzig Group

The following chart shows the known ancestors of Sigmund Fischler, the father of Roger Fischler (2). His mother's maternal side is discussed in the chapter "The Heinebach Group". His mother's paternal side is discussed in the chapter "The Hilchenbach Group".



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## Special Bibliography for the Leipzig Group

See also the "General Bibliography" in the Introduction, and the additional bibliography in the "Leipzig Group" section of the DVD. The DVD also contains lists and copies of sources for the history of Eastern Europe and the Jews of the region and in addition it contains copies of the various trees and documents listed here.

[ESTATE] A family tree created by the lawyer for the estate of Sig Zelman Flishler (1902.09.06, Warsaw -- 1974.12.29, New York). The probate number is #.1153/gl 1975.

His father was one of eight siblings whose names appear on the list. Among these are Isaak Fischleiber, the father of Sigmund Fischler. The common parents of these eight children -- and thus the paternal grandparents of Sigmund Fischler -- are also given, but I do not know how these were obtained. Several dates and place names appear and these were probably obtained from some of the cousins of my father who were still alive at that point. It is obvious from the lack of certain information, which could have easily been obtained from New York death certificates, that the lawyer did not search very deeply. The lack of dates for the grandparents indicates that either there was no search in Poland or that nothing could be found.

[MOM] Part of a family tree created by my mother ("mom"), Ruth Holländer, showing what she remembered concerning the family of my father.

## Leipzig Group

The names are the same as for [ESTATE], but with variations. This indicates that my mother did not simply copy from [ESTATE].

- [HERB] A genealogy created upon my request by Herbert Fischleiber.  
See child number 4 under “The Parents of Isaak Fischleiber”.
- [SIMON] Information about Joseph Fischleiber provided by his son Simon for the Central Database of Shoah Victims.
- [FRIED] Friedlander, A. 2003. *From Suwalki to St. Ignace: a history of the Rosenthal, Reinhertz, Blumrosen, Winkelman and related families*. Brooklyn: Breakaway Productions.<sup>DVD</sup> Available at the Centre for Jewish History:  
<http://search.cjh.org>
- [JRI] The web site of *Jewish Records Indexing-Poland* founded by Stanley Diamond of Montreal.  
<http://jri-poland.org/>
- [SCHUL] Kowalzik, B. 2002. *Das jüdische Schulwerk in Leipzig 1912-1933* Cologne: Böhlau-Verlag.

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### Fischler, Fischleiber, Fischleber, Fiszleber?

On his birth certificate my father’s family name is “Fischleiber”, and that is how it appears on various documents.<sup>DVD</sup> It is also the spelling used by his father on the 1937 death certificate of my father’s mother. Thus “Fischleiber” is the form that I will use in the following.

However on certain documents, e.g. on his 1912 grade book from the Städtische Realschule, the spelling is “Fischleber” and that is how my grandfather signed his name in the grade book. We find the same confusion as to the spelling on the 1933 DD of Symcha Fischleiber, a brother of Issac Fischleiber. On the original document the family name is written “Fischleiber”, but a handwritten note, which dates from 1976, says that his family name was “Fischleber”.

Literally, Fischleiber means “fish-body”, and “Fishleber” “fish-liver” (if the spelling were “Fishlieber” the meaning would be “fish-lover”). To add even more confusion -- see the discussion in the chapter “What’s in a Name?” -- civil records for Miedzyrzec for the period 1836-1839 contain the Polish spelling “Fiszlejber”, which apparently corresponds to “Fishleber” rather than “Fischleiber”.

And for further confusion consider the use by [JRI] of the spellings “Fiszleber”, “Fejzleber” and “Fajzylber” for what is apparently the same surname.

## Leipzig Group

It is of course possible that my grandfather's family kept an original German spelling instead of Germanizing an original Polish/Yiddish spelling when they came to Germany.

My father once told me that he had changed his name because the German spelling was too complicated for English speakers. On a letter from 1958, which accompanied his application for becoming a matriculated student at the City College of New York, he wrote, "Please note that I changed my name from Fischleiber to Fischler when I entered the United States in 1925". The ship's manifest, dated November 25, 1925, has the spelling "Fischleiber", but he may have made the change when he spoke to the immigration officer. On a German travel document dated July 31, 1928 his name is stated to be "Fischleiber". The first official sign of the change from "Fischleiber" to "Fischler" is on the following record of his reentry to the United States on January 25, 1929 where the immigration officer wrote "or Fischler".

20	Dreyer	✓	27
29	Fischleiber	✓ or Fischler	Sigmund

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### Sigmund Fischler (22)

**Sigmund Fischler** *Fischleiber* (22) 1899.08.06, Leipzig -- 1972.03.06 [BD, DD, P].

marriage: 1939.03.19, New York, to Ruth Holländer.

See "The Hilchenbach Group" for the life of Ruth Holländer



## Leipzig Group

I have only three pictures of my father that predate his emigration to New York in 1925. The first was probably taken when he was two or so years old (notice the whip in the posed photograph). The second dates from when he was five or six and shows him with his three older siblings; from left to right we see Sale, Sigmund, Mareichen, and Moritz .

Moritz -- seated on the left in the photograph below -- passed away in January, 1921. Teddy, the young boy in the middle, was born in 1909 and appears to be around twelve years old. So an educated guess would be that the photograph was taken in 1920, perhaps slightly earlier.



ca. 1920: Moritz, Mareichen, Regina, Teddy, Isaak, Sigmund, Sale

### Studies and End of Studies

Among the documents that I found after the death of my mother in 1982 were what seems to be a complete set of records from the schools my father attended, in particular from the *Israelitische Religionsschule zu Leipzig*. I had no idea that he had attended a Jewish school. Given the level of German schools he would have had a fairly advanced knowledge of Hebrew and Judaism. Aside from his helping me to recite from an elementary Hebrew learner I never had a chance to observe his knowledge of things Jewish. Neither did I know that he had studied English and French to a high level, with excellent marks.

## Leipzig Group

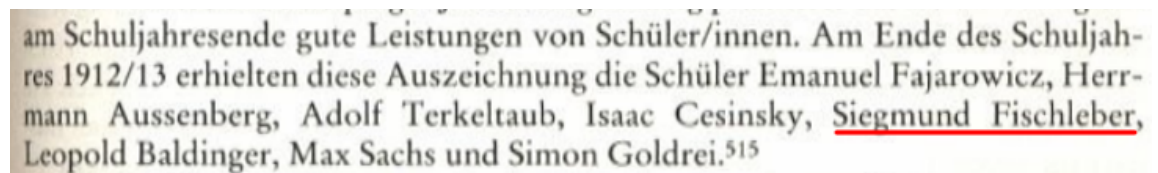
His post-secondary education was the only part of his youth that I had heard about, albeit briefly . On several occasions he would speak about attending the *Technischen Hochschule Dresden* (this corresponds to a polytechnic institute / engineering college). However, as we shall see below, his higher education was quite different from what I thought it had been. As far as non-academic activities he may have mentioned that he belonged to the Macabee athletic club, but I am not sure of this.

Since the nineteen years between the start of school at the age of six and his departure for New York in 1925 were of great importance in his life I will summarize the period, with many more details and documents appearing on the DVD.

The German system was, and still is, quite different from that of Canada. For now -- see the HTML for an extended discussion -- I note that there was a summer term that started after Easter and went until June or July, with the official end being "Michaelmas" (September 29, named after the archangel Michael). Then, starting at some point in the fall, there was a winter term, with the official end being Easter. Sometimes the school terms referred to as the Easter term and the Michaelmas term, but I will use the summer / winter terminology.

Starting with the summer term in 1906 when my father was almost six years old, and ending with the winter term of 1909-1910 he attended a primary school for a period of four years. Next he attended a regular (*Städtische Realschule*), starting with the summer term of 1910 and ending with the winter term of 1911-1912. I note that his worst grades ("sufficient") were in penmanship (this was a lot higher than what I received) and this continued to be a weak subject for him. During this latter period he also went to a Jewish school, probably after the regular school finished for the day and perhaps on Sunday.

In the summer term of 1912 he started attending the *Höhere Israelitische Schule*, founded by the well-known orthodox rabbi Ephraim Carlebach. This was the first year of its existence and as the following, from a book about the Jewish school system [SCHUL] in Leipzig, shows he was awarded honours in his first year:



am Schuljahresende gute Leistungen von Schüler/innen. Am Ende des Schuljahres 1912/13 erhielten diese Auszeichnung die Schüler Emanuel Fajarowicz, Herrmann Aussenberg, Adolf Terkeltaub, Isaac Cesinsky, Siegmund Fischleber, Leopold Baldinger, Max Sachs und Simon Goldrei.<sup>515</sup>

My father attended the *Höhere Israelitische Schule* for four years and in addition to the diploma from this school he also received one from the *Städtische Realschule zu Leipzig*.

As the government did not give permission for the *Höhere Israelitische Schule* to continue beyond four years, my father attended the *Oberrealschule* for three years. This must have been a very demanding school as the class size went from thirty-five

## Leipzig Group

to twenty-one to fifteen with my father being ranked seventh, third and second in those three years. The following shows his grades and standing on the Easter 1918 report. On the bottom left is the signature of his father Isaak Fischleiber.

OBERREALSCHULE ZU LEIPZIG

Halbjahrszeugnis

für

Sigmund Fischleiber

Schüler der Klasse 12<sup>a</sup>

Ostern 1918

Betragen  /  Fleiß  /

Leistungen:

Religionslehre . . . . .	(h)		Physik . . . . .	h	
Deutsch . . . . .	2 <sup>a</sup>		Mathematik . . . . .	h	
Französisch . . . . .	h		Darstellende Geometrie . . . . .	h	
Englisch . . . . .	2 <sup>a</sup>		Rechnen . . . . .	/	
Geschichte . . . . .	h		Freihandzeichnen . . . . .	/	
Erdkunde . . . . .	2 <sup>a</sup>		Schreiben . . . . .	/	
Naturkunde . . . . .	/		Singen . . . . .	/	
Chemie . . . . .	/		Turnen . . . . .	/	
Wahlfrei: Stenographie . . . . .			/		
Trigonometrie . . . . .			/		
Latein . . . . .			/		

Klassenplatz: Unter 10 Schülern der 12<sup>a</sup> fe.

Leistungszensuren: sehr gut (1, 1<sup>b</sup>), gut (2<sup>a</sup>, 2, 2<sup>b</sup>), genügend (3<sup>a</sup>, 3), kaum genügend (3<sup>b</sup>), ungenügend (4, 5).

Versäumt: 14 1/2

Bemerkungen: \* jenseit der israelitischen Religionslehre

Unterschrift des Vaters oder dessen Stellvertreters: Klassenlehrer:

Dr. Fischleiber
H. Poitzner

At the end of their studies the students had to write the school-leaving examinations (*Reifprüfung*) which I believe is similar to the modern day German *Abitur* examinations. On September 11, 1918 he received his diploma (*Reifezeugnis*) and it is written that he intends to study engineering.

Shortly after graduating, starting on October 28, 1918 and continuing until January 3, 1919, my father worked at the *Deutsche Maschine-und-Papier-Industrie-Werke* as a volunteer. A 1916 document certified that he had the academic qualifications to do volunteer work. My father -- being a Russian citizen -- would not have been eligible to serve in the German army and this volunteer work may have been a replacement -- WWI was raging at that point -- for military service

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Despite his excellent grades, and for a reason beyond his control, things did not turn out well education wise. As stated above he had indicated that he wanted to continue his studies in the field of engineering. On May 8, 1919 he received an acceptance letter from the *Technische Hochschule Dresden*. However -- and this is completely incomprehensible to anyone used to the Canadian system -- the acceptance letter went on to say that there was no guarantee that space would be available for him in either the lectures or in the laboratories!

Since my father had mentioned the *Technische Hochschule Dresden* on several occasions, I wrote to the institution in 1998. They replied that there was no record of his actually attending. However in a letter to the City College of New York, dated October 14, 1958, he stated that he had studied there for *two* terms, but that the records were lost. Since he also submitted a translation of his *three* University of Leipzig terms, the statement about Dresden can not be due to a confusion between the two institutions. It is possible that he had attended the *Technische Hochschule Dresden* for two terms in the hopes of having a spot open up.

In August of 1919 he applied to the *Universität Leipzig* where he was accepted, but he was unable -- apparently because he had applied too late -- to start that fall. Thus it was only at the end of October 1920, a full year and a half after the end of his volunteer work, that he was able to proceed with his higher education.

From his *Kollegien-Buch*, and as confirmed by a copy of record sent to me by the university in 1998, he only attended the university for three semesters, winter 1920/1921, summer 1921 and winter 1921/1922. In the first semester he attended lectures in experimental physics II and experimental inorganic chemistry; in the second semester experimental organic chemistry; and in the third he took physical chemistry. Except for the physics course with Otto Wiener and physical chemistry with Max Le Blanc (a specialist in electro-chemistry) all these courses were taught by Carl Paal, a professor of applied chemistry.

Winter Semester 1921/22	69	Physikalische Chemie	Le Blanc
"	55c	Chemische Übungen	Dr. Paal.

**Sigmund Fischler, courses winter 1921/1922, his handwriting**

At the end of these three semesters my father received an *Abgangszeugnis*, literally "leaving certificate". My colleague Berndt Ulbrich -- who coincidentally also studied chemistry before switching to philosophy -- explained to me that this was not a

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diploma, but was rather, as indicated by the list of courses, what we would refer to as a transcript. It would be used in case a student changed universities or had to stop their studies for a variety of reasons. In order to obtain an *Abschlusszeugnis*, what we would consider a university diploma, ten or twelve semesters of study would have been required. With only the *Abgangszeugnis* future possibilities as a chemist would have been rather limited and I never heard him speak of working in the field.

I suspect that he had simply abandoned the idea of being a chemist and instead decided to work with his father in the fur business. At that time Leipzig, and in particular the *Brühl* district, was the world centre of the raw fur industry; see the discussion below. The following photograph dates from about the time that my father was in university. Note the horse and the men all dressed in white shirts, ties and jackets. People in the New York fur market in the 1950s and 1960s did not dress like this! My father, when I knew him, was not one to put on a white shirt and tie (any more than me) except to go to synagogue.



ca. 1920: The Leipzig *Brühl*

### A Citizen of What Country?

Being born in Germany did not make one a German citizen and there was apparently no way that one could become one. That is why the Nazis were able to expel children born in Germany, but of Polish descent, in 1938. The citizenship of my father is not indicated on his birth certificate, but on a police document dated December 2, 1914 he is declared to be a Russian citizen and given the right to reside in Germany. The need for such a certificate is perhaps related to the outbreak of WWI in the summer of 1914 and the desire of the German government to control the non-Germans living



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on their territory. Not being a German citizen probably kept him out of the army, for he was eighteen before the war ended in November 1918. As suggested above he may have done voluntary work in lieu of serving in the army.

As part of the Treaty of Versailles, which was signed in June 1919, Poland became an independent country. The first elections were held in 1919, but a constitution only came into being in 1921. Thus one would think that my father and his parents would have automatically been considered Polish citizens at that point, but this does not seem to be the case. On his May 1922 leaving documents from the University of Leipzig he is said to have Russian citizenship. However, a police document dated October 27, 1922 states that it was being issued in connection with my father's application for a Polish passport. There is something of a mystery associated with this document because it notes that between August 3 and September 26 of 1917, when he was in the Oberrealschule, and again between May 23 and June 3, 1919, after he had applied to the Technische Hochschule Dresden, my father was absent from Germany. It would seem that the only country that my father could have visited in 1917 was Poland. Even though WWI was still raging, the front line was to the east of Poland. Had he gone to visit family (perhaps his grandparents were still alive) in Warsaw or Miedzyrzec or even for reasons of the fur trade?

Did my father want to obtain Polish citizenship because he was no longer going to study and wanted to be able to go with his father to work in the fur market in Warsaw? Did he want a Polish passport because he was already thinking of emigrating to the U.S.? I did not find any documents related to this.

There seems to be still another twist to the question of my father's citizenship. In July 1928 he obtained a travel pass from the German consulate in New York so that he could return to Germany. The document states that he was "presumably stateless" and that previously he had been "presumably Polish". This indicates that he was no longer considered to be a Polish citizen and perhaps that he had immigrated to the U.S. on a German travel pass rather than on a Polish passport.

### **To New York and Back to Europe: 1925 - 1937 [and 1939?]**

I have no idea why my father left Leipzig to come to the U.S.. Was it to establish contacts in New York for his father's fur business? This possibility is suggested by a postcard, dated July 8, 1938, in which my grandfather speaks of having visited New York and also requests that my father pay someone for furs he had purchased. In any case on his July 31, 1928 German travel pass his occupation is listed as "fur sorter". Sorting is a task requiring a great deal of experience and he had surely learned this from his father.

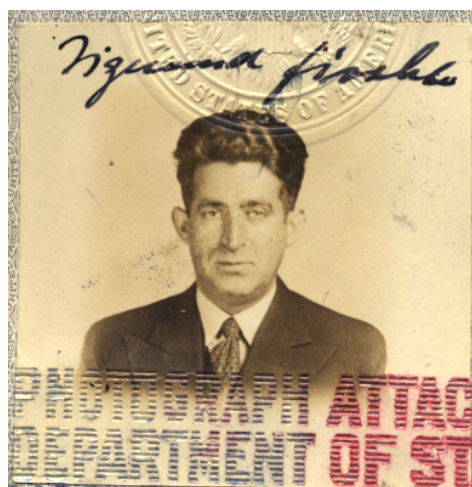
I knew from my father that he had gone back to Europe a few times and that at one point he had worked with his father in the Warsaw fur market. I do not recall him speaking of working in Leipzig. As far as details are concerned I only remember him saying that he had left his very good library in Leipzig and that he had once attended

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a Nazi rally with a friend. With a variety of his documents at hand and the possibility of consulting immigration records on-line, I decided to try and trace his voyages as much as possible.

I know from the the immigration registries that he had been issued an immigration visa (no. 41897) in Leipzig on October 20, 1925 and left Hamburg on November 15. He traveled on the *Arabic* and arrived in New York on November 27. My father had mentioned that when he arrived he had stayed with his aunt Roza Fischleiber and family (see child 3 in the section, “The Parents of Isaak Fischleiber”) and it is their address that we see on the passenger list. His occupation is stated as being “merchant”. My father recalled that it was (American) Thanksgiving when he arrived, but in fact Thanksgiving was on the 26th in 1925. I suspect that the family held off celebrating because of his arrival. The association of Thanksgiving with his arrival was probably due to a first culture shock because he had probably never heard of such a thing in Germany.

Language would not have presented a barrier because my father had studied English at an advanced level (although New York English would have seemed strange) and he probably could converse in Yiddish, the lingua franca of the New York fur market. I do not know if his uncle by marriage Albert Epstein was also a furrier, but if this were the case my father might have worked for him for a while.



The German travel document mentioned above is dated July 31, 1928 and it was only valid until January 30, 1930. The picture on the left is the one on the German travel document and for comparison the one on the right is from what must have been his second U.S. passport, issued on October 11, 1935.

Thus after about three years in the U.S. my father returned to Germany for an extremely short visit. I do not know when my father actually sailed for Germany, but he returned on January 25, 1929, after a nine-day voyage aboard the *New York*. Al-

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together his stay in Germany was no longer than four months. When he reentered the U.S. he declared that his name was now "Fischler"; see the image above with the discussion of the various versions of the family name.

I know from a stamped statement on the back of the German travel document, and also from the November, 1937 immigration manifest, that he was naturalized on September 17, 1931. According to the following note, in his handwriting, he left shortly after becoming a citizen and did not return until August 1935. I vaguely recall my father saying that he had returned to Germany because of the depression of the 1930s that had followed the 1929 stock-market crash; the market for furs had surely dried up.

Absence from USA	
(see Form 633 for father)	
Sept 1931 - Aug 1935	Poland France
Nov 2 <sup>nd</sup> 1935 - Nov 9 1937	Germany Prussia
E. Univ. ret.	S.S. Dystaccia Prussia
V	S.S. Argentina

He did not stay very long in New York because on October 11, 1935 he obtained a new passport and in it [p.9] there is a "verification" document, dated October 30, 1935, from the German consulate in New York. We know that he then set sail almost immediately because he disembarked in Le Havre on November 10. My father did not return to New York until November 9, 1937. It was on this latter voyage that, as described in the "Preface" ("A Triple Love Story"), he met my mother.

From the passport we can obtain an idea of his travels, although the official stamps and signatures sometimes overlap and others are difficult to read. Since he only seems to have arrived in Leipzig on the 15th, he may have first visited his brother Sale in Paris. A Polish visa is dated December 20 so he stayed in Leipzig at least until then. Notice that on the above handwritten sheet he does not mention having been in Germany on this trip, but in fact the year 1936 is marked -- at least from what the scattered stamps indicate -- by back and forth trips between Poland and Germany. What might be a visa was stamped by a Czechoslovakian authority in Poland on "21 Lip 1936", where the Polish month *Lipiec* corresponds to July and, if I decipher another stamp correctly, he entered Czechoslovakia on August 1. This is of special

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interest because of a visit, captured in the photograph below, that he made with his parents and brother Teddy (on the right) to the Czech spa town of Franzenbad, which is just over the border with Germany and about 220 km south of Leipzig:

Everytime I look at this picture I have the same feeling of surprise that I have when looking at the pictures of my mother at the pool or in the fields in the 1930s (see the chapter on the Hilchenbach group) and realize that this is Nazi Germany with the anti-Jewish decrees and persecutions becoming ever more frequent. From what I have read it was not until 1938 that the fur businesses in the Leipzig Brühl were confiscated. So apparently my grandparents were still able to afford a holiday, to leave Germany and then come back.



**[August] 1936 Franzenbad, Czechoslovakia**

The most surprising entries in the passport are the visa for Great Britain issued on February 2, 1937 by the consul in Leipzig and then the entry stamp at Harwich dated June 22, 1937. Harwich is a port on the North Sea, so my father must have sailed from Hamburg or Bremerhaven. Next we find a French visa issued on July 7, 1937 with the stamped note that it was a special visa issued in conjunction with the 1937 *Exposition internationale* held in Paris. I can not tell where this visa was issued or when, or even if my father actually went to France on this visa. It was not at the end of his stay in Europe because on October 26, he obtained a transit visa for France where he surely visited is brother Sale before leaving Europe for good. Finally on November 3, he set sail on the *Aquitania*, the trip on which he met my mother.

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It appears that my father again sailed -- or intended to sail -- to Europe, in the late spring or summer of 1939 for in postcard 7 (below), mailed on May 2, 1939, his father writes, "...In London you will obtain [exchange?] a lot cheaper" and a second hand who writes, "have a nice trip". An item which may or may not be related to the trip is his French-German dictionary (which I still use) with the inscription, "Walli Guzmann 12.6.39". At first I thought that my father had purchased this dictionary because he was also going to visit his brother Sale in France, but it did not seem reasonable that Walli Guzmann would have resold the book so soon after having purchased it. In addition may father spoke French quite well and had been in France two years prior, so why would he have purchased a dictionary. Perhaps he had borrowed it or had purchased it later when he was writing to Sale (writing in German was probably not a good idea once the war started). Another mystery.

WW II started on September 1, 1939 and, as evidenced by the correspondence he received from relatives in Poland there were unsuccessful attempts to provide them with visas; see the appendix to this chapter, "Postcards from Europe: 1937 - 1944. As the war dragged on and news of the mass murders of the Jews started filtering out it must have been a terrible time for my parents. They never spoke, as was frequently the case with survivors, about such things. Only once did I hear my mother cry out while watching a television programme.

At some point my father started training to be a lathe operator, probably to help the war efforts against the Nazis. It may have been after the U.S. entered the war in December 1941. He told me that he had not been allowed to work in that field during the war because he still had family in Germany. For a while -- before my mother threw them out, as she did with other things that I would have liked to keep -- some of the objects that my father had created on a lathe were in a closet and I would play with them. He did contribute to the war effort by joining the Air Warden Service in January 1942. The wardens would ensure that lights were off in case of an air raid and make sure that water hydrants would not be running etc.

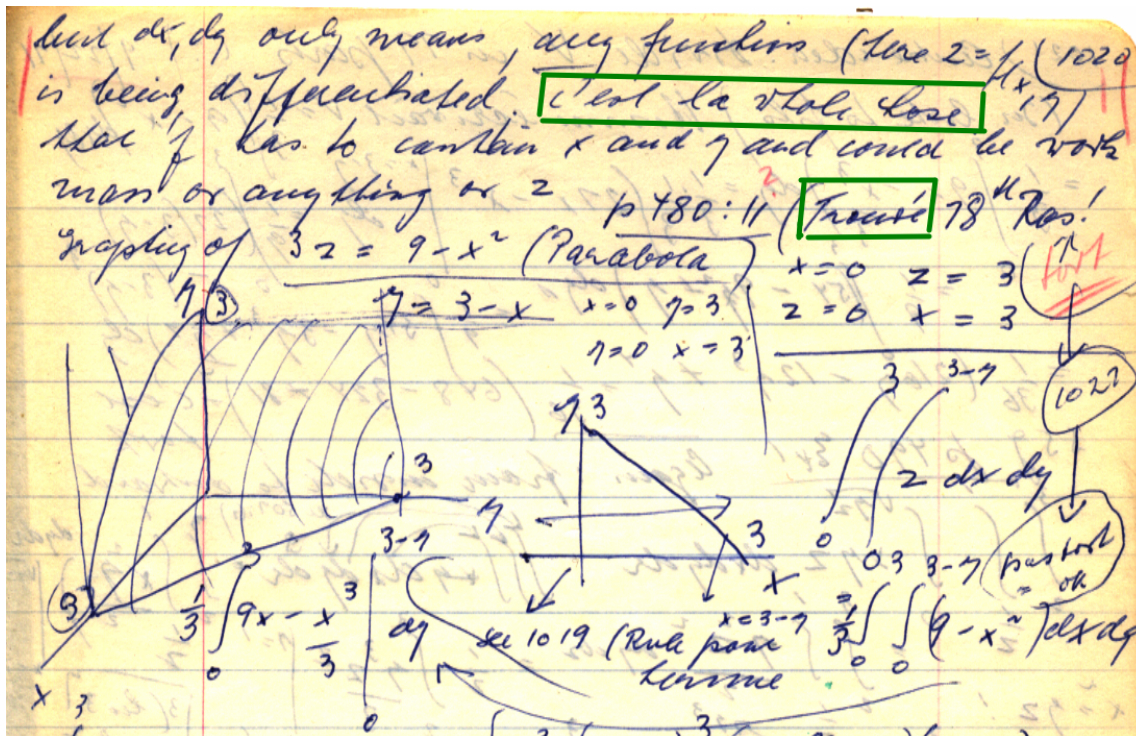
## Un Philosophe Manqué

There is no indication, either oral or written, that my father engaged in any formal education after he arrived in New York. On the other hand, he certainly continued his informal education and had a collection of books dealing with philosophy, art, history, atoms etc. He went -- and sometimes dragged me along -- to many art museums and galleries. When the United Nations was being built in the early 1950s we would often go, because of his interest in the organization, to the site. He also studied and played chess with different people (he wanted to teach me, but I was not interested).

In the late 1950s -- at the time when I was an undergraduate student in engineering -- he started taking evening courses at the City College of New York. He took courses in mathematics and philosophy and tried to obtain credits for his chemistry courses in Leipzig. Above is a page from one of his notebooks where he worked out mathematics

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problems from a text book. Notice the French, “C’est la whole chose”, with the English word “whole”, right in the middle of a sentence, and then “Trouvé” (I also tend to mix languages).



He once told me that when he would bring furs to manufacturers for inspection he would just put them down and work on his mathematics.

I think that my father would have been happiest being a professor of philosophy.

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## The World of the Parents of Sigmund Fischler

The map below of post-2000 Europe is quite different from the map that existed in 1900 and even from the post-World War I and post-World War II maps. The question of geography around 1900 will be discussed below.

Kalvarija was the birthplace of Regina Reinherz (1874) and Miedzyrzec Podalski was the birthplace of Isaack Fischleiber (1871). The couple were married in Warsaw in 1895. Sigmund Fischler was born in Leipzig in 1899.

To give an idea of distances: Warsaw is about 160 km from Miedzyrzec and about 370 km from Kalvarija and it is about 730 km from Warsaw to Leipzig.

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N.B. Miedzyrzec Podalski is the modern name of the town which was simply called Miedzyrzec around 1900. Thus I will use Miedzyrzec to designate it. There is another town in the western part of modern Poland that is also called Miedzyrzec.



## Congress Poland and the Pale of Settlement

To understand the world of my father's parents one has to consider the history of Eastern Europe. The countries involved had ever changing borders, so names such as Poland and Lithuania have to be considered as general expressions. In the sixteenth century Poland and Lithuania were joined in a commonwealth, but starting in the late 1700s Poland started being split up among Russia, Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian empire. When Napoleon started his march towards the east he created the Duchy of Warsaw, just as he had created the Kingdom of Westphalia (see under the Hilchenbach group). In 1815, after Napoleon's defeat, the Congress of Vienna once again split up Poland. Because of this the Russian held portion is usually referred to as Congress Poland, although the expression Kingdom of Poland is also used.

After 1835, Russia created another entity from the territories that it had acquired, the so-called Pale of Settlement [The word "pale" here has the sense of "a territory with fixed bounds, under a particular jurisdiction or subject to particular restrictions"]. Jews living in the Pale could not reside in the central part of Russia without special

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permission. The Jews of Poland were also barred from central Russia, but after 1862 Jews could at least move freely between the Pale and Congress Poland.

The map shows Poland and the northern part of the Pale, together with the number of Jews in the different sub-regions according to the 1897 Imperial census of all of Russia. Note that the Jews in the Congress Poland represented over fourteen percent of the total population. Yiddish was spoken by about ninety-nine percent of the Jews, often in addition to other languages.

The town of Kalvarija was in the Congress Poland province of Suwalki. The province was later divided between modern Poland and Lithuania, with Kalvarija now being in Lithuania. Miedzyrzec was in the Congress Poland province of Siedlce and has remained in Poland.



The Suwalki region was about 10 percent Jewish, but the town of Kalvarija was predominantly Jewish with about 7,000 Jews out of a population of around 8,500. Similarly the Siedlce region was about 16 percent Jewish, but the town of Miedzyrzec had approximately 9,000 Jews which represented about 65 percent of the population. Warsaw, where my father's parents married, was about 35 percent Jewish in 1901, out of a total population of about 712,000.



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### From Poland to Germany

My father's parents moved from Warsaw to Leipzig at some point in time between their marriage in January, 1895 and 1899 when my father was born. Leipzig was part of the Kingdom of Saxony and it remained so until the king abdicated in November 1918, just after the end of WWI. Did the Saxon authorities encourage settlement or were the Jews of Poland merely tolerated? I have been unable to elucidate the matter.

As to why my grandparents left Warsaw, I suspect that it had to do with the importance of Leipzig as a centre of the fur industry, in particular the importation and distribution of raw -- see the etymological note below -- furs from eastern Europe. There were other members of the Fischleiber family in Leipzig in the early twentieth-century and some of these may have preceeded them.

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#### Tobacco products and untreated furs!

On my father's October 10, 1922 police document it states that his father was a *Rauschwarenhändler*. I had seen the German word *Rauschwaren* earlier and immediately thought of the verb *rauschen* which means "to smoke" (from the noun *Rausch* which means simply "smoke"). Since *Waren* alone is related to the English "ware" I assumed that Leipzig was also a centre for smoking products. All wrong! The real word is *Rauwaren*, as it is still written in Austrian German. *Rau* is related to the English word "raw", which explains why *Rauschwaren* refers to the trade in untreated furs. I first confirmed the translation by looking in my father's German-French dictionary from the late 1930s (another sign of his continued interest in intellectual matters).

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### Learning More about my Father's Parents Erecting a Tombstone

Until 2009 all that I knew about of my father's parents was what my mother wrote on a family tree [MOM] that she had drawn for me sometime in the late 1970s.<sup>DVD</sup> This consisted of the names of my paternal grandparents and the name, Max Reinherz, for my grandmother's father. She had also recalled that my grandmother had died in 1937, but did not know the date.

In 2009 I was in the process of looking at books and web sites describing Jewish cemeteries in Germany. I asked my colleague Bernd Ulbrich, who lived not far from Leipzig and had done research on Jews and Jewish institutions in Sachsen-Anhalt, if there were any books dealing with the cemeteries in Leipzig. He did even more, he contacted the *Israelitische Religionsgemeinde zu Leipzig* (IRG: Organization for the Jewish Community of Leipzig) and asked whether they had any information. Much to

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my amazement, given the Nazi and Communist regimes, they still had the registration cards of my grandparents.

On my grandmother's card it states that it was created in September 1935. On my grandfather's card 1915 is the date associated with the address so perhaps his card was older. I do not know if the Nazis had required the creation of these cards. In both cases my grandparents are stated as having been born in Russia and as being Polish citizens; see the discussion above.

Israelitische Religionsgemeinde zu Leipzig			
Familienname: <i>Fischleiber wib.</i> <i>Reinherz</i>		Vornamen: <i>(Regina) Riva</i> <small>(Rufnamen unterstreichen)</small>	
Geburtstag und -jahr: <i>(10. 4. 73)</i> <small>Pol. Aufg. 24/10. 37 26. 5. 37</small>		Geburtsort: <i>Kalwaja-Siwalk i Pöpl.</i>	
Staatsangehörigkeit (wenn nicht deutsch): <i>Polen</i>		Beruf:	
Ledig, <u>verheiratet</u> , verwitwet, geschieden			
Wohnung:			
am <i>10. 9. 35</i>	: <i>Hofmeister</i>	Str. Nr. <i>17.</i>	am : Str. Nr.
am :		Str. Nr.	am : Str. Nr.
am :		Str. Nr.	am : Str. Nr.
Bemerkungen: <i>Am 29. 11. 37 msp.</i>		<i>Auftrag v. 13. 7. 2009</i>	
<i>NE Abt. 3A15</i>		<i>v. 30. 11. 2009</i>	
<small>12000. III. 35. G.M.N.</small>			

IRG: Registration card for Regina Reinherz

Israelitische Religionsgemeinde zu Leipzig			
Familienname: <i>Fischleiber</i> <i>(Modeller)</i>		Vornamen: <i>(Yoko) Yoko Fouch Riza</i> <small>(Rufnamen unterstreichen)</small>	
Geburtstag und -jahr: <i>28. 3. 71</i>		Geburtsort: <i>Meseritz i. Pöpl.</i>	
Staatsangehörigkeit (wenn nicht deutsch): <i>Polen</i>		Beruf: <i>Gandellmann</i>	
Ledig, verheiratet, <span style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">verwitwet</span> , geschieden <span style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">widowed</span>			
Wohnung:			
am <i>7. 9. 15</i>	: <i>Yofunier</i>	Str. Nr. <i>17.</i>	am : Str. Nr.
am :		Str. Nr.	am : Str. Nr.
am :		Str. Nr.	am <i>Bernoth 176. 58</i> Str. Nr.
Bemerkungen: <i>unbekannt msp.</i>		<i>28. 10. 38 Pol.</i>	
<i>Auftrag v. unknown [fate?]</i>		<b>1938.10.38 expelled to Poland</b> <i>b.w.</i>	
<small>12000. III. 35. G.M.N.</small>			

IRG: Registration card for Isaak Fischleiber

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There seemed to be confusion concerning his name because it reads “Fischleiber (Fischleber), (Icko) Itzko Isaack Hizik[?]”. The card also states that he was born in Miedzyrzec in Russia and that he was considered to be a Polish citizen when the card was created. His profession is listed as “tradesman”. I learned from the card that he had been a widower before his remarriage with my grandmother. One further remark, at the bottom, is of importance: “unknown location, 1938.10.28, Poland”. This latter date corresponds to the expulsion to Poland of all Jews of Polish citizenship.

More information was provided by the death registration card of Regina Reinherz.

Neuer Friedhof, Leipzig, Delitzscher Landstr.		Nr. 132
Name:	Fischleiber geb. Reinherz	Vorname: Regina
Geburtstag:	26. 5. 24	Geburtsort: Kalwarja Staatsang. Polen
Gestorben am:	29. 11. 1937	Bestattungs-Verz.-Nr.
Sterbeort:	Leipzig	Sterberegister-Verz. 132/1937
in Einzelgrab — Rundgrab — Gartengrab — Aschenstelle — Erbbegräbnis		
für	Gräber in Abt. III a 1	Reihe 5 Nr. 102
Das Familienbegräbnis lautet auf den Namen:		

**IRG: Death registration card for Regina Reinherz**

We learn that she was buried in the “New Jewish Cemetery” on Delitzscher Street (this dates from 1925; in 1937 the Nazis had all the bodies in the old cemetery exhumed and reburied in a mass grave in the new one) in section III, a, 1; row 5, number 102 (Abteilung III a 1, Reihe 5, Nr. 102 ). The date of death is given as November 29, 1937 which was just a few weeks after my father's return to New York.



Bernd Ulbrich did even more for me, for when he was in Leipzig he went to the cemetery and sent me the picture on the left. I assumed at first that my grandmother's stone had been destroyed, but as can be seen in the photograph there are old stones

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on either side. I finally figured out the reason for the lack of a stone; the unveiling ceremony normally takes place after eleven months. However eleven months had not expired on October 28, when, as the Jewish registration card above states, my grandfather and the other Polish Jews of Leipzig were expelled; see the comments on postcards 3 and 4 below.

Having understood the situation I inquired whether it were possible to have a tombstone placed. As the answer was in the affirmative my grandmother finally, seventy-two years after her death, had her place of burial (on the right in the above pictures) marked. The following photograph taken in the shop shows the details of the grave stone.



Regina (Riewa)

Fischleiber

née Reinherz

1874.05.26 -- 1937.11.27

In Memory of

Isaak Fischleiber

1871.03.28 -- ca. 1942

---

## The Parents of Sigmund Fischler

**Regina *Riwa* Reinherz** (221) 1874.04.10, Kalvarija-- 1937.11.29, Leipzig [registration and death cards from the Leipzig Jewish Organization, D,P].

On her original registration card the date of birth was given as 1873.04.10, but this was later corrected. I have used the German spelling “Reinherz”, which appears on her DD.

In a letter in response to a request to the Lithuanian archives for her birth certificate, I was told that there were no Jewish records for Kalvarija for that period. The adjective “Jewish” suggests that the Russians kept the records for Jews separate from other records. This was confirmed in the very detailed chapter on the Reinherzs of Kalvarija in [FRIED, p.3].

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**Isaak Itzko? Fischleiber** (222) 1871.03.28, Miedzyrzec -- WW II, Poland [registration card from the Leipzig Jewish Organization].

Isaak Fischleiber was a furrier in the Leipzig *Brühl*, an ancient quarter of Leipzig which is named after the main street that runs through it. Already in 1900, thus about five years after my grandparents arrived from Warsaw, Leipzig was the centre of the world raw fur trade.<sup>DVP</sup> He may have already been in the fur trade in Warsaw before he came to Leipzig and from what my father told me they worked together in Warsaw; see above on his travels.



ca. 1905, fair day in the Leipzig *Brühl*

Marriage : 1895.01.10, Warsaw; obtained from a note attached to the death certificate of Regina Reinherz.

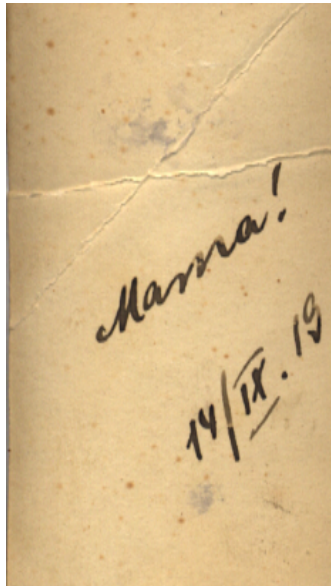


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The above photographs are undoubtedly their formal engagement photographs dating from 1894, which, from the information on the back, were taken in Warsaw. Since their first son Moritz was born on November 22, 1895 the couple moved to Leipzig during that year. It is possible that Isaak had previously worked in Leipzig.

Since Isaak was a widower, as we learned from the registration card, but not yet twenty-four years old when he remarried, his first wife must have died very soon after their marriage. How Isaak and Regina met or were introduced is, as was the case with my maternal grandparents, something that intrigues me.

Knowing the date of their marriage, I inquired -- via the consulat of Poland in Ottawa -- if it were possible to obtain a copy of the MD. This would have permitted me to know the names of their parents. Unfortunately, as was the case with Lithuania, the records no longer seem to exist.



1919.09.14: Regina Reinherz & handwriting, Isaak Fischleiber, 1920s?

### Children:

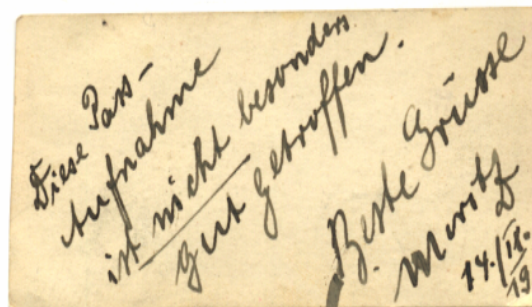
Children 1 and 5 are listed only in [MOM] whereas the other four appear in both [MOM] and in [ESTATE]. The latter source has been used for dates when documents were not available

1. **Moritz Fischleiber** 1895.11.22, Leipzig -- 1921.01.16, Leipzig [BD, DD]

According to my mother he died of influenza.

The date, November 14, 1919 on the back of the first photograph of Moritz is the same as that on back of the second photograph.

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1919.11.14: Moritz passport photograph



Moritz, 1919 -- Sale, Paris, 1942

2. **Solomon Sale Fischleiber** 1897.04.09, Leipzig -- 1969.09.14, France.

I do not know when Sale (the name that I knew him by) went to France, but I know that my father visited him on at least one of his trips to Europe. He was in hiding during the war, but in another one of the strange happenings in the history of this family he had a formal picture -- shown just above -- taken in occupied Paris in 1942.

He had a daughter Goldie, who aside from an unknown child of Selma Holländer (see the chapter on Selma Holländer and Freddy Furcht) was my only first cousin. I saw her for about thirty minutes in early January 1968 at the Tel-Aviv airport; and this only because her husband worked for Swiss Air and found out what return flight we were on.

3. **Sigmund Fischler** *Sigmund Fischleiber* (22) 1899.08.06, Leipzig -- 1972.03.06, New York; see above.
4. **Marie Marieschen Fischleiber** 1901.06.23, Leipzig -- 1992.08.31, Israel.  
We visited her and her husband Joseph Lehrmann in Israel in 1967 and her alone in 1983. As far as I know the couple did not have any children.

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The 1901 date comes from [ESTATE], and since she is listed as an inheritor she was surely the one who supplied the date. If we look at the ca. 1905 photograph of the children Marie appears to be quite a bit taller than Sigmund, but since we do not see her feet she is probably kneeling on the chair.

5. **Helene Fischleiber** a. 1905? Leipzig -- b. ca. 1919, Leipzig.  
She does not appear on the ca. 1905 photo of the children so she was either not yet born or still a very young baby. Nor is she in the above family photo which dates from ca. 1919.  
A note on a sheet of paper, presumably based on what my mother told me, says that she died at the age of twelve from diabetes.
6. **Theodor Teddy Fischleiber** 1909.06.26, Leipzig -- World War II, Poland [DOC].



Mareichen, 1920s -- Teddy, 1920s

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## The Maternal Grandfather of Sigmund Fischler

### The Father of Regina Reinherz?

My mother wrote Max Reinherz on a family tree as the name of the father of Regina Reinherz. She also told me that my grandmother was the daughter (or perhaps it was that she was a descendant of) of a famous rabbi, but she had no further information:

**Max? Reinherz** (221 • 2) lived in Kalvarija [MOM].

Despite the lack, as note above, of records for Kalvarija Friedlander [FRIED] was able to gather a great deal of information from other sources. Of particular interest, because Regina Reinherz was born in 1874, is an 1865 list of ten members of a synagogue in Kalvarija named Reinherz. However, none was called "Max".

As to being the descendant of a famous rabbi, the only one that suggests itself is one Nathan Reinherz, who lived from 1792 to 1867. Some of the descendants of this



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rabbi, as well as those of his siblings appear in [FRIED, chart 12-2]. Intriguing are the children of Hirz Reinherz, a brother of Nathan; two girls have birth dates of 1870 and 1872 respectively compared to the 1874 date for Regina Reinherz. However as [FRIED, p. 3] states, the limited amount of information available suggests that the Reinherz family was extensive.

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### The Paternal Grandparents of Sigmund Fischler

#### The Parents of Isaak Fischleiber

These names appear in [ESTATE], [HERB] and the DD of Hermann Fischleiber (child 2). Herbert Fischleiber (see under child 4) would have either known them or learned about them from his father Joseph.

**Sara Hochman** (222 • 1) 1857, Miedzyrzec ??? -- a. birth Manja (ca. 1890) [HERB, ESTATE, JRI<sup>DVD</sup>].

[ESTATE] says, "Sara or Sima". It is "Syma" on the DD of Hermann Fischleiber (child 3).

**Chaim Jacob Fischleiber** (222 • 2) lived in Miedzyrzec and Warsaw -- a. birth Manja (ca. 1890) [HERB, ESTATE].

[HERB] says simply, "Jacob".

marriage: before 1871 (birth of Isaak Fischleiber)

Since Hermann and other children after him were born in Warsaw, the couple moved from Miedzyrzec between 1871 and ca. 1876

children: The symbol ■ indicates that I knew the person in New York.

1. **Isaak Fischleiber** (222) 1871.03.28, Miedzyrzec -- WW II, Poland; see above.
2. **Hermann Hirsch Fischleiber** ca. 1876, Warsaw -- 1918.05.04, Leipzig [DD, ESTATE, MOM, HERB].

The DD gives his name as Hirsch and also states that he was born in Warsaw. He married Helene Bluseid. The couple had four children, all of whom perished at the Majdanek concentration camp, except Sigmund, the person whose estate was being probated in [ESTATE].

3. **Roza Rose Fischleiber** ca. 1877, Warsaw--1927.05.01, New York [DD, ESTATE, MOM, HERB].

She married Albert Epstein (ca. 1871, Warsaw -- 1941.04.21, New York). The family is listed on the 1905 census and her death certificate says that she was in the U.S. for twenty-two years which implies that they arrived in 1904 or 1905. The couple had two surviving daughters Eva (1902 -- 1960) and Myra ■ (1909 -- 1958). They also had a twenty-four year old boarder named Leo Fischleiber, who may have been a nephew of Roza Fischleiber.

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Myra ■ married Married Martin Steinberg ■. They had two children, Robert ■ and Cynthia ■. We would visit this family once or twice a year.

My father first stayed with this family when he immigrated in 1925.

4. **Joseph Fischleiber** 1879, Warsaw -- WW II [SIMON, HERB, ESTATE, MOM].  
He married Charlotte Friedmann. They had three boys, Henek, who died in Treblinka, Simon, who lived in Israel, and Herbert, whom I met in Paris.
5. **Faigge Fischleiber** 1880, Warsaw -- ca. 1939 [HERB, ESTATE (states 1880), MOM].  
She married Issac Finkelstein, who also died before the war. The couple had three daughters, all of whom perished during WW II.
6. **Leiser Leon Fischleiber** 1881.04.28, Warsaw -- 1939.10.31, Warsaw [HERB, ESTATE, MOM].  
He married Fanny Neumann in 1909. They had two daughters Bella ■ and Ruth.  
Bella ■ married Phil Laub ■ who went to the same Jewish school in Leipzig as my father. They had two children Leon ■ and Fern ■ and we would visit them fairly often.  
Since Bella Fischleiber was alive and almost surely answered questions relative to [ESTATE] the date of 1881 probably came from her. There is a record of Leiser from the Warsaw ghetto, which gives his date of birth as 1889 [as opposed to 1881].04.27 and a date of death as 1939.10.30.
7. **Symcha Fischleiber** 1884.04.28, Warsaw -- 1933.07.17, Leipzig [DD, ESTATE, MOM, HERB].  
On his DD and as confirmed by a handwritten marginal note that was added in 1976, his first name is "Symcha", but the other documents refer to him as "Sigmund". On 1911.09.14 he married Esther Schoenburg, who died in 1958. Since two of the children, George Fisher and Halina Fischleiber were alive and living in Great Britain in 1975, I suspect that they, their mother and another son, Alexander Fischleiber, had been able to escape there before the war.
8. **Manja Fischleiber** ca. 1890, Warsaw -- WWII [ESTATE, MOM, HERB].  
She married Israel Goldman and was the addressee on postcard 6 and 7. She was living in Miedzyrzec at that time. They had a son Jakob, who apparently perished during WW II and a daughter Judith (1909.04.12 -- 1963, Poland).

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## Possible Ancestors of Issac Fischleiber

As we saw above in the discussion of the name Fischleiber there are several variations of the spelling. The web site for [JRI] has three different spellings, "Fizleber", "Fizlyber" and "Fizlejber" for people who lived in Miedzyrzec in the period 1828-1841.<sup>DVD</sup> This corresponds to the period when Jews were obliged to take civil names and it is possible that these people were related and that some were ancestors. Since

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there are great gaps in the Polish records, there is no way of knowing if this was indeed the case.

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### Appendix: Postcards from Europe: 1937 - 1944

Among my father's documents are ten postcards that had been sent from Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland between July, 1937 and November 1941. There is also an envelope which indicates that a message had been received from his brother Teddy and other relatives.

In addition there is a copy of a letter addressed to his sister Mareichen in Tel-Aviv, as well as two postcards from his brother Sale in Paris, one from a few months after the war started, but before the Nazi occupation of Paris, and the other written -- apparently -- the day after final liberation of Paris.

The following consists of summaries of the documents together with comments. Colour copies of all of the documents, a pdf document made up of high contrast black and white scans of the documents and a pdf document with transcriptions, translations and further comments can be found on the DVD.

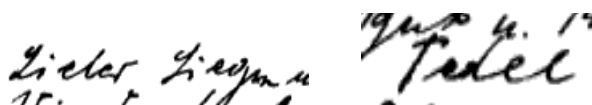
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### Identifying the Writers

The following images show the salutation and signature of Issac Fischleiber and Teddy Fischleiber. Issac called my father "Siege", whereas his brother Teddy calls him "Siegmund". The signature of Issac Fischleiber reads "D[einer] Issac, and Teddy signs "Tedel".



Issac Fischleiber



Teddy Fischleiber

On cards 3, 5, 6 and 7 -- the latter two having been sent from Miedzyrzec -- a writer signs with what appears to be the letter "H", but it may be a symbol of some sort, especially given the text of postcard 3:

If the "signature" is indeed an "H", as opposed to a combination of letters or a symbol, then this may have been written by Henek Fischleiber, who perished, along with his

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father Josef Fischleiber, a brother of Issak Fischleiber. Josef Fischleiber is mentioned in postcard 4 where we learn that Issac and Teddy were living with him. The same return address as on postcard 4 is also used on postcards 5, 8 and 10. If Henek is indeed “H” then, in view of the statement on postcard 3 that he and his father had been expelled from Leipzig, they most likely were renting the apartment.

For information on the siblings of Issak Fischleiber mentioned here, see above under “The Parents of Isaak Fischleiber.”

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### Summaries

- [card 1] 1938.07.08, Franzenbad, Czechoslovakia; from Issak Fischleiber.  
We learn that *Isaak Fischleiber has returned from his trip to New York*. He asks my father to pay a person \$50 for the opposum furs that he had purchased from the seller.  
That my grandfather had been in New York came as another great surprise to me.
- [card 2] 1938.08.08.15, Franzenbad, Czechoslovakia; from Issak Fischleiber.  
He will go to Leipzig for a few days and will meet up with Teddy in Karlsbad, Czechoslovakia for the Jewish holidays. *He is in favour of my father marrying*. We learn that Sale Fischleiber, my father’s brother, has received a French residence card, valid for three years.
- [card 3] [1938.10.30?], Warsaw. The date on the card is “3.X.38”, but this date can not be correct as the writer states that they had had to leave Leipzig, the expulsions having started on October 28. The postcard was mailed from Poland with the post office stamp indicating “wars[aw]” and a date of November 2, 1939. I suspect that “3.X.38” should read “30.X.38”.  
The postcard is signed “H”. The address is obliterated by the stamped postal mark so we do not know if it is the same as on postcard 4.  
This is a postcard partially written in a coded language, e.g. “If this book from the hand of Nostradamus [the sixteenth century French astrologer] is not enough guidance, student bathe, without hesitation, your hot breast in the cool morning dawn ... [the dots appear in the original]”.  
“H” further writes, “My father is also here; we had to leave Leipzig as we were, with hardly any time [to pack things]”. He speaks of making difficult[?] trips (*scharfe Trips [sic]*) with someone named Georg and again being a pioneer[?]with him.  
Georg might be Georg Fischleiber, the son of Symcha Fischleiber, a brother of Isaac Fischleiber. George survived the war, along with his mother and a sister.

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[card 4] 1938.10.30, Warsaw; from Teddy Fischleiber. The address is Stojerska 16/80 which is presumably the address of Joseph Fischleiber. Postcards 5, 8 and 10 have variations of the street name.

The text reads, "...we and all other Polish Jews had to leave within 24 hours ... On the 28th [the start of the expulsion of Polish Jews from Leipzig] civil servants came and without the opportunity to pack the most urgently needed things, we were escorted to the railway station ... Papa wants you to come immediately to Leipzig and store our furniture and belongings... We, and also uncle Lev and [our] aunt are living with uncle Joseph".

Joseph Fischleiber was a brother of Isaac Fischleiber. Lev might refer to Leiser Fischleiber, another brother of Issak Fischleiber. In the latter case "[our] aunt" would then be Fanny Neumann.

Lieber Liebesmum! <sup>von pr. 51 von</sup> <sup>1938.10.30</sup> <sup>Warschau</sup>, 30. 10. 38.  
 Wie du durch die Presse wohl schon weisst, mussten wir <sup>alle</sup> ~~alle~~ <sup>alle</sup> Juden innerhalb 24 Stunden verlassen. Am 28. kamen früh 2 Beamten u. ohne Gelegenheit sich das Allerwichtigste einzufachen wurden wir nach d. Bahnhof gebracht. Mehrere Sonderzüge fuhren gleichzeitig zur Bahn. Bren ee die ganze Fahrt werdeine furchtbare Plage. Wie sich die Angelegenheit weiter gestalten wird, ist noch ungewiss. Papa wünscht dass du sofort nach Leipzig kommst u. unsere Möbel u. Sachen mitnehmen. die wir zurück lassen mussten. Wir sowie Uncle Lev u. Tante sind jetzt bei Uncle Josef. Er schnell glaubte ich hier nach Warschau zu kommen. Hoffentlich geht es Bistgut u. kannst du auch in Europa was machen. mit bestem Willen. Tadel. ich denke du kommst bestimmt in Nagude ist geblieben unser simliche Goldsachen aufbewahrung gehen von mein Pelz. bei Uncle habe alles Bekk. die schon in 1. Zug bei den was ich den 19 Okt. die 37 bei 3 Meppen

[card 5] 1938.11.08, Warsaw; first from Issak Fischleiber and then Teddy Fischleiber.

Isaak had received a postcard, mailed on October 27, from my father. Teddy hopes that they will be allowed to return to Leipzig to arrange matters. They are not in a good position as they are only guests. If my father finally makes a good match the hope is that he can take better care of them and hopefully bring them to America. At the end of the text Isaac says something about mail, but can not give advice and then signs the card.

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October 27 preceeded the date when Isaak and Teddy were expelled from Leipzig and thus my father would have addressed the postcard to Leipzig; it is not clear how Isaak would have received it in Warsaw. The second hand does not sign "Tedel", but a comparison of the handwriting with that of postcard 4, and especially the salutation, indicates that the second writer was indeed Teddy. This part is signed "IC", unless it is the Hebrew letter aleph in cursive.

[card 6] 1938.11.20; from Issak Fischleiber and "H".  
Issac says that he will find it more peaceful in Miedzyrzec and be together with Teddy a lot more. When he hears from my father he will perhaps have some of the essentials brought here.

"H" writes in a style somewhat reminiscent of postcard 3: "I am driving in the jungles of Poland and if this is even possible, from now on nothing is impossible ... You in America do something".

The postcard was written in Warsaw, but mailed from Miedzyrzec, and the returnee is M. Goldman. M. Goldman, must be Manja Fischleiber, a sister of Issac Fischleiber, who married Israel Goldman. The fact that Issac Fischleiber went to Miedzyrzec, combined with the name of his sister suggests that Manja was living there.

[card 7] 1939.05.02; from Issak Fischleiber and "H".  
Isaac has not received anything today so if my father is not sure that Issac has received the money he should send 100 by telegram. "In London you will obtain [exchange?] a lot cheaper. Business is frozen as there are no buyers".

"H" writes that papa [not identified] wants to run away very fast and wants to save, "[but] with the present situation, saving is not worth while; who will live to have it ... Have a nice trip".

As with postcard 6 this one was mailed from Miedzyrzec, with the returnee being Goldman. There is a gap of over six months between the previous postcard and this one. It speaks of a postcard sent in April, 1939 and I assume that there had been others during this period. What do "In London" and "have a nice trip" refer to? Did my father travel to Europe? He had just married in March.

This is the last missive dated from before the outbreak of WWII in September 1939.

[card 8] 1940.01.30; from Issak Fischleiber in Warsaw to Joseph Holländer (the father of Ruth Holländer) in Hilchenbach.

Isaac Fischleiber says that he has received the card from his "Dear relatives" and asks them to let my father know that he and Teddy are well. Isaac requests that Joseph Holländer ask my father to send affidavits for himself and Teddy. Isaac also speaks of writing my father himself.

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The return address in Warsaw is the same as postcards 4 and 5 so Isaak and Teddy had returned from Miedzyrzec to Warsaw.



### 1940.01.30: Issac Fischleiber to Joseph Holländer in Hilchenbach

To properly understand this postcard one has to consider the historical and geographical background.<sup>DVD</sup> The start of the WWII is usually dated to September 1, 1939 when both Germany and Russia invaded Poland and divided the territory almost equally between them. The aim of both occupying countries was the destruction of the Polish state. The Germans incorporated the western part of their conquered portion, which contained many ethnic Germans, as part of Germany proper. Further east they created the “Central Government” and forced the ethnic Poles and Jews who lived in the incorporated portion to resettle there. Both Warsaw and Miedzyrzec were located in this Central Government region. The affixed stamp, which partially covers the printed, presumably Polish, stamp simply says “Deutsche Reich”. This in turn implies that, at least for postal purposes, communication between Warsaw and Hilchenbach in Germany proper was possible.

The card was then sent from Hilchenbach to my parents in New York and so became part of my father’s document set. Note that Jews in Germany proper were still able to use the postal service, in particular they could send mail to the U.S. which was not yet at war.

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[card 9] 1940.03.09. This is the date that my father wrote on an empty envelope, so I do not know if this refers to the date it was sent or the date it was received.

The text (in English except for, apparently, the German abbreviation “u.” for “und”) on the envelope reads, “From Teddy, uncle Jo[seph Fischleiber] and aunt Tang[?]. I can not identify this last person. Note that Isaac is not mentioned among the writers.

[card 10] 1941.04.08 (according to the postage stamp); from Lotte Fischleiber [Charlotte Friedmann, the wife of Joseph Fischleiber]. The address is the same as on postcards 4,5 and 8. The printed postage stamp now reads, “General Government”; see above on postcard 8.

She complains that my father had received innumerable letters from them, but that he had not accomplished anything for them, He is to visit her aunt, who lives in New York. The aunt is to send papers (probably visas) via a certain person in Washington, D.C.. The latter sends them money each month via the Dresdener Bank, but unfortunately not much can be bought with it. My father is to send a telegram once the papers have been sent.

[card 11 ] 1941.11.17; the postcard was held up by the British censors (in Bermuda, which was a transit point, I believe) and only arrived on New York on March 3, 1946. The name of the sender is Maria Marczav in Warsaw, who was perhaps the name of the Polish woman where the sender was staying. Unfortunately, the name of the person who wrote most of the text is covered by stamps. The handwriting is not the same as that of Charlotte Friedmann on card 10.

The writer asks my father to ensure that there are no disruptions in the sending of packages even if there is no acknowledgement. The person has sent letters on September 23, October 30 and November 12. My father is to only send coffee and bitter chocolate because “everything else is of little value for me.” There is also a request to send greetings to an uncle Wolf.

There is also a short message by a second writer, but it too is covered by stamps. Partially visible under the stamps is “Naftal[i?]”.

Because of the stamps -- which I did not want to attempt to remove -- I can not identify any of the people. The Hebrew name “Naphtali” sometimes corresponds to the given name “Hirsch”, but I did not find any relatives with this name.

This is the end of the letters from Germany and Poland. I do not know if my father received the letters mentioned in postcard 11. Three weeks later, on December 7, 1941 the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour and the U.S. entered the war, putting an end to any communication. In the sum-



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mer of 1942 the Nazis carried out mass deportations to the death camps and the Warsaw ghetto uprising of April 1943 resulted in more Jewish deaths. None of the people mentioned in the above letters appears to have survived until the end of the war; the only possible exception being "George" of postcard 3.

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[card 12] 1940.05.30. From Sigmund Fischler in New York to Mariechen Fischleiber in Tel-Aviv. This letter was in an envelope marked, "Returned for additional postage". From a slip of paper inside the envelope and post office stamps on the outside, we know that the letter at least arrived in Rome.

The letter deals with the problem of delivering a visa to Issac Fischleiber and Teddy Fischleiber. My father says that he had had a letter from the U.S. government stating that the visa was in Berlin and that the consul was ready to send the visa to any place that Issac was allowed to go to. My father sent a cable to Issac on May 25 telling him to write the consul. Since Italy was no longer allowing transit passengers, my father suggested that he go via Romania. My father writes that he knows that Issac is sick and that he has not heard from him.

Since Issac Fischleiber was considered to be a Polish Jew the Germans would not have allowed him to travel to Berlin.

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## Two Postcards from Sale Fischleiber in Paris

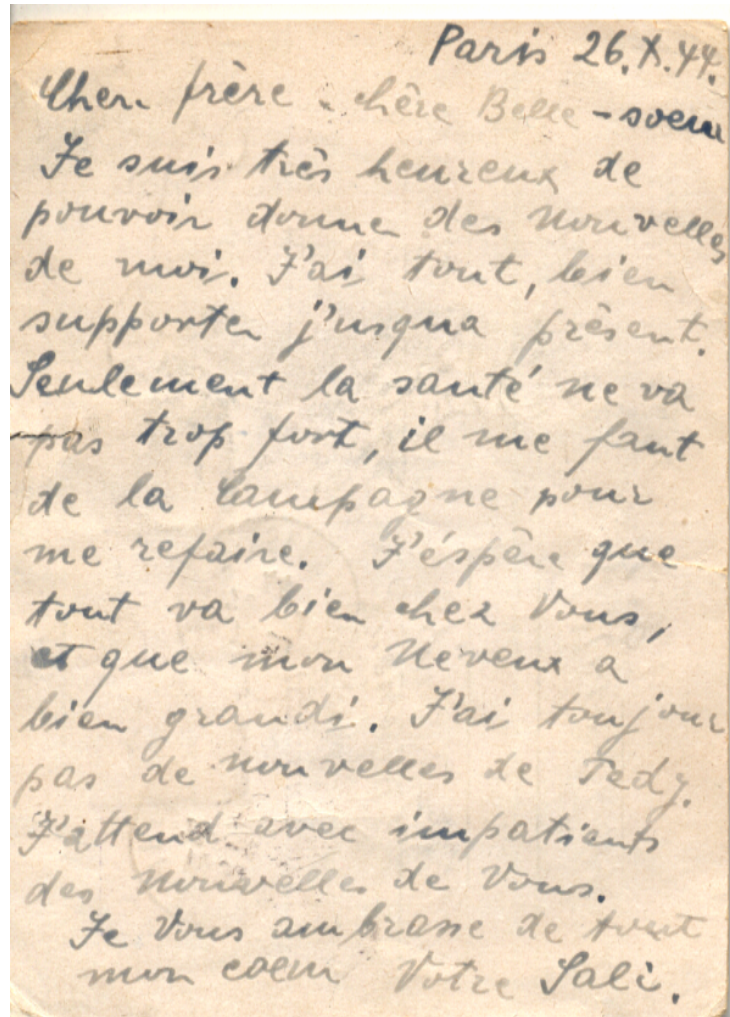
Although WW II started on September 1, 1939, the Germans did not attack France until May 10, 1940. Paris was occupied on June 14, well after the first postcard was written. The Parisian uprising against the Germans started on August 20, 1944 and the surrender date was August 25.

[card 13] 1940.02.12. From Sale Fischleiber in Paris to Sigmund Fischler in New York.

Sale received the card that my father sent and says that he was glad to have news [from my father] about Issac and Teddy. I had assumed that it would have been impossible to send a letter directly from Paris to Warsaw, but Sale says that he hopes to be in contact with them. In addition he says that he had met Herbert Fischleiber [the son of Joseph Fischleiber] who showed him a letter that he had received from his parents in Warsaw and that they are in good health. He is waiting to hear about my birth [which took place on the 22nd]. Sale is working a little, but the essential is that he is still alive.

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[card 14] 1944.08.26?. From Sale Fischleiber in Paris to Sigmund Fischler in New York.



Paris 26.X.44.  
Cher frère - chère Belle-sœur  
Je suis très heureux de  
pouvoir donner des nouvelles  
de moi. J'ai tout, bien  
supporter jusqu'à présent.  
Seulement la santé ne va  
pas trop fort, il me faut  
de la campagne pour  
me refaire. J'espère que  
tout va bien chez vous,  
et que mon neveu a  
bien grandi. J'ai toujours  
pas de nouvelles de Teddy.  
J'attends avec impatience  
des nouvelles de vous.  
Je vous embrasse de tout  
mon cœur. Votre Sale.

Sale is happy to be able to send my parents news. He has been able to get along until the present, but his health is not the best and what he needs is to go to the country. He has not had any news about Teddy.

Sale wrote "26.x.44" as the date, but October 26, is the date of arrival that my mother wrote. The post office stamp has "26-8/44", which I imagine stands for August 26. If this date is correct Sale wrote the day after the Germans surrendered.