



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Fisher, Bruce & Company Records

NMAH.AC.0370

Craig A. Orr

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Archives Center, National Museum of American History

P.O. Box 37012

Suite 1100, MRC 601

Washington, D.C. 20013-7012

archivescenter@si.edu

<https://americanhistory.si.edu/archives>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Fisher, Bruce & Company Records
Date:	1920-1940s
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0370
Source:	Gatter, Carl (Donor) Fisher, Richard, Mrs.
Creator:	Fisher, Richard Fisher, Bruce & Company. (Collector)
Extent:	3 Cubic feet (1 box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Fisher, Bruce & Company, importers of china, earthenware, and glassware, were located on Market Street, Philadelphia. The collection contains catalog pages and price lists for china, earthenware, and glassware imported from Belgium, Britain, France, and Italy, and some American ceramics.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

These records were donated to the Division of Domestic Life in February 1990 by Mr. Carl Gatter. His father, Herman L. Gatter, had been employed by Fisher, Bruce, for many years. The records were transferred to the Archives Center in March 1990.

Processing Information

This collection is unprocessed.

Preferred Citation

Fisher, Bruce & Company Records, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Probable copyright restrictions.

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Biographical / Historical

Fisher, Bruce & Company, importers of china, earthenware, and glassware, were located on Market Street in Philadelphia. The firm dates back at least to the year 1880, when it was known as Atherholt, Fisher & Company, and was located at 519 Market Street. The principals in the firm were Thomas C. Atherholt, Samuel Fisher, and his son, Joseph G. A. Fisher. By 1885 the company's name had changed to Fisher, Son & Company. By 1889, after the addition of George H. Ruth to the firm, its name had changed to Fisher, Son & Ruth. The following year, probably following the death of Samuel Fisher, Worthington Bruce joined the firm, and its name was changed to Fisher, Bruce & Company. In the same year the firm relocated to 221 Market Street.

The company continued to prosper in its Market Street location, which extended back to Church Street. By 1930, the adjoining building at 219 Market Street was purchased. The ground floors of numbers 219 221 were used as a showroom and the company's offices were located upstairs. The company stayed in the Fisher family's hands for the remainder of its existence, with E. Monroe Fisher as President of the firm beginning in 1930. In the 1970s the company was sold and the business relocated to New Jersey.

Scope and Contents

This collection primarily contains catalog pages and pricelists for china, earthenware, and glassware imported from Belgium, Britain, France, and Italy, as well as some American ceramics. The catalog pages consist of color photographs of numbered ceramic items; the pricelists are separate pages keyed to the same numbers. These records, which date from 1939 1940, are arranged in separate folders by nationality.

The Belgian material consists of one catalog page of glassware. The British catalog pages depict Aynsley bone china (breakfast and tea sets), Grimwades earthenware, and "Toby" mugs of U.S. General McArthur and British General Wavell. The French catalog pages show "Quimper" design faience as well as other china and earthenware pieces. The Italian ceramics are primarily earthenware breakfast sets, bowls, baskets, vases, and donkey figures. There is also some Venetian glassware. The U.S. catalog pages show china breakfast sets and other tableware.

In addition, a photoprint in the collection shows the firm's building, ca. 1920s; a second photoprint shows a 1920s display of Pyrex ovenware in one of the building's display windows.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Advertising, Point-of-sale
- Ceramic Industries -- American
- Ceramic Industries -- Belgian
- Ceramic Industries -- English
- Ceramic Industries -- French
- Ceramic Industries -- Italian
- Ceramic tableware
- Ceramics
- Clay pot cookery
- Commemorative porcelain
- Dams -- Panama
- Display of merchandise

Faience
Glassware
Glassware -- Belgian
Glassware -- Catalogs
Glassware -- Venetian
Importers
Locks and dams
Plates (Tableware)
Porcelain -- 20th century
Porcelain -- Prices
Porcelain figures
Porcelain, American
Porcelain, English
Porcelain, French
Pottery -- Prices
Pottery figures
Pottery, American
Pottery, English
Pottery, French
Pottery, Italian
Pyrex
Show windows
Stores, Retail
Table setting and decoration

Types of Materials:

Correspondence -- 1940-1950
Legislation (legal concepts)
Photographic prints
Postcards -- 1900-1920
Price lists
Sales catalogs
Stereographs

Names:

Fisher, Richard, Mrs.
Gatter, Carl

Places:

Colon (Panama)
Philadelphia (Pa.)

Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1	Photoprints, 1920s
Box 1, Folder 2	Belgian glassware and price lists, 1939
Box 1, Folder 3	United States ceramics and price lists, undated
Box 1, Folder 4	French ceramics and price lists, 1939
Box 1, Folder 5	British ceramics and price lists, undated
Box 1, Folder 6-7	Italian ceramics and price lists, 1939