

Guide to the Samuel Herbert Fisher Papers

MS 213



compiled by Diane E. Kaplan and William E. Brown, Jr.

March 1987

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 213

CREATOR: Fisher, Samuel H. (Samuel Herbert), 1867-1957

TITLE: Samuel Herbert Fisher papers

DATES: 1916-1954

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 13 linear feet (26 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers consist of correspondence and background material which document Samuel Fisher's service to Yale University and his research on the eighteenth century Litchfield, Connecticut printer Thomas Collier. The papers detail Fisher's involvement as a member of the Yale graduate committee on university development and his plan for reorganization of the university (1919). The papers also highlight Fisher's role in Yale's search for a new president (1920-1921) and his influence in the development of the residential college system.

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Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0213>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gifts of Robert L. Fisher and Mrs. Theodore Babbitt, 1961, and George W. Pierson, n.d.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

Samuel Herbert Fisher Papers (MS 213). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library

Biographical / Historical

Samuel Herbert Fisher was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on May 26, 1867. He received B.A. (1889) and LL.B. (1892) degrees from Yale University. Fisher practiced law in New Haven, Connecticut and New York City and served as junior counsel to Yale University and personal counsel to Mrs. Stephen V. Harkness and Edward S. Harkness. He was a fellow of the Yale Corporation (1920-1935) and chaired the Connecticut tercentenary commission (1934-1935). Fisher died in 1957.

Scope and Contents

The Samuel Herbert Fisher Papers consist of correspondence and background material which document Samuel Fisher's service to Yale University and his historical research and writing. Though the papers detail Fisher's involvement as a member of the Yale graduate committee on university development and his plan for the reorganization of the university (1919), the bulk of the papers focus on Fisher's role as a member of the Yale University Corporation (1920-1935). The papers record the corporation decisions during this period which significantly changed Yale's administration, physical plant, student housing, and course of study. They highlight Yale's search for a new president (1920-1921), James Rowland Angell's presidency, the major building programs made possible by the gifts of John Sterling and Edward S. Harkness, and the development of the residential college system. The papers do not include any of Fisher's legal files, and thus his role as junior counsel to Yale University and as personal counsel to Mrs. Stephen V. Harkness and Edward S. Harkness is not documented. Historical research files testify to Fisher's interests in the history of Litchfield, Connecticut

Robert L. Fisher and Mrs. Theodore Babbitt donated a portion of their father's papers to the Yale University Library in 1961. George W. Pierson received several files of papers from Samuel Fisher in the 1940s while working on his history of Yale. (See folder 116). These files subsequently became part of the Fisher Papers in the Manuscripts and Archives Department. The papers are arranged in two series.

Series I is the larger of the two and comprises seventy-five percent of the papers.

Series I consists of topical files which are arranged in alphabetical order. Almost all files include correspondence but may also contain related minutes, reports, charts, and printed material. There are files for all the committees on which Fisher served and for many administrative offices and Yale organizations. There are also voluminous files concerning the Yale class of 1889, its donations to the university, and its reunions. Correspondence with a particular individual may be in several different files.

University reorganization is the subject of the files for the Alumni Committee of Yale University (folders 3-24). Correspondence between Fisher and fellow committee members and also with University Secretary Anson Phelps Stokes concerns the existing division of functions between Yale College and Sheffield Scientific School. The committee's report, issued in February, 1919, proposed changes in the structure of the university, a common freshman year and the addition to the administration of a provost and a dean of students. Correspondence following the appearance of the report contains reactions from alumni, faculty, and university officers such as Charles Seymour and Lewis S. Welch. Correspondence in the fall of 1919 also includes discussions of candidates to fill the new administrative positions.

Building Committee files (folders 26-45) concern Fisher's interests in changes to the physical plant of the university from 1920 to 1922 and from 1933 to 1935. The files include general discussions of architectural plans for the university's development as well as correspondence with architects, contractors, and suppliers concerning specific buildings such as Sterling Chemistry Laboratory and Sterling Hall of Medicine. Folders 144-145 concern buildings for the School of Forestry.

In the files under the heading "Corporation" is correspondence with individual corporation members and administrative officers as well as with alumni concerned with matters under the corporation's consideration. Many letters relate to the selection of new corporation members. Also in these files are discussions of student drunkenness, a presidential residence, academic appointments, improvements in graduate education, and undergraduate housing needs. The correspondence with Lewis Welch in these files is particularly substantive. Additional files relating to Yale's plan for residential colleges are found under the subjects "Educational Policy" and "Yale University: general." Similar discussions are found in the files for "President," "Provost," "Secretary," and "Treasurer."

The papers include two boxes of material relating to the work of a committee to receive suggestions of candidates for the Yale presidency, which Fisher chaired beginning in April, 1920. Incoming letters containing suggestions are voluminous, and many letters also contain reflections on the Hadley presidency and the qualities sought in the new president. The most frequent names mentioned are Anson Phelps Stokes, Charles Seymour, and Henry Sloane Coffin. The files also include Fisher's correspondence with fellow committeemen such as John V. Farwell and reports and lists submitted to the corporation.

The files for the Yale Alumni University Fund Association and the Yale College Class of 1889 are also voluminous, and both document Fisher's efforts as a fund-raiser and organizer for the Class of 1889. Many letters relate to reunion arrangements, and frequent correspondents include Lewis Welch, Gifford Pinchot, and George Parmly Day. The papers also contain many files relating to theater and the Yale Department of Drama. Some of these relate to the controversy surrounding the resignation of Monty Woolley as a coach of the Yale Dramatic Association.

Series II includes correspondence, notes, and drafts relating to Fisher's research on Thomas Collier, an eighteenth century printer in Litchfield, Connecticut, and his publication of *Publications of Thomas Collier, Printer* in the early 1930s. The files contain notes on the locations of almanacs printed by Collier, a manuscript of a biography of him, Fisher's correspondence with the Yale Printing Service, and letters of acknowledgement and congratulation.

Arrangement

Arranged in two series: I. Yale University Files, 1916-1954. II. Thomas Collier Files, 1930-1948.

Collection Contents

Series I: YALE UNIVERSITY FILES, 1916-1954

This series is arranged in alphabetical order by subject.

Alumni Advisory Board		
b. 1, f. 1	General	1922-1929, undated
b. 1, f. 2	Alumni Association scholarships	1922, undated
b. 1, f. 3-11	Alumni Committee of Yale University	1917-1919
b. 2, f. 12-24	Alumni Committee of Yale University	1919-1920, 1926, undated
b. 2, f. 25	Athletic-Association	1926, 1951-1953
Building Committee		
See also: box 14, folders 185-187		
b. 3, f. 26-36	General	1917-1935
b. 4, f. 37-39	Day, George Parmly	1921-1922, undated
b. 4, f. 40	Day and Klauder	1921-1922
b. 4, f. 41	Downey, John I.	1922
b. 4, f. 42-44	Farnam, Thomas W.	1921-1922, undated
b. 4, f. 45	Minutes and papers	1922, undated
b. 4, f. 46-47	Chapel matters	1925-1926, undated
b. 4, f. 48-49	Christian Association	1925-1949, undated
b. 4, f. 50	Committee on Colleges	1933-1934, undated
Committee on Educational Policy		1925-1926, undated
See: box 8, folders 95-96 box 20, folders 261-266		
b. 4, f. 51-52	Committee on Honorary Degrees	1925-1926, undated
Committee on Taxes		
b. 5, f. 53-54	General	1933-1935
b. 5, f. 55	Taxation and New Haven	1917-1927

Committee on Taxes (continued)

b. 5, f. 56-59	Yale University	1930, 1933, undated
	Corporation See also: box 20, folders 261-270	
b. 5, f. 60	Baker, George Pierce	1929-1933
b. 5, f. 61	Bannard, Otto T.	1920-1926
b. 5, f. 62	Buckner, Mortimer N.	1921-1928
b. 5, f. 63	Cheney, Howell	1921-1927
b. 5, f. 64-66	Day, George Parmly	1916-1929
b. 6, f. 67	Farnam, Thomas W.	1920-1925
b. 6, f. 68-70	Finance Committee	1921-1930
b. 6, f. 71	Gallery of Fine Arts	1930
b. 6, f. 72-73	Hutchins, Robert M. See also: box 4, folders 51-52	1923-1927
b. 6, f. 74	Jones, Frederick S.	1921-1925
b. 6, f. 75-76	Lohmann, Carl A. See also: box 11, folders 151-160	1927-1930
b. 25, f. 1-4	A-O	1920-1930
b. 6, f. 77-79	P - Z	1920-1935
b. 7, f. 80-81	Revision of bylaws	1919, 1929-1930, undated
b. 7, f. 82-83	Stokes, Anson Phelps	1920-1922
b. 7, f. 84	Successors to the Original Trustees	1929
b. 7, f. 85-86	Welch, Lewis Sheldon	1920-1925
b. 7, f. 87	Miscellaneous papers	1921-1927
b. 7, f. 88-89	Day, George Parmly See also: box 5, folder 64-66 box 8, folder 103-104 box 15, folder 197 box 15, folder 199-219	1921-1930, undated
b. 7, f. 90	Department of Drama See also: box 5, folder 60 box 14, folders 192-193	1931-1934
b. 7, f. 91	Department of Education	1929
b. 7, f. 92-94	Dramatic Association See also: box 14, folders 194-196	1917-1930

b. 8, f. 95-97	Educational policy See also: box 20, folders 261-266	1930-1935
Endowment Fund		
b. 8, f. 98-99	General	1920-1928
b. 8, f. 100	Angell, James Rowland	1921-1927
b. 8, f. 101	Bannard, Otto T.	1926-1927
b. 8, f. 102	Buckner, Mortimer N.	1925-1927
b. 8, f. 103-104	Day, George Parmly	1920-1930
b. 8, f. 105	Gifts and bequests: reports of treasurer	1922-1930
b. 8, f. 106	Papers	1923-1925
b. 8, f. 107	Use of income	1928
b. 8, f. 108	Webb, Estate of Gertie E. Gorman	1923-1924
b. 8, f. 109	Woodruff house	1927-1929
b. 9, f. 110	Harkness Recitation Hall	1924-1926
b. 9, f. 111	Institute of Human Behavior	1928, undated
b. 9, f. 112	Institute of International Studies	1944-1945, undated
b. 9, f. 113	Memorial concerts	1929
b. 9, f. 114-115	Nathan Hale Inn and Tapping Reeve Inn	1927-1929
b. 9, f. 116	Pierson, George	1942-1953
b. 9, f. 117-130	President	1921-1948
b. 10, f. 131-137	Provost	1928-1946, undated
Publishing Association		
b. 10, f. 138	Watrous, Hewitt, Sheldon and Gumbart	1930
b. 10, f. 139-141	<i>Yale Alumni Weekly</i>	1917-1923
b. 10, f. 142	<i>Yale Rep</i>	1918-1935
b. 10, f. 143	Quadrangle plan	1930-1931
b. 11, f. 144-145	School of Forestry	1921-1929, undated
b. 11, f. 146-149	School of Medicine	1918-1931
b. 11, f. 150	School of Music	1926

b. 11, f. 151-160	Secretary's office See also: box 6, folder 67 box 6, folders 72-73 box 6, folders 75-76 box 7, folders 82-83	1928-1953, undated
b. 12, f. 161-172	Special Committee on the Presidency	1920
b. 13, f. 173-184	Special Committee on the Presidency	1920-1921, undated
b. 14, f. 185-187	Sperry Engineering Company: controversy	1921-1924
b. 14, f. 188-191	Sterling Memorial Library	1917-1954
Yale Theatre		
b. 14, f. 192-193	Personal	1927-1930
Woolley matter		
b. 14, f. 194	General	1927-1928
b. 14, f. 195	Papers	1927
b. 14, f. 196	<i>Yale Daily</i> See also: box 19, folders 252-254	1927
b. 15, f. 197	Treasurer's office See also: box 5, folders 64-66 box 7, folders 88-89	1935-1946, undated
b. 15, f. 198	Trumbull College	1934-1942, undated
b. 15, f. 199-210	Yale Alumni University Fund Association: Class of 1889	1937-1943
b. 16, f. 211-219	Yale Alumni University Fund Association: Class of 1889	1943-1948
b. 17, f. 220-221	Yale Club of New York	1937-1948, undated
Yale College Class of 1889		
b. 17, f. 222-231	General	1934-1947
b. 26, f. 1	Banks, John W.	1936-1948
b. 26, f. 2	Corbin, William H.	1942-1945
b. 26, f. 3	Donnelly, Thomas E.	1934-1948
b. 26, f. 4	Ensign, Joseph R.	1936-1940
b. 26, f. 5	Pinchot, Gifford	1936-1945
b. 26, f. 6	Reed, Harry Lathrop	1934-1948
b. 26, f. 7	Vernon, Howard W.	1936-1942
b. 26, f. 8	Welch, Lewis S.	1936-1939

Yale College Class of 1889 (continued)

b. 18, f. 232-237	Fiftieth reunion	1938-1939, undated
b. 18, f. 238-243	Fifty-fifth reunion	1943-1944, undated
b. 18, f. 244	Fifty-sixth reunion	1945
b. 19, f. 245-246	Fifty-seventh reunion	1946, undated
b. 19, f. 247	Fifty-eighth reunion	1947
b. 19, f. 248	Fifty-ninth reunion	1948
b. 19, f. 249-251	Sixtieth reunion	1948-1949
b. 19, f. 252-254	<i>Yale Daily</i> : Woolley matter	1927
b. 19, f. 255	Yale-in-China	1920-1951
b. 20, f. 256-260	Yale Law School	1923-1948, undated
	Yale Theatre See: box 14, folders 192-196	
b. 20, f. 261-268	Yale University: general	1919-1930, undated
b. 21, f. 269-278	Yale University: general	1931-1953, undated
b. 21, f. 279	<i>Yale Re</i> See also: box 10, folder 142	1920-1929

Series II: THOMAS COLLIER FILES, 1930-1948

This series is arranged in alphabetical order by topic or record type.

b. 22, f. 280-281	Almanacs	1932, undated
b. 22, f. 282-285	Bibliography	1932-1933, undated
b. 22, f. 286-293	Biography: manuscript	1932
b. 23, f. 294	Collier and Monitor	undated
b. 23, f. 295-297	Correspondence	1930-1948, undated
Imprints		
b. 23, f. 298-303	General	1931-1933, undated
b. 23, f. 304	Authors	undated
b. 23, f. 305-307	Miscellanea	1932
b. 24, f. 308	Later years	undated
b. 24, f. 309-312	Notes	undated
b. 24, f. 313	"Politics of that day," English	1930
<u>Publications of Thomas Collier, Printer</u>		
b. 24, f. 314-317	Correspondence	1933-1945, undated
b. 24, f. 318	Mailing lists	1933

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Education, Higher
Lawyers

Geographic Names

Litchfield (Conn.) -- History

Names

Angell, James Rowland, 1869-1949
Baker, George Pierce, 1866-1935
Bannard, Otto Tremont, 1854-1929
Cheney, Howell
Collier, Thomas, 1761-1842
Day, George Parmly, 1876-1959
Fisher, Samuel H. (Samuel Herbert), 1867-1957
Hutchins, Robert Maynard, 1899-1977
Lohmann, Carl A. (Carl Albert), 1887-
Oviatt, Edwin, 1874-1955
Pinchot, Gifford, 1865-1946
Rogers, James Gamble, 1867-1947
Seymour, Charles, 1885-1963
Stokes, Anson Phelps, 1874-1958
Welch, Lewis Sheldon, 1867-1940
Woolley, Monty, 1888-1963

Corporate Bodies

AYA (Organization)
Yale College (1887-). Class of 1889
Yale Corporation
Yale University. Dramatic Association
Yale University -- Administration
Yale University -- Alumni and alumnae
Yale University -- Buildings
Yale University -- Curricula
Yale University -- Officials and employees
Yale University -- Presidents
Yale University -- Students