

Arthur Fisher, Register 1951-1960

Arthur Fisher was born in Chicago in 1894. He was the son of Walter L. Fisher, a prominent attorney who served in the cabinet of President Taft as Secretary of the Interior from 1911-1913. Arthur Fisher graduated from Harvard College *magna cum laude* and from the Harvard Law School. For a short time, he was professor of law at the University of Montana and editor of a newspaper in Missoula. From 1925 to 1939, he practiced law in Chicago, and during both world wars served the U.S. government in several capacities.

An authority on international as well as national copyright law, Mr. Fisher was interested in furthering the international protection of literary property. He represented the United States at a number of international copyright conferences and was also active, both nationally and internationally, in fields related to copyright, such as design protection and neighboring rights.

Mr. Fisher joined the staff of the Copyright Office in 1946 as associate Register, became acting Register in May 1951, and Register of Copyrights in September 1951. As Register, he led the drive that made the United States an adherent, for the first time, to a world-wide copyright agreement, the Universal Copyright Convention. Moreover, by having a series of studies prepared under his direction that examined the various aspects of copyright law, he began the movement for the general revision of the copyright law that ultimately resulted in the Copyright Act of 1976. These studies were published by the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary as *Studies on Copyright*. They were compiled and edited under the supervision of the Copyright Society of the U.S.A. and published as the Arthur Fisher Memorial Edition. Mr. Fisher did not live to see this task accomplished. He died on November 12, 1960, in Washington, D.C., after a short illness.