Collection Summary

Title: John Jacob Wolfe and Esther Blum Wolfe Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1929-2012

ID No.: MSS85764

Creator: Wolfe, John Jacob, 1903-1990
Creator: Wolfe, Esther Blum, 1909-1999

Extent: 1,750 items
Extent: 5 containers plus 3 oversize
Extent: 2.2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm2012085764

Summary: John Jacob Wolfe, dentist and physician; and his wife, Esther Blum Wolfe. Correspondence, writings, wartime journal, lectures, memorabilia, photographs, press clippings, and other documents pertaining primarily to their life and work in China and India in the 1930s and 1940s and his service as a medical officer with the United States Tenth Air Force in the China-Burma-India Theater during World War II.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People
Di Belatini Hadzsy, Ducu.
Singh family.
Singh, Ganga, Maharaja of Bikaner, 1880-1943.
Wolfe, John Jacob, 1903-1990.

Organizations
United States. Air Force--Medical personnel.

Subjects
Americans--China.
Americans--India.
Dentistry--China.
Dentistry--India.
Oral medicine--China.
Oral medicine--India.
World War, 1939-1945--Medical care--Burma.
World War, 1939-1945--Medical care--China.
World War, 1939-1945--Medical care--India.
World War, 1939-1945--Medical care--United States.

Titles
Esther Blum Wolfe papers
John Jacob Wolfe papers

Occupations
Dentists.
Physicians.
Acquisition Information
The papers of John Jacob Wolfe and Esther Blum Wolfe were given to the Library of Congress by their daughter, Meera Wolfe, in 2012 and 2013.

Processing History
The papers of John Jacob Wolfe and Esther Blum Wolfe were arranged and described by Laura J. Kells in 2019. The finding aid was updated in 2024 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

Transfers
Sound recordings have been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division where they are identified as part of the John Jacob Wolfe and Esther Blum Wolfe Papers.

Other Repositories
A small collection of John Jacob Wolfe Papers, consisting of correspondence and other materials pertaining to the Wolfe's time in Bikaner, India, during the early 1940s can be found at the Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

Copyright Status
Copyright in the unpublished writings of John Jacob Wolfe, Esther Blum Wolfe, and Meera Wolfe in these papers and in other collections in the custody of the Library of Congress is reserved. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division for further information.

Access and Restrictions
The papers of John Jacob Wolfe and Esther Blum Wolfe are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation
Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, John Jacob Wolfe and Esther Blum Wolfe Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note
John Jacob Wolfe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1903, June 4</td>
<td>Born, Dublin, Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>L.D.S., Royal Dental Hospital, London University, London, England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>D.D.S., Columbia University, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Married Esther Blum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932-1935</td>
<td>Chief of dental clinic, Peiping Union Medical College, Peiping (now Beijing), China</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1933 M.D., Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
1934 Daughter Meera Wolfe born
1935-1936 Private practice for oral surgery, Peiping and Tientsin, China
1938-1940 Surgeon specialist, Tata Memorial Hospital, Bombay (now Mumbai), India
1940-1942 General surgeon to Bikaner government, Bikaner, Rajputana (now Rajasthan), India
1942-1945 Medical officer, United States Tenth Air Force, China-Burma-India Theater
1945-1946 Medical officer, United States Tenth Air Force, O'Reilly General Hospital, Springfield, Mo.
1946 Became United States citizen
1977 Retired as head of plastic surgery department, University of Louisville School of Medicine
1990, Apr. 12 Died, Naples, Fla.

**Esther Blum Wolfe**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1909, Dec. 13</td>
<td>Born, Hamden, Conn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Married John Jacob Wolfe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>Moved to Peiping (now Beijing), China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Gave birth to daughter, Meera Wolfe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Returned to New Haven, Conn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Returned to Peiping, China</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
circa 1936  | Returned to the United States                                        |
| 1938       | Relocated with family to Bombay (now Mumbai), India                   |
| 1942-1943  | Secretary, United States Air Forces in India headquarters, New Delhi, India |
| 1944       | Returned to the United States                                        |
| 1947       | Moved to Lexington, Ky.                                              |
| 1999, Aug. 2 | Died, Naples, Fla.                                                   |

**Scope and Content Note**

The papers of John Jacob Wolfe (1903-1990) and Esther Blum Wolfe (1909-1999) span the years 1929-2012. Although the papers touch on their entire married lives, the major portion of the collection pertains to their experiences while living in China and India in the 1930s and 1940s while John worked as a dentist and surgeon and served as a medical officer during World War II.

A chronological run of correspondence comprises the largest portion of the collection, and it consists primarily of letters that Esther wrote to her family from China and India and those that John (nickname, Jack) wrote to Esther (nickname, Jill) while he was serving as a medical officer with the United States Tenth Air Force. Esther’s letters contain details about her daily life in China and India. Their writings provide additional accounts of their experiences, including their interactions with Ganga Singh, Maharaja of Bikaner, and his family. John’s wartime journal chronicles his thoughts about his service in the China-Burma-India Theater. Additional writings by their daughter, Meera Wolfe (called Judy, Julia, and Meera at various times in her life), provide additional insights into her parents and her life with them.

Other material includes a file of material pertaining to their friend, Duci di Belatini Hadzsy, a Hungarian sculptor who was the official court painter for the Maharaja of Bikaner.

**Arrangement of the Papers**

This collection is arranged alphabetically by type of material.
## Container List

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 1</td>
<td>Correspondence 1929-1942 (15 folders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 2</td>
<td>1943-1950, 1956-1959 (14 folders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 3</td>
<td>Duci di Belatini Hadzsy file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 3</td>
<td>Correspondence, 1942-1954, 1975 (6 folders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 3</td>
<td>Miscellany, 1948-2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 3</td>
<td>Writings about her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 3</td>
<td>By Esther Blum Wolf, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 3</td>
<td>By Meera Wolfe, 2006, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Memorabilia, 1938-1944, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX OV 1</td>
<td>Memorabilia, illustrated maps, short snorter, 1942-1944, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Miscellany, 1945, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX OV 2</td>
<td>Photograph album, China, 1930s, 1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX OV 3</td>
<td>Photograph album, India, 1930s-1940s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Photographs, 1935-1950, undated (2 folders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Press clippings, 1932-1987 (2 folders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Speeches and remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>By Esther Blum Wolfe, 1944-1945, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>By John Jacob Wolfe, 1945, undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>Writings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td>By Esther Blum Wolfe, 1933-1993 (2 folders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 5</td>
<td>By Esther Blum Wolfe, 1933-1993 (2 folders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 5</td>
<td>By John Jacob Wolfe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 5</td>
<td>Journal, 1943-1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 5</td>
<td>Miscellaneous, 1941, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 5</td>
<td>By Meera Wolfe, 2004, undated (2 folders)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>