

Walk On A Tightrope

or

Paradise Lasted A Year And A Half

by

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F O R E W O R D

I am writing these memoirs because I think that some day some great-great-grandchild of mine may be interested in reading about his or her ancestors who made the big leap over the great ocean and why they came. Also, quite generally, to show how great happiness can blossom under very modest material circumstances if there is love; and, finally, because our lives spanned almost the whole 20th century and participated in the enormous changes that were brought about by two world wars and the amazing progress in technology.

Jane Ising
born Johanna (Hannchen) Ehmer

CHAPTER 1. BERLIN, WOHLERT STR. 9. THE EHMERS AND THE MOLDENAUERS

One evening in January, 1900, at a party of *Grete Poethke's*, in Berlin, Father pulled *Clara Moldenauer* behind a door so the others could not see them, embraced and kissed her passionately and asked her if she would become his wife. *Clara* liked the stately, vivacious man and, although he was 22 years her senior, she thought, "if I only can have 10 happy years with him, I will be grateful." She said "yes" and got 16 years of happiness. *Clara* was already 31 and an independent woman who earned her livelihood as a bookkeeper with various businesses. Even so, Father wrote a formal letter to her mother in Frankfurt, a.O., who was only 9 years older than her future son-in-law, asking for her hand in marriage. The wedding was set for November 3, 1900, to be celebrated in the big apartment on Magazinplatz 2, Frankfurt a. O., where Mother and her four sisters had been born and raised.

The intervening 9 months were spent with finding an appropriate place to live and setting up a small drug store connected with the apartment. They found it at 9 Wohlerlert Street in the northern part of Berlin - between the Stettin Railroad Station and the section called Wedding. Wohlerlert Street was a small side street of Chaussee Street, a main north-south thoroughfare in a lower middle class neighborhood: two rows of about 12 five-story buildings touching each other; no trees, but lots of balconies with green and flowering plants. In our house, a central hall divided an apartment with a dairy shop on the left from ours with Father's drug store on the right. It was not a drug store in the American sense, just teas and ointments and medicines that needed no doctor's prescription, perfumes and cosmetics, some candy and paints.

Father put it all together with Mother's money and his own labor with second-hand furniture and do-it-yourself construction. Next to the store was the bedroom, also looking out on the street and on the other side of a small hall kitchen and "salon" looking out on the treeless backyard. The toilet was in the back of the central hall of the house and had to be shared with the neighbors. We had no bathroom. The "salon" or living room was used only when we had company and at Christmas. I practiced the piano in there one hour a day. It was in the bedroom where the three of us not only slept, but also ate and worked, washed, dressed and studied, played and entertained a friend. I was born in it and my father died in it.

In the left-hand corner behind the entrance door there was a large tiled stove which Father filled with briquettes on winter mornings after having taken out the ashes of the previous day - a dirty job. But it was always warm and cozy. I remember kerosene lamps which were extinguished by turning down the wick and blowing into the top of the chimney. Later we had gaslight, but never electricity.

The court in the back was surrounded on three sides by our front wing, a side wing to the right and the back wing. The fourth side was a wall, through and over which we could not see and which separated us from the neighboring court and house which mirrored ours. In the court stood the bins into which the occupants emptied their garbage and the horizontal pole over which Father threw our rugs to beat the dust out of them - which then settled on his face and hair and the windows of the nearby apartments. It was here, too, that I learned to dance the waltz and the polka when the organ grinder came to offer his music. And once a year there was an Erntefest, a harvest or Thanksgiving feast, with many-colored garlands strung from one side to the other, with games and candies

and candles in colored paper cups at the end of long sticks.*

These, then, were our simple quarters together with the modest foundation of our livelihood. But no richer environs could have witnessed more joy and happiness, more laughter, love and mutual devotion than these.

When I lived there, Berlin, of course, was not a divided city. But when, after World War II, the city was split into the four sectors of the occupying forces, Woehlert Street happened to lie just one block inside the Soviet sector. Ernest, I and Tom were there in 1961, just two weeks after the communists erected the wall on August 13. We could not get to Woehlert Street. But in 1977 Ernest and I were able to go there. The house No. 9 was still standing, but very neglected. The eight balconies were gone, but the traces where they had been attached were still visible. When we lived there the facade was freshly painted every three-four years. Now it looked as if it had not been painted at all since the war. There were also no more stores. It looked drab, depressing, poor!

The streetcars on Chaussee Str. used to go north to the outlying suburbs of Tegel, Wittenau, Reinickendorf, Pankow. But now the wall blocks the artery right behind Woehlert Str. and the street cars turn screeching and clanking right into our small street and with two more right turns into Pflug and Schwartzkopf Str. in a loop back to Chaussee Str. to begin their southbound run into the city - the city of East Berlin - until they are stopped again by the wall from continuing, as they formerly did, to the Halle Gate (Hallisches Tor), Tempelhof and the southern suburbs. So, Woehlert Str. is now a noisy, ugly thoroughfare with big bombed-out gaps - frontierland in a hostile city,

When Father opened his drug store in 1900, Berlin was the undivided, prosperous, progressive, open capital of the German Empire and Woehlert Str. a quiet, intimate and solid section off a busy main artery, providing us through its many little stores with all the necessities of life. Besides our drug store and the dairy shop next to us there were two bakeries, a butcher, a grocer, a tobacco store, a shoe repair shop, two little pubs. We went shopping to the big specialty and department stores in the city only for clothing, shoes and household goods.

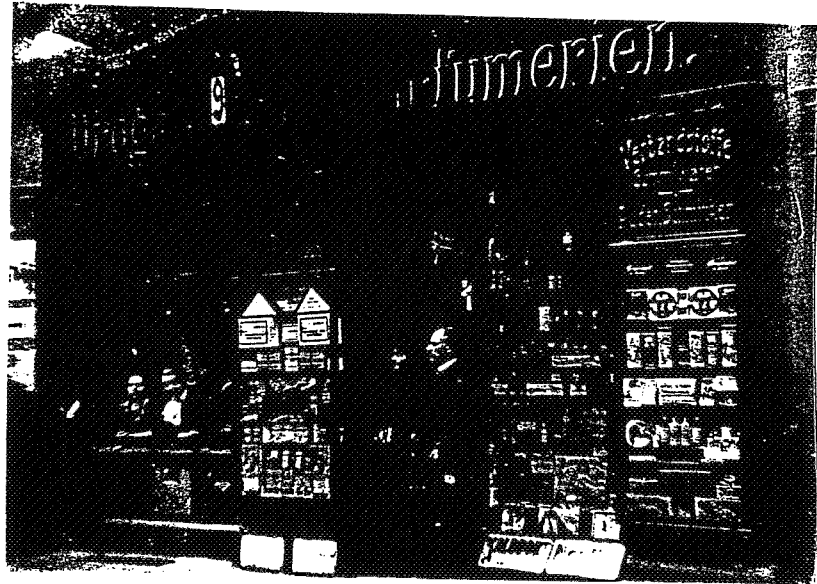
I know very little about my Father's life before he married Mother. He was born June 24 (St. John's Day = Johannestag), 1846, and baptized *Johannes Eduard Ehmer*. His birthplace, Neuenburg on the Vistula in the Prussian province of West-Prussia, became part of the Polish Corridor after WW I and of the new Poland

*There was more opportunity to dance when, on warm summer nights, my parents would go to a beergarden to sit under trees sipping a "Berliner Weisse mit Schüss" (a light beer with a shot of raspberry juice) or a "Pilsener Urquell" warmed with Father's personal beer warmer, a metal tube filled with hot water. A band on a podium played all the popular hits of the day of which I remember best:

In der Nacht, wenn die Liebe erwacht,
Und am Himmel der Mond freundlich lacht...
(At night when love awakens
and in the sky the moon friendly smiles...)

A Chinese lantern with a moon face was then always pulled from one side of the podium to the other and we children danced.

B e r l i n
9 Wöhlert Street



ca. 1914

in Window Hanna and Clara Ehmer
in Door Martha Ehmer Cotrba and
Hans Ehmer



before World War I, ca 1908



after World War II (1978)
now in the East Sector of Berlin

after WW II. I do not know its Polish name. When I was 7, Father returned with me for a week to his hometown. I remember a large garden behind his parental home from the end of which one had a splendid view of the mighty Vistula deep below and of the city of Graudenz in the distance on the other side.

My father was the oldest son of *Eduard Adolf Ehmer* (born 1820 in Deutsch-Eylau, died in 1892 in Berlin) and *Johanna Charlotte Sengebusch* (born 1821, died in Neuenburg, Westprussia). They were married in Neuenburg on August 22, 1844, where *Eduard* was a house-painter and merchant. His father, *Karl Ehmer*, married *Karoline Muller* in Deutsch-Eylau on August 20, 1811 and died in April, 1832. He may have been born in 1790 or so. That is as far back as I can go.

There is, however, an oral tradition in the *Ehmer* family that their ancestors were Salzburg protestants driven out by the archbishop around 1735. These refugees were settled all over Germany and some even went to the American continent. I have not been able to verify this tradition. The Prussian State Library in Berlin has hand-written lists of Salzburg protestants settled in the frontier province of West-Prussia around 1735 by King *Frederick William I* of Prussia. There are several *Elmers* on these lists, but no *Ehmers*. Is it a spelling error or later spelling change? I do not know. But the idea that my ancestors may once have lived in the lovely Salzburg area of Austria delights me and I find it intriguing that about 200 years before *Ernest* and I were chased away from our German homeland for racial reasons my ancestors may have suffered the same fate for religious reasons.

Father came from a large family; there were three boys and three girls. Brother *Georg* became a wealthy architect in Kassel. *Karl* emigrated to America and was never heard of again.* Sister *Emma*, called *Muchchen*, never married. *Fanny Haberkorn* had two daughters, *Kate* and *Ilse*. *Kate* married an Italian count and went with him overseas to become plantation owners. Sister *Martha* with her pock-marked face married *Arthur Kotrba* who looked like the Gypsy Baron. They were such an odd, striking couple that the famous Berlin caricaturist, *Heinrich Zille*, once used them as models. *Martha*, when widowed after WW I, lived in Gablonz, Czechoslovakia, and it was through her that Mother was introduced to her second husband. *Georg*, *Emma* and *Martha* had no children. The contact with Father's family was not close. Occasionally, the one or the other visited us for a few hours. And Uncle *Georg* repeatedly sent a most welcome 20 mark bill when times were rough. After my graduation from the Gymnasium in 1921, his widow, Aunt *Dora*, invited me to Wiesbaden where she lived with Aunt *Olli Kampmann*, a relative of hers. I spent a glorious five weeks vacation there.

After the death of Aunt *Dora* I stayed in contact with Aunt *Olli* who came to Berlin quite regularly to visit her niece who was married to *General Fellgiebel*. Often, during the early *Hitler* years, Aunt *Olli* would say, "What I hear in my niece's house is most alarming and upsetting. I am always glad when I am back in my quiet Wiesbaden." It was only many years later when I had already left Germany that I realized what she had meant. *General Fellgiebel*, who became *formal* chief of transportation during WW II, participated in the abortive plot to assassinate *Hitler* on June 22, 1944. He was found out and hanged.

Unfortunately, my affection for Aunt *Olli* was badly shaken when, in the late 1930's, she wrote a tactless anti-Semitic remark on an open post-card to her cousin, who through my efforts, had become the housekeeper of *Ernest's* parents.

**Karl Ehmer* who advertises his delicatessen business in the "Aufbau" is no relative of ours. He came to New York only after WW II (personal letter).

My father learned the trade of a house painter as his father had, but he did not stick with it. He absolved his military service as a black hussar in the King's first Hussar Regiment in Danzig (Gdynia) and participated in the Franco-Prussian war (1870-1) without seeing combat. But he rode into France and fell in love with it. The "arch enemy" seemed friendly and charming to him and he was impressed that they drank wine with every meal. He implanted in his daughter this love of France and the French, together with his great admiration of Napoleon "who wanted to unite Europe." After his dismissal from military service he went to Berlin and had many odd jobs. He had already come to Berlin before the war after his three years with the hussars in Danzig (1866-1869). In 1877 he married *Bertha Schroeder* and, with her money, opened a restaurant. But one day, when he returned home, he found her in bed with another man. Immediately, he packed a few personal belongings and left, never to return again. In 1893, he was the acting president of the 177th orphans' council in Brunnen St. He loved dogs and once dyed his white poodle green for a week. He started from scratch when, at age 54, he married Mother and set up his drugstore at 9 Woehlert St and this time everything worked out all right. The drug store provided us with the modest necessities of life and some wonderful extras - the more precious because they were rare.

Mother was the third of five daughters of *Albert Moldenauer* (born 1833 in Potsdam, died 1894 in Frankfurt a.O.) and *Auguste Johanna Caroline Staar* (born 1837 in Halbau, Silesia, died 1906 in Frankfurt A.O.). They were married in 1863. *Albert Moldenauer* had served 12 years in the Prussian army and participated in the wars of 1864 against Denmark and of 1866 against Austria. He then got a civil service job as chancellery inspector. While with the military, he played in the band. *Auguste Staar* was a peasant's daughter. I still remember her sister, *Emilie*, who continued living near Halbau in a little farm house in the country with two big sweet-smelling linden trees in front. When we slept there we had to climb onto high bedstands and were covered with enormously thick featherbeds, summer and winter. *Auguste*, my grandmother, was the more refined sister. She took service as a chamber maid and travel companion with the *Countess von Henckel-Donnersmarck* in Romolkwitz and with the *Baroness von Ungern-Sternberg*. Between 1865 and 1875 - after her marriage in 1863 - she gave birth to *Louise*, *Anna*, *Clara* (1869), *Emma* and *Amalie*. *Louise* became the housekeeper for *Louis Koenigsmarck* and his son, *Carl*, in Breslau while Mrs. K. was in an insane asylum. When she died, *Aunt Louise* became Mrs. *Koenigsmarck*.

Uncle Louis was the bookkeeper of a wool company, and at home they had one room full of wool bundles from the floor to the ceiling with narrow passages between the piles of knitting wool. *Aunt Anna* was the only one who never married and suffered from it. She was a school teacher in Cottbus and lived together with *Emma*, also a school teacher, until *Emma* married *Albert Mewes*, an accountant clerk. *Aunt Mali* was a school teacher in Wittenberg and eventually married, very hesitantly, a widower colleague, *Adolf Burckhard*, but the marriage did not turn out well. Mother had some commercial training and became a bookkeeper for several businesses in Berlin. After her marriage she continued doing such work on a part-time basis and thus contributed to the family income.

These aunts were all very important to me because I was their only niece and they spoiled me. Especially, *Anna* and *Emma* invited me often to Cottbus during Christmas, Easter and summer vacations. They traveled widely and their tales about the Alps, Switzerland and the Dolomites, Scandinavia and Thorvaldsen's statues aroused my appetite. But they were also very nationalistic and anti-semitic and - together with all their Christmas and birthday presents of books, toys, clothes, games and dolls - they would beg me: "Please, don't marry a jew!" This is precisely what I did and it hurt.

Anna, as well as *Emma* and *Albert Mewes*, came to a sad end. Early in 1945, when the Russian troops invaded Germany from the east, their bodies - as well as those of many others were exhausted from 5 years of war and ravaged by dysentery. Unable to move from their beds, they had to watch helplessly how the Russian women - those hated Communists - walked through their apartments, opened wardrobes and drawers and took what they wanted. I would think that under such circumstances physicians and medicine were scarcely available to make their dying easier. I don't know when and how *Louise* died. But *Mali* survived the war and her unloved husband. She had been the only aunt who stuck to me when I chose *Ernest* for my husband and the only one who came to our wedding. Eventually, her mind would become clouded (like Mother's); she would write illegible and nonsensical letters and sit on her bed, her little dog next to her, tearing her nightgown into little pieces. I don't know when she died.

So I am the only shoot left on the *Moldenauer* family tree.

The marriage of my parents was a good one in spite of the great age difference. There were occasional quarrels as in all marriages. I did not like them and begged them to stop, mostly with success. I heard my father say once, "Wife, you should have married an employee with a fixed income. Then you could have made all those plans of what you want to buy to improve the apartment. I cannot afford it."

In our family, Father was the strong one, easily excited, exuberant and easily upset. Mother was quiet, calm, flexible, giving in. Both of them loved me dearly but did not spoil me. My education was rather strict. Father could get into a roaring furor over little wrongdoings. But - while I dreaded it - I also admired his wrath, his blue eyes sparkling with anger. It belonged to Father's principles that a child should not be beaten any more after it reached the age of 3, and that it should be made to understand what it did wrong. It was then that I felt my parent's love most strongly and, as a rule, accepted their punishment as justified. The fact that my parents loved each other and me very much created an atmosphere of warmth, security and happiness. I was not even aware that our life style was modest and the surroundings drab. When the teacher once asked who had traveled on the railroad 1st class, 2nd class, 3rd class and then stopped because "no educated person ever travels 4th class," I was not hurt and suffered no inferiority complex because we traveled only 4th class. I only found it funny that she did not know better.

Father suffered from asthma and was told by the doctor to be in fresh air as much as possible. So, every Sunday, we went into the beautiful environs of Berlin. Usually we squeezed into the crowded tram #25, and from its terminal in Tegel walked through the woods to Hermsdorf, either directly in an hour on the road which in pre-car times was never busy, or on trails detouring through the woods.

In summer there were blueberries to pick and wild strawberries and flowers; in fall mushrooms and in winter a Christmas tree for us. The goal was always the "Waldschänke," a restaurant in Hermsdorf where, in summer, we sat outside, always at the same table close to the woods on the third terrace. In the cold season we sat inside.

For 50 Pfennig we bought boiling water for the self-provided coffee:

Der alte Brauch wird nicht gebrochen,
Hier können Familien Kaffee kochen
(The old custom is not broken,
Families can make their coffee here).

We ate fresh coffee pastry with it, bought at a Tegel bakery, and all the other good food that Mother carried through the woods in a heavy bag. The woods meant much to me. I remember two occasions when I experienced a religious awe, a Freudian "oceanic" feeling. Once, with Father alone, on a day off from school, we sat on a bench on top of a hill, he with his newspaper, I with a book. It was an open woodland, high dark pine trees and light-green underbrush flooded with sunlight. My soul was floating in ravished bliss. And I made a poem! The other time was much less spectacular. We were hiking through a dense, dark pine forest when we came to railroad tracks which made an opening in the thicket and allowed the sky and bright sunlight to penetrate the darkness. I let my parents go ahead and deeply enjoyed the quiet and the unexpected shaft of light. I have later often felt this "oceanic" awe, mostly in nature, on high mountain tops, watching ocean waves, but also listening to great music.

CHAPTER 2. PRE-SCHOOL YEARS

1902-1908

My parents wrote a diary for me from my birth on February 2, 1902, till my confirmation Easter 1917. It contains some lengths, so I let an abbreviated version follow:

I was born in my parents' bed-dining-living-room which was so crowded with furniture that I cannot figure how three physicians and a midwife could manage to pull my big, hard skull and the rest of me with forceps from my mother's womb.

Mother writes: You little worm suffered so much that the doctors and our good 'Mrs. Stork' feared you would not make it through the night. But then you started crying - three jugs of ice cold water were poured over your little body - and you cried all through the night and that saved your life. Then you slept for three days with *Grandmother Moldenauer* worrying that we let you starve to death. Only on the fourth day did you begin taking any nourishment."

Father was so disappointed that I was not a boy that he wrote to Mother's sisters: "Berlin, 2-3-'02: Dear sisters-in-law, a doggone old gal has arrived. Mother and gal are fine. Hoping that you are not as angry as I am I remain with best regards your brother-in-law. *Hans*."

He soon regretted this. That sweet little thing with which his advanced years were blessed became his "*little Goldheart*," his happiness and his pride.

June 6, 1902. (Mother) ...You are a darling little creature so that, in spite of all the trouble and work that your feeding and caretaking cause us, Father and Mother love you more every day, quite especially Father, who has never been so happy as he is now with you, little girl."

June 25, 1902. (Father) Mother took a job to help us get ahead better, and we have a 14 year old girl to play with you and push you around.

July 1st, 1902. (Father) Today, Sunday, we planned to push your pram to Jungfernhöhe. But we regretted it when we entered the first restaurant to the right behind Sea Street: dust, columns of people, bad-tasting beer and heat! We turned around, but alas! On Sea Street deep sand and rugged grassland. Father pushed the pram like a beast of burden, Mother mumbled "never again!" Finally, we reached the Lehr-Brewery. There we were well sheltered: good beer, cool, etc. We stayed there for two hours. Then we started home...we are dog tired and told ourselves: not again very soon! Now sleep well. Mother is already asleep and I write these lines already in bed. Good night. Your Father."

July 14, 1902. (Father) ...Recently you wake up promptly when I go to bed and then you can beg irresistibly to be taken up. And every evening I have taken you in my bed and we have romped around together. But today we both got a good scolding from Mother, for you performed such things as other people only do at a certain place. Well, Mother washed you and Father washed himself and the freshly put on bedsheet was also washed, and when all was over and Mother's face also indicated better weather, you laughed happily and we two old ones laughed, too. Now you are asleep. I wish you a very good night until tomorrow at 8. Then Father has to take you on his lap during breakfast. Good night. Father"

While Mother's four sisters loved, adored, admired and spoiled their only niece to Father's fullest gratification, his own sisters were rather indifferent toward his treasure and it hurt him deeply in spite of his gainsaying it.

August 4, 1902. (Father) ..Aunt Mali just left and last week Aunt Anna and Emma were here (all three Mother's sisters). They greeted you immediately and were pleased that you developed so beautifully. In this connection I have to tell you that my sisters Emma and Martha, with her husband, Arthur Cotiba, were here in February and last week Fanny (Habermann). But they scarcely looked at you. Well, it's all right, my little sweetheart. That does not hurt the three of us.

And two days later: August 6, 1902 (Father) "My dear beloved little daughter, today your aunts Fanny and Emma were here, but they showed no interest to see you and did not ask about you, and I did not think it necessary to show you. (Mother was not at home). When you are grown up, please treat them the same way. I tell you this today, so you have some idea how they are...it is my duty."

August 14, 1902 (Father) Aunt Emma came back alone today, but she has not even asked about you. Remember this, my dear child!"

As it turned out, Father's indifferent sisters were no problem in my later life. But Mother's loving sisters who were shocked and disappointed when I married a Jew made life miserable for me and especially for Mother.

August 18, 1902 (Mother) My little mouse, I have not written much for you lately, am mostly too tired after the day's work...you require more attention now, want to be carried around more often, which is mostly Father's job who anyway spoils you to his heart's desire!

August 23, 1902 (Father) "Come, come quickly! I have to show you something!" Thus Mother came into the store from the street. And outside, by your pram, "Look, look, our mouse has two little teeth." Well, the joy was great. Mother was overly happy and calls you our sunshine. Good night, darling."

August 25, 1902 (Father) "...your first visit...too far with the pram, so we went by public horse-drawn coach. You looked around very interested with your large brown eyes...but on the way back...you got tired....and started crying. It was not too bad, but Father sweated blood and water; performing all kinds of things for you and still could not calm you down. But then Father railed not at you, for you had a right to be tired, but that we two fatigued ourselves so much on Sundays after the week's burdens and troubles and forswore not to go out with you again as long as you are still so little."

"Next day you fell out of Mother's bed when she went away for a moment and you started crying softly. But Father picked you up quickly and made bumbum - bumbum and quickly happy bliss was all over your face. You are always very quiet when Father sings and you cry loud with joy when he lets you dance. Good night, little darling worm."

September 7, 1902 (Father) Yesterday, Sunday, we were at the "Eiskeller" (Ice Cellar), a pretty garden restaurant off Chaussee Street, almost across from our Woehlert Street. The druggist, Kling, and his wife came to visit us and at 5:30 pm we all went there and stayed until 10 pm. Oh, little mouse, how you listened to the music, and your eyes turned this way and that. And those many lights..

You were a very very good child...

September 8, 1902 (Father) Sometimes you call "oeh, oeh." Then Father must take you up and play the drum at the door with fingers and fist and whistle or sing. Then we drum on the door of the tile stove in our bedroom and then the same on the glass door of the kitchen. Sometimes I swing you by your hands to the right and to the left and up and down while you put your feet on my chest. Then your little face is beaming with bliss all over. But the culmination of your happiness comes when I rock you in my arms and sing, "*Hannchen, little Hannchen*, etc." We have great joy at this picture. In short, you give us a lot of happiness (sometimes you don't, but that can't be helped)...you handle my mustache thoroughly; no need for a moustache holder (would be of no use). Sometimes you pull so much that I don't know what to do."

November 3, 1902 (Father) ...If I only had as much time as I don't, you scarcely would get away from me. But a few hours Father has to dedicate to you - well, you can imagine - only too gladly; fondle you mightily and have my joy.

December 15, 1902 (Mother) You are such a dear merry little girl. Father and I idle away many an hour to play with you. How you can laugh! We always must laugh with you."

February 2, 1903 (Mother) Today our child is one year old! You are really a dear little mouse, always cheerful and merry and ready to fool around. Now you are trying awfully hard to walk. You push the little chair you got from Aunt *Grete Poetke* for Christmas forward all alone which looks very funny. So we have a lot of fun with you and the aunts enjoyed themselves immensely. This afternoon I stayed home, while usually I go away for a few hours to work. I gave myself totally to the happiness to possess you, my child. Then you belonged to me all alone. Father was busy in the store. So we two played and romped around and laughed. You, too, seemed to like it very much, for you did not want to go to *Anna* at all with whom on other days you spend the afternoon together, and who is also very nice with you. Now you sleep, little darling, after you got tired while playing, and Father and I are glad that you are asleep and wish you a good night. And all the good wishes from the faithful hearts of Grandmother, aunts and parents accompany you into a new year of your life and on your future way through life which we would like to make bright and sunny for you. You were born on a Sunday; perhaps that will bring you luck in life..."

May 11, 1903 (Mother) ...Our dear father got sick and is not yet well today. It is bronchial catarrh, and Father has much to suffer from it, since he can so little take care of himself in the store. Yesterday, in spite of cool weather and mainly because of Father who is supposed to be much in fresh air, we were in our old garden restaurant in Muller Street where we had gone with you last year already several times. What fun you had there! The band played - your greatest delight. You ran through the whole garden to the music without looking back to Father, Mother or *Anna* and without minding any bow-wows although you usually go out of their way. When an organ-grinder comes into the court of our house, I cannot hold you back and *Anna* must go and dance with you. If not, you scream and kick with hands and feet. "Temperament," Father calls this. I rather say "stubbornness" - a very very little one. - but it must not get any bigger with Father's and my education."

The first Christmas and all the following Christmasses, all the birthday celebrations, occasional efforts to have my will done against that of my parents, the

developing of the little mind, several adenoid operations and other illnesses like a whooping cough at age 4, the measles at age 9 and a kidney infection which lasted about 8 weeks at age 11, *Grandmother's* death in October, 1906, were all reported in the diary. So were the frequent trips to *Grandmother* and the aunts in Frankfurt and Cottbus and the Sunday excursions to the woods from Tegel to Hermsdorf.

Always interspersed in the diary were expressions of happiness, of love and joy: March 17, 1903 (Mother) ..You are, after all, a dear good child, who looks so trustingly up to Father and Mother. Oh, the bliss when you nuzzle your little head so sweet on Father's or my shoulder!"

May 18, 1903 (Father).."All in all, we have a lot of joy and many a happy hour with our good little girl."

July 14, 1903 (Father) ..."You can jubilate in unrestrained mirth. In short, you are a charming little thing."

February 28, 1904 (Mother) ..."You love me above everything. When you can come into my bed and nuzzle up to me - that is something most wonderful for you, and for me, too. "*Mutterchen* (Mom), be good, give kiss." You are in total bliss and can cast sweet glances just as *Vaterchen* (Pop)."

November 25, 1904 (Mother) .."A real coaxing pussy you are! You come to me tenderly to hug and kiss me as if you are copying Father.

December 29, 1904. ~~Postcard~~ Postcard from Father in Berlin to *Fräulein Hannchen Ehmer* in Frankfurt a. O.: "My dear good sweet little *Goldheart*, how are you? And you, my own beloved dear wife, how are you? Here all is in best order...but I alone without the two of you! I miss the racket, the bright laughter and the arguing of my sweet wife..."

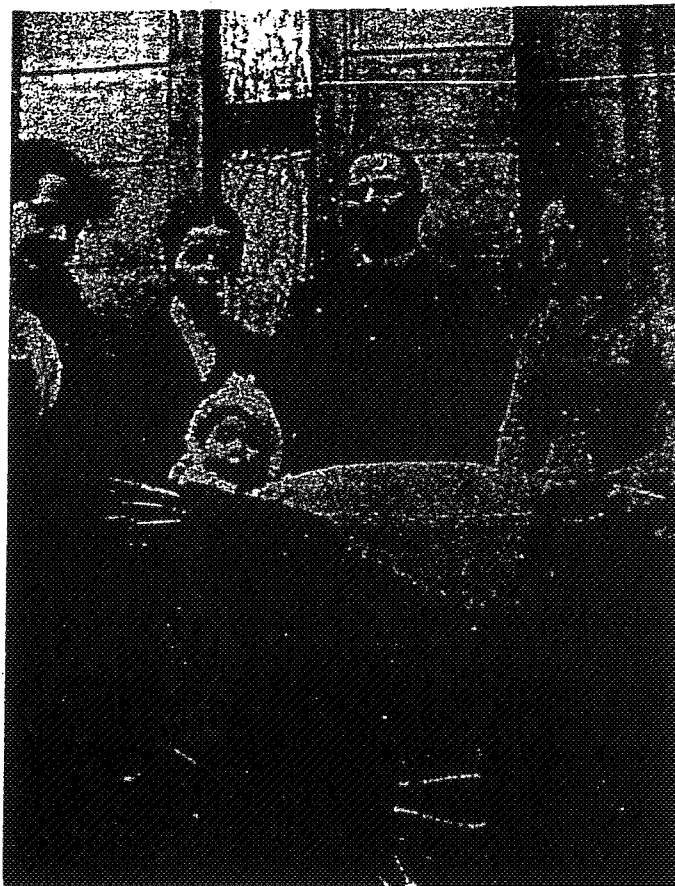
October 21, 1906 (Father)..."Sleep well, my own sweet little daughter. May you flourish and prosper, so that *Mutterchen* has much joy from you and you two have a lot of fun when you read this..."

February 26, 1907 (Mother) .."You are now a very good child and a coaxing pussy of the first class. 'If I can hug my dear *Vaterchen* and my *Muttchen*, my dear mother, that's what I love best.' And then you press us as hard as you can and kiss us both most vigorously, just as Father who also loves to hug and kiss."

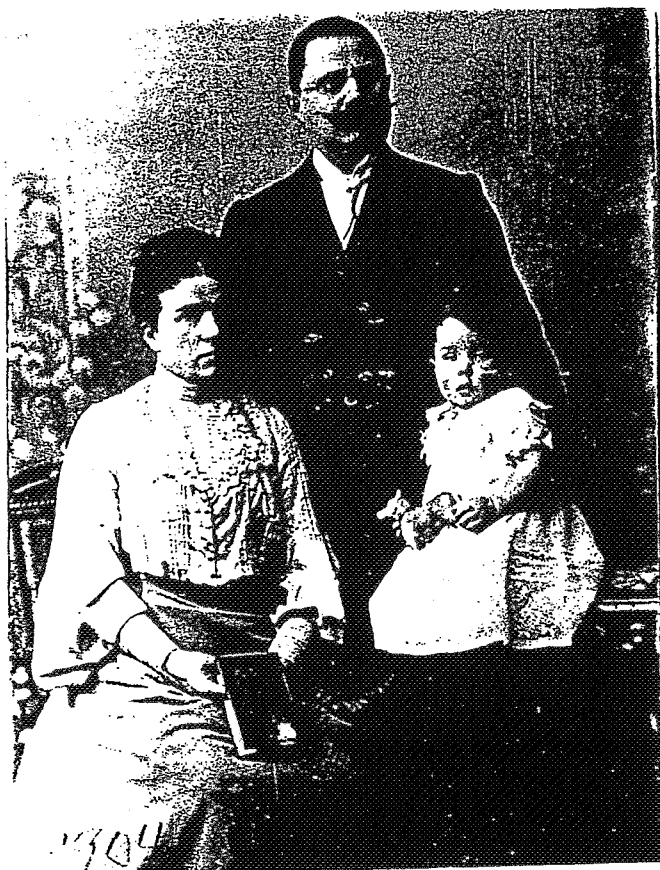
Back to March 20, 1903 (Mother) ..."Yesterday you dared to take the first steps alone. I stood you against the bed and knelt at some distance from you, a rattling match box, which you like especially well, in my hand. Then you laughed, looked at me and let go and with one, two steps you were with me. That was so much fun that you did it once 'mo' again and again..."

April 4, 1903 (Father) "Ho! Ho! my sweetheart, now you walk quite well already, all through the long bedroom or kitchen. There isn't much grace and elegance in it, it is true, but it goes quite well..."

August 1, 1904 (Mother) "Every Sunday now we go to Hermsdorf, mainly on account of Father who still has to recover from the winter....Now *Vaterchen* has finished his day's work. We'll both sit in front of the house a little while."



1902 Hanna and Aunt Mali,
parents Clara and Hans Ehmer,
Aunt Anna



1904 Clara, Hans and Hanna
Ehmer



ca.1907 Clara and Hanna Ehmer



Hans Ehmer ca 1910

2
October 5, 1903 (Mother) ..(Grandmother and the aunts), they all love you, but most Father and Mother. All week long when I am gone in the morning, I am looking forward to Sunday, when I am home, can supervise your games and play with you myself and teach you this and that. Father, who occupies himself with you as much as possible, has to tend the store and often has his head full of worries and little time for you.."

August 17, 1903 (Mother) "Four weeks have passed without our having told you anything about you, little Hanna. Father is always very tired at night after the day's work and trouble - he has to labor so hard for you and me - so that he is glad when at night, before going to bed, he has half an hour to quietly read his newspaper. And I am just as tired. In the morning and afternoon I still go to work, and at noon and in the evening my little Hannchen wants to be occupied and entertained by Mother, which I don't mind at all."

February 28, 1904 (Mother) "You are very anxious to go to school. Yesterday morning, Father lets you out a bit on the street without supervision. There, after a little while, five boys come and bring you in and say that you were in the school, which is around the corner on Pflug Street. You had taken along a booklet from the store!"

September 11, 1904 (Mother) ... "Recently we have been in Hermsdorf every Sunday and you with Father also once or twice during the week. The wonderful forest air did a lot of good for Father who was very down from the winter's bronchial catarrh. He has recovered beautifully. And for you it is good, too. You shoot up like a little mushroom. All dresses are getting too short.

On January 19, 1905, Mother wrote this paragraph: ... "This Sunday turned out to be a day of horror for Russia, the beginning of the revolution. Thousands of people who, without arms, demanded their right from the czar were shot down by the military, and unrest and tumult become greater every day. Of such things, thank God, you don't understand anything...who knows how the world will look and what will happen when you will understand?"

Mother, herself, would live through WW I and WW II, see *Hitler* come to power, her daughter emigrate first to Luxembourg, then to America, be herself forced to give up her second home in the Sudetengau of Czechoslovakia and have to live under Communist rule in East Germany!

January 1, 1907 (Mother) ... "Vaterchen was sick during the holidays and stayed in bed for almost 2 weeks, bronchial catarrh. It is better now. With all the work that pressed down on me: store, household, sick Father and you, I could not get into a Christmas mood. If Mr. Paul Perdelwitz had not come and brought a tree for us and knocked it into a stand, we would not have had a tree for the holiday."

CHAPTER 3. SCHOOL YEARS AND WW I. FATHER'S DEATH. 1908 - 1921

April 23, 1908 (Mother) The first school day! A happy section of your life is behind you, an important one is ahead of you. Will it be just as happy? I hope so...You went to school full of joy, hand in hand with *Vaterchen*...In the afternoon you said, "if only it were tomorrow already and I could go to school again!"

My parents were not learned people, but they considered education the most valuable and important thing to give their daughter. Father used to say, "I want you to learn as much as you can, so your life will be easier than that of your parents. We work so hard and so long hours and don't have much to show for it."

There were no public kindergardens when I was young, but a six-year old could be enrolled either in one of the many elementary schools with an 8 year curriculum, called "people's schools" or in a "higher school" with a 10 year curriculum. The admission to these latter schools did not depend on superior learning abilities of the student, but on the ability of the parents to pay the fee of 35 marks per quarter. In spite of our frugal means, Father always saw to it that the school money was there when it was due every three months. I had to walk half an hour to the Schiller-Lyzeum, but if I made a slight detour, I could walk through the beautiful Humboldt Park, often accompanied by Father who was told by the doctor to walk much in fresh air. There was an elementary school right around the corner, on Pflug Street, five minutes from us. But besides getting me a better schooling my parents also wanted to keep me away from the rude neighborhood kids about whom they both repeatedly complained in the diary.

I went to school six days a week, at first from 9-12, later from 8-1 or 8-2. We started French in the 4th grade and English in the 7th grade. Besides the three R's, we had classes in history and geography, physics and chemistry, biology and math. Non-academic subjects were physical education, singing, art and needle-work. Not every subject was taught every day, perhaps only 2 or 3 hours per week. But once started, it was never dropped, but carried on to the end of school. We had no choice in our subjects. There was no school lunch; we took sandwiches along. School did not start with a prayer (nor did any meetings or conferences), but we had a class of religion 1 or 2 hours a week. Since Berlin was the capital of Protestant Prussia, we were taught Protestant religion, but we were not indoctrinated. Although I am myself quite unreligious, I find it good that children should learn about religion and about the content of the Bible. The 2 or 3 Jewish girls in my class always left and had their own lesson. I cannot remember that there were any Catholics ever in my class.

We had homework from the very beginning, gradually increasing in amount, and I made it my practice always to do my homework before playing or reading or whatever.

We were seated according to our report cards. I was usually the fourth, sometimes moving higher up even to the first place, occasionally down to the 5th or 6th place. We formed our friendships almost exclusively with our competing neighbors. But since the high school recruited its students from a much larger area than the elementary school, my classmates did not live close to me and we got together outside of school mainly for the different birthday parties.

May 17, 1908. (Father) "...Father has great joy over his little daughter. We always do the written homework together and Mother the oral."

During the first big summer vacation Father went with me to Saatwinkel every day for a week.

August 14, 1908 (Father) "Early in the morning we left on the suburban train for Tegel, then walked through the woods to Saatwinkel and crossed over by boat to Baumwerder, an island. There we totally undressed, spread a blanket under a tree and lay around there naked all day long or we played ball in the burning sun. But first we bathed in the Tegel Lake. Sometimes it was hard to get you out... then we had a good lunch and slept on your crocheted horse ropes. So we stayed there all day long. A final dip in the water and home we went, first by steamer to Tegel - that was one of the main attractions for you. From Tegel home by train."

Another vacation week I spent with Mother in Cottbus at Aunt Anna's and Emma's.

When school started again in fall, written homework with Father became a torture.

September 30 and October 15, 1908 (Mother) "...It costs a hard struggle almost every time, since you seldom write well enough for him. He often gets very irritated and then you cry and there we are! I often scold him when he torments himself and you for a more or less straight thick or thin stroke...I often cannot listen when you do your homework and leave the room...Father is so terribly ambitious. He would like best to see you first in class and writing especially beautifully."

Once when I had moved up to the second place, he lifted me up on his shoulders in my coat with the school-bag on my back and carried me triumphantly from the store to Mother in the kitchen.

November 30, 1908 (Mother) "...Yesterday we went to the Schiller Theatre and saw "Max and Moritz" - that was wonderful. You and all the kids had great fun, but also the grown-ups who were there. It was very amusing. We are now going every Saturday to see a fairy tale: 'Hänsel and Gretel,' 'Sleeping Beauty,' 'Snow White,' 'Cinderella,' - it was all very nice and you were always quite enthused about it."

March 20, 1909 (Mother) You are learning how to swim. You already knew it, but did not dare do it alone. Now, with the teacher you dared to swim alone when she ordered you to, during the second lesson, and in the very deep part of the pool, too. And yesterday you jumped in! First twice on the rope and then three times all by yourself from the high diving board where the water is 6 yards deep! I did not believe my eyes and worried for you. But you were quite courageous. I was really very happy about it, and Vaterchen gave you a whole mark, later. Probably a mother hen when her hatched ducklings go on the water and she cannot follow them must feel as I did when I saw you diving. How funny it looked, such a little dot like you on the diving board, tap-tap-tap and then 1 - 2 - 3 diving into the water like a little frog. All the other people in the pool were as amused as I was.

May 6, 1909 (Mother) "Today you passed your swimming test; you swam 16 minutes without interruption. Even I managed to swim twice around the pool - quite an achievement (considering my heavy build) of which I am quite as proud as you of yours."

We learned the breaststroke then, head out of the water; no crawling. At age 8½ and Ernest 8½ we still swim 20 minutes daily.

Also at age 7 I started having piano lessons. I had them for many years, but

never achieved very much. However they helped me appreciate music. I learned to skate during my first school year and would often go skating with Mother or school friends on flooded empty lots in the city or on streams and lakes in the environment. This, too, has become an almost lifelong sport, especially since *Ernest* was a rather good skater, more secure than I and able to support me. We learned to skate the Dutch Waltz and the Canasta Tango and performed in the opening show of the Rhodell Owen Icerink in Peoria in 1980. *Ernest* was 80 then and I 78. Soon thereafter skating became too strenuous and we stopped. But 20 years earlier, when *Ernest* fell and broke a few ribs while skating, the nurses at the hospital told him that a man in his 60's had no business being on the ice!

Also at 7 I took my first train ride to Cottbus all by myself. Mother put me on the train in Berlin, but in Cottbus nobody picked me up. I took the tram and surprised the aunts!

In the fall of 1909, *Count Zeppelin* came to Berlin with his blimp from Friedrichshafen (which is today the sister-city of Peoria) and all Berliners, we too, were on the flat roof tops of their houses to have a first sight of the remarkable "dirigible."

In July, 1909, Father went back to his birthplace - Neuenburg in West Prussia - which he had not seen for 33 years and took me along. It was my first long trip on an express train. I still remember the house where Father was born and grew up - it had been changed into a hotel where we could stay - and at the end of the big back yard the grand view over the valley of the Vistula with Graudenz and Marienwerder visible in the distance on the other side of the mighty river. All this is now part of Poland. There were even some distant relatives with whom we spent much of our time.

In summer, 1911, the doctor recommended for me to breathe sea air for a few weeks in order to combat a constant soft cough.

July 7, 1911 (Mother) "Father now insists that we go somewhere to the sea. Yes, if only the expenses were not so high! But we are always short of money in spite of an ever so thrifty way of life...we are busy making travel plans, also for next year. We acquired a "Giant Mountains cash box." In it we put every nickel that we wanted to spend, but recognized as unnecessary and saved, e.g. -- for cake or other delicacies after the motto 'We can do without it.' If we can save enough we want to go to the Giant Mountains of which I have told you so much. ~~You are quite eager to save and said yesterday you would like best to eat nothing so that the box will soon be full. So far there are only 4 mark in it!"~~

August 16, 1911. (Mother) "We are back from beautiful Lubmin on the Baltic Sea. First you were there for two weeks with me. Then I went home, left you there alone and *Vaterchen* went the same day for 2 weeks."

Father continues: "You received me at the station at 10 pm. We stayed with a fisherman close to the beach. That was a life for you as you had long wished for!...You were jubilant with joy when the waves were high, threw yourself into them and swam...the hundreds and hundreds of swans interested you, too."

November 2, 1911. (Mother) "On Friday your cousin, *Kate*, suddenly appeared in the store! She was very nice, friendly and intimate. But now, after she has left, we don't hear from her at all. They are all like meteors on the *Ehmer* side. They flash up, scarcely spread some warmth and disappear again. So it was with *Kate*. She is engaged to a *Count Haraz von Manitzky* and wants to go with him to Ceylon or somewhere else in the wide world where they want to buy

a plantation. Somewhat adventurous, but it all sounded so credible that we have no reason to doubt it."

June 18, 1912, when I was 10, Mother wrote: "you cross-questioned me how it happened that the *Krauses* now have a child: if *Mrs. Krause* was sick now; if one gets sick before or after and how it happens that such a sickness occurs just then, and if an engaged couple could already have a child. *Martha Pohl* had shown you a Miss who was not married yet, but had a child already. And I had trouble to get out of this cross-fire and give answers that you could understand."

January 31, 1913 (Mother) "Our *Hannele* was sick, very sick! At the end of October you suddenly complained about ear ache. One noon you came crying home from school - you had an ugly otitis media. It was followed by a kidney infection which lasted about 8 weeks. That was a hard time. Alarming days came and more alarming nights until finally, finally the evil fever subsided."

My birthdays were always festive occasions, full of surprises for me and the 10 or 12 girl friends I invited. We either dressed up as the 12 months of the year or as fairy tale personages, as farm girls or as birthday candles. And Mother always made little poems for us to say or songs to sing. And there was always a polonaise through our small apartment and something sweet to eat and some colored paper cups or candy to take home.

September 30, 1913 (Mother) A year before World War I broke out: "Life flows so calmly now - I just see that I started my writing the same way last time (May 23, 1913). I am glad that it is still the same after almost half a year. The summer vacation passed uneventfully. We did not go away at all, much as I would have liked to. But times are bad and we can save only so slowly and so little that we cannot afford any extravagances. But we were often out in the open, *Vaterchen* and I taking turns with you. We mostly went to *Hermsdorf* and *Tegel*. You still love to dig in the sand at the beach although you are already a pretty big girl. But we also took trips to other parts of Berlin's beautiful environment.

And there was always Cottbus with the good aunts, *Anna* and *Emma* and *Uncle Albert* whom *Aunt Emma* had married in April, 1912, at age 41.

February 10, 1914 (Mother) "In Cottbus during your Christmas vacation you enjoyed yourself quite marvellously. You and *Uncle Albert* teased each other a lot. You helped *Aunt Emma* wherever you could, and by your funny pranks you stole into everybody's heart. On their part they spoiled you thoroughly, and for a long time you were raving about how wonderful it had been. In November we had a special event: *Aunt Anna* took her grade school principal's examination. She stayed three days with us and with her we worried and hoped and enjoyed her success..

We had very good ice in January and we two skated several times together. Once we skated across *Müggel Lake* from *Bellevue*. When we arrived at the other side, we ate the sandwiches and drank the cocoa I had taken along, sitting in the open, and then we skated back more secure than before. We were both proud of each other, and next Sunday we made a skating trip from *Tegel* to *Tegelort*. That went even better because we, especially I, had had the much needed practice.

Good night, little coaxing pussy. That's what you still are. There is nothing better for you than to cuddle and hug your *Vaterchen* or me with the most tender words.

February 11, 1914. (Father) "Thursday last week I took the tram until Wittenau and continued on foot to Hermsdorf. When I was just having coffee at the "Waldschänke," my little *Goldheart* came in. I did not trust my eyes! In summer you had done this repeatedly, immediately after school with your satchel on your back. But now I really did not think you would come after me. You had roller-skated from the tram terminal through the village of Wittenau up to the railroad bridge. Now you got nice warm milk."

In July, 1914, Mother and I could make the trip to the Giant Mountains in Silesia for which we had saved for three years. It was my first mountain hike and very exciting. But when we had reached the Schneekoppe, the highest mountain peak, and watched the sunrise together with hundreds of others who had come up during the night, we got rather sick in our stomachs. Instead of going on hiking we took a train to Breslau, surprised Mother's sister, *Louise*, and stayed with her and her family until we were all right again. We had a wonderful time with them. I still remember the impressive city hall built in the middle ages and the fascinating tanners' section where the penetrating stench, however, drove me quickly away. This beautiful German city, together with all of Silesia, became part of Poland after Nazi German's defeat in World War II. I also remember that a friend of my cousin *Carl's* was invited for dinner and I, age 12, was so flustered by this handsome student that I ladled apple sauce into my glass dish without realizing that it was flowing over on all sides!

August 14, 1914. (Mother) "And now there is war in the whole world! May God grant that it won't stretch out too long and that the misery won't become too great!...We are uneasy about *Aunt Anna* who went to England. We are totally without news from her. We hope she is still alive and stayed in England...It is a terrible time now. Business, too, is very bad. We must curtail our expenses considerably. If only this fatal war were over!"

January 22, 1915 (Mother) "Half a year later, and still the war is raving. At the end of August *Aunt Anna* returned happily from England. She was glad to be back on German soil. But she had a very good time at the house of *Prof. Whitby*...

This is not a great time; at least I and *Vaterchen* lack the enthusiasm. We look at it all very soberly and only feel sadness and horror for this terrible war, which also paralyses all commercial activity. I simply cannot get enthusiastic for the great idea which supposedly is behind this war when I think of all the misery that befell thousands of families who lived happily and peacefully before, and that will hurt still more thousands. Now, after half a year, no end is in sight. Who knows what sad experiences the future will bring even to us who have no relatives in the field?...For the present one cannot believe any news; and that Germany is totally without guilt for this world conflagration no reasonable, thinking person believes - only one must not say it. Father's opinion is that we have in this country a large reactionary party which fears that freer France and totally free England may become a model for us and that we may want to get rid of much that is reactionary with us. That is why the verbal attack against England is especially vicious."

February 2, 1915. (Mother) "War birthday today! Not as in former years great weeklong preparations and secret conferences. Times are too grave for it. You certainly didn't get much in this war year. But you still can be joyful over the smallest trifle."

At Christmas you spent almost two weeks in Cottbus. The aunts and also *Uncle Albert* love you very dearly. There you can marvellously fool around with them, something you still love to do. *Vaterchen* always says when you come to him, 'Child, don't tear me to pieces!' And *Mutti* is always so serious and has so little time to play with you, often not even for your caresses, with which you are so generous."

February 4, 1915. (Mother) Enrollment for the gymnasium! (A high school for gifted children with a 6 year curriculum, three years longer than the Schiller Lyzeum) "We'll leave it to the future what will happen further, if you will stay three extra years through the 'Prima.' Anyway, you are now accepted as a 'Lower Third,' and are looking forward to the change in spite of the prospect of having to study harder."

March 24, 1915. (Mother) "...After the long cold and wet winter we had today a truly genuine warm spring day. *Vaterchen* went to Hermsdorf to dig the garden and you went after him at noon. With that, all the sad thoughts about leaving the Schiller-School and about the period of your life that lies behind you disappeared. On the way home, you two carried on quite a serious conversation, *Vaterchen* told me."

April 24, 1915. (Mother) "...Now for nine months already the war has been raging and everywhere prices are high. This way we feel the consequences of the war very strongly. Everything is terribly expensive and in our store much of the merchandise is already lacking."

May 20, 1915. (Mother) "...*Uncle Albert* in Cottbus has been drafted into the Garde Infanterie, perhaps he may come to Berlin! In Hermsdorf, at the Waldschänke, we dug a little vegetable bed for ourselves. *Vaterchen* planted potatoes and chives and pumpkins...on the way home last Sunday evening, we had all kinds of serious talks and *Vaterchen* raised the question how it would look there in 50 years and he suggested to you, since in all probability you would live 50 more years, that you should look up all the places of your happy childhood, especially Hermsdorf, sometime in later years."

We have been back to Berlin repeatedly, and in 1977 I saw again the house on 9 Woehlert Street where I grew up which is now in East Berlin. But I never went back to Tegel and Hermsdorf although they lie in West Berlin. I am afraid much of the beloved woods had to cede to urban development.

July 2, 1915. (Mother) "...These are sad dog days this year. Still the war is raging and there is no end in sight. How happy I am that our *Vaterchen* does not have to go to war! Now they even draft 42 year old men like *Uncle Albert*. When I see soldiers marching out they impress me as victims to be sacrificed and I can no longer look on. *Otto Wolffram*, Aunt *Emilia's* only son, is already in Russia. She is quite unhappy. Let's hope he will return and in good health!

I have been able to give the three of us daily enough to eat - thank God! And the store, too, is still running. There are even days with quite nice cash receipts. However, business becomes more difficult because many items are not available and we also buy to lay in a store of articles. We are afraid everything will get more scarce and expensive the longer the war lasts. But in spite of these high expenses we still muddle through somehow and did not have to take anything from our small savings. Recently for *Vaterchen's* birthday, *Uncle Georg* sent again 20 Mark, just when taxes with a 25% war addition and also the school fees were due. That helped us enormously."

Summer vacation of the war year 1915 was spent with the aunts in Cottbus. It was, as always, wonderful, although *Uncle Albert* had been drafted.

August 4, 1915. (Mother) "...Yesterday Warsaw was conquered and Ivangorod. I hope it helps to hasten the end of the war."

November 18, 1915. (Mother) "...The war is still going on. Unfortunately, our dear *Otto Wolffram*, Aunt *Emilie's* only child, fell before Warsaw on August 3rd. Poor aunt and poor uncle and *Otto's* wife! How deeply we sympathize with them that they had to give their dearest one and lose him in such a way. Good that you are not a boy. We would already now live in fear of having to sacrifice you when you will be grown up - what for?"

January 23, 1916 (*Hanna* on a slip of paper, before going to the opera for the first time with Mother) - "Many greetings, thousand kisses, you sweet, dear *Vaterchen*. We are leaving now. Surely, it will be as in Paradise! Your happy *Hannchen*."

January 24, 1916. (Mother) "...We are again in a new year now, 1916! Although the war is still raging and food is getting more and more expensive and scarce time goes on - one day after the other. Thank God, so far we have had enough to eat every day. It is often poor food, but I always had something to cook although we now have two meatless days a week.

In the meantime Christmas and New Year have passed. We even had a little tree which you helped to buy. *Vaterchen* was very sick again and only now begins to recover and to feel somewhat stronger. Those were hard weeks for me and sometimes I thought *Väterchen* would not be able to regain new strength. But, fortunately, he is better now and we can utter a sigh of relief. You are not so much aware of all this. You leave for school early in the morning and when you come home at one or two, you have plenty of home work, then a piano lesson or practice. There is little time left. You don't even get much reading done.

Yesterday I was able to give you a great pleasure and thereby me, too. Our landlady gave us two tickets for "*Mignon*" at the Royal Opera House and it was a great joy for me to take you there. You were quite enthused. With a kind of holy awe you entered the opera house which seems to you the aggregate of everything that is lofty and beautiful. And when we were high up on our seats in the 4th balcony your expectation and impatience rose higher and higher. "*Mutti*, one doesn't dare to breathe here." I was happy with you, your joy and your spontaneity. They truly played well and sang beautifully. It was easy to get enthusiastic about it - you certainly did. I wished I could give you more often such a beautiful, pure joy."

My parents did not take note of it in the diary, but I remember that the second opera I heard was "*Lohengrin*" and this time I went with Father.

October 29, 1916. (Mother) "...Since the beginning of the war you have kept your own diary, so I really could close mine. But I will wait with it until your confirmation next Easter. Since last Easter you have attended confirmation classes. But you take it much more lightly than I did as a young girl, probably because of your nature and education. Also, our minister was a fanatic zealot and *Rev. Haase* is not."

March 7, 1917. (Mother) "The day after tomorrow is your confirmation day, my

dear *Hannchen*, and I will close my diary with this. The year has passed so quickly and brought you at the end the first great sorrow of your life: your dear, beloved *Vaterchen* is no longer with us and could not live to see your confirmation to which he had been looking forward all these years, oh how much! Shortly before his death when I once showed you your first drawing endeavors in this book, he said he would like so much to be present when I hand you this diary. But he did not live to be present now. Originally I had intended to give you this book later, when you are more understanding. But I have decided to do it tomorrow. Such a great deep love is speaking from Father's lines to you that you will have the feeling on your confirmation day as if *Vaterchen* is with us and especially with his little *Goldheart* that he loved above everything. Thus, in his notes to you, he will always remain close to you.

So God will, we two will still go a long stretch of the way together and delight ourselves often at the little events of your childhood years." Your Mother.
Here the diary ends. There are four additions, from 1928, 1936, 1938 and 1941. I shall insert them at the appropriate time.

Mother does not write anything about Father's death. But I remember it well. On December 23 he had gone to the Tegel forest to cut a little fir tree for us for Christmas and caught a cold. I still see him sitting at the table on Christmas Eve, the tree in the middle, his elbows propped up, his hands holding a towel around his head and over a dish from which he inhaled hot camomile vapors. But on Christmas Day he stayed in bed and on the second holiday he was unconscious. The doctor ordered only port wine to strengthen him, but when Mother tried to spoon it into his mouth, it would flow out again and make a dark streak by the side of his chin.

Mother told me the doctor does not have much hope and we would have to be very brave in the days to come. On the 28th I had to go and get saccharine for the store. It meant walking half an hour to Brunnen Street, and when I returned after an hour, Father had died. Mother assured me that he had not gained consciousness. She had been sitting by him on his bed, her arms around his shoulders, and by a slight jerk had felt that the end had come. According to his wishes he was cremated at the crematorium on Gericht Street. I had special classes in preparation for my confirmation at Easter, 1917, and had to tell Rev. *Haase* that my father did not wish a minister to speak at his funeral. In fact, no one spoke. Mother had asked two acquaintances, who refused. Afterwards, two others came to Mother complaining that there had been no eulogy and that they would have loved to do it. But I found the soft music very soothing and only when the coffin slowly sank down and the two vaulted doors closed over it, I burst out sobbing.

A week later, Mother and I alone were present when the urn containing Father's ashes was deposited into a vertical tube long enough to contain three more urns, and covered with a simple square stone. It was Mother's wish to be some day buried there with her beloved husband, but world events and private destinies prevented this. After World War II we were informed that the ashes had been transferred to a common burial place in the cemetery. This is all right with me. My thoughts do not seek my father where he was buried, but rather in *Wöhlert Street* and more still in the woods of Tegel and Hermsdorf.

At Easter, 1917, I was confirmed. Rev. *Haase* had selected for me the verse "God is love, and he who is in love, is in God." I remember the aunts' merriment when I misquoted it as "I am love."

One year later, at Easter, 1918, I left the Studien-Anstalt to become an apprentice at a pharmacy on See Street. But I was very unhappy there and returned to my old class after the long summer vacation with only a few private lessons in math.

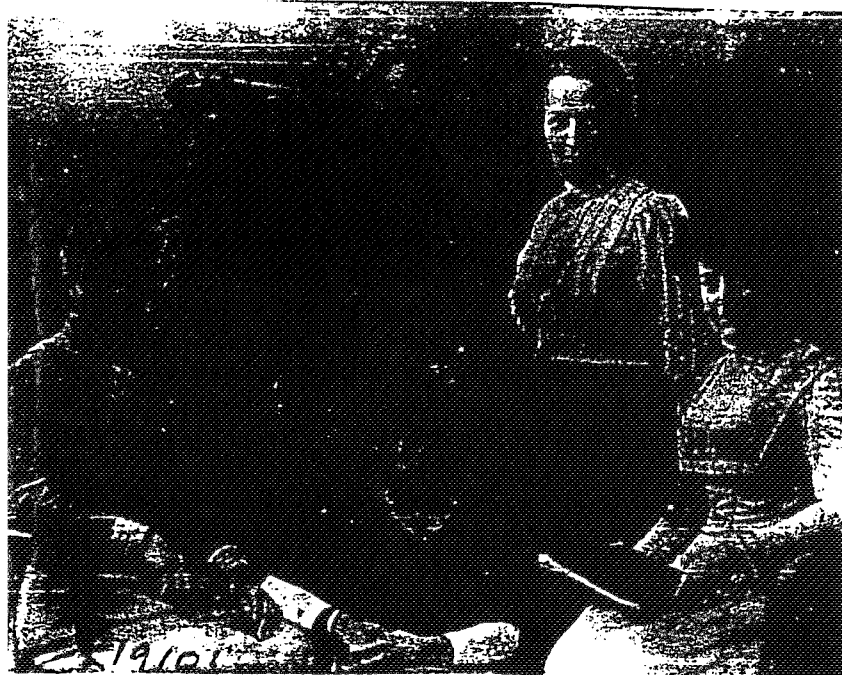
Finally, in November of 1918, the war came to an end. Mother and I were happy; we welcomed the new republic. On November 11 I asked Mother's permission to go to Unter den Linden and mingle with the milling crowd. Someone gave me a red cyclamen to put on my jacket. Except for shoulder straps being torn from officers' uniforms all was peaceful. There was rejoicing that the war was over. Mother and I had adopted Father's social-democratic sympathies, but were not in favor of a communist state after the model of Russia. Although we condemned the murder of *Karl Liebknecht* and *Rosa Luxemburg*, we shed no tears for the emperor who had fled to Holland. Not so the aunts. They were conservative German-nationalists and were deeply hurt by the defeat of the German armed forces and the toppling of their beloved Hohenzollern rulers. Here was the first rift in the otherwise so harmonious relationship between the five Moldenauer sisters. The political unrest of the following years did not help to smooth it over.

All through 1919, there was much fighting between Socialists and Communists in different areas of Berlin. But mostly we only read about it in the newspaper. Only once, when Mother and I returned from the theatre by tram, they shot above our heads from rooftop to rooftop in Chaussee Street.

I graduated from the gymnasium at Easter, 1921, not with high honors; but my written tests were good enough to free me from the oral examinations. Two lasting friendships were formed during the six years at the gymnasium. One was with a fellow-student, *Hanna* (or *Jeanne*-she had a French mother) *Kirmsse*, who later married *Dr. Wilhelm Kiby*, a physicist. The other was with my math and physics teacher, *Prof. Dr. Ernst Lamla* and his wife, *Jettchen*.



1908 First Schoolday, Hans and Hanna Ehmer, Last Schoolday 1915
at Schiller-Lyzeum



1910 Hanna and the Aunts
Anna, Emma, Mother Clara,
Louise, Mali



ca 1932 Clara Ehmer Diessner and
daughter Hanna

CHAPTER 4. UNIVERSITY YEARS. RESEARCH ASSISTANT. MOTHER'S SECOND MARRIAGE 1921 - 1926

Since math and physics were the subjects in which I excelled in school, I enrolled in these fields at the University of Berlin. But from the very beginning I found it difficult to follow the lectures in spite of the help of older semesters. I think if teaching had been done in a more school-like fashion as is the case in America with frequent tests, I might have fared better or given up earlier. I held on for three semesters, the last one in Tübingen, and then switched to economics and enrolled myself at the Handels-Hochschule (College of Commerce) in Berlin.

Although a year and a half had been lost on my education, they had been rich in friendships and warm human relations, four of them lasting for a lifetime. The Mappha (= Mathematisch-Physikalische Arbeitsgemeinschaft or Study Fellowship in Math and Physics) had been formed by students returning from the war, especially *Alfred Brauer*, *Ernst Sorge* and *Hubert Cremer*. There were two special study rooms where we all worked and studied. We went to concerts together, especially to the nearby Sing-Akademie or met in private homes for member concerts on Sunday morning. Almost every Sunday in summer we hiked together in the beautiful surroundings of Berlin. *Ernst Sorge* became a high school teacher and an ardent follower of *Adolph Hitler*; he was killed during the war. *Alfred Brauer*, still a friend, is professor emeritus of the U. of N. Carolina in Chapel Hill, the science branch of its library named for him. *Hubert Cremer*, his face distorted by a shot in his cheek in WW I, became professor of mathematics at the Technical University at Aachen. He is the author of "Carmina Mathematica" and used to call me his rhyme (*Cremer-Ehmer*). He lived in retirement in Freiburg in S. Germany, a good friend to the end. He died in February of 1983. *Charlotte Sauer*, with whom I spent the semester in Tübingen, became a high school teacher, but after a long fight with tuberculosis, turned novelist and in the last 15 years of her life published a book a year, mostly on religious history. I translated her book on King David into English and sold it to a publisher, but they never published it. She lived in the DDR, Eastern Germany, outside of Berlin with her mother who adored her and survived her by half a year. And, finally, *Erna Schulz*, who also became a high school teacher. I lived in her mother's apartment with them for about two years. Then *Erna* married *Dr. Wilhelm Inthmann*, who was first an assistant to *Prof. Nernst* and later became *Prof. of Physics* at the Handels-Hochschule (College of Commerce). Unfortunately, he - like *Ernest Sorge* - became a Nazi and that killed the friendship.

But after the war when *Hitler* was dead and *Wilhelm* also had died in a Russian prisoner-of-war camp leaving *Erna* alone with four little boys to raise, she wrote again assuring me that she, herself, had never been a Nazi and that she deeply regretted what had happened. So the old friendship had a scar, but it gradually healed and we are now also befriended with her sons, *Jürgen*, a physicist with Agfa in Munich, *Winfried*, *Prof. of Archeology* in Saarbrücken, and *Reinhard*, who works with Airbus in Toulouse, France. Our son, *Thomas*, and his wife, *Carol*, are also befriended with them. I am the godmother of *Winfried's* second daughter, *Hanna*. When *Lotte Sauer* and I spent the summer semester of 1922 in Tübingen, *Erna* was there, too. So we share wonderful memories of hikes in the Suabian Alb, of art excursions to the rich treasures of Southern German churches, of friendships with boys, of singing and drinking new wine.

That same year, on June 3, 1922, Mother married again. Father's sister, *Martha*

Cotrba, had moved from Berlin to Gablonz in Czechoslovakia - I presume it was her husband's home town. She knew the widower, *Robert Diessner*, of nearby Grottau and suggested to him he look up the widow *Clara Ehmer* in Berlin, which he did.

It is probably natural that children do not want a parent to re-marry and a stranger to take the place of their father or mother. I was no exception. I did not think, of course, that *Robert Diessner* was equal to my father and I never, in fact, established a close relationship with him. But I was reasonable enough not to object or to make any difficulties. The 5-1/2 years since my father's death had been very hard for Mother. She had bravely carried on the drug store all alone, only gave up house paints - "that's a man's job," she said. Even under normal circumstances this would have been a heavy burden. She was as in a prison, always tied to the store except for Sundays. I must admit to my shame that it never occurred to me to learn the trade and relieve her for a week or a few days. But circumstances were not even normal. After Father's death the war went on for two more years and thereafter things did not get much better in the defeated country with its shortages of goods, reparation payments and an ever increasing inflation. Besides, Mother was lonely. I would be gone all day to attend classes and to study at the *Mapha* and also go out with friends in the evenings or on Sundays occasionally. This marriage with *Robert Diessner* would not only lift the burdens of running the store from Mother's shoulders, it would also take her out of Germany where, with the increasing inflation, life resembled a madhouse more and more. Besides, *Robert Diessner* was a more successful business man than my father had ever been. His small factory provided him with a much more comfortable income than Mother had ever enjoyed.

On Christmas Eve, 1921, as soon as Mother could close the store, we took the train - it was practically empty - and for about three hours we rode through the dark, snow-covered countryside past houses with brightly shining Christmas trees in their windows toward the Czech border and got off at the first station beyond it, Grottau in the Sudetengau, a purely German-speaking area forming the northern rim of Bohemia. When we came to the house of the daughter, *Else Pfeiffer*, we got such a warm, bright, cheerful reception that any ill feelings I might still have had concerning this strange Christmas Eve and the big changes that lay ahead quickly disappeared.

Robert Diessner was a self-made man, in his fifties like Mother, not very educated, but a good businessman. He had built up a celluloid factory employing about 20 people, mostly women. Here they mainly produced shirt collars which, at that time, did not come with the shirt and in the same material. Normally, men wore stiffly starched white linen collars. These celluloid collars were cheaper substitutes, imitating the linen texture well. They were more practical because they could be cleaned easily with soap and water without starching and ironing. They sold well. Later, when shirts with collars became popular, he shifted to other products. I still use on my travels a very practical toiletbag of plastic material from his factory.

When we first came to Grottau, they lived in a big brick house. The main floor housed the offices, the other two floors were occupied by *Robert Diessner's* and the *Pfeiffers'* apartments. In the back, across the courtyard, was a one-floor building that housed the factory. *Robert Diessner* took care of the business and financial side of the enterprise while his son-in-law, *Emil Pfeiffer*, supervised the production proper. With him I had immediately a very warm and cordial contact.

He had been an officer in the Austrian-Hungarian army and fought in WW I. He was a most kind and good-hearted person. His wife, *Else*, my step-sister, about 10 years older than I, was nice, too. But I never had a close relationship with her. She was mainly interested in clothes and town gossip. We had little in common, but we got along all right. They had no children. There was also a son, *Oscar*, with his wife, *Marie*, and two children, *Lothar* and *Dorothea*, who also lived in Grottau, but had his own business.

Of the wedding I don't remember anything except that I sang "Treulich geführt" from Wagner's *Lohengrin* in church. I moved what belongings I had into an attic room with slanted walls and a window that looked out over the roofs of the little town and far to the thin line of the mountains of the Iser-Range. It was the first time I had a room of my own (at age 20) and I cherished it and spent many a happy vacation there. I remember the hikes, accompanied only by the dog, up to the Pfaffenstein where I liked to sit long and look out over mountains and valleys - or the walks with the family to an inn in a near-by town where you could be sure to meet other acquaintances and talk for hours. All socializing took place in the inns of the town or neighboring villages. It was there that I later met *Ilse Heinzmann*, nine years younger than I. She was a lovely girl, daughter of the rich coal dealer of Grottau, and lived in a beautiful big villa. She married a German banker, *Gellert*, who was killed during the war.

Eventually, when my step-sister had died, *Emil Pfeiffer* married *Ilse* and helped her raise her daughter, *Ursula*. Today there is a close relationship between us and *Ilse Pfeiffer* (*Emil* has long ago died) and her daughter and son-in-law, *Klaus Melcher*, of Coswig, near Dresden, East Germany.

In the fall of 1922 after the summer in Tübingen and my first vacation in Grottau, I returned to Berlin. The proceeds from the sale of the Berlin drug store could be transferred to Czechoslovakia and were thus saved from disintegrating through inflation. During inflation's galloping phase in 1923, my life was less maddening than that of my fellow Germans because I had stable currency in my hand which I changed only when I needed something. But, even so, bread and artificial honey were my staple diet. By November, 1923, this nightmare came to an end.

In spring, 1924, I earned my commercial teacher's diploma from the College of Commerce and went on to study economics at the University of Berlin, where I got my doctor's degree early in 1926 with a thesis on deflation and unemployment in England under the supervision of Prof. Dr. *Charlotte Leubuscher*.

Another chapter in my life came to an end. The student years were over. Now to find a job and finally support myself.

CHAPTER 5. FALLING IN LOVE. " 1926

In choosing a job, I think now - looking back - that I made the wrong decision (which, however, turned out all right). *Prof. Meerwarth* offered to help me get a position at the Prussian Institute of Statistics. Instead, I accepted an offer of *Prof. Melchior Palyi* to become his secretary at the College of Commerce. I have had very much luck in my life, happy coincidences that helped me. Here was the first one. After half a year, *Dr. Palyi* went to America for a year to teach at the U. of Chicago and "loaned" me for this time to *Prof. Franz Eulenburg*, who told me that he really did not need a secretary. But during the year he got so accustomed to me that he refused to "hand me back." Instead, he asked the administration to give me the official position of "Research Assistant at the Department of Economics especially assigned to *Prof. Eulenburg*," to which he had a claim. I stayed with him for 12 1/2 years, from fall 1926 to March, 1939, through good times and hard ones in a very harmonious and interesting collaboration.

I gave up my room at *Mrs. Schulz'* and rented one from "*Muttel*" - *Ma Sonntag* - in *Friedenau*. She was a friend of *Mrs. Stulz*, the mother of a school friend, and earned her living by giving piano lessons. She was a most wonderful, lovable, old lady and was very knowledgeable in musical matters. For 4-1/2 years I enjoyed staying with her.

But here I was, 24 years old, in a well paying position, with a lot of friends, but no serious attachment to the other sex. However, on June 6, 1926, I met *Ernest Ising*. It was on a Sunday outing of the Pacifistic Student Organization. Although I was no longer a student (nor was he), I liked to hike with them and attend their meetings and lectures. It must have been on such meetings that I had seen him before June 6, because, when I saw him alight from the suburban train, I went to him and welcomed him. "I am sure you want to hike with us." And since that day we have hiked together for 60 years so far.

I liked Ernest for what I saw in him: a handsome young man with a doctor's degree in physics who was an anti-militarist and subscribed, as I did, to *Coudenhove-Kalergi's* advocacy of the United States of Europe, an outdoor person as I was, a good hiker and biker, swimmer and skater. He loved to go to concerts and plays, as I did. In one pocket of his jacket he always had a paper bag with chocolates, in the other a thin-paper pocket edition of *Faust I and II*.

On trips he always carried a huge rucksack on his back which was sure to contain a spare pullover or water-proof should someone need one or an extra sandwich or drink for someone who was hungry. But what I liked best was that at the end of the day on the long marches in the dark - two hours or so on rather car-free roads to the next station from where we would get a train back to Berlin - he would recite German poetry. He had in his head a treasure of poems, ballads, soliloquies and dialogues that made us forget how tired we were. He had learned all this when, during his high school years, he had had speech classes with *Willi Busch*, the leading actor of the Bochum city theatre. I did not ask him if he was Jewish - it did not matter. Once he showed me the picture of the wedding of his sister to *Hermann Busch* and I thought, "they don't look Jewish, so apparently he isn't." Later, of course, I found out that he was. It made no difference. We totally agreed in our religious outlook, which was liberal and without any dogmatic concepts. So I loved Ernest for what he was and only found out later that there were relationships and circumstances which would greatly enrich my life and turn it into an undreamed-of direction.



Hanna (Ehmer) and Ernst I s i n g
1931



First Residence, Strausberg near Berlin
1931 - 1934

What I did not know when I fell in love with *Ernest* was - first - that he came from a well-to-do and very cultured family. His parents lived in a beautiful house in Bochum in the Ruhr Valley. The home was full of art, paintings of German expressionists, sculptures, a two-story high stained glass window by *Thorn-Prökter* in the stair-well, modern furniture, elegant silverware - a house in which every piece was selected with great taste. This was mainly his mother's achievement. His father had owned a store for elegant lady's apparel, but had recently suffered bankruptcy.

Second - I did not know that through his sister's marriage with *Herman Busch*, *Ernest* was related to the famous brothers *Busch*: *Fritz*, the conductor of the Dresden Opera and Staats-kapelle; *Adolph*, violin soloist and first violinist of the *Busch-Quartett*; *Hermann*, *Lotte's* husband, was a cellist and later joined the *Busch-Quartett*. Many a happy concert did we hear from them at the Sing-Akademie and afterwards joined them at a restaurant. And then there was *Willi Busch*, the actor, whose speech classes with *Ernest* led to this relationship, and the pianist, *Rudolf Serkin*, who was married to *Adolf Busch's* daughter.

Third - I knew that *Ernest* had a doctor's degree in physics, but I did not know at that time, nor did *Ernest* himself, that his thesis "Beitrag zur Theorie des Ferro-Magnetismus" (contribution to the theory of ferro-magnetism) an excerpt published in the Zeitschrift für Physik, 1925, should become famous as the origin of the *Ising Model* which is taught in all graduate classes in physics and the application of which has been constantly spreading.

And - finally - I did not know that, while I would have to suffer a lot of misfortune on account of this marriage, it is true, my husband would also not be drafted into the war - he would not have the "honor" - while, at the same time, he would not be deported to a concentration camp as the husband of an "Aryan" woman. And we did not know that all this would make us want to come to America and that thanks to the generous recompensation policy of the WestGerman Republic to the survivors of the holocaust, we would be able to enjoy an absolutely carefree old age. Although the pension is the same as if *Ernest* had not been Jewish, it comes on top of our American earnings.

We both had plans to go to Paris in September, 1926-another nice coincidence!-I to spend my first vacation and my first self-earned money in this dream city; while *Ernest* wanted to go with his mother after he had attended a physicists' convention in Düsseldorf. Even our times almost coincided. He came a few days after me, without his mother, who had to go to the hospital. So we were alone in our budding love to explore this enchanting city. But it was not till the last evening before our departure that I got the first kiss from *Ernest*.

On the way back to Berlin we stopped in Bochum so I could meet *Ernest's* parents. When we came to their house, I was spellbound. *Ernest* had told me a lot about his family ("my mother is the youngest of us all"), but not a word of how they lived. There were pictures by *Paul Klee* and *Vlaminck*, *Schmidt-Rotluff*, *Macke* and *Oscar Kokoschka*, *Christian Rohlf*s and *Seewald*. There were sculptures by *Milly Steger*, one a life-size nude in white marble, "Enchanted Woman." (Our son, *Tom*, later, at age 5, showed a photo of it to his friends and explained, "that's my mother when she was herself!"). There was a small sculpture in porcelain by *Barlach*, "The Beggar." The ceiling of the closed-in veranda was painted by *J. Levin* in a bright, abstract design. And there were two maids, good old *Louise*, the cook, who had been with the family for many years, and a teen-age girl. Many of the treasures had to be sold when the Nazis came to power, and the house with the

stained-glass window in the stairwell and *Levin's* painted ceiling was totally destroyed during World War II! A few pictures have been saved, also the *Barlach* and the bronze "Dancer" by *Milly Steeger* and are in the possession of us or *Ernest's* sister, *Lotte Busch*. ()

Ernest's father was always meticulously dressed. He was a little slow and exact, but most kind, with a heart full of goodness. We also visited *Ernest's* mother in the hospital and with both made plans for the future.

Ernest had worked for two years at the patent office of the AEG (Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft - General Electric Company), but wanted to go into teaching. For a year, in 1927, he took a job at the boarding school: Salem, in Southern Baden near Lake Constance. The school was founded by *Prince Max von Baden*, German Chancellor for a short time, and led by *Kurt Hahn*. When the Nazis came to power, *Hahn* went to Scotland and founded a similar school - one student of which was *Prince Philip Mountbatten*, later Prince Consort of *Queen Elizabeth II*.

Ernest had to take a few classes in philosophy and pedagogy at the University of Berlin and in 1928 passed the Prussian State examination. *Prof. Hettner* afterwards said of him he was the typical theoretical physicist with little experience in experimental physics. Later, as professor of Bradley University, *Ernest* gained a reputation for his instructive experiments.

Two more years followed as "Studien-Referendar" in teacher training, and in 1930 an examination before the school board in higher education. One of the examiners was *Dr. Lamla*, my former math and physics teacher. A few days after the exam, I went to *Dr. Lamla* and told him that I was engaged to *Ernest Ising*. Thanks to him, *Ernest* got a position as "Studien-Assessor" at the high school in *Strausberg* near Berlin, so I could continue in my job at the College of Commerce. *Ernest* started in September and we got married on December 23, 1930. ()

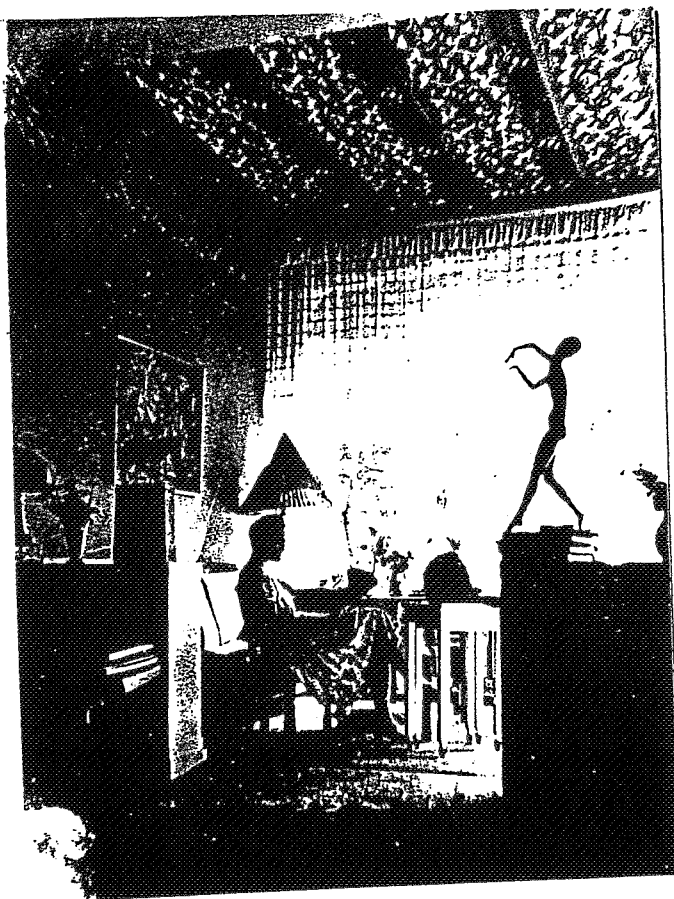
We had found a most beautiful apartment near the railroad station from where I had an hour's ride into Berlin - trains leaving once every hour - and *Ernest* had a 20 minutes' ride by tram or bike into the town of *Strausberg*. His school was beautifully located by a big lake. He liked his work very much. We occupied the main floor of a villa that a baron had bought for his sweetheart. He had recently married her and she had moved to Berlin, but her parents still lived in the basement and took care of the yard and the greenhouse. We had a large kitchen and bedroom with bath on the right side of the hall and a study, dining-living-room and glassed-in porch on the left. We had furniture made according to our specifications by *Dickerhoff* in Bochum who had done interior decorating for *Ernest's* parents: the bedroom with two wardrobes in dark gold-red-sapeli-mahogany, a big double desk and bookshelves in black fir; golden-yellow birch for the dining table, chairs and buffet. Outside the porch, a cherry tree bloomed magnificently in May, and the backyard, which was crossed by a little brook, bordered directly on a deep forest. On Sundays, we either took long bike rides into the lovely environment or pulled our rubber canoe half an hour to Lake *Stienitz* and spent all day on the water.

Thus, everything would have been perfect, if.....

Mother had accepted *Ernest* and liked him, so did my step-father. But the aunts, especially *Anna* and *Emma* in Cottbus, were German Nationalists and very anti-Semitic. They realized that I had several Jewish friends, especially at the Studien-Anstalt where 50% of the girls were Jewish, but also at the university and School of Commerce, and they repeatedly begged me, "Do us the favor and ()



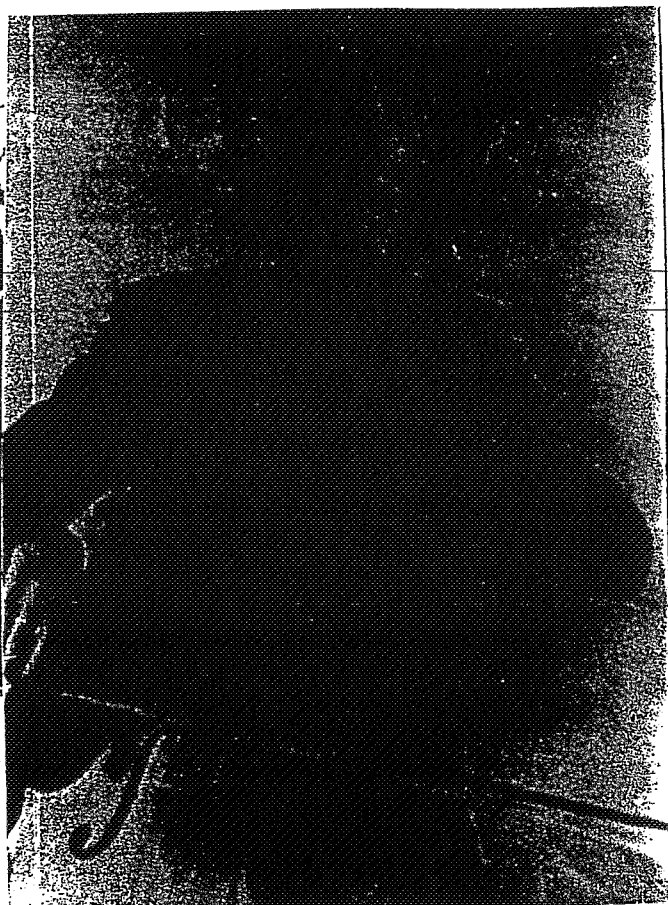
Ising Residence, 1926
Bochum, Goethe St. 18
Completely destroyed in WW II



The Veranda with Hanna, ca 1929
Ceiling by Julo Levin. "The Dancer"
by Milli Steger



The Ising family: Ernest, mother Thekl
wife Hanna, son Tom, father Gustav,
sister Lotte Busch.
Basel. Switzerland 1946



Hermann Busch, Lotte Ising, s
husband, ca. 1930

don't marry a Jew!" I never took it seriously and did not consciously avoid getting involved with a Jew. I found their demand despicable, having been raised by my father in the conviction that what alone is important is the goodness of character, not the race, color of skin or nationality.

But even if these things had mattered: the color of *Ernest's* skin was the same as mine, his nationality was German like mine, his language was the same. He was raised in German schools, steeped in German culture, his whole background was German. His race was different. But in what did that difference actually express itself? Where could I feel and perceive this difference? His religious ideas were like mine, his political convictions and hopes were no different than mine. I felt that unlike color of the skin and nationality, "race" was a word without content. If *Ernest* had been an orthodox Jew or a Zionist or just steeped in Jewish traditions, or used a lot of Yiddish expressions, I would have felt a difference and might have had a problem. But that was not the case.

When I realized that *Ernest* was Jewish, I knew that the aunts would be hurt and I was sorry. I owed so much to them - they had given me joy and happiness through 24 years! But I also thought they would change their minds when they got to know him. They never gave him a chance, they did not wish to meet him. *Aunt Lieschen* agreed with the aunts in Cottbus, but she was far away in Breslau and the contact with her was not very close, the break, therefore, not so painful. Only *Aunt Mali*, now in Wittenberg, did not condemn me, although she was an ardent follower of *Mathilde Ludendorff*, wife of the WW I general and leader of an anti-Semitic movement. That was very illogical of her, but she was romantic and had a sympathetic feeling for young lovers. *Aunt Anna* begged me to let *Ernest* go - I was still so young and would find someone else! When I told her about *Ernest's* relationship with the *Buschs*, all she answered was, "Yes, we had a quartett here recently and we said 'Why does it always have to be Jews who make good music for us?'" I said, "It can't have been the *Busch-Quartett* they are not Jewish." No use!

The break was painful and upsetting. The good fairies of my youth rejected and condemned me for something that I could not consider bad and that made me so happy. I immediately repaid 500 mark to *Aunt Anna* which she had loaned me to get my doctor-theses printed - *Ernest* loaned me the money. That was symbolic: I could live without the aunts, I had *Ernest* now! But for them it was a different story. I was their only niece, their joy and pride for over 20 years; I am sure they had high hopes for me. And that was all thrown away to one of the hated race of the Jews! They were deeply hurt and had no compensation - as I had in *Ernest*, and beyond cutting me off they could not do anything to me.

But they found an outlet for their rage and offended feelings in Mother and her husband. *Robert Diessner* had originally been an Austrian and after WW I, when Austria had been split up, had become a citizen of Czechoslovakia. Like all Nationals living outside the border of their homeland, he had strong nationalistic feelings which everywhere, but especially in Germans and Austrians, are inclined toward anti-Semitism. His feelings were not as strong as the aunts' and he had had no objections when he first learned of my wish to marry *Ernest*. We had both been in Grottau repeatedly during vacations. But gradually the aunts succeeded in stirring him up against us and sometime during our 4-1/2 year waiting period, about a year or two before our wedding, I was told that *Ernest* was no longer welcome in Grottau. It meant, of course, that I, too, could no longer go home to Grottau. That was a heavy blow and the one who suffered most from it was Mother. She sided with us and there had been ugly scenes between her and her husband. We corresponded and we saw each other in Berlin. However, when the wedding approached, Mother wrote that her husband would like

to be invited, too. We were overjoyed for Mother's sake and invited him immediately. And he came! So, the beginning of our married life was wonderful.

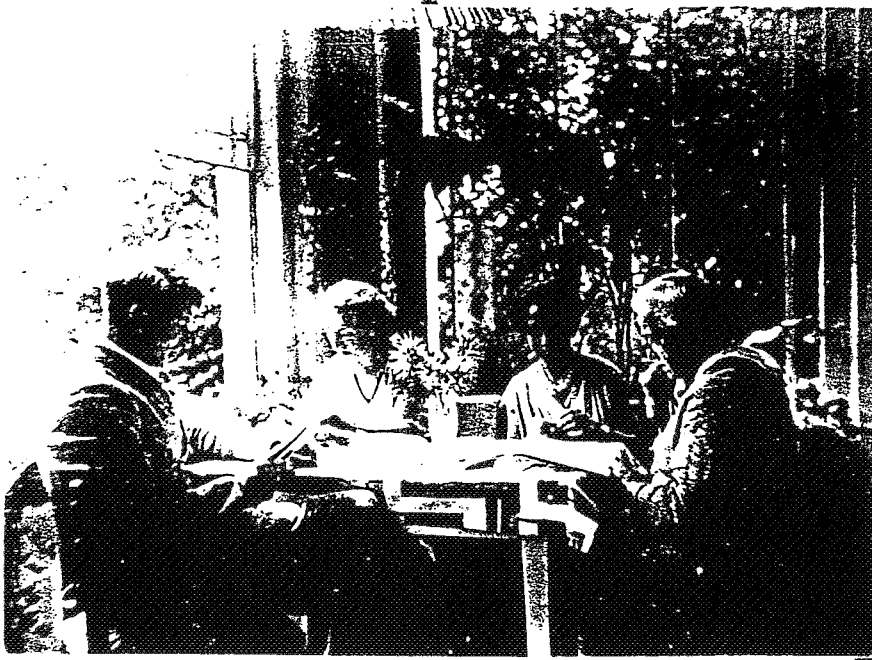
CHAPTER 6. MARRIAGE, 1930. PARADISE LASTS A YEAR AND A HALF. ERNEST'S DISMISSAL. HITLER COMES TO POWER.

We had only a legal ceremony - my mother and *Ernest's* father were the witnesses, but my step-father came along to the registration office. After the signing we stepped out into the hall and *Ernest* took me into his arms and kissed me and held me while I sobbed and sobbed - I don't know how long, five minutes? - and let go all the tension that had piled up during the last years.

Ernest's father had decided that we should celebrate at his favorite restaurant in Berlin, Bristol, Unter den Linden. We had no room reserved, only a table for the seven of us: *Ernest's* parents, my parents, we two and *Aunt Mali* - dear *Aunt Mali*! *Ernest's* sister, *Lotte*, and husband *Hermann Busch* were entangled in concerts. After a delicious meal we went to a small hotel across from Friedrich-Strasse Station, and next morning took the train to the Giant Mountains for 10 days of skiing. On January 3, 1931, we moved into our lovely home in Strausberg.

Paradise lasted a year and a half. In fall, 1932, *Ernest* was transferred to Crossen on the Oder to fill in for a colleague who had seriously fallen ill. He rented a room in Crossen and every weekend he came home. Each way took 6 hours, partly by train, partly by bike as long as the weather was good; otherwise long waiting on railroad stations for the connecting train. So we waited for five days and on Saturday-Sunday enjoyed a second honeymoon in installments. These were precious hours! So much to talk about, so much to discuss and plan. Should the colleague die, *Ernest* would be promoted to Studienrat and get the position in Crossen on a permanent basis. I would give up my job in Berlin and we would move to Crossen and have two kids. It was not to be, although the colleague did die!

During the bleak winter of 1932-33, the economic and political affairs of Germany deteriorated in an alarming way. Unemployment increased, the soup-lines grew longer and street fights between opposing groups became more frequent. On January, 1933, *President Hindenburg* named *Adolf Hitler* chancellor of the German Republic. We knew what that meant. As of March 31st, *Ernest* was dismissed from his job as a civil servant, with payment of his salary to be continued for half a year. Then nothing!

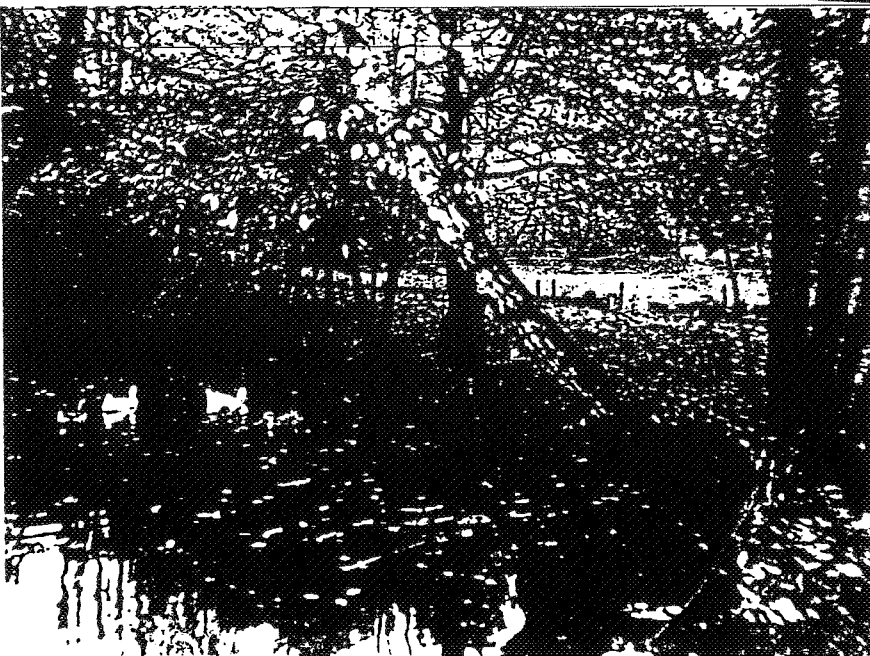
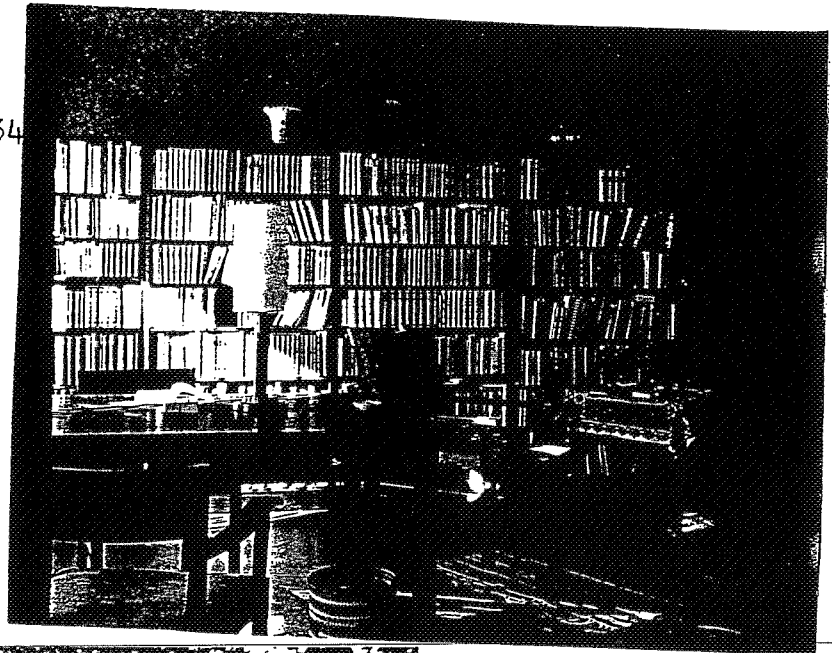


Veranda in back .
Ernest Ising, his
mother Thekla, Hanna
Ising, her mother
Clara Ehmer Diesner

Strausberg 1931 - 1934

Paradise lasted
a year and a half

Study



Brook in the Backyard
and the Woods behind

CHAPTER 7. THE NAZI YEARS 1933 - 1939. CAPUTH. EMIGRATION TO LUXEMBOURG.

On May 1st, 1933, Labor Day, a holiday in the German Republic, upon which the Nazis seized to display their power by huge parades of SA and SS troops in all cities, a small group of friends huddled on our porch, away from it all, seeking some consolation in the aspect of the magnificently blooming cherry tree and the sweet smell wafting in through the open windows from the woods behind the yard. We enjoyed the peace and calm, but we knew that we were uprooted, that we had lost the ground under our feet, that the future was dark.

Ernest found work at a newly established school in Paris that was to ease the transfer of emigrant children into French schools. It had been founded by a German teacher who had been dismissed for political, not race reasons. *Ernest* stayed there for three winter months, then returned because he neither liked the man nor did he see a future for this school.

Since from October on we practically had to live on my salary alone, we arranged with the landlady a reduction in our rent if we would forego the central heating. We heated only a fireplace in the study, washed in a foldable rubber tub next to it, slept in a cold bedroom, cooked in a cold kitchen, saw the plants perish on the cold porch and lived and worked in the one cluttered room, all the charm gone from the lovely apartment.

In spring, 1934, *Ernest* found a new job as a teacher, later as the headmaster of a boarding school in Caputh, near Potsdam. It had originally been an international school, but when the Nazis came to power, the owner, *Gertrud Feiertag*, "*Tante Trude*," changed it into a school for Jewish children who had been expelled from public schools. For 4-1/2 years we lived in this island of peace and beauty amidst the sea of terrifying developments.

The main building was located by the edge of a forest on a bluff high above the Havel River which, starting in Potsdam, widens to a big lake. This building housed the administration, kitchen and large dining room and bedrooms for the pre-school kids. Next to it was the "*Einstein-House*," a small villa that had originally been given to the great physicist by the City of Berlin, but had caused so much controversy and wrangling from anti-Semitic quarters that in the end he paid for it himself. *Einstein* loved to spend his weekends here enjoying his favorite sport, sailing, on the Havel below. When in 1932, *Einstein* went to America to teach at Princeton, the boarding school rented the house from him for classes and lectures and continued doing so when - after the *Hitler* take-over - *Einstein* did not return. When we arrived at the school in 1934, we were at first quartered in a farmhouse without bathroom. So, for a while, we took our bath in *Einstein's* bathtub. I always wished that some of his wisdom would thus rub off on us!

I should like to include here some memories of the great man. About 10 years earlier, *Wilhelm Kiby* had once taken me along to a graduate seminar held by *Einstein* at the Institute of Physics in Berlin. A student read a report. After a few minutes, *Einstein* interrupted, "I don't understand a word. Start all over again and the one who is the most stupid in the class will interrupt you as soon as he does not understand. This way we'll all get it. Who thinks he is the most stupid?" Pause. No hands up. "It seems I am the most stupid here. All right, start again and I'll interrupt you as soon as I do not understand." Of course I had gone to his public lectures on the theory of relativity in the

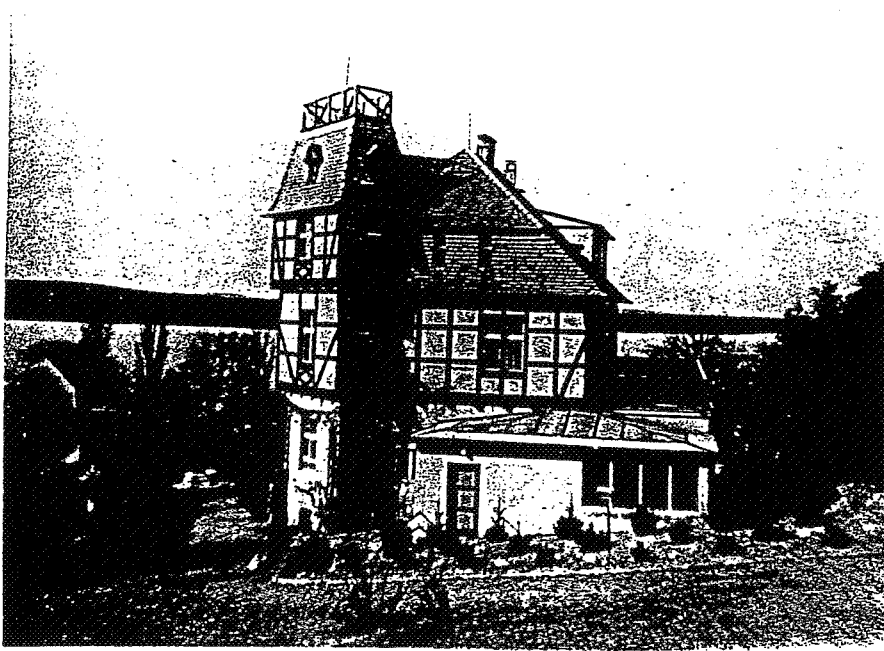
Auditorium Maximum sitting on the window sill because it was so crowded. We often saw *Einstein* and his wife at concerts and rubbed shoulders with him going home on the bus.

On the bottom of the bluff, right off the main road, was a smaller house containing most of the classrooms. The road coming out of the woods from Potsdam ran parallel to the river into the long stretched-out village of Caputh. The children (about 100) and the staff (about 30) were housed in three large homes, rented from emigrated Jews, and located between road and river not far from the main building. We soon moved into a basement apartment of the "*Reiwald*" house where we could place almost all of our furniture. We had a tiny kitchen, which we used very seldom because we usually ate in the big dining hall, a bedroom and a study with a dining nook. And we could walk through the large garden to the river where a pier widened at its end enough to allow us to sit around our red service table with wheels and have Sunday breakfast over the water - next to the rushes - and look out to the boats on the Havel. Every morning from May to early October we dipped in the river and had a swim before we went to work.

Caputh was not very far from Werder, famous for its cherry blossoms in spring. Caputh, too, was full of cherry orchards but not as overrun by the Berliners. Steamboats plied the waters regularly from Potsdam to Caputh, Ferch and Werder, and we put our Klepper boat to good use exploring the Havel and its sidearms, resting hidden among the reeds. It was truly an oasis we had found - made even more blessed by the cordial relationships between the teachers and among children and grown-ups. Caputh has become a tie among all those who were there and many close friendships formed that are still lasting today.*

I continued my work at the College of Commerce. In winter I took the bus from Caputh to Potsdam, but in warm weather I did the four miles by bike. It was beautiful: to my left the Havel, to my right the woods and little traffic on the road. Then 45 minutes on the suburban train from Potsdam to the Stock Exchange Station ("*Börse*"). Not until the Nazis took over did I find out that *Prof. Eulenburg* was Jewish by race, although a Christian by religion, and he that my husband was Jewish. Since the College of Commerce was not a state institution, but owned by the Chamber of Commerce, nothing happened to *Prof. Eulenburg* until 1935 when he was 68 and retirement was suggested. I worked through the summer of 1935 at the office of the school in Caputh, but in fall preferred to go back to *Prof. Eulenburg* and work for him privately at one third of my former salary. I had applied for several real good positions, but was always rejected at the wife of a Jew. One gentleman said, "we are in great need of a person just like you. But under these circumstances we are not allowed to take you." But the College of Commerce let *Eulenburg* have a large room at the Physics Department that was not used, and the *Weltwirtschaftliche Archiv* paid him my salary so we could go on doing statistical research which would be used by the WA or even published, but not under *Eulenburg's* name.

*Friends made in Caputh are *Ilse Berger-Grundleger-Blumenfeld*, SW Africa - New York: *Dr. Alice Berger-Bergel*, California, *Rudi* and *Eva Bruch-Brook*, California. *Henry* and *Billie Philips*, Cincinnati-California, *Sophie Friedlander* and *Hilde Jaretski*, London, *Dr. Elizabeth Rosenthal*, London, *Ruth Meyer-Reigenheim-Stahl*, Israel, *Kate Simon-MacKinnon*, Scotland, *Vera Pappe*, Brighton, England, *Sanne Exiner-Dyke*, Africa, Fiji, England - and many others with whom there is still some loose contact. They were strewn out all over the world.



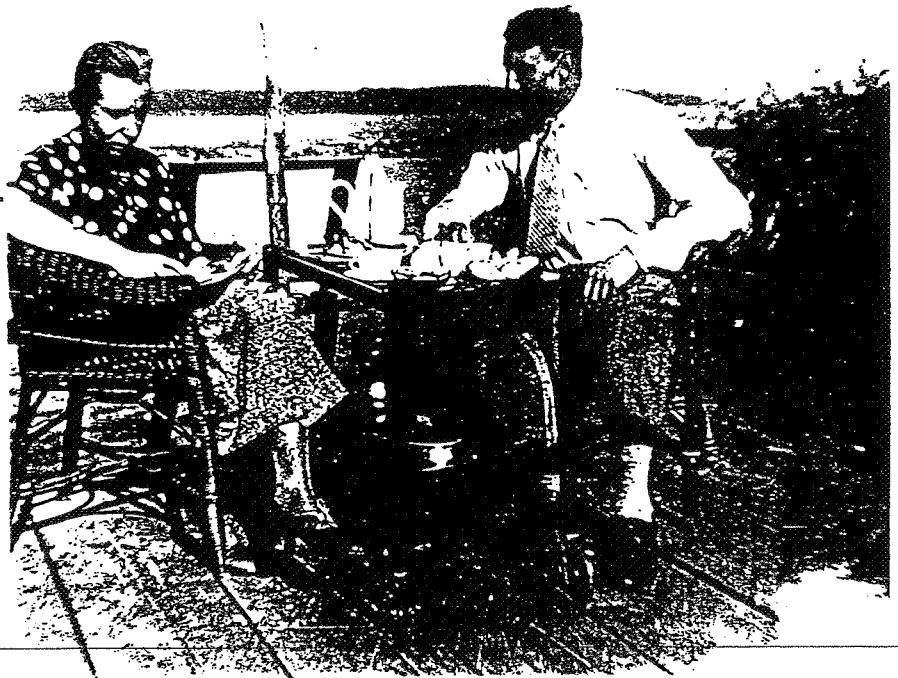
Boarding School

Main Building and
Havel River

Caputh near Potsdam

1934 - 1938

Sunday Breakfast
above the Havel



Camping on a
Canoe Trip

Neither he nor we thought of emigrating. *Ernest's* sister *Lotte* and her husband, *Hermann Busch* and daughter *Trude* had moved to Basel, Switzerland in November of 1933, where *Adolf Busch* and family had already gone in 1926. *Fritz Busch* had left Dresden in 1933 after Nazi rabble-rousers in his orchestra had given him trouble and would not stay, although *Hermann Göring* and wife *Emmy Sonnemann*, an actress and friend of *Fritz*, personally implored him to. He went to Copenhagen, Denmark. The *Busch Quartett*, with *Adolf* and *Hermann*, had given their last concert in Germany on April 1st, 1933, in Berlin. They played Haydn's "Seven Words on the Cross" in a church. Many of us cried. It was an unforgettable concert, because on that day the first pogrom had taken place; all over town rock-throwing Nazi hoodlums had smashed the windows of Jewish shopkeepers. The *Buschs*, I repeat, were not Jewish, just shocked and disgusted. When *Adolf*, at another occasion, was asked to substitute for a Jewish soloist originally scheduled, he refused and said "I am not *Richard Strauss*," who had substituted for conductor *Bruno Walter*, although he had a Jewish daughter-in-law.

Although life in Caputh was good and rich in values - non-monetary though they were - the gradually stepped-up persecutions of the Jews were on our nerves, especially *Ernest's*. In summer, 1938, he wished to spend his vacation in Caputh where he was practically out of contact with the hostile world. When I talked to *Prof. Eulenburg* about *Ernest's* raw nerves, he recommended treatment in a sanatorium. *Ernest* absolutely refused and I, too, had quite different ideas. Austria, until now off limits, had been invaded by the Nazis and incorporated into the German Reich and the valley of the Danube proclaimed as the Road of the Nibelungs. If we would go down on the Danube from Ulm to Vienna in our rubber boat and camp on the shore by night, we would get in touch with very few people and have a wonderful vacation. *Ernest* said "no." I packed everything we needed into the covered front and back ends of the boat and said "tomorrow." *Ernest* said "no." I said "tomorrow" the next day and *Ernest* said "no" again. The third day, I said "today." *Ernest* still held back, but I finally pushed him out of the house and got him into the boat.

We paddled to Potsdam, put our things in two backpacks, dismantled the boat and wheeled the three packages to the Potsdam railroad station. It was 8 p. m. when we got to the Anhalt Station and time for the departure of our train. We had to run all along the train to the luggage car right behind the locomotive, just managed to get the boat packages in and climbed into the first compartment when the train started moving! It was very crowded, we found two separate seats, but we were on our way through the night to Ulm! We were so intimidated that in Ulm, when we admired the cathedral, we were surprised that a stranger came and talked to us pointing to the bronze sparrow on the roof in memory of its help to the builders by showing them with a straw in its beak how to get a boom in lengthwise, not crosswise..

When we put the boat together, kids stood around and talked to us! They all did not seem to realize that we were outcasts! But then we were really almost isolated for two weeks. Even if we were lazy and did not paddle, the river carried us forward 10 miles an hour. Only once did we have an unpleasant incident. We saw in the evening that another tent was pitched upon the opposite shore of the wide river. From there they watched us with their fieldglasses. When we set out next morning, they set out, too, and steered straight toward us. We paddled as fast as we could, they caught up with us and put their hands on our boat. "We watched you doing your exercises. Great! Isn't it wonderful to have the Road of the Nibelungs now free for us Germans? Did you see the yellow benches "for Jews only" in Linz?" etc. We froze stiff. Finally I said, "If you are so anti-Semitic, why on this big, wide river do you come precisely to the one boat with a Jew in

x in Berlin

it?" Now they got stiff and soon let go. Their "sure instinct" had sorely deserted them. We had no desire to go into Nazi-Vienna and put the boat together shortly before and shipped it back to Caputh.

Then we took the train to the Ötztal and went mountain climbing for a week. The higher we got, the less frequently we heard "Heil *Hitler*." The greeting was still "Grüss Gott!" Once we hired a guide and roped together climbed a chimney. There with the guide above me and *Ernest* below, I heard him saying, "Oh, this is much better than a sanatorium!" He was healed again!

While we thus coped with adversity and tried to make the best of it, Mother suffered. Her husband's friendly attitude towards us was constantly attacked and undermined by the aunts from Cottbus. They reproached him with capitulation when he came to our wedding, with abandoning his principles, with treason to his convictions. That he had come to our wedding was a terrible blow to them and they smarted from it. So they worked on him and after seven years succeeded: the relations between him and us were again broken off. All the time Mother stood between them and us and suffered, as two diary entries of the years 1936 and 1938 movingly show. I will also add here an entry in the Diary of the year 1928.

November 9, 1928 (Mother) (An itemization of objects belonging to Mother that should go to *Hanna*, among them) "my golden wedding ring in which both rings of my first marriage were worked into one band in December, 1922.---Please, take also the collection of my poems. There is in them so much that is very personal of my youth and of the happy days of my marriage with *Vaterchen*. The poems give you a good picture of it. Read them, when you can, and place yourself again into the time of your childhood and youth with the events that happened then, although they were often quite unimportant."

November, 1936 (Mother) "Dear *Hanna*: What I am going to write here is meant for you even when I no longer am among the living. I am now 67 years old and perhaps it won't be very much longer that I will be forever separated from you. 'Perhaps,' I say, I hope that I will be allowed to be mother to you for many more years to come. But I have so much time now to think about so many things, because, due to the illness in my right leg, I have been unable to work for six weeks already.

I refer to what I wrote on the previous page on November 9, 1928. Eight years have passed since and they brought in their course much unrest over both of us. Much of what I wrote before is no longer valid today. My opinion about the money I brought into the marriage with *Robert Diessner* is still the same, it is true. But it will be no use to argue with him about it after my death, and you are much too sensitive to let yourself be offended. Since I doubt that he could treat you in a generous way - to me he has never been generous - or only very, very seldom - I am afraid you will come off second best should there be a dispute.

It is not only my inner loneliness in which I live more and more from year to year that has made my life so sad, it is also the worry about you, my dear, dear *Hanna*. You are a brave person and have resigned to your destiny - maybe only outwardly. For a mother's eye sees sharper, even if the mouth does not ask. But my heart is often oppressed that life has not allotted a better fate to you. How much would I like to see you again happy and glad as in the days of *Strausberg*!

My last Will (Mother) "I request, when I have died, to be cremated in Zittau (Saxony). The permit lies in my box in the big linen closet in our bedroom. The

key for this box lies in the jewel case which is in the upper drawer of the chest of drawers in the bedroom. I request that my ashes be buried in Berlin together with the ashes of my dear first husband, *Hans Ehmer*, so that *Hanna* has both her parents together in the same cemetery."

September 15, 1938 (Mother) "Today is a very critical day. We all here in Bohemia and, of course, also in Grottau live in the greatest anxiety, because we do not know what the next day will bring for us. Will we live to see it and will there be peace or will the Fury of War destroy our beautiful land, our property, and ourselves?"

In the face of this uncertainty I will once more speak to you, my dear *Hanna* - it may be the last time. You have brought much unrest into the last years of my life. *Anna* and *Emma*, it is true, contributed mainly to keeping this unrest alive by constantly stirring up those things long settled now which cannot be changed any more and which, after your step-father had himself resigned to them, did not bother him for seven years. At least, so we believed, since he had kind and friendly intercourse with both of you during this time and neither of you have given him the slightest cause to treat you differently. You put no obstacles of any kind in his way over which he could have stumbled, and it is due only to the constantly renewed hateful instigation from Cottbus that Father, who in their opinion had weakly given in, now again turns against you. Because I have not mentioned you at all since my "apology" in Schreiberhau - you know about it - Father has become somewhat more conciliatory towards me after his former awful invectives against me, and our present relationship could be called as cordial as in former years, if those terrible times did not constantly absorb my mind. I have resigned myself to never mentioning the two of you, but believe me, *Hanna*, that it pains my heart to lead such a double life, even if I don't let it be known to the outside by a single look or sign. Because you were there before him, you are more than your step-father the content of my life, although in a different way than he. But the claims he has on me are not diminished in any way by this.

I had to write this down here to unburden my heart before I close the diary today. Let us hope that I am not closing it for good. I took Father to Zittau today because he was weak and miserable after six weeks of sickness and should avoid the anxieties of these days.... Your mother."

It took a little more than two weeks after Mother wrote her letter until *Hitler's* troops marched into the Sudetengau after *Chamberlain* in Munich had "saved the peace of the world" by deserting Czechoslovakia and promising the Nazi leader that England and France would not honor their pact with Czechoslovakia and allow him to invade this purely German part of Bohemia. The Czechs, realizing that they could not stop the Nazi troops alone, offered no resistance. So Mother's fear was unfounded and no fighting or bloodshed occurred.

When *Robert Diessner* was still on speaking terms with us, he had repeatedly mentioned that at first, after WW I, the relationship between Czechs and Germans was friendly and harmonious and only after the Nazis had developed their fifth column were tensions and dissension created.

After this easy success on foreign soil, *Hitler* attacked on the inner front with the greatest pogrom so far, and this time even we in Caputh were not spared. On November 9, 1938, in all towns and cities all over Germany, Jewish males were arrested and sent to concentration camps, stores were smashed and even homes and apartments invaded.

When on the evening of November 9, Ernest's parents called, we could tell them that we are fine and that all is quiet in Caputh. They said it was not quiet in Bochum, but they were all right; details would follow in a letter. We found out later that Nazis had gone around in Bochum and arrested all Jewish men and damaged homes and furniture. When they came to Goethestr. 18, they smashed the heavy oaken entrance door and did their evil work on the ground floor which Ernest's parents in the wake of bad times had rented to another Jewish family. When they wanted to come upstairs, Ernest's mother, whose maiden name was Löwe (Lion), stood at the head of the stairs like a lioness and argued with them!! "What do you want here? My husband is a good and honest man; his ancestors have lived in this country for hundreds of years. He is over 70! Go away and leave him alone!" And they did!! Thekla Ising was a very energetic woman and her commanding voice and appearance apparently scared them away!

Confident that the peace of our secluded existence in Caputh would not be broken as had been the case during earlier disturbances in the Capital and the nation, I went to work in Berlin early on the 10th, as did Ernest and the other members of the school in Caputh. But at noon the village school teacher came with his pupils and gave the kids a feast. They threw rocks through the windows of the main building, not only of the dining hall and the offices, but also of the rooms of the pre-school children, strewing broken glass on their beds. In the kitchen they overturned the big kettles with food for 130 people and created an awful mess. They ordered grown-ups and children to leave. Ernest went to our apartment, packed a few things together, locked the door, took about 8 children, and with empty stomachs they walked 4 miles through the woods, avoiding the highway, to the station in Potsdam. In Berlin he handed the children over to parents, relatives or friends and went to Ilse Berger's parents in Wilmersdorf whose apartment was not damaged.

From there he called the College of Commerce, but nobody at the Physics Department (where I had my room) answered. Then he called Prof. Eulenburg in his apartment and asked him to tell me, if he should see me, not to go out to Caputh, but to come to the Bergers.

Something very strange happened to me on this day, the most wonderful coincidence I have ever experienced. A few days earlier, Eulenburg had asked me to come to his house "one of these days" when it suits me; there is some work to do on his library. I decided on this day to interrupt my ride to Potsdam at Halensee and to go to the Kurfürstendamm apartment of Prof. Eulenburg. Why not the day before, why not postpone it to the next day? I know I had no inkling, no premonition, no thought that something might have happened in Caputh. Well, I got the message, the bad news, and went to the Bergers. I have often afterwards in my mind made that trip to Caputh and imagined what would have happened. I would have gotten out of the bus at the first stop at the end of the forest and would have seen no lights in the main building high up on the bluff where I always went first to have dinner with the others in the big dining room. There would have been no lights in the dormitory on the other side of the road towards the river. And when after a few minutes along the road I came to the "Reiwalde" House, there would have been no lights either and at the entrance to our basement apartment I would have found the door broken open, the windows smashed and maybe run into a few looters that made away with our two down quilts and silver cookie dish and many other things and I would have been scared to death not knowing what had happened to Ernest.

As it was, we counted ourselves happy that we were together and that Ernest or the other male members of the staff had not been arrested and thus were spared two or three months in concentration camps. Over the radio came Joseph Goebbels's announcement that the pogrom is over and that no more actions must be taken. So

we decided to go back next day, November 11, to see what had happened - maybe we could clean up and go on as before? *Ilse Berger* decided to go along, pick up her few things and help us.

We were not prepared for what we saw: the desk turned over, red and black ink spilled on the carpet, papers, broken glass from beautiful vases, water and wilted flowers all over, books torn from the shelves, the canvas of one picture shredded with a knife, etc. *Ernest* took two photos of the mess, and then we went to work. *Ernest* barricaded the windows and *Ilse* and I straightened things out. Women came, who probably wanted to loot, looked in and expressed their anger that people like us were allowed to be there. Then two men came, the policeman and the Nazi boss. The policeman was quite friendly; he advised us not to stay there. "The village is long, I cannot be everywhere and will not be able to protect you. You better put some necessary belongings together and leave as soon as possible." They left and returned almost immediately. The Nazi, who had said nothing, had looked around and had seen *Ernest's* camera on the desk. "I have to confiscate your camera," the policeman said, and they left. *Ernest* was not finished doing something about the broken door. But *Ilse* urged, "get away quickly, *Ernest*, before they come back and arrest you!"

So *Ernest* loaded some things on his bike, said he would send a taxi from the next village and would meet us at the railroad station in Potsdam. Ten minutes later the two men came back, "Where is your husband?" "He is gone. You, yourself, advised him to do so!" Still he looked everywhere, under the tables, in the wardrobes, under the beds, in all corners of the kitchen, and left. *Ilse* and I had put clothing, linen and valuables together and waited anxiously for the taxi. *Ernest* had not been able to get one in the next village and had to go to one farther away. Again in Potsdam we had to wait an unusually long time for *Ernest*, worrying if they had caught up with him and arrested him on his way. But he only had had a flat tire and had to push his bike half the way.

After all these unpleasant happenings we thought it more prudent not to stay with the *Bergers*, a Jewish family whose daughter was connected with Caputh. We called our good friends *Hanna* and *Wilhelm Kiby* and asked if we could hide in their row house in Reinickendorf, and they agreed. Fifteen years later, they did another generous act of friendship for us; for both we feel deeply indebted to them.

We never went back to Caputh - but the others did to clean up and to rescue what belonged to them and the children as far as it was not stolen. And every day the policeman came and asked them if they knew where *Ising* was - they didn't. We had to ask others to pack all our belongings; the 2,000 books, etc. together in boxes and then asked a company to take it to their storage facilities on Frankfurter Street in Berlin - where everything was totally destroyed in the bombings by the Allied Forces in 1943. Much as I regretted the loss of our beautiful, custom-made furniture, it was a blessing in disguise. To have it shipped to America would have cost a fortune.

Ernest quickly found work in Berlin at the private Jewish schools there. But he often came home totally exhausted, a nervous wreck because he fancied that every policeman in Berlin had his picture in his pocket and was out to arrest him. He pushed his hat deep over his face and sometimes, when he came home, threw himself on the carpet, back down, arms stretched out, to relax and calm down.

We finally understood that we had to leave Germany. *Ernest* wrote to distant relatives in America who promised to sponsor us. But the immigrants' quota was al-

ready filled for the next two years. So we would not have to spend this waiting period in Germany, we obtained a permit for Luxembourg whose borders had already officially been closed to immigration. For this special permit we have to thank the Buschs.

Whenever the *Busch-Quartett* gave a concert in Brussels, they also played privately for the *Queen-Mother Elizabeth* and for Mr. *Danny Heinemann*, a rich German-born American who was head of the Belgian-Luxembourgian utility company. Instead of giving money to "Joint," he set up his own rescue enterprise and was able to get 100 people out of Germany and into Luxembourg, in spite of the official closure of the borders. The hotel business was down in the beautiful little country due to the goings-on in neighboring Germany. So, if the refugees were not allowed to work and thus did not take away jobs from the locals, but instead would fill the otherwise empty hotels, both sides would profit. Mr. *Heinemann* did not only pay the hotel bills for 100 people, but also gave each of them a small monthly allowance for stamps, shoe repair and such things. From Germany each one could take out only 10 Mark = \$2.50. *Frieda Busch*, *Adolf's* wife, talked to Mr. *Heinemann* about us and he agreed to help us! If that had not worked out, *Fritz Busch* had promised to try to get us into Denmark.

In the meantime, the *Kibys* got a little nervous. "The neighbors are watching us!" Also, it was required in Germany that after a stay of 6 weeks one had to register with a local population office (*Einwohner-Meldeamt*). These six weeks were over shortly before Christmas and we now moved to the *Bergers* who had a room we could rent and we gave their address when we registered.

We spent Christmas and New Year's with *Ernest's* parents in Bochum - my mother's home had again been closed to us. It was the last time that we were in *Ernest's* parents' home, still beautiful although they occupied only the upper floor now. They were preparing their own emigration and would move to Basel, Switzerland, in February, 1939, where *Lotte* and *Hermann Busch* (who had lived there already since 1933) had secured their immigration permit. We would not see the parents until 8 years later, in 1946, and their pretty home never again. It was hit by bombs during WW II and totally destroyed. When we came to look for it in 1954, it had been replaced by a totally new house and not even a shard from *Thorn-Prikker's* tall stained-glass window in the stairwell could be found.

Once, while we stayed at the *Bergers*, our good friend, *Hubert Cremer*, professor of mathematics, came to visit us. He was committing his 5th act of high treason this day, he explained, because he had already visited four Jewish friends. He gave us 50 Mark, a share of the money he had earned by taking over a class of a Jewish colleague. He could not refuse to take the class, he said, but he did not want to keep the money.

On January 27, 1939, the bell rang at the *Bergers'* at 7 a. m. and three young Gestapo men asked for *Ernest*. We were still in bed and got quickly dressed. They searched in all drawers and closets and were disappointed in the harmless photos of children, classes, school projects and *Havel* landscapes they found. When they left after an hour, they took *Ernest* along. I asked what he should take along, toothbrush, pajamas? "That won't be necessary." To our great relief he was back after four hours. They interrogated him and accused him of having taken those shots of our messed-up apartment to tell horror stories ("Greuelpropaganda") in foreign countries - which is true! But *Ernest* argued very cleverly: first, he took them for the insurance company, and second, we had no intention to emigrate when he took the shots and only afterwards we got an affidavit for America and an immigration permit for Luxembourg. "Luxembourg? That is much too close. We'll

get there." *Ernest* had to promise that he would emigrate as soon as he would have his affairs straightened out and get a passport, and was dismissed. As children we celebrated the emperor's birthday on the 27th of January and had a school free holiday. This evening, we celebrated again, but for another reason!

Through all this troubled time I continued to work for *Prof. Eulenburg*. Now I had to tell him that I would have to stop soon because I wanted to follow my husband to Luxembourg. He hated to lose me and he, as well as *Mrs. Eulenburg*, tried to talk me into staying behind. In fact, my leaving him would eventually lead to his premature death. He had a very hard time finding a substitute for me. An Aryan woman was not allowed to work for him. Eventually, he found a Jewish woman who lived underground, to avoid deportation. That went all right until 1943. In September he still visited us in Mersch, Luxembourg, and we spent a few nice days with him. Three weeks later he was arrested in Berlin. His secretary had been caught and, pressed to explain how she supported herself, admitted that she worked for him.

He was taken to the prison of the Gestapo headquarters on Alexanderplatz, Berlin. *Franz Eulenburg* was a very sensitive, nervous man. Often, before a class, he took a few drops of tinctura valeriana to calm himself. Now, at age 76, he was thrown into a large cold basement together with hundreds of other prisoners. There were no chairs or benches and certainly no beds. There was only the bare floor on which to sit or stretch out, and the sanitary conditions were just as poor. Soon he contracted pneumonia and was taken to the Jewish Hospital, where he died on December 28, 1943. His (non-Jewish) wife, *Gertrud*, could visit him there and he could tell her about his horrible experience at the hands of the Nazis. The only comforting thought is that he died in a clean bed with his wife at his side; and also that he thus was spared to live through the shocking events one night at the end of January, 1944, when his house was bombed and caught fire and all his belongings, his furniture and all his books and manuscripts and art treasures were destroyed and *Gertrud Eulenburg*, who had taken shelter in the cellar, had to run between the burning houses on Kurfürstendamm to find a safer place.

But let us return to early 1939. The *Eulenburgs* soon stopped trying to keep me in Berlin, when I told them that I was pregnant! Yes, in this most miserable time of our lives I became pregnant. To explain why, under the given circumstances, we did not love more carefully, I have to go back a few years.

On January 24, 1935, I wrote a letter to my mother: "The day after tomorrow you will celebrate a very special birthday - do you know that? Much more special than the 60th or the 65th. Not only because you have now reached two thirds of a century, but for a much more important reason which, however, only concerns the two of us. Namely, you are now exactly twice as old as I am. Half of your life you have now spent together with me. When you turned half as old as now, I was with you on your birthday for the first time, although much more intimately than later, because at that time we two were still one. But already a week later I left you and made myself independent. That was in the middle of your life so far, when you were as old as I am now. I have always thought I would imitate you. For we always knew that *Eulenburg* would become professor emeritus in 1935. Then I wanted to quit working and have my child at age 33 just when you got yours. That would have produced a nice sequence of generations: when you would be 99, I would be 66 and *Wolfgang* or *Vera* 33! Well, the Third Reich has now made a few thick strokes through this plan...." But two years later, I realized that time

was running out and if I waited until *Hitler* was gone and times were normal again, I might never have a child. So, in spring of 1937 we decided not to love carefully any longer and I became pregnant immediately. But after 5 months the doctor found out that the fetus was dead and had to be removed surgically. I was very unhappy and cried a lot, but did not give up hope. However, after the miscarriage in fall, 1937, I did not get pregnant again, not even when I sought the help of a physician. So we thought something had happened and it wouldn't work any more.

Even after the upsetting events of November 10, 1938, it did not occur to us that we should use caution again. And so it happened that in the darkest hours of our lives, in December, 1938, when we were hidden at the *Kibys*, when *Ernest* feared to be arrested any time, when our future looked absolutely bleak, our son's life began and with it came joy and hope and confidence that there would come a better time after all. He had kept us waiting for two years and then had timed his coming perfectly - another wonderful coincidence.

CHAPTER 8. LUXEMBOURG. 1939 - 1947. THE WAR YEARS

We first stayed in Luxembourg-City until we were assigned to the Hotel "Sept Chateaux" in Mersch, right in the center of the tiny dukedom. And now again, a very pleasant time began for us. It lasted only a year, though, but it was full of happiness. And even after the great disturbances of the next year, 1940, life was not too bad, although we were very poor and never knew what the next day would bring. The plan had been that we would stay in Luxembourg two years or so, until our quota for immigration to the United States was up. Instead we stayed eight years because the American Consulates were closed before it was our turn to be admitted: We continued the ups and downs that, by now, had become a pattern of our existence.

The months of my pregnancy were blessed. We lived in a hotel, ca. 20 couples, where I had to do neither cooking nor house cleaning. After many years of doing this plus working, I suddenly found myself having an endless vacation. We took long walks over the rolling hills, through the deep forests, over the flowering meadows along clear brooks and enjoyed our freedom and the absence of Nazi oppression. We read a lot and were in very good company. There were lawyers and doctors and businessmen, and they formed groups to study English and Spanish together. While *Ernest* was doing this, I went to my favorite bench on a slope with a wide view over the land, let the sun shine on my growing belly and dreamed about my baby while I was sewing and knitting and preparing for his arrival.

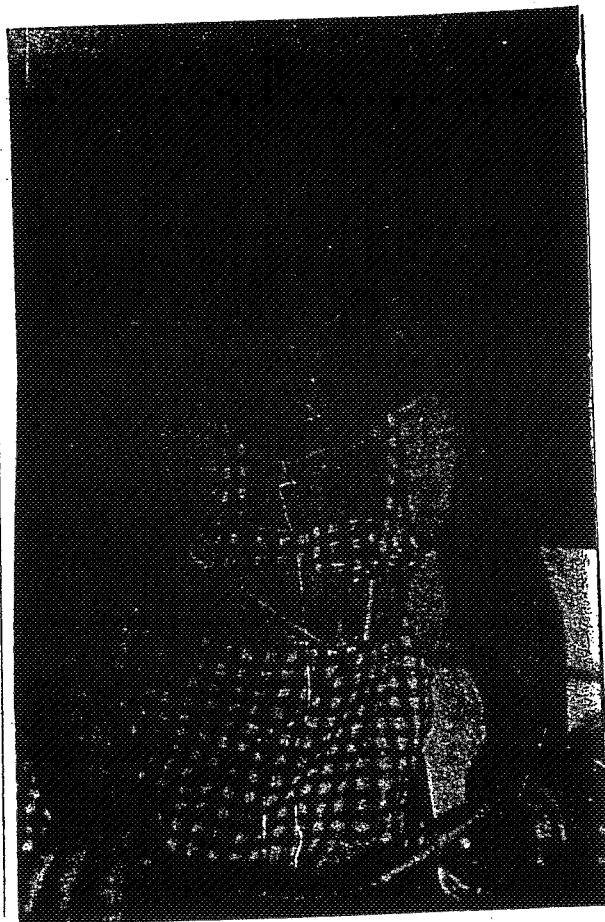
In spring of 1939, having become intoxicated with success in the Sudetengau, *Hitler* invaded Czechoslovakia, thus shaking the myth that he only wanted to incorporate German areas into his Third Reich. And the world, while not yet acting, finally learned its lesson. When *Hitler* struck again, in September 1939, this time in Poland, England and France declared war, while *Stalin* cut Poland up together with his Nazi enemy.

These were worrisome days. The baby was due very soon, and it was decided that I should go to the Maternité outside Luxembourg-City immediately because there was no telling if transportation would be available when I needed it there. I had to wait a week. The doctor drove a few times to the southern tip of Luxembourg and watched some shooting between French and German troops, nothing much, and told me about it in the evening. The war in the West did not really start until May, 1940; it remained calm all through the winter and early spring. *Thomas* was born on September 9, 1939, at 8 p. m. after 8 hours of labor. All went well, *Ernest* came by bike from Mersch. It had been a warm, sunny fall day, just as the preceeding days when I had taken long walks in the surrounding country. From 8 to 10 p. m. *Ernest* and I talked quietly in the delivery room. Then I was wheeled back to my room where *Ernest* was allowed to spend the night on a couch. We were very happy.

After 10 days I returned to Mersch with my baby and now had nothing else to do than to take care of him. The first 6 weeks two women even volunteered to wash the diapers for me. This good life lasted for 8 months, when it changed abruptly on May 10, 1940. We were awakened at 7 a. m. by a knock at our door. "Well, well," said *Dr. Grunberg*, "here you sleep while the German planes fly over our heads and the German tanks are rolling through our streets!" It was *Ernest's* 40th birthday, and we did not at all appreciate this birthday parade by the Nazi Wehrmacht. We had had no inkling, had made no preparations for flight, would get nowhere now with all roads blocked by the military. But nothing happened, the army was not interested in the Jewish problem. All they wanted was that we get out of the hotel and make room for the officers. The gentleman who handled *Mr. Heinemann's* money for the refugees had managed somehow to come from Luxem-



Ernst and Tom Ising
1939



Mersch
Luxembourg

Tom, 1940



Tom, 1941



Hanna, Tom and Ernst 1941

bourg-Ville to Mersch and distributed all he had to us, enough to live for six months. *Mr. Heinemann* himself had been forewarned and had left Brussels with his family for the United States.

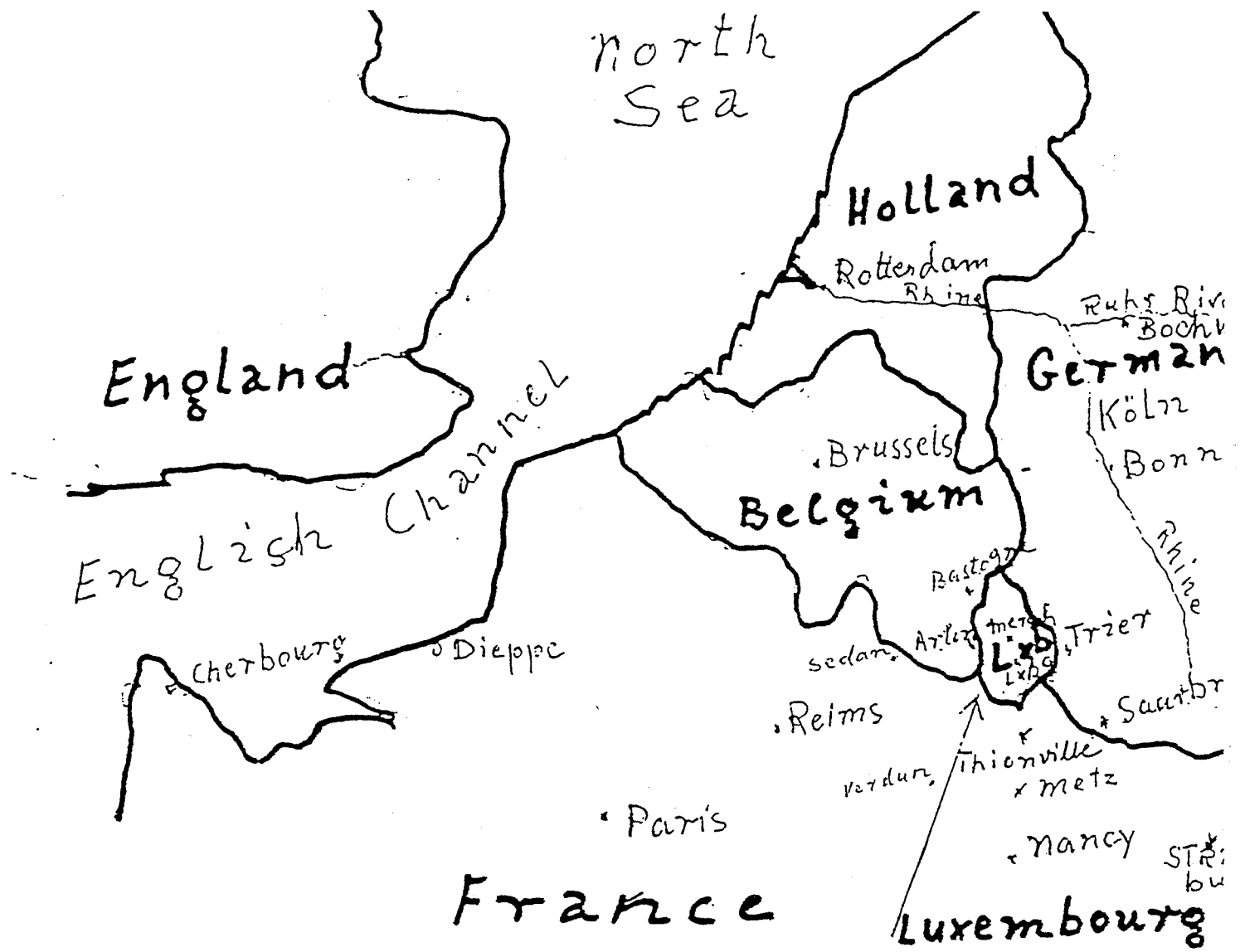
After a short stay with a family in Mersch we found a primitive apartment - two large rooms, a bedroom and a kitchen-living-room, on either side of a hall leading to an upstairs apartment - in Berschbach across a wide meadow and two brooks from Mersch. Kind townspeople who knew of our plight loaned us beds, a table and chairs, pots and pans, and from all sides we got clothing and bedding and toys for *Tom*, mostly used, but very pretty, so that we could not carry through our plan to raise him spartanically, with only the absolutely necessary things, without offending the donors.

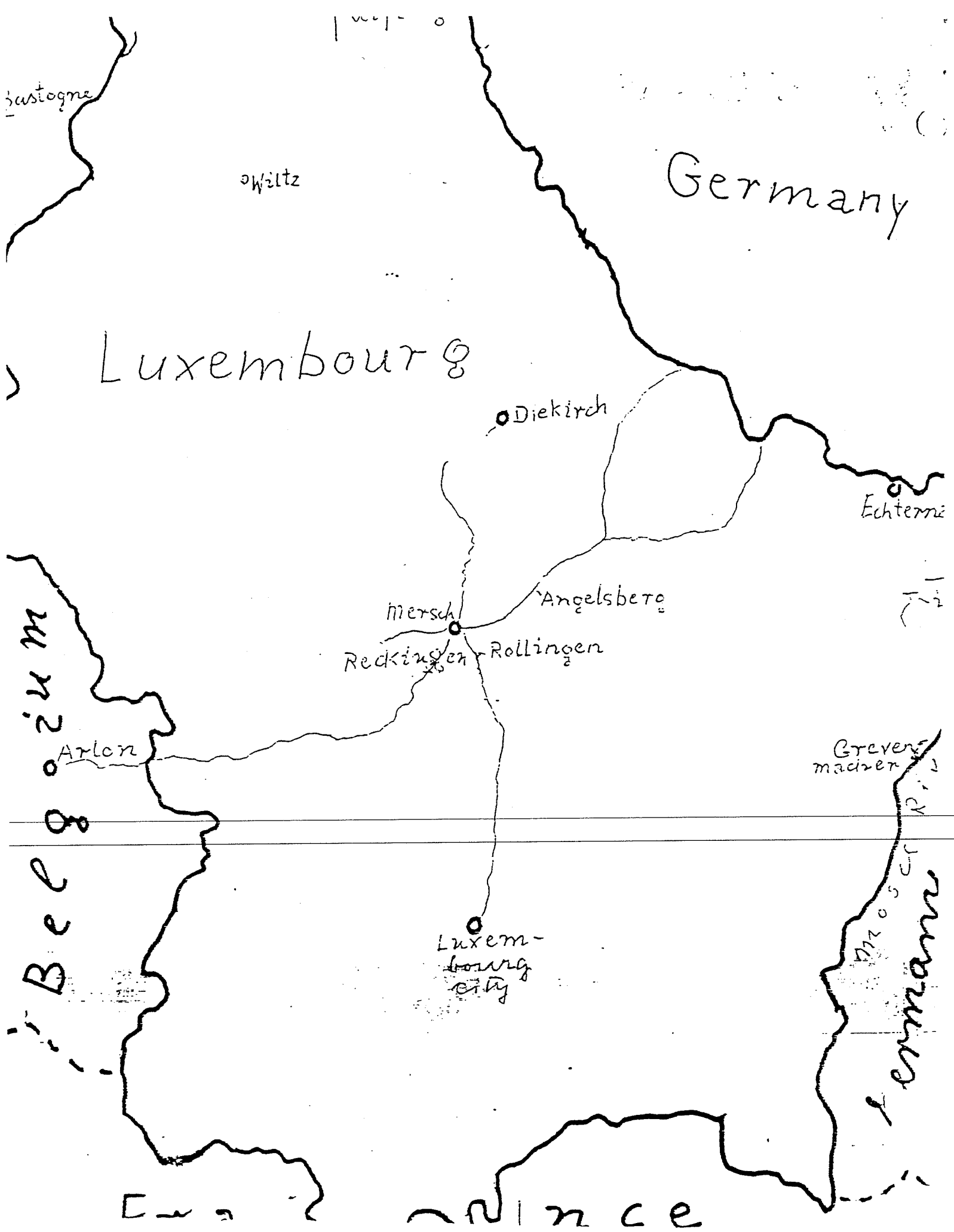
On *Tom's* first birthday, September 9, 1940, *Ernest* wrote in *Tom's* diary, "We wish you that you may continue developing so well, that you may stay in good health and that you and we may be protected from the dangers that surround and threaten us. In this past difficult year, you have given us immense happiness and joy and we are very very happy to have you." Three weeks later, on October 1, 1940, I wrote, "We have spent again anxious days, since *Father's* last entry. It was said we had to leave, all people like us, and that within two weeks. Money and belongings can only be taken along in limited amounts.- To Belgium or occupied or unoccupied France. We would not know on what to live there, unless we can find someone of *Father's* relatives in Belgium. But most of them fled when the Germans invaded Belgium in May. You, my dear heart, don't know anything of all this. But in what a hard time were you born! When your little life covertly began, *Father* and *Mother* had just been deprived of their means of existence and of their home which was destroyed. That was in December, 1938. Then, when you were born, the war broke out. Now, when you are a year old, this new threatening danger. But you develop and grow and our greatest wish is that we may carry all anxieties for you now, so that you may grow up and live free and happy in the future."

Fortunately, we could stay, and in the middle of December *Ernest* even found an appropriate job. Jewish children had been thrown out of public schools and for these children a school was set up in Luxembourg-Ville, where *Ernest* became the headmaster. We also were able, now that Luxembourg had become part of the German Reich, to transfer money from our bank accounts and that of *Ernest's* father's in Germany.

All the time we were working on our emigration to the States. In 1941 the two year waiting period was over, the money for the trip from the Spanish border and for the boat passage was available, almost all papers were ready. Only one more specification was required of where our sponsors would lodge us in their house, how much pocket money they would give us and more such details. We wrote, but before the answer arrived, the American consulates were closed in June, 1941 and no more visas given out! It was a terrible disappointment and meant that we would have to stay in Luxembourg under the rule of the Nazis until the War was over.

Although we were poor and could afford only the bare necessities of life, we explored the beautiful country and almost every Sunday took long bike excursions in all directions with *Tom* in a basket in front of *Ernest*. One Sunday in June, 1941, we went east to the border with Germany which was formed by the Moselle River, heard in Grevenmacher over the radio that Russia had entered the war against Germany and saw on the other side of the river one train after the other filled with German soldiers going north and east.





I have often thought when we rode through the lovely countryside, enjoyed a far view from some height, walked through the ruins of a castle, swam in the clear rivers or just picked raspberries or wild strawberries in a secluded forest clearing, that I will probably later look back on these eight years of simple life so close to nature and so rich in happiness with our little Tom, as a blessed time in spite of the lurking dangers and threatening catastrophies. And I do. We were very poor, it is true. But we were never separated, *Ernest* did not have the "honor" of being drafted into military service and the constant danger of being deported never materialized. We often thought our Jewish-Aryan combination was the best possible. Our Aryan friends died in battle or were taken prisoners by the Russians and perished in their camps (*Ernst Sorge, Wilhelm Orthmann*), our Jewish friends were deported to concentration camps and ended in the Auschwitz gas chambers or starved to death in Theresienstadt. We were simply left alone, not even asked for contributions to the many Nazi causes, only led a precarious existence, never knowing what the next day would bring.

On August 26, 1941, my mother came to visit us in Mersch and to see her grandson for the first time! That was for all four of us a great and most joyful event. I had seen *Mother* last in summer '39 when I was alone in Berlin for a short time. Then we had visited together my father's grave in the Crematorium cemetery on Gericht Street, for the last time for both of us. Now she was coming to Luxembourg and we were in great expectation. From *Tom's* diary: Mersch, August 31, 1941. ". When, after your noon nap, she was really there, you were at first again very shy. But that did not last long. In the evening you gave her already a kiss . . . and stroked her face. Once, when *Mother* was busy, you took *Grandmother* by the hand and led her across the yard to the street so she would go with you to Milkman's horse. She brought an Easter bunny for you which you don't let out of your hand; it even must go to bed with you. One afternoon, we walked up to Binzerath. . . *Mother* went to pick blackberries while *Grandmother* sat down in the grass with you. You showed her your picture book and then you fell asleep."

My mother stayed with us for a while, then went to Bad Mondorf in southern Luxembourg, a spa where she took the waters, and returned home to Grottau on September 21 after again spending a few days with us. She brought my diary along in which, on September 12, 1941, she had written her last entry:

"So, *Hanna*, my darling daughter, I was granted the pleasure, after all, to read this diary through once more, since I was able, after two years of separation, to see you here again, you and your dear *Ernest* and, above all, the little grandson whom I had not met before.

You have been through very hard times since 1933 and especially since 1938. And who knows what sorrows and difficulties lie ahead of you? But I am happy: so far you have taken it all in your stride and will continue to do so and preserve yourselves in spite of all adverse powers. (A quotation from a *Goethe* poem: Allen Gewalten zum Trotz sich erhalten). A better time must come again for the three of you. You were born on a Sunday, weren't you? And I find you have so far fared better than thousands of others, and what looked bad and threatening for you has still always led to something good. If you think earnestly about it, you will find a little more good than evil for you and your loved ones in all the misfortune that occurred to you.

I should like to live to see the three of you settled somewhere in the world, happy and free - free in thought and deed. If I should not live long enough to experience it, it remains my last wish on my deathbed.

With very great joy I have read once more your Diary from beginning to end, with very different feelings today than when I wrote it, have in my mind lived once more through all the good and happy years of my marriage with your dear father and once more enjoyed, and delighted, in your growing and thriving - bodily and mentally - and all your amusing little sayings and doings, and I wish from all my heart that your little *Thomas* will become for you also such an energetic and courageous human being as you have become - in spite of everything.

My life with my second husband is flowing more calmly now. He acknowledged much of the wrong he did to me in the past years - unfortunately too late to make anything good again. As far as money is concerned, he took out an insurance policy for me. If he should die before me, this together with a small pension, scanty as it is, will enable me to continue living frugally until the clock of my life will run out.

So now, my child, I will close. Will it be possible for me to write something here again? If not, it is good, too. You have always been my sunshine, in spite of everything. May you be the same now for your little *Thomas*, that is the dearest wish of my heart, and that he may fare better when he grows up than you did, who had to suffer so much misfortune during the evil years since 1933.

Your Mother"

On October 6, 1941, *Ernest* lost his job as teacher and principal of the Jewish school in Luxembourg-Ville because it was closed. All Jewish families in Luxembourg-Ville were deported to concentration camps. These were worrisome days; we did not know anything about gas-chambers then, but it was bad enough for them to be taken away, and for a while we did not know if *Ernest* would have to join them. Our life was like a dance on a tightrope, again and again we were in danger of falling off.

Old and sick people, ca. 100, were taken to the Monastery of Fünfbrunnen (Five Fountains) near Ulflingen in the northern part of Luxembourg, whose monks had been driven out earlier. Two younger Jewish families had been retained to run the camp in Ulflingen. Since they were extremely efficient and since there were no Nazis there at all, life was not too bad out there. The Monastery was beautifully located, quite isolated in a mountainous, densely wooded area. The next railroad station was reached in 45 minutes on foot. So it was all right as long as it lasted.

It was not until August, 1942, that *Ernest* was asked to come out there during the week to teach the three children that were left there and to do all kinds of odd jobs.

During the 10 months between the closing of the school and the beginning of his work in Fünfbrunnen *Ernest* earned a little money by herding the sheep for a farmer in nearby Pettingen and occasionally I went there, too, with *Tommy* to mend the farmer's underwear which was badly torn, for nothing new could be bought. We two got our meals and a little piece of bacon or other food to take home.

While we felt like puppets the strings of which lay in the hands of evil powers above us, we were surrounded by sympathizing Luxembourgiens, who suffered from, and hated, the "Prussians" just as we did. Their young men were drafted into the German army and in order to avoid it, many went underground. They stayed in the dense woods or were hidden by friends who, after the liberation, told of ingenious designs to keep them undetected. When they were sent into Germany to

join the army they would disappear, but friends sent post-cards written by them from different places on the way which the parents could show when Nazi investigators came and asked about them. But if somebody was caught, he was shot and his name in big black letters on bloody-red paper was posted all over Luxembourg on the walls of schools, police stations and city-halls.

In April, 1942, we had a chance to move into a much nicer apartment, back in Mersch, on Mozart Street which skirts Michael Square. We were told about it by Mrs. Schwachtgen, a banker's widow, who lived upstairs with her son who had finished his studies in medicine and was ready for residency, but having no other choice than to go to Germany preferred to stay home and - as we found out after the war - work for the underground. It was a most pleasant relationship between them and us.

An anecdote how the Luxembourgiens and we understood each other: I was in the bakery store after the Allies had landed in Normandy and the Germans were retreating in France. A German Nazi woman was there, too, crying and sobbing, "I only hope that in the end we will be victorious." "Sure we will win," said the bakerwoman. "Don't you agree, Madame Ising?" winking at me. "Certainly we will win," said I.

We had repeatedly visits from old friends. Lotte Döring, a long-time friend of Ernest's whom he had met in a dancing class, came from Berlin for two days in May and two weeks at Christmas '42. She was quite enthusiastic about our long walks in the snow-covered woods, but scolded me for being too lenient with Thomas whom she put in a corner when he was naughty. She was probably right. Our friends, the Kibys, who had kept us hidden for six weeks in 1938, came for two days. And, finally, my mother came again in August/September, 1942. She was in Mondorf taking the waters for three weeks, but spent the weekends and a final fourth week with us.

From Tom's diary: "You and grandmother have become fast friends. She could play so well with you and was always calm, when Mother got nervous from your mischief. She loves you dearly in spite of your noisiness and fidgeting and always said, you are good-natured and quite educable; you'll come out all right, even if not everything is going smoothly now. You were very much after Grandmother, had to show her everything or to play with her. And, of course, she almost always had time for you. One Sunday, while Father was harvesting the last bucket of raspberries in Ulflingen, we rode to Michelau and walked up to the ruin of Burscheid Castle. You marched along very well and on top remembered that we had been there with Daddy and eaten an egg. Once you wetted your bed and said, "Don't tell Grandmother!" Once Grandmother said, "Turn off your flashlight, you hear?" You put the flashlight on your ear and said, "I don't hear anything." The first Monday we accompanied Grandmother to Mondorf and you had a field day on the swing in the park. The following two Mondays, when Grandmother returned to Mondorf, you said, "When Grandmother has played on the swing, she will come back to us."

There were refugees in Mersch who had come long before us and had been able to bring furniture, books and other belongings with them. Two of them were Mr. Davidson, a banker from Hildesheim, and his wife, both in their 70's. They had rented two large rooms in a stately mansion. To spend an afternoon with them reminded us of the comforts of what now seemed a luxurious home. With them and two other gentlemen, one a physician in his fifties, Dr. Grunberg, with a non-Jewish wife in Germany, the other a bachelor in his seventies, Mr. Marcus, formerly the owner of a department store and a stable with horses in Mecklenburg.

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With these four we formed a reading circle, met once a week at the *Davidsons'*, read aloud a drama or short story of the rich treasure of German literature and afterwards discussed it over Ersatz-coffee and some sort of cake. These happy activities were soon stopped. *Mr. Davidson* died, and a few weeks later his widow and *Mr. Marcus* were informed that they should keep themselves ready to be deported. *Marcus* helped *Mrs. Davidson* packing, (so did *Ernest*), pushed her cart with her luggage to the railroad station, went home and took an overdose of sleeping pills. He lay unconscious in his bed for three days before he died on July 28, 1942. Frail *Mrs. Davidson* died within two weeks after her arrival at the concentration camp in Theresienstadt. *Mr. Marcus* could play so nicely with *Thomas* and told him wonderful stories about his horses.

From August, 1942 till April, 1943 *Ernest* worked in Fünfbrunnen and only came home for the weekend. Every Thursday he gave an evening of poetry reading to these totally secluded people. I had been in Fünfbrunnen occasionally, but one Thursday in March, when I went out with *Tom* to attend *Ernest's* lecture, the news was announced at the dinner table that these last Jews in Luxembourg, old and sick as they were, would be deported, too. This was the last blow. Some women fainted. I decided to stay out there and help them pack and get ready. I stayed 2-1/2 weeks: 10 days until their departure and another week to clean up afterwards. I especially helped a lame and hunchbacked seamstress to sew for the others.

On the third or fourth day of my stay, the Nazi boss of Luxembourg in a huge olive-gray oilcloth coat came with three subordinates for inspection. This had never happened before. And the first room he entered was the one where I was working. No time for me to hide. Two others could, the one ran into the woods. The other hid for two hours in the toilet. "What are you doing here? You want to go to Theresienstadt, too? Go to your room and wait there for me!" *Ernest* was sent there, too, while *Thomas* ran around outside, chatted with the chauffeur and was most interested in the beautiful car! In the meantime, the Jewish manager explained to the Nazi boss how much he depended on *Ernest's* and my help since the others were too weak to do the necessary preparations themselves. So, nothing happened to us, but the Nazi promised that those "lazy Jews" who lived in mixed marriages and were not affected by the deportation rulings would be put to work. (He forgot that they had not been allowed to work for non-Jews.)

There were railroad tracks in the valley deep below the Monastery and six freight cars were stationed on an unused track to be prepared for the transportation. The men put 5 or 6 mattresses along one small side for the sick and two with mattresses as backs on the other side for those who could sit and found enough toilet chairs to put one in each car, for there were no toilet facilities at all. Suitcases, food and bedding and blankets had to be stored. When the doors were shut, there would be no light, and it was still very cold in April, but no heating in the freight cars. I remember an 84 year old gentleman who lay fully dressed on his bed, belly down, muttering, "If I only could die, if I only could die!" Another one debated with us if he should commit suicide. But we realized that he was not really determined, so we talked him out of it with the argument that he may have a chance to survive the war and the Nazis. A very nice old lady was the widow of an army doctor who had been a high-ranking officer during WW I. When the Nazi boss came, she set up several photos of her husband in uniform and went to bed with shock. The photos had the desired effect. The Nazis were surprised and questioned her at length. But in the end, it did not help. She had to join the others in the freight car, ca. 15 in each car, like cattle, for the four-day trip to Theresienstadt in Bohemia. Some died on the way, many died

When the ca 80 persons were installed in the five cattle cars, I left with Tom on a high trail. From there we saw on a lower road several police officers walking toward Fünfbrunnen to inspect the arrangements and to see that everybody was in the cars. I sat down, my heart filled with sorrow for the people I had befriended during the weeks I had helped them to pack, to sew, to prepare their departure, for the children who had walked with me for an hour to a neighboring village to buy milk for the old and the sick. I also felt gratitude that I was not one of those in the cattle cars, because, by accident, I had been born of non-Jewish parents. And I was thankful that Ernest was not among them, but instead, after having helped to make their trip as comfortable as possible, could return to wife and child and that we could face the future, uncertain as it was, together, side by side, encouraging and supporting each other. I was grateful, but to whom? To God? I would have felt very conceited to think that God had selected me to be spared the horrors of deportation or separation while He allowed those 80 down there to be carried to their almost certain death. Grateful to a blind Fate then that dealt out human destinies without regard of merit? Pure Chance, just good luck? I did not know the answers to these questions and I don't know them now. But good luck has certainly been with us though all those horrible years.

there. only few returned. The army doctor's widow had sewn some gold pieces in her bra which were found and she was sent from Theresienstadt which was considered the best camp to one of the death camps in the east. We learned of these things later, when some of them returned.

7 *in* *must* *jo* 46a These were horrible and upsetting experiences. But, again, we had to admit that, while we had come close to losing our balance on the tightrope, we had not fallen off. What followed was not pleasant, but much much better than a deportation. All 37 Jewish husbands of non-Jewish wives left in Luxembourg were ordered to dismantle the rails of the Maginot-line, the rails to be sent to Russia to support the advancing German army.

Fünfbrunnen had been vacated on April 6, 1943. On May 5, the new work began. For *Ernest* it meant get up at 4 a. m., leave by train at 5. Change trains in Luxembourg-Ville, arrive in Diedenhofen, Alsace, at 9, work 8 hours plus one hour lunchtime, return 4 hours, be home at 10 p. m. The work was hard, especially on the shoulders, that were not accustomed to carrying heavy rails. Already on the sixth day a rail fell on *Ernest's* left index finger and cut off the tip. It was extremely painful and he had to stay home for four weeks, which was the nice part of it. But after this, for a year and three months he was gone every weekday, and *Tom* saw his father only on Sundays. Even I scarcely saw *Ernest*. I did not get up with him at 4 a. m. and when he came home at 10 p. m. his warm meal was waiting for him, but I was next door. The watchmaker, *Harpes*, allowed us to listen in on the BBC news broadcast, and it was these news broadcasts which gave us hope and encouragement. The *Harpes* property was surrounded by a stone wall and the radio stood on a spot farthest away from the street and turned on very low to be sure that we could not be detected. When I returned home, *Ernest* was sound asleep, but I wrote the most important news on a slip of paper and put it between two slices of bread. Next morning when he had read it, *Ernest* burnt the paper in the stove and then told the news to his fellow workers. Thus we lived on hope that the end may soon come. But there was many a night when I left the *Harpes* family saying, "Well, today has again not been the day of the landing."

In spite of all hardships we were happy not to be separated. I had not much chance to talk to *Ernest* except on Sunday and his clothes were terribly dirty from work, but I was glad to wash them. He lay next to me at night and I knew every day he was all right and relatively safe.

In August, 1943, my mother came again to visit us. From *Tom's* Diary: "For three weeks we had *Grandmother* with us. That was wonderful, especially when we went to our garden and you had a team of two then. *Grandmother* is a cow and *Mother* is a horse! Allez hopp, *Fanny*. Or when we had to join hands and make a gate through which you could run again and again. Or when you blocked the way on the narrow trail across the meadow with legs far apart and let us through only after paying "toll." "Toll" was a kiss for which you pointed your sweet little mouth up from below. Otherwise you did not make too much use of *Grandmother's* presence. She would have loved to build with you with your blocks. But you lacked endurance and, the weather being so beautiful, preferred jumping around outside. But always dear *Grandmother* had some dainties for your sweet tooth. And she was always so tolerant and lenient and always had a good word when you were naughty and made *Mother* quite angry. Her first words when she saw you on the railroad station, were "My, has he grown!" And then she also said, "What a handsome boy!" And she thought, too, that you probably are taller and heavier than all the children your age whom she sees back home at the Counseling-for-Mothers-Clinic. Dear *Grandmother* often comforted me and thought

you'll turn out all right even if you are now often quite stubborn and rebellious. You have a good heart. And then we read together in the diary that *Grandmother* wrote about me. According to it, I was at your age also often unruly and yet turned into a very good child later. . . . Once *Grandmother* was making cherry dumplings and needed a piece of wood to check if they were done. You ran behind the house and came back with a piece of wood as thick as your little arm. "For *Grandmother* for the dumplings!"

That was the last time that my mother saw her grandchild, although she still lived eleven more years.

On October 8, 1943. I woke up at 7 a. m. from loud steps of nailed boots coming over the long pavement in front of our house. I felt a lump in my throat and thought, "Now it is our turn!" But they rang the bell upstairs. *Mrs. Schwachtgen* and son were commanded to get ready to be deported this afternoon. They left a German soldier behind (he was a good natured man) to make sure that they would not run away. After a little while he confessed he hated what he had to do there, that he had a wife and children in Germany and would like nothing better than to be with his family away from it all. *Mrs. Schwachtgen* had been afraid that something like this would happen and over several weeks had prepared a list of what she wanted to take along. Thus, the packing went smoothly and without nervousness. In the late afternoon they were loaded into a truck together with many other families from Mersch. They both came back after the war and told us that, when they were deported, the Nazis did not know about *Fernand's* work for the underground - only that he was very hostile to the Nazi occupation. But they found out later and put him on death row and shuffled him from one prison to the other while retreating from the oncoming Russians until he was liberated. He was grateful that this did not last much longer, for any day could have been his last. *Tom* missed his beloved "*Madame 'wachtgen'*" very much and he also liked her son, *Fernand*, who had once rescued him from a large group of big boys from the nearby school. He was playing on a sandpile when they told him to go home. "No, I won't go home!" One boy gave him a box on his ear, but in the same moment got *Fernand's* boot in his behind and they all ran away. After the liberation, a grateful Luxembourg gave *Dr. Schwachtgen* a good position at a hospital in the capital. *Mrs. Schwachtgen* later moved into an old age home just outside Mersch, where we visited her in 1953. But her mind was no longer clear, and to our great sorrow she did not recognize us.

Early in December new people moved in upstairs: *Madame Fixmer* with her three children, *Nico*, *Jacqueline* and *Marietta*, all a few years older than *Tom*, and nice playmates for him.

The year 1944 started badly. It was in January when we learned of *Prof. Eulenburg's* death after his arrest and mistreatment at the hands of the Berlin Gestapo, of *Dr. Schwachtgen's* separation from his mother and strict imprisonment and of the bombing and total destruction of our beautiful furniture that had given us so much delight during the first years of our marriage in Strausberg.

But then came the turning point: D-Day, June 6, the same date on which, 18 years earlier, I had met *Ernest* for the first time! The Allies had landed in Normandy! Stalingrad had been sort of a turning point early in 1943, when the German advance had been stopped in Russia and our friends at the Fünfburgen-Monastery had hopes for awhile that the end was near and they might survive. But Stalingrad was far away, deep in Russia, and change was slow in coming. Normandy was close - when will they liberate us in Luxembourg?

From August 26, 1944, on, I wrote a diary about the war events which I will let follow here. I was no longer afraid that it might fall in the hands of the Nazis.

Mersch, Luxembourg, August 26, 1944. Saturday

At 9:30 p. m. *Mrs. Fixmer* calls us to our neighbor, *Miss Zimmer*. On the BBC, a warning of the Allied Chief Command is broadcast first in French, then in German to the population of Alsace, Luxembourg and the west bank territories of the Rhine: Now that the Allies have advanced up to Reims, we have become part of the battle zone and must expect strong airplane attacks on the transport communications and, thereafter, on the receding German troupes. Our first quick, (but wrong) calculation: It took them three days from Paris, which was liberated on August 23, to Reims. It is just as far from Reims to us. Thus they can be here on August 29!

August 27, Sunday

Suitcases with valuable clothing (furs, winter coats) and bedding from the attic into the basement. Pack suitcases for flight with some especially good things, something of everything. Deliberate in which forest we should flee: to the caves of the Mamerlays or rather to Honnebur where a source would always supply us with water?

August 28, Monday

Ernest returns at 7:30 a. m. because there was no train from Luxembourg to Diedenhofen. Baker *Schintgen's* store is stormed for zwieback and bread. I get, happily, a kilogram zwieback at baker *Schaack's*. Also send the last eight packages to Poland, Theresienstadt and *Mother*. In the morning planes are coming, there is some shooting; we go into the basement for the first time. Many school-children come down, too. The railroad station of Colmar and a locomotive near Lintgen were shot and are up in flames. I buy lard, margarine, bread, all that is still due to us on ration tickets and anything that will not spoil.

August 29, Tuesday

~~*Ernest* stays home. Some German soldiers on trucks come through town. Red Cross wagons, heavily tarnished cars. They stay in town for repairs and park under the trees on the square in front of our house~~

August 30, Wednesday

Ernest again returns from Luxembourg-Ville at 7:30 a. m. He tells that the station at the capital is crowded with German civilians, mostly women and children, loaded with suitcases, trying to get out and home, many of them crying. German Nazis! Now it is their turn to cry. One could tell, *Ernest* said, that they had packed their things in haste, it was chaos!

August 31, Thursday

Ernest goes once more to Rombach with his colleagues to pick up their tools. At 10 o'clock they are told the construction site would be dissolved, they were all to dig trenches. But *Ernest* and the others have already been assigned to *Mr. Schuller* on the Maginot Line and they go home. In Hagendingen they have to wait 5 hours until a construction train takes them along, against orders.

In Diedenhofen their train is ready to leave when there is a full alarm and everybody runs into the fields. *Ernest* barely returns in time for the departure of the train. He is home half an hour before midnight. I was greatly worried.

September 1, Friday

No more trains are running! We are cut off from all the world. No newspaper, no mail, no telephone. Occasionally, also, no current and, therefore, no radio. The school is closed. All Germans and the Luxembourgian "Prussians" ("letzeburger Preissen"), those who sympathized with the Nazis, were admonished during the night to leave. Now cars stand in front of *Dolinsky's* who had taken over *Salomon's* store, at the butcher *Lucian Frisch*, a collecting truck in front of City Hall, loaded high with bags, underwear, bedding, linen, food, the people on top, very grave, some of them crying. The mayor also is leaving, the evil *Gersberg* from City Hall; *Fandel*, an awful Nazi - the whole "yellow danger" disappears. Now they have to pack and move and we look on! I have no pity for them. When they have left, we all have the feeling that the main danger for us has already been removed. We feared them more than the bombs. There are scarcely any planes. *Mrs. Reichardt* of the laundry, too, is gone where I have not been allowed to wash any more for over a year. And many others. All policemen are leaving. We live very strangely as in a vacuum.

It is said the Allies have Verdun and stand before Sedan. So they can be here on Sunday! We are very happy, the Nazis are gone; *Ernest's* shovelling is over for good!

September 2, Saturday

There is no milk available. All vehicles have been confiscated by the German military. So the milk cannot be brought to the dairy and from there to the consumers. We get milk from baker *Schintgen* who is also a big farmer. Later, also potatoes, since the grocer had none. I buy 3 lbs. butter, our whole monthly ration, and salt it.

By loudspeaker a new authority makes itself known, SS *Obersturmbann* leader *Waller*, local commander. His wife managed the Hotel Sept Châteaux after the deportation of the *Barthelemys* and has left, too. He orders that all stores must immediately be opened again, all people have to take up their work again.

Some people who did not leave got SN = Sow Nazi painted on their house walls or windows, at *Mr. Ries'* from the Savings-Bank; a German; at the coal dealer *Schöllen's* and others. In the following days swastikas are painted on many other people's houses.

In the evening, we saw an endless train of horse-drawn wagons, each with 2-3 horses in the rear coming in to town from the upper village. That seems to have continued until late at night. Some of them took quarters here.

September 3, Sunday

The square in front of our house is crowded with horses and wagons and soldiers in a half-circle under the double row of trees. They come from Belgium, from Arlon and are going home into the Reich. Infantry.

The radio announces entry into Belgium, conquest of Tournai. East of Sedan,

60 km of the border of Luxembourg have been reached. So we figure that they will be in Arlon tonight and here on Monday evening at the latest.

In the afternoon, we went most peacefully into the woods to pick blackberries and mushrooms. A few planes came and circled long and very low over Mersch. There was some shooting, too, probably flak from Rollingen. It was uncomfortable. Back home they were in the basement, but we felt rather secure in the woods. We did not go home until the planes had left.

The horse-drawn vehicles are gone. At night trucks arrive with terrible noise and are directed under the trees with loud commands. Everywhere soldiers are billeted. At the *Raths*, who also have left, they are supposed to have said, "What do they want in Germany? We don't need traitors there!" In Rollingen and Lintgen, they pillaged the houses of those who had left. In Hotel Sept Châteaux, it is said, German soldiers stabbed through a *Hitler* picture, elsewhere they hanged a *Hitler* bust.

Gersberg has returned and a few other Nazis. It is said the local commander forced *Gersberg* to it. "You coward, what demoralizing impression does it make, if the German authority simply scampers off!"

September 4, Monday

The radio announces the Allied forces have reached Brussels, south of us Diedenhofen, Metz and Nancy. On Sunday they stood already in Longwy, close to the border of Luxembourg - but they do not come. We are getting impatient. *Annette Harpes* is sewing an American flag with 49 stars! *Jacqueline* makes, on my suggestion, a garland of multi-colored paper with red-white-blue ribbons. *Mrs. F.* sews the red stripe again together with the white-blue ones. She had separated the red one and put a white circle with a swastika on it!! But they are not coming! The trucks have disappeared from the square. They left behind only a tank with caterpillars which is broken. The children had made fast friends with one German soldier, who allowed them to climb on his car, and carried on a lively trade with them. *Thomas* exchanged tomatoes against tobacco. They also got "chocolate." We give them mail for Germany. They say they go on in the direction of Trier, east of us.

September 5, Tuesday

Shortly after a quarter of nine, *Mrs. F.* comes running down the stairs, "*Madame Ising*, Allies have entered Letzeburg!" I rush to the radio and just hear the anthem "De Feierwon" at the end of the Luxembourgian broadcast. In the following German broadcast they say, "The Luxembourgian president has just announced the entry of Allied troupes in Luxembourg." Everybody is totally off his head. We don't think otherwise than that they have marched into the city and would finally come here during the day. I clean living- and bedroom, kitchen and hall shining like gold, *Ernest* cleans the windows. *Mrs. F.* interrupts her washing and also cleans everything, then hurries to get her wash finished, too. Her friend scolds her that she still works at all instead of taking to the street in her Sunday best where people have already gathered along the roads from Arlon and from Luxembourg-Ville. But they do not come! We are getting very impatient. Gradually we understand that they have not entered the capital, but apparently only entered Luxembourgian territory. Later we learn that they stand near Burmingen - stand and don't stir!

September 6, Wednesday

At a quarter to nine, there is no current, nobody can hear the Luxembourgian broadcast. Nobody knows what is going on. They have traversed all of Belgium in two days and entered Holland; south of us they have even crossed the German border from Lorraine. We cannot really be happy about all this and are only jealous. Why don't they come to us? Have they forgotten us? Meanwhile, it is most peaceful here. One can get all the food one needs. Now and then, dull rumblings and explosions can be heard.

Two Austrians, who call the Germans bad names, have been left behind on Michael Square to watch the tank. They have orders to blow it up if necessary. What a danger for our houses! They are being persuaded to drive it onto the open field and, in exchange, they are promised civilian clothes so they can sneak away.

September 7, Thursday

The German radio announces stiffening of the German resistance from Namur to Sedan, especially southwest of Sedan. Now we know the reason for our peace here: stopping on the Maas River! So it can still take a long time! After we had not seen soldiers or vehicles for days, *Ernest* sees many trucks with soldiers on the road from Reckingen moving in the direction toward Arlon, west of us.

Gersberg, who is back again, casts a mean look at *Ernest*. We learn that already some days ago Nazis "confiscated" shoes in the shoe stores, meat at the butcher's, cigarettes at the store of merchant *Schmit*. Since the lootings, empty houses of the emigrants have shown a note "German Property." *Mayor Weis*, before leaving, had three monthly salaries of DM 1000 each paid to him.

September 8, Friday

The radio announces that Sedan is now totally vacated by the Germans - only now! And days ago we thought they stood already on the Belgian frontier! The "mouth radio" (grapevine) says they are in Bastogne and Neufchatel, short before the border with Luxembourg. So it goes forward again. We no longer try to figure out when they will be here. Airplanes.

We go into the woods in the afternoon to pick blackberries, and observe lively car traffic on the Angelsberg road from and toward Echternach and Germany. For several days already we have no light in the evening, no radio either.

September 9, Saturday

Tom's birthday. He is five years old! Morning news: breakthrough on the front between Lüttich and Sedan 110 km wide and 35 km deep. During the day it is getting very war-like. The whole square is full of trucks and alive with soldiers. Lively airplane activity. There is some shooting (flak) and we run into the basement with a pan full of cottage cheese and egg rolls which *Tom* was anxious to get for his birthday. But we come up again quickly. The detonations of blown-up bridges are coming closer and closer. Around 5 p. m. the bridge across the Alzette between Mersch and Behringen is being exploded. At 6 p. m., it is said, the big road bridge and parallel to it the railroad bridge of Mersch are to be blown up. We are afraid of the loud report and the air pressure and now, at 9:30 p. m. with candle light, are still waiting for it. But only just now have the trucks left the square, they still need the bridge to get

to the eastern side. We argue that if they blow up the bridges, they can't have German troops march through here any longer. Maybe not much will happen here!

This morning each peasant of this district had to deliver one head of cattle. Fifty pieces of cattle were taken away. They got the order yesterday night at 10:30. Trains were running again. Gersberg and his gang are definitely gone.

In spite of it all, we celebrated Tom's birthday wonderfully with six other children. But we grown-ups were not quite with it.

September 10, Sunday

Much noise at night from leaving and passing motor vehicles! A little broken car was left in front of our house. Of it Mr. Weber, father of Mrs. Fixmer, dismantles all parts that can still be used. On the rest of the wreckage the children play beautifully.

The bridges are still standing, but we are prepared that the explosions can happen any moment. Soldiers can still be seen around the bridges, but none in town. It is so peaceful that Ernest says, "It does not look to me as if they will come today either." No current, no news. The thick morning fog had settled, and the sun came out brilliantly. Suddenly Mrs. Fixmer yells from upstairs, "They are coming now, they are already in Reckingen and are coming down from the Enelt Chapel, tank upon tank." A few isolated planes circle slowly over Mersch. A wild joy grips us all! They are here! Nothing had announced their coming, no squadron of planes, no thundering gun fire. They are suddenly here! And the bridges not blown up! That was shortly before 10:30 a. m. The children go to church, but quickly return. Only at 11 o'clock will there be a silent mass. They all get little red-white-blue flags from Joffer Zimmer who owns the grocery store next door, and on all houses, also on ours, large Luxembourgian flags are displayed, on some houses also American and English flags. There is everywhere an unbelievable jubilation. Ernest goes to the "Lehmkaul" from where one has a good view of the road to Reckingen. At the first houses of town he sees a USA tank approaching very slowly, and now he, the sceptic, too, believes that they are really here. He returns to tell me. Mrs. Fixmer says, "Oh, that darn cooking, right now!" I say, "I don't feel like cooking now, I would like to go towards them." Ernest says, "So what! If you don't see the very first tank!" "No, I would like to see the first one!" Even so, I quickly prepare my carrots, Ernest helps. It takes a little longer than I like. In the meantime it was 11 a. m. Then suddenly we hear someone yelling from the meadow "Attention!" Mrs. Fixmer cries from upstairs, "It looks as if the Germans are going to blow up the bridge!" We step back from the window - and immediately a terrific explosion sounds, an enormous air pressure rushes through our bodies and a shattering clanking of broken window panes follows. We are benumbed. Thomas comes running in from the street, his heart beating heavily. A huge cloud of smoke and dust hangs over the stone bridge. When it settles, we see our beautiful bridge across the meadows hanging, broken in the middle. The railroad bridge is still intact. All jubilant joy is gone. We are paralyzed with fright and pale from shock.

And now the shooting starts. We grab coats, bag with valuables and zwieback and go into the basement. From 11 to 12 we sit there, Thomas tightly snuggled to me and somewhat frightened. Joffer Zimmer also comes quickly down to us (the entrance to the basement is from the street). Her mother is at church. Machine guns and heavy artillery crack, roar and hiss - it is the battle for the railroad bridge. It is not very comfortable, but we feel secure in the basement. Ernest

even goes up twice which always worries me very much. But we realize clearly that they only shoot in the direction of the bridge and the road to Angelsberg. At noon the shooting stops and we go upstairs. The railroad bridge stands intact; some American soldiers in their brownish uniforms - the first we see - walk across the bridge and soon start hammering with their axes. One duplex is burning. Shooting begins anew, but farther up the road, however, still from this side of the Alzette River. *Ernest* is against going into the basement again. Thus I finish cooking my Sunday dinner under the accompaniment of artillery barrages, and at 12:30, when all other people probably still sit in their basements, we dine under the thunder of gunfire. We clink our glasses filled with red wine to our liberation and are happy and thankful from the depths of our hearts that we could move from one side to the other comparatively easily, if not quite without gunfire.

Only then do we look at the damage. All large windows in the stairwell are broken; in our apartment one in each room. But the worst is that the door between store and bedroom was pushed open by the air pressure and many jars with preserves on a shelf in this door were broken! Tomato paste, mixed vegetables, cherries, Brussel sprouts, buttermilk and lemon juice float around on the floor mixed with glass. It is a horrible mess! But we leave everything as it is and first go to town. For now the shooting has totally stopped.

Fifteen minutes after the freeing of the bridge, the first tank rolled over it and now they come one after the other. At the big street crossing in the middle of town, a gun is set up at each corner. We talk to one soldier who watches the street toward our house. He is 30 years old, from Frankfort, Kentucky, a nice guy, in his private life a truck driver for a laundry and very willing to show us all the gadgets of his motor gun, in which four men are quartered with food and all necessary supplies for the duration of the war. We are pleased that we understand his English and are understood. Then we go to the destroyed bridge. Heavy chunks were hurtled up as far as *Morlot's* and into the apartment of *Madame Hayne*. All vehicles now go to the railroad station and over the platform and the railroad bridge and east up the Angelsberg Road. We go home. On the way joyful greetings everywhere. Some women proudly show off the young men whom they have kept hidden for years from the draft into the German army at great danger to themselves and their families. Everybody wears something red - white - blue: ribbons, collars, blouses, shirts, etc. From 3 to 6 we are busy with cleaning up the glass and the mess in the storage room. During all this time tanks and guns roll over the railroad bridge without interruption.

At 6 o'clock the *Lipman-Wulfs* come to us, she with swollen red eyes from crying for joy. I have always said, when all is over I will cry for three days. But I have not yet quite caught my breath. *Mr. Lipmann-Wulf* starts speaking about his time in a concentration camp at the end of 1938 and how he had witnessed mistreatment of Jews there. After a short time, when we already talk of something else, he shouts "That must never be forgotten, these infamous acts of the Nazi pack!" and sobbing he collapses on a chair. When he has calmed down a bit, we walk together across the meadow to the other side of the Alzette to the burnt-out house and across the railroad bridge back into town. On the bridge the Americans are working; they put boards between the rails. At the station we stop for a little while and wave our hands to the vehicles and their teams incessantly rolling by. They throw candies for *Thomas*, but we realize that they look serious - for them the war is not over yet as it is for us.

Thomas' mind is totally occupied with the explosion and he constantly utters if-

propositions. "If I were a lion, I could have prevented the Germans from blowing up the bridge. If I had been there and had put sand on the fire, the bridge would not have been destroyed," etc. At 8:30 p. m. he is in bed, dog tired, but a very good child. It was a great day for him, as it was for us. *Ernest* covers the broken top window in the kitchen with cardboard.

Then, at 9 p. m. when we were just ready to finally eat our supper with candle light, a second explosion occurs just as terrible as the one in the morning. Or perhaps worse, because it happened unexpectedly for all and in the dark. And again the clanking of glass panes. The candles were extinguished. But they had for a second lit *Ernest's* face distorted from fright. The cardboard from the top window had flown into the kitchen. My first thought, when I could think again, was "the child!" He had awakened and lay, softly whimpering, in his bed. He was very disturbed and I stayed by his bedside while *Ernest* swept the glass together. A few more windows were broken and the door in the hall was pressed out in the wrong direction. But there was no new damage in the storage room.

At *Tom's* bed I tried to figure out what had happened. "The railroad bridge! A German time bomb! And all the people on it working or riding over it! And we ourselves passing over it just an hour and a half ago! If it had happened just then!! Dear Lord, I thank you!"

Later, the *Fixmers* come home. *Mr. Weber*, father of *Mrs. F.*, who always knows everything, contends it was not the railroad bridge, but the explosives which the Americans had removed from the railroad bridge were detonated on *Schintgen's* meadow. They further bring the rumor that SS, the Nazi Storm Troopers, are still in town. The LPL recommends pulling in all flags. I am worried about *Ernest* and together we develop a flight plan if they should intrude into our apartment during the night. *Ernest* is very calm, thinks that is exaggerated. But then at 10 p. m. the bell rings; at once I think "Here they are, the SS." But it was *Mrs. Fixmer's* brother, a Nazi, from Luxembourg-Ville, who only wanted to hide in her apartment.

Thus ended this memorable day. It first brought us extreme joy that the Americans were coming, then fear and fright by the bridge blow-up and the two-hour-long shooting. Thereafter jubilant happiness broke through again that we had survived all dangers safely, that we were free now and could look into the future with hope and confidence only to be gripped with fright once more by the second explosion and the SS rumor.

September 11, Monday

The railroad bridge does stand!! All day long artillery is rolling over it. At 9 a. m. the third explosion, not as terrible as the two first ones, but unpleasant since we were just sitting by the window. That was a part of the explosives still left over, we were told later. No damage, but *Thomas* very bewildered. And at 4 p. m. there is a fourth explosion, the last one, very weak. In the afternoon we have electricity again; we had not expected it so quickly. After two days we hear the news again! Of Luxembourg only the capital and various parts are liberated. In the evening they burn the Nazi uniform of the dentist, *Dr. X. Weinachter* on the square in front of our house. American soldiers, Luxembourgian LPL people and young girls form a big circle around the fire and treat themselves to the wine from *Weinachter's* basement.

September 12, Tuesday

I barter with an American Red Cross soldier: half a bottle of cognac against two cans of meat and vegetable stew, one box of cigarettes and two packages of chocolate. When I later hold a piece of chocolate in my hand, I think that is the symbol and promise of a better future, that means an appropriate occupation, freedom for Tom's development, good living quarters, travels, concerts, theater, reunion with parents, in-laws, friends.

The first Americans have stepped on German soil, northwest of Trier. That must be those who came through here! - The LPL people bring in Nazis. Dr. *Weinachter* has been found and many, many others. In Hollenfels they set a house on fire in which a Nazi was hiding who was to blame for the deportation of many families. In the afternoon the prisoners are pulled through town on open trucks, painted with large swastikas. But the onlookers were disgusted. They march through the streets and sing the "Feierwon," the Luxembourgian anthem. The last line "We want to stay what we are," they have changed into "We do not want to become Prussians (Germans)!" Radio: "All of Luxembourg liberated." On the other side of the meadow, in Rollingen, on the road from Luxembourg, heavy artillery rumbles up to the Angelsberg highway for hours, that is from south to east.

September 13, Wednesday

We can get meat without tickets! People say *Prince Felix*, the husband of the *Grand Duchess*, and *Prince Jean*, her son, drove through Mersch coming from Colmar; they have been in the country since Sunday.

September 14 - 30

After about ten days, all windows were repaired and we now live rather normally again. The bakers only make white bread and that can be had without tickets. Meat also is available occasionally in small amounts without tickets. Yesterday we heard two Americans were shot to death by two Germans dressed up as militia men. Thus, things are still unsettled in the country. We don't stir, scarcely go out of town. The road to Angelsberg, for instance, is closed to everybody except the military.

~~Last Sunday was Kermess without carousels. On Kermess-Tuesday a great procession marches through the whole village, Thomas with them. At the end parade on our square: children, choral society, fire fighters, the clergy, scouts, orchestra, a group of Americans, speech by Teacher *Schroeder* in English and by *Mr. Henckels*, who held a red poster in his hand with the names of ten men who were executed in September, 1942.~~

Still no trains, no mail. The newspaper is again published regularly, in three languages: Letzburgian, German, French. Notices at city hall are often in Letzeburgian, French, English, no German.

On Dauphin's house on the Angelsberg road many bullet holes, inside a ceiling is down. *Ernest* gives lessons in English to girls who want to speak to the American soldiers. First sentence they learn: "I love you."

October 1 - 22

Between October 5 and 8, the German money was stamped in the whole country.

We learn that Tom's godmother, *Mrs. Schmit*, also went to Germany before September 10. She was the wife of the gentleman who handled *Mr. Heinemann's* money for the emigrants!

Joffer Balter from Hollenfels told us that it was she who set fire to a Nazi peasant's house (*Weiher*) when he refused to come out. The men didn't dare to go in, not even to go close because they were afraid he would shoot. She brought a communist newspaper along which, for the time being, is published weekly. She tells us that once during the last years she collected 3000 kg food for hidden Luxembourgian boys.

On October 5, our American friends (*Polese, Rodgeweller*) leave. Civil Affairs, Airport in Angelsberg are moved.

Around October 6, we hear much shooting from the distance.

On October 7, new Americans are billeted in the Château. We make friends with five young men, mostly students, especially nice boys, 19 - 21 years old of very good families. We invite five young girls with them and now have a steady circle with social gatherings at night at the homes of the different families (*Hoffman, Harpes, Faber*).

All foreigners have to register at City Hall. *Mr. Bartels* there re-instates us as German citizens. "What the Nazis did to you there, expatriating you, that is no longer of any consequence."

On October 14 we have, for the first time, movies with an American program.

October 21. It is getting very warlike in Mersch again. The square in front of our house is full of trucks; four large tents are set up in which, all through the night, tanks and guns are being repaired. There are a few small tents across from our house, in which the soldiers sleep. The whole town, the squares in front and next to the church, also the square in front of the school are full of cars. There are soldiers everywhere. They sleep in the school, in Hotel Rauchs.

October 23 - December 17

On October 23, at noon, *Dr. Lenhard* (not Jewish) arrives. He was occupied in Berlin until September 1 and just left at the right moment. He got to Trier by train, then on foot to Echternach where his wife (Jewish) lives with their son, *Robbi*. On October 6, Echternach was evacuated and they went to Savelborn. There they cannot stay any longer with the farmer, and *Dr. Lenhard* is here to look for quarters. At 3:30 p. m. he is arrested on the street in my presence by a militiaman and led away! I myself have an unpleasant argument with militiaman *Wolters* who calls *Dr. L.* a rogue (*Spitzbube*) and me a "Preussin" and - his hand lifted to beat me - orders me to go straight home. I find out that the Americans are interested in *Dr. L.* and believe that he has plans of the Siegfried Line. He is imprisoned for three days, first class in City Hall, is repeatedly interviewed and tells them all he knows, also gives them a written report. On the 24th, I go to the captain of the CIA and tell him what I know about *Dr. L.* On October 26, he is released at noon. Great joy! In the afternoon, *Mrs. L.* arrives from Savelborn driven by two Jewish Americans, former Germans, in a jeep, only to find out what has happened to her husband in the meantime.

On the 28th, *Dr. L.* goes by jeep to Savelborn together with the agent who

interviewed him to pick up his family and his belongings. We empty our store-room and fix it up as a bed and living-room for the Lenhards. They had thought it would only be for about three weeks, but they are still here. Keeping house for six works out all right.

All this time Mersch is crowded with American soldiers. The picture on the square in front of our house changes; old tents are taken down, new ones set up.

For the soldiers movies are daily played at *Lacaf's*. Once someone took me along; they are good for me, in English without French subtitles. Also, the American movies for civilians are better now. Real entertainment. Every Sunday, there is a dance for the Americans and young girls.

In October, I washed at the laundry again for the first time. On November 8, *Eisenhower* was in Mersch. Unfortunately, we did not see him. He was in Hotel Rauchs and in the school, just a few houses away from us - the children still have no school.

Many articles are in rather short supply. We got 150 gr of butter in four weeks. No stockings, no shoes are available. But there is plenty of meat and bread. Still no trains, no mail - no news from Mother, the parents in Basel, the friends.

Ernest is busy from morning to evening with English lessons. He has over 30 students and a good income.

Our five Americans eventually did not care for us old people any more after we had made them acquainted with young girls. Instead two Jews dropped in one day, later also a third one. Especially, *Epstein* is very nice, an economist, 27 years old. *Greenbaum*, a lawyer, is a bit awkward. *Brown* became a soldier right after school and was stationed for four years on the Panama Canal.

At the end of November, at 6:30 a. m. a V-1 rocket crashes in the woods near Beringen, heavy explosion. Since the beginning of December we have heard heavy shooting of flak almost every evening.

December 17, 1944

~~All day long, tanks and trucks with the big red recognition sign on top roll through Mersch, just as on September 10. They come from Reckingen, west of us, onto the hill of Mersch and continue south in the direction of Luxembourg City across the wooden bridge which was finished ca. two weeks ago and carries the sign "Road to Berlin." In the evening the radio announces: Heavy German counter attacks southeast of Malmedy and breakthrough onto Luxembourgian territory near Vianden and Echternach in the south! We see bright search lights in the Northern sky and north and east of us the flashes of gunfire. But we do not hear anything. We are sorry for the people of Echternach.~~

December 18, 19, 1944

We have behind us two very alarming days and a frightful night. On Monday, Dec. 18, all was rather quiet here, only some of *Ernest's* students cancelled their lessons. On Tuesday the 19th, *Ernest* expected his students from 9 o'clock on, but none came. Instead, *Mr. Lipmann Wulf* appeared at 9:30 a. m. and told us that in his neighborhood everybody was packing. Most stores were closed

and the owners were busy packing their wagons or cars. We were shocked and frightened. We had not for one moment thought of doing that. It was said that the "Prussians" were at Medernach and close before Diekirch, both 15 km from us north and east. We started packing three suitcases with clothes and two backpacks with food. Clothing, linen and underwear which we could not take along, we took in the basement - how often had we done this already!!

At noon, *Ernest* heard bad news on the English radio: Deep intrusion of the Germans in Southern Belgium, great fighting valor of the German troops. We were very upset. But two Americans said: "No reason to worry!!" So we calmed down a bit. In the afternoon the news was spread that the situation had improved, the breakthroughs had been stopped, at least in our direction. But we continued packing. In the evening London announced: "Bad in Southern Belgium and Northern Luxembourg. Farther south the advance had been stopped." In the afternoon I went to Hotel Rauchs to talk to *Epstein* or *Greenbaum* hoping to learn something from them since they were with the staff. They were not there, but later came to us. However, they did not know more than we, only: it looks better.

In the evening heavy gunfire broke out that made us totally nervous in spite of all reassuring rumors. *Mrs. Fixmer*, who had been calm and confident all during the day, walked restlessly around in her room above me until 1 a. m. Intentionally I did not take a sleeping pill in order to be wide awake immediately if something should happen. From one to three I slept. Then I awoke in a sudden fright from loud noises in the street. In front of our house, people were running back and forth, to and from the catholic dean who lived a few houses down the street. "Now Mersch is being evacuated," I thought. I looked out of the window and saw up on Main Street wagons and people passing in a long train. But they were only evacuated persons from Diekirch and surroundings, not from Mersch. There was no thought of sleeping any more. When I had still been sleeping, *Mrs. F.* had called *Ernest* upstairs and together they looked out of the window and deliberated if we should also get ready to leave. But *Ernest* was still against it.

For some time there was an unbelievable roar of tanks chasing through our street. But the worst were the gunshots. Each one hit us between heart and stomach and made us wince. "Are they coming closer?" "There, quite close!" Woom - woom. I got diarrhea. At 5:30 a. m. I got up to put all those things together I still had thought of, also a sewing-kit. Then I lay down again and was happy when, at 7:30 a. m. it was time to get dressed. *Ernest*, too, did not sleep - nobody did. We were all quite knocked down after this night from December 18 to 19.

December 20, 1944

I could not eat a bite nor drink anything and constantly felt like vomiting. We learn that in Diekirch where the inhabitants, as far as they were still there, had been asked to leave at 12:30 a. m. At that time there were no Germans in Diekirch yet. Thus they cannot be here so quickly. At 11:30 a. m. the *Lipmann Wulfs* walk away pulling a sturdy hand-wagon packed high. *Gerda's* eyes are swollen with tears. They say in their street there is nobody left. The *L-W's* want to go to Mamer first, then see what happens. Nevertheless, we want to wait a little longer. We wished we had such a strong hand-wagon! We have to make do with a baby carriage and two bikes.

At 4 p. m. *Mrs. Fixmer* tells us, *Joffer Muller* brought the news from the General Staff in Hotel Sept Châteaux, where she works, that the danger is over; we need

not leave! Also *Tom* comes running in: militiamen had told the children in the street to tell their parents not to leave. Tons of weight are lifted from us! Suddenly I can eat again. Word of mouth: The Americans have occupied Echternach in the east which later proves to be wrong, and have dug positions for themselves between Diekirch and Ettelbrück in the north. On the radio in the evening: Breakthrough of the Germans in the direction of Wiltz and Bastogne - that is far north from us! The constant stream of evacuated people has stopped.

This night from Wednesday the 20th to Thursday the 21st I sleep in the bedroom with *Ernest* - by all means not alone again! We both sleep very well, I especially, in spite of thundering gunfire. (We only had one bed in the bedroom besides *Tom's* little one. I, being the smaller one, slept on the sofa in the livingroom.)
December 21, 1944

The day starts again quite normal, only no students are coming. The school a few houses away from us is occupied by the Red Cross. German prisoners are taken through town on trucks. *Ernest* sees long columns of American infantry marching from Reckingen, west of us. An enormous amount of reinforcements pass through Mersch from the west and on the other side of the meadow through Rollingen from the south (Luxembourg-Ville) going north. It's very reassuring. Cars chase hither and thither, wires are pulled. We learn that all around us guns are brought in position, three near the former monument, one behind the monastery - that explains the close roaring of gunfire. But we hear discharges, not bullet hits!! One bit of news is disquieting again (is it correct?) that the militia got orders to be ready eventually to evacuate women and children to Luxembourg-Ville during the night. News from London at 8 p. m. - "The German advances in Southern Belgium are slowing down, the flanks are secured. In Luxembourg, where the Germans advanced 8 km, the front seems to have been stabilized." That is very carefully expressed, but not really disquieting. Yet *Ernest* is very nervous again, I a bit. I hope we will sleep undisturbed and well, nevertheless.

December 22, 1944

At 9:30 a. m. *Greenbaum* comes for a chat - most unusual! But he assures us that everything is well. They are not leaving; however, if they should, they would move closer to the front. In the afternoon I hear that they left, after all, the 9th army and their headquarters. Instead, the 10th army comes from Alsace. We are advised not to be on the street after dark and also during the day as little as possible. The streets are flanked with cars, the sidewalks are full of them. A truck with German prisoners moves past us. Everybody is very optimistic. The radio announces: "Clerf, Wiltz and Konsdorf, all north of us, are in German hands." But this news is already 24 - 48 hours old.

December 23, 1944, Saturday

Snow fell yesterday, the streets were very slushy. All is frozen hard today and we have splendid sunny Christmas weather. Consequently many airplanes. In the morning, *Mrs. Fixmer* brings some Americans along who are looking for quarters. The *Lenhards* went to Luxembourg on December 16 and are not allowed to return now. So we let the Americans have their room. In the evening a V-1 explodes nearby, strong concussion.

December 24, 1944

Splendid winter weather. Numerous planes draw white traces onto the blue sky

like ski tracks on fresh snow. From our kitchen window we can see many little Flak clouds in the North and East. Excited, *Jacqueline* and *Thomas* come running home from the meadow: "We saw how a plane dropped two bombs!" We, at home, only heard the explosion. Then heavy machinegun fire. A German plane shoots on an American vehicle in front of the gendarmery. Frightened, we run into the basement. There is a curfew between 5 p. m. and 7 a. m.

We are already accustomed to the steady roaring of guns day and night, but not yet to the explosions of bombs which we constantly hear, apparently coming from the front. Everybody is very nervous. Windows and doors rattle all the time, but we do not fear for us personally. *Santa Claus* comes with Christmas tree, gingerbread and gifts. Peace on Earth! In the evening we are at *Joffer Zimmer's* for a glass of wine together with the *Fixmers* and our three Americans. London announces: Allied progress north of Mersch and 15 km north of Luxembourg - we wonder where that may be. We are here 17 km north of Luxembourg-Ville. If our parents and friends hear this they will be much alarmed on account of us! After all, we are quite all right! The most wonderful Christmas gift that we received is that we did not have to leave. And so we are very happy in spite of everything.

December 25, 1944

Again beautiful sunny winter weather: Our two Americans eat tongue with us which we had planned to eat with the *Lennards*, *Epstein* and *Greenbaum*. Little thunder of guns, less planes. In the evening GI dinner with Prussian noodle soup, at *Mrs. Fixmer's*.

December 26, 1944

Frost and sunny winter weather. Not much thunder of guns, only few planes. Radio: The southern front is stable, German progress in the direction of the Maas River.

Mersch is crowded with vehicles and soldiers. At Rollingen, on the road from Luxembourg-Ville across the meadow there is an uninterrupted traffic going north, car after car, trucks with soldiers, reinforcements, Red Cross, yesterday already and all day long today. Common supper at the *Fixmers* with our three Americans. Friendly cozy chatting until 11:30 p. m.

December 27, 1944

Our three Americans leave in the morning. They say they'll have a week of rest. They drive trucks with gasoline and explosive materials. The whole day is very quiet. In the evening, ca. 30 tanks move thundering down our little Mozart Street and park on *Schintgen's* meadow behind our house. We get seven men quartered in our apartment, some of them sleep on the floor. They are all cooks, which proves to be very advantageous. We get a lot of cheese - after four months! - genuine coffee from coffee beans which we had not had for years, white bread with corned beef, a whole dinner. They were already at St. Lo, Avranches, Brest, Lorient, Orleans, Metz, Saargemünd, Saarbrücken.

December 28, 1944

Edward Barnard, steel recorder from Pittsburgh, especially nice, had made us ac-

quainted with the physician, *Capt. Spielman* from New York. He came in the afternoon for tea. In the evening we were again all together upstairs. Our worries that the tanks behind our house might be a good target for German bombers, totally unprotected as they were on the white snow, they dispelled with the remark that it was only "bed-check-*Charlie*" who always came for reconnaissance purposes and that bombers could not dare coming up to here. They said they were more worried about their tanks than we about our house, and they should not leave them sitting there if there would be any danger.

The radio news was supposed to be favorable.

December 29, 1944

Our tank drivers leave at noon - very reluctantly for they had enjoyed being with us. We call two men upstairs for a cup of coffee who sat in their tank and had to wait long in front of our house for the final departure. One is a farmer from Georgia, the other a dark Sicilian whose parents emigrated from Messina and who has a pool saloon in New York. It is announced the Americans crossed the Sauer at Esch. We now feel quite secure.

New Year's Eve at the *Fixmers*! with one American whom we did not like.

January, 1945

When the tank drivers left, medics moved into the school a few houses away from us. On New Year's Day we had an opportunity to visit their kitchen and get acquainted with the physicians. One of them was *Dr. Wagschal* who emigrated from Mainz to Denver in 1934. For three weeks he came to us almost every evening, played chess with *Ernest*, raved about America. Later, when he had to work in the evening, he came daily from 2-4 p. m. Through our connection with the kitchen we got marvellous food every day. They were not allowed to serve left-overs the next day. So they gave them away. *Thomas* always went over to get some for us.

We also met the *Chaplain Malboeuf*. At first he stayed with the *Joffers Harpes*, but later moved to *Mrs. Fixmer's*. He pretended to be crazy about little *Jacqueline*, but we thought he had other intentions when he moved in upstairs. *Frank Syner*, a musician from Springfield, Mass., told us much about the successes of the *Busch-Quartett* and *Trio* in the United States.

For days heavy gun fire, very close, making windows and doors rattle. But we remain calm. One Sunday, *Dr. Wagschal* plays *Bethooven* and *Chopin* at the school, very good.

On January 27, six men are quartered with us, combat-engineers from S. Carolina, Alabama and Mass. Staff sergeant *Hmurciak* and *Long John Vaughn* are carpenters, i. e. they build houses. They stayed with us until February 7. Then the three *Lenhards* returned and the boys moved somewhere else. *Mrs. L* behaved abominably. She wanted them to clear the room immediately for herself, although the boys had returned dogtired from the front where they had staked their lives - for *Mrs. L*, too! I tried to interfere, but they were very complying and did not want to inconvenience her, especially since they quickly found some other quarters.

While the Americans were still with us, their *Lieutenant Lawson* from Springfield, Ill. came one evening for a discussion with his men. We liked him very

much and invited him to come back, which he often did. He was 24 years old, studied interior decorating, applied art, raved about the French cathedrals and castles (Fontainebleau, Blois), wanted to see the Dom in Cologne, later study in France. He had bought picture books and brought them along; we showed him our photos. He brought interesting New Year's cards, one from a young sculptress, *Mitzi Solomon*. He was "only too happy" about our repeated invitations. He had a very friendly, companionable relationship with his soldiers. On Sunday, February 4, we all sat together, at the end alone with *Lawson* and *H. Murciak*. On Monday, the 5th, he came back without invitation to show us a prospectus with pictures of sculptures by *Mitzi Solomon*. Tuesday, the 6th, they all went to the Our River and did not return until next day. Until now they only had strewn sand or had rested; now they got hard work. They had to ferry infantry in boats across the Our under heavy barrages of gunfire. Each of them had to cross only once. They said it was pure suicide! Very rapid current, terrible machinegun fire from the German side. On account of the terrain, they could not be taken in trucks up to the river, but had to march ca. 10 miles through awful sludge.

The infantry slid down the slopes by the shore and arrived below totally covered with mud. The transfer began at 6 p. m. and continued all through the night. *H. Murciak* had stepped into the ice cold water up to his chest to get his boat on land on the other side - ("someone had to do it.") Among the German prisoners there were many 14-15 years old and many older men. One refused to step into the boat - they just threw him into the water. A hidden German machinegun did them a lot of damage; the infantry finally tracked it down. Then the 14 year old boy who had worked it yelled, "Comrade, comrade!!!" But they did not want to take him prisoner because he had hit so many of their own, and killed him. After this, our boys were wet and clammy and warmed themselves by a fire in a ruined house. They knew that the Germans would see the smoke and would shoot - but they did not care.

The worst was: *Lawson* had been killed! On the German side, they had heard a wounded man moaning. The infantry had looked for him, but could not find him. So *Lawson* volunteered with three soldiers, found him, stepped on a mine and was killed together with the wounded man. All his men were deeply mourning, we too. A few days later they wanted to fetch his body, but nobody dared to go and get it. They sent a German prisoner who was also torn to pieces by a mine. I was very angry at them for this: to risk the life of a man for a dead body!

Our boys had to return a few more times, right next morning without having had enough sleep. After a few days they were no longer under steady fire, only artillery. They always returned from the front totally exhausted, and yet, they were happy to have a night of rest, while the infantry had to remain at the front. Later they laid cables across the river and pulled the boats to the other side by ropes. They said the towns on the Our and the Sauer and further on into Germany and also back in "Luxembourgian Switzerland" were all totally destroyed!

On February 14, they left.

Gradually, at the beginning of March, Mersch became emptier. More and more troops left and new ones did no more arrive. Only once a column of heavy tanks came through here and stayed in Mersch over night. The Square was again crowded with vehicles - in between sat the soldiers and ate their rations which they prepared on small fires. At the wall of the Château an open field kitchen was set up. *Thomas* returned home again and again with food in his messkit and

with large booty. Three of the tankmen came to visit us in the evening. They had started near Prüm in Germany in the morning and were now going through Belgium and Luxembourg to Luneville in France where they were to unite with another army group. Next morning they started very early with an awful uproar, and thereafter Mersch appeared to us so much quieter. Also, the garbage they left behind was quickly removed so that our town almost has again its old looks. Only some gasoline cans and some tools are still on the square, for the children to play with. A detachment of negroes and the bread bakery at the station were the last traces of Americans and they, too, soon disappeared.

In June, 1945, *Benno Friedberg*, looking like a vagabond, returned from Poland where he had been deported from Luxembourg in October, 1941. He had survived because he had been consigned to hard labor, and also his wife from whom he had been separated since November, 1944, later returned. We witnessed their immense joy in being reunited and in being among the very few who survived the concentration camp.

In September, 1945, *Tom* started school in Mersch. He was very good in all subjects, especially in arithmetic, but poor in handwriting. He would constantly solve problems in his mind and forget to get dressed for school or start dressing and then absentmindedly undress again. When his class was still counting till 10 only, he gave me a problem, "How much is 9 plus 0?" - 90 - "I said 9 plus 0, not 9 plus 81!"

Every morning he marched in a long row, two and two, one class after the other, from school to church for prayer and back to school again. Christian Doctrine was one of the four subjects in school, this one taught by the chaplain, besides German language, arithmetic and writing. There was no separation of school and church in Catholic Luxembourg.

Tom had a wonderful time there. He had a lot of friends whose parents would take him along on excursions. He repeatedly accompanied one friend's grandfather up into the church steeple to wind up the clock. He helped with hay making and rode through the town on an oxcart. He helped one friend's mother gather wood in the forest and rode with the milkman through the streets, ringing the door bells and collecting the empty milkpots to be filled by the milkman. Those healthy rural activities soon calmed and smoothed the disturbances that the war might have caused.

At the end of February, 1946, we had to leave our nice apartment on Michel's Square because the owner of the house wanted to move in again. The upstairs had already been reoccupied by *Mrs. Schwachtgen* and son who had been deported to Eastern Germany for their opposition to the Nazis. We took up quarters at Hotel Rauchs where the *Weilers* were our neighbors. Their son, *Fermi* was in *Tom's* class and the two became fast friends. *Fermi* later became a teacher for business and commerce in Luxembourg-Ville and when *Tom* and *Carol* were in Europe in 1973, they looked him up and renewed the old friendship.

In the meantime, American red tape kept us waiting in Luxembourg until April, 1947, and *Ernest* had to find ways and means to support us. After the Americans had left in February, 1945, the girls were no longer interested in learning English. He got a job as translator and interpreter at the Claims Office in Luxembourg-Ville, an interesting and well paid job. But when, after 2 or 3 months, the Americans moved into Germany, they would not take *Ernest* along - they would not allow a German to interpret for Germans. So *Ernest* did odd jobs in town: bookkeeping, darkroom work and, finally, he helped with the

reconstruction in the northern part of Luxembourg, close to the Belgian border in the aftermath of the Battle of the Bulge. He stayed there during the week and came home only on weekends. It was as hard work again as the dismantling of the Maginot Line for the Nazis, and his hands were as rough as his cheeks would be after two days without shaving. When *Ernest* once tenderly stroked his face, *Tom* said: "Daddy, you must shave your hands!"

In July, 1946, we were able to go to Basle, Switzerland, to visit *Ernest's* parents and see his sister, *Lotte Busch* for five days before she returned to New York. We had planned to stay four weeks, but had to stay 2-1/2 weeks longer because *Tom* got the small pox. For him this trip was an enormously impressive and instructive event including a week of hiking in the Alps with his 70 year old grandmother coming along.

After 8 years of seclusion in a small town and of living in poverty, this visit to Basle, a city not touched by the war, was even for me - the born Berliner - like a revelation: so many people, and all well dressed and well nourished! *Tom* enjoyed the rides on the tram and always wanted to stay on to the very end, "You fancy how it may look there, and perhaps, in reality, it is quite different." Once we visited an old fortress surrounded by a water-filled moat. There was a restaurant in the court now where we planned to have a cup of coffee with cake. While we crossed the drawbridge we explained to *Tom* that it could be lifted when enemies approached. He thought for awhile, then said, "But if the enemies only come to have a cup of coffee with cake?"

For the grandparents it was a great joy to see their 7 year old grandson for the first time. For us it was a mixed joy: We found *Ernest's* parents well and secure after the Nazi regime and the long war years; but we also did not know what America would bring, if we would ever have the means to come back and see the old country and our parents again.

With my mother it was even worse - we were not able to go to see her before our emigration. At least, she had visited us in Mersch three years in a row during the war, the last time in 1943. In 1944 she did not dare to come. The Allied had landed in Normandy on June 6, and there was no telling how long it would take them to reach Luxembourg and transform our little country into a battle zone. In 1945, with Germany destroyed and occupied by foreign troops there was no question of traveling, and in 1946 Mother was herself uprooted.

While we were in Switzerland, my mother and her husband, his daughter *Else* and her husband, *Emil Pfeiffer* were forced by the new Czech government to leave their homes in Grottau. The whole German Sudetengau population, no matter if they had been Nazis after Hitler's occupation in fall, 1938, or not, had to leave. *Robert Diessner's* son, *Oscar* had already left earlier and settled on the German side of the border in the small town of Grossdubrau near Bautzen in Saxony. And that was where Mother and the other three also went. Apparently the transfer went smoothly and the small rural community was similar to the one they had left. There was, however, no possibility of opening a factory like the one they had to leave behind. Mother was 77 years old and her husband one or two years older.

With the enormous shortage of everything in Germany after the war it soon sufficed for us to support them by sending a package a month of coffee, tea, cocoa, cigarettes and margarine in the value of ca. \$20, - first from Luxembourg, then from the U. S. My stepfather would sell these precious goods to his acquaintances and that brought in enough money for them to live by. It also helped to enrich their own frugal diet. After we had been three months in the U. S. they

had received two packages from us. In a letter of July 25, 1947, I wrote, "Oh, I am so very glad finally to read something else in your letters than the sad sentence: "We have only dry bread and dry potatoes to eat." We are both so happy over your joy and said already when we packed it all together, "The parents must feel like in heaven when they unpack this." I hope you, too, now think that it was better also for you that we went here. For in Germany we would have been nearer to each other, it is true, but we would only be hungry together." *Ernest's* parents sent them cigarettes from time to time. With dependence on us and with the aunts in Cottbus no longer around to stir up hatred against us, Mother's marriage was peaceful during the last years of her life. In 1947, about the time that we emigrated to the U. S., Mother celebrated her silver wedding anniversary with *Robert Diessner*.

In November, 1946, we were asked to present ourselves at the American Consulate in Antwerp - finally! At this occasion we also visited *Ernest's* relatives, *Pels* and *Loewe* who had returned to Brussels. (*Tom* was somewhat confused that there was more than one Santa Claus - one in every department store). There were difficulties to the last moment. The Lykes Shipping Company did not want to give us tickets unless we had our visas and the American Consulate did not want to give us our visas unless we had the boat tickets. I do not remember how this problem was resolved, but *Popol Pels* was extremely helpful. In April, 1947, we were finally able to leave for America - two years after the end of the war!

Luxembourg had been good to us. The people were friendly and helpful. The country was beautiful. Our life was simple, but we had the necessities of life and lived close to nature. For *Tom* to spend the first 7-1/2 years of his life there was certainly a blessing. But we also knew and felt that we were guests, that we would never be considered as equals. It is a closed community where strangers can never feel quite at home. We hoped that this would be different in America.

We had hoarded a lot of things, especially during the last war years. People who were still able to go overseas or those who were deported let us take what we could use from their possessions which they could not take along. Being poor we had need of many things. Now it was our turn to sort out the necessities and leave the rest of the junk behind in a big pile for *Mrs. Weiler*, *Fernand's* mother.

And there was one more thing to do; we had to get identification papers. We probably could have gotten German passports again - they had been confiscated from us by the Nazis. But we preferred to travel with a Luxembourgian identification paper. *Ernest* got his without a hitch. But when I gave my name as *Johanna Ising* the official became upset. "You want to call yourself with that Prussian name?" And pointing to the life-size portrait on the wall, "The *Grandduchess* will turn around in her frame if you call yourself *Johanna*. It's "*Jeanne*". I did not object. It did not matter with what first name I immigrated to the United States. Later, in America, I found it somewhat strange that I was living in an English speaking country, a German immigrant with a French first name and, therefore, anglicized my "Prussian" name *Johanna* to *Jane* being afraid that otherwise *Roosevelt* might turn around in his grave! I have since found out that in the U. S. you may have whatever first name you want: on the contrary, the more outlandish the better. But it was too late. I am known in America as *Jane Ising*, but for my German speaking friends I remain *Hanna Eesing*.



Mersch, Luxembourg.
Thomas with mother Hanna
Ising and grandmother
Clara Ehmer Diesner
1942

Grandfather Gustav,
Father Ernst and son
Thomas Ising, 1946



Grandfather Ernst,
Father Thomas and
Son Ralph Ising, 1973

CHAPTER 9. EMIGRATION TO AMERICA, 1947. NEW YORK. CAMP TAPAWINGO, PA.
MINOT, N. D.

We left Mersch April 6, 1947, and Rotterdam on board the freighter Lipscomb Lykes on April 9. It took twelve days to cross the Atlantic. We were only 6 or 8 passengers and had our meals together with the crew. The First Mate wanted to show off, to show us how rich America is by throwing my teabag in the garbage can instead of letting me use it for my second and third cup of tea. It did not impress me; I found it wasteful then and still do. The April weather was not too good. We had to dress warmly when we wanted to spend an hour on deck. My godmother, *Grete Suck*, from America, who visited us every two years, had told me often that you see nothing but ocean and sky. It had been so difficult for me to visualize it. Now I saw it for 11 days. *Ernest* and *Tom* enjoyed the sea voyage immensely. I did not feel so good. I was not seasick, but every one of those big waves seemed to go through my stomach.

Now and then, very seldom, we saw another ship in the distance going in the opposite direction. We knew that the *Busch Quartett* and *Lotte* with them were on their way to Europe for their first European concert tour after the war and we wondered if they might be on one of those ships we saw.

On April 21, we arrived in New York and truly felt it was for us that the Statue of Liberty lifted her lamp beside the Golden Door. Immigration officers came on board to check our papers and, although we did not go on land on that day, the 21st of April, 1947 is the official date of our entrance in the U. S. Our freighter had to go into a Bethlehem Steel dock on the New Jersey side of the Hudson River and the maneuvering was long and difficult. We sat on the river for another night and watched the last Maxwell Coffee-House coffee drop fall innumerable times into a cup of advertisement lights. On the 22nd our ship moved slowly and with great caution into the dock. We had scarcely stopped when we were handed a note from *Lotte* that she was waiting outside and would come on board as soon as permitted. What a great joy!! *Lotte* still in New York!! So we would not be alone to find our way around and adjust to the New World. Soon she came aboard accompanied by *Hanna Cossman*, a distant relative, who had a car waiting outside. The first thing *Hanna* said when she saw *Ernest's* knickerbockers, "These go back to Germany. You can give them to *Willi Busch*" (who had never left Germany). She drove us through the long Lincoln Tunnel under the Hudson River and through the center of New York and we stared in amazement.

Our departure had been so indefinite that *Lotte* had decided to go along to Europe with the *Busch Quartett*. But when she received our telegram with the exact date of our arrival, she changed her plans and stayed a week to help us get settled. We could stay in her E 86 Street apartment while they were gone. Their daughter, *Trudy* stayed so long in *Rudolf Serkin's* apartment on 5th Avenue. Thus everything was marvellous for our start in the New World.

Ernest had to go back to our ship the next day and was extremely proud that he found his way by public transportation without any trouble. *Tom* was sent to school two days after our arrival. There were still 6 or 7 weeks till the end of the school year. We had the choice between a predominantly black and Puerto-Rican school six blocks to the north or a predominantly white school on 83rd Street 13 blocks south. We chose the latter. *Aunt Lotte* told *Tom* that, if it should rain, he may ask a policeman for a nickel for a bus ride home. It did not rain, but he asked anyway and when *Ernest* came to pick him up, he had left and was home long before *Ernest* and had gotten off the bus at the right stop.

On his first American report card he got an F in every subject except arithmetic where he got an A.

There was a physicists' convention held in New York and *Ernest* went there not to attend lectures, but to study the job offers. He applied for several and finally was accepted at the State Teachers' College in Minot, N. D. They had a slogan "Why not Minot," So why not? We had to go to Boston to present ourselves to the wife of the college president. She was to decide if our English could be understood, and we passed the test. But the position was for September and here it was May!

To find some temporary work I applied for a secretarial job and flunked the test miserably. I finally got a job with a family in Queens. The old mother was bed-ridden and needed care while the daughter and her husband worked. They were simple people, but kind and helpful. I saw how Americans live and improved my English and earned enough money for food and transportation. Yet our situation was rather depressing and on *Ernest's* 47th birthday on May 10, 1947, we two put our heads together and cried. That was the only time we were really unhappy. It did not last long; soon *Trudy* came and invited us for a birthday dinner at *Rudolf Serkin's* apartment. She stayed there together with *Hedwig Fischer* from Basle, Switzerland, a medical doctor who was a friend of *Mrs. Irene Serkin*, *Adolph Busch's* daughter. Four months later, to our great surprise she became *Adolph Busch's* second wife. He was beset with heart troubles and she, as a physician, took good care of him. She accompanied him on all his concert tours and bore him two sons when he was already in his late 50's, early 60s. Their happiness lasted only four years. *Adolph* died in 1951 of a heart attack in his farmhouse in Vermont where he and his brother, *Herman* (our brother-in-law) together with a few other musicians, had founded the Marlboro Music Festival.

For July and August we found work in a camp in the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania. *Ernest* worked with children in the darkroom and in the workshop. I did what all immigrants are supposed to start with: I cleaned pots and pans and helped the black cook in the kitchen. *Tom* enjoyed the camp life and learned to speak English. We paid for his stay with our work. His den mother was *Hanna Tillich*, wife of the famous theologian, *Paul T.* who at that time also did not have much money and paid with her work for her son's stay at the camp. When the kids were in bed and the dishes washed and the darkroom closed, we went on long walks with *Hannah* and formed a long lasting friendship with her. In 1964, when we had been in Africa, she invited us to the Windermere Hotel where they stayed when he lectured at the University of Chicago, to have dinner with them and show them our slides from Africa. And when *Paulus* had died and their friends, the *Robert Owens* of New Harmony, Indiana, arranged a fabulous celebration of *Tillich* and buried him in the *Tillich* Grove across the Roofless Church, we were invited, too. *Hannah* visited New Harmony for the last time during the 70's and came from there to visit us in Peoria. But *Mrs. Owen* broke the friendship with *Hannah* after the latter had published her book "From Time to Time" (1973) in which she told all the world about her husband's shortcomings in his private life, especially his extramarital sex life.

But back to 1947 and Camp Tapawingo. When we got *Tom* back after 8 weeks, he spoke English fluently (with a limited vocabulary, to be sure,) but stammered in German. It took him four days to speak German fluently again. Children learn fast and forget fast. "I thought at the beginning I'll never learn that damned language," he confessed later.

It had been a wonderful summer for us. We were out in nature, could walk and swim during our free time, had contact with Americans, learned to speak English fluently, but especially to understand their fast spoken English. It took us about half a year until we could sit back and listen at ease. Until then we sat at the edge of our chairs straining our ears and wishing they were as large as donkeys' ears. The loveliest memories were picnics around a fire in the woods or group singing inside by the fireplace.. Songs like "Home, home on the range where the deer and the antelope graze, where never is heard a discouraging word and the skies are not cloudy for days" were my favorites and presented to me America at its best. I remember how I marvelled at some couples who sent their children to camp for two months at \$400 per child and went themselves away by car to Colorado or some other fabulously sounding fairy tale place. American life styles were all so new to us. *Tom*, too, had a good time. He spoke little the first 6 weeks. Then his den mother heard him say one day, "Who wants to play with me?" and she thought he had made it. One son of the camp director, *Mrs. Norton*, was a student of economics and lent me his introductory book on principles of economics. It was my first reading on how economics was taught in the States and very valuable to me.

So we had been lucky again. We had bridged the months until *Ernest* would earn a regular salary working in the field for which he was trained. We still were very poor - it required some arguing (that I had been working for a week before *Tom* came) to get a little money to pay for our three railroad tickets back to New York!

On September 5, 1947, we left New York for the long train ride to Minot, N. D. A German acquaintance to New York had warned us of the dangerous Indians in the Wild West! We did not share her fear. Nevertheless we felt very adventurous and, in fact, when a bank in Minot celebrated its 60th anniversary, it published pictures of its beginning with Indian teepees outside of town and horse-drawn carts loaded with buffalo bones. The train ride lasted ca. 24 hours. We filled out eyes with the changing sights of this vast country: the endless cornfields in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, the mighty Mississippi. The more north and west we came, the more spaced were the towns, and trees were finally seen only around the homesteads. How empty and lonely it was! But the small community of Minot (20,000 inhabitants) and especially the members of the college soon made us feel welcome.

We got an apartment in the dormitory on the campus the first floor of which was for teachers only. We had really one big room only, but it was divided into three by two partitions, and it was furnished by the college. We shared the kitchen with the family of *Prof. DeLong*. This brought us in close contact with them and gave occasion to many a good advice and practical help. The dorm was connected with the main building by an underground tunnel, so we did not have to go outside on the bitter cold days of their winter.

Every Saturday morning we went to town by bus to shop at the grocery stores for the whole week. Each time we bought about \$5.00 worth of food which by some stores was delivered and sat in front of our door when we returned. There were many other things that were new and strange for us. The 16 year old daughter of our neighbors would stand behind the kitchen door with her boy friend of the same age hugging and kissing with the full approval of her parents. The parents went to the movies every Friday no matter what was played; we only went if there was a special film we wanted to see. We were invited by a teacher for a delicious waffle supper and were amazed that she threw what was left over into the garbage

can. Once "religious music" was advertised and I went full of expectations to hear *Bach* and *Telemann* and *Buxtehude*, but was terribly disappointed, yet fascinated to hear an evangelist of the worst theatrical, swaggering and boastful kind. We learned that you have to write a Christmas card even to people whom you see every day and to whom you can wish a merry Christmas orally - at least if they have written to you. At Commencement we walked for the first time in gown and hood in a long procession of teachers and graduates to the music of *Elgar's* "Pomp and Circumstance." We were surprised that all such meetings begin and end with a prayer by some minister or rabbi, in a country where church and state are separated. In Germany where this is not the case there are no prayers at such meetings. Another great surprise for us was the position of the farmer. Many of the students at Minot State Teachers' College were sons of farmers who intended to farm themselves. In Germany we had peasants, i. e. small landowners who work their farms themselves and big landowners, many of them noblemen, who served as officers in the military and hired laborers to work their fields. There was no equivalent to the American farmer who is a big landowner, but works alone with his machines or only with the help of his sons or a few hired hands. In North Dakota where the summers are short and the summer days long, they worked day and night, the father by day, the son by night. That my best student, a very intelligent girl, was going to marry a farmer, who graduated this year, was very strange to me.

We took private English lessons from a teacher of English at the College and in exchange taught her German. She made us aware how atrociously we mispronounced the English language; that it is not "he iss" or "she hass," how to distinguish between "we were" and "where," between "hat" and "head" or "had," that the d at the end has to sound like a d and not like a t as in German: Lord, not Lort, good, not goot. In spite of all these improvements we never could get rid of our German accent. At first I tried hard, but could not hear the difference. But when people told me, "Don't try, your accent is so charming," I stopped trying - it was hopeless anyway.

Tom did not have these difficulties at all. At the age of 8 he still picked the language up correctly and a summer school teacher in 1948 who did not know his background was surprised when she found out that he had been in this country only one year. There was no difference between him and the other kids. He finished third grade in Minot and got A's in arithmetic and reading.

Ernest only had some first year college physics classes to teach, about the same as the classes he taught in high school in Germany. It was good that he was not required to teach higher levels. too. As it was, it meant an enormous amount of work for him. He had not taught physics since 1933, for 14 years! And he had to do it in English. He also had math classes. He drowned in work and his nerves became raw. This first year was extremely difficult for him and it was good that the demands were not too high. He learned a lot and laid the basis on which to build in the future. He ordered new apparatuses for the physics department and had the old ones repaired.

I was given a class in German - there were no openings in economics. While I certainly knew my German, I, too, had to spend a lot of time on preparation; the rules and structure of my language were all new to me. And then I got sick. It started at the back of my head and spread over my whole body: a skin disease. It itched and I scratched and blisters formed and then scabs. It may have been caused by some hair shampoo which was too sharp or by the dry air of the tightly closed and well heated brick dormitory. I did not have to interrupt my classes, but it was very uncomfortable and lasted a very

(long time. In February of 1948 I also had to spend 10 days in the hospital for a hysterectomy operation. During that time *Ernest* taught also my German classes on top of all his other work.

Over all this, *Tom* was rather neglected. He had his own great adjustments to make and got little support from his parents. He said after a year, he wished we would not go away because he had made so many good friends. But at home he felt that we were terribly preoccupied with schoolwork, that we had no time for him and he became difficult to handle. I realized how much he changed, when, during the summer vacation of 1948, we used our first savings to go to Glacier Park for two weeks. We hiked and camped and shared all our time with *Tom* from morning till evening and imperceptibly he became the darling, lovable boy again. It had been all our fault or the fault of the difficult circumstances.

For all the three of us this first American vacation was unforgettable. But we could afford it only by being extremely frugal. Once, in a chalet, where we ate our own sandwiches, the manager felt so sorry for little *Tom* that she gave him a cup of hot chocolate free of charge. However, at the end, at St. Mary's Lake, we had a little extra money left and allowed ourselves the extravagance of a milk shake! Our first! It was so delicious that I still remember our delight 38 years later! This first year had been hard for all of us - and that we spent it in Minot was a blessing.

CHAPTER 10. PEORIA, ILLINOIS. 1948

We had intended to stay another year in Minot and *Ernest* signed a new contract. Teaching would have been much easier our second year there; I would have had two German classes, beginners and intermediate. But *Ernest* had his name with a Teachers' Agency in New York and constantly got offerings of open positions. He refused them all until he got the one from Bradley University in Peoria, IL. which sounded especially good. When the president of Minot State Teacher's College, with the help of *Ernest*, found a substitute, an Austrian who could not only teach physics, but also German, we were released from our obligation and left no bad feelings. It was not easy for us to leave. People had been so very kind to us and opened their doors and their hearts to the newcomers. Some of my German students, however, were very angry. Yet, there was no advancement possible for *Ernest*.

We had come by train. We went to Illinois by bus, thus going through the centers of towns and seeing much more. It was 20 hours to Chicago and 5 more to Peoria. We interrupted two days in Chicago and enjoyed our first sight of the Windy City. We were very impressed by the beauty of the lake shore and of the treasures of the Art Institute.

In Peoria we were again given an apartment in a house belonging to the university, the upper floor of what was really a one family home, 3 blocks from the campus and 3 blocks from Bradley Park. We had been delighted to see on our long bus ride how American towns and cities were laid out: a business centre and separated the outlying residential areas with one-family homes in green fenceless yards. That was true for Peoria, too. The department stores, banks, hotels, movie theatres, doctors' and lawyers' offices were down town, in the valley by the Illinois River; the residential areas, with only small shopping centres for daily necessities were mostly on the bluff, like a large park with lawns, trees, shrubs, flowers, no fences - and houses in it! In Germany, there are residential areas, too, the so-called "Villenviertel," but they are fenced in or even walled in to protect the privacy of the inhabitants.

We were also surprised and delighted when we saw the Bradley Campus. In the old country, the university buildings were all over town, even in small towns like Tübingen. Not so in the States, where they are all together on a large coherent green complex. We have seen many other campuses since, and every time we enjoyed their charm and beauty.

Bradley University was founded in 1898 by Lydia Bradley. When we joined the BU faculty in 1948, it had existed half a century. During the ca. 40 years we have been here we saw the campus grow to more than twice its size. Most important for *Ernest*, the new science building, Olin Hall, was erected in 1967 for physics, chemistry and biology and he had the great joy to teach and show his experiments for 9 more years in this beautiful and modern building. And most enjoyable for both of us now are the new Hartman Centre, an intimate theatre in gray and red, and the new Dingeldine Centre for music.

His second academic year was again very hard for *Ernest*. He had to teach 22 hours per week - the rule was 16 hours, and besides the introductory course he taught optics and acoustics, but no math. There were three other physicists besides him. I had again a chance to teach German for beginners and in the second semester also "History of Economic Thought." But perhaps the most important class for me was one we took, "Great Books." *LaVerne Miller* who led the class, invited us to participate. We met there several couples with whom

we formed long lasting friendships. Besides *LaVerne* and *LeForest Miller*, there were *Theo* and *Leslie Kenyon*, *Ray* and *Peggy Baird* and *Wally* and *Marion Matthews*. When *Bradley U.* discontinued this class, we formed a book club and met in our homes and when the *Millers* moved to Washington, D. C. and B. U. wanted to offer "Great Books" again, I was asked if I was willing to do it. I was never as successful at *Bradley* as *LaVerne*, who had 25-30 participants. But I had a group of ca. 10 faithful members, gradually swelling to 15, who wanted to continue this stimulating exchange of ideas even when I had to retire from teaching at BU, and through all the years of my retirement till today this reading and preparing for the discussion fills my days with interesting work and keeps my mind alert. It also brings me in contact with nice women. I think one reason for the long lasting success is that we all like each other very much. We meet in private homes or the social room of a condo complex and have the fall picnic and the last meeting in spring at *Mary Frederick's* beautiful home overlooking the Illinois River.

It was much more difficult to feel at home in Peoria than in Minot where people feel grateful when you come to their pioneer outpost. In Peoria everyone seemed to have his own circle. For Thanksgiving we were not invited to a private home as in Minot by *Prof. Hoffman*; But the minister of *Tom's* Boy Scout troop invited us to his church together with many blacks and orientals, mostly from Hawaii. God was not mentioned and we were not asked to join his church, and at the end he and his colleague put on aprons and helped wash the dishes. We had never known any such ministers in Germany nor any churches with kitchens in their basements. It took us about a year to lose the feeling of loneliness and to get some closer contact with other people.

There were still many things new to us, but gradually we got accustomed to them all: that Christmas trees did not have candles, but multicolored electrical lights and that they are lit 3-4 weeks before Christmas and the gifts put underneath during that time - nicely wrapped. In Germany we lit the tree on Christmas Eve and put the gifts unwrapped on the special place assigned to each of us; that you eat ice cream summer and winter; that there are so many left-handers, many more than in Europe; that little boys wear long pants and big girls, too; that all windows have screens so there are no flies in the house and that most windows do not open toward the inside, but are pushed up; that football and other sports seem to be more important than academic achievements; that there are no second holidays for Christmas and Easter, no Good Friday, Ascension Day and Whitsuntide holidays at all, no May 1st holiday either, but instead Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day and Thanksgiving; that people drink orange juice or eat half a grapefruit before breakfast, and that people drive around in impossible old cars as long as they run.

What we missed most in Minot and Peoria was a good theatre. In Germany a city like Peoria would have a repertoire theatre with daily performances, subsidized by the city. The Broadway Theatre Club brings 3 or 4 professional performances, always excellently done, but the contents often just light entertainment. The amateur theatre "Peoria Players" presents 4 - 5 plays during the winter season, mostly astonishingly well played, but also too much light stuff. We had a chance to see "Oklahoma" early in Peoria, performed by a touring troupe, and fell in love with the great musicals by *Roger and Hammerstein* and *Lerner and Lowe*.

Although we were both drowned in preparing our classes, our work was much more satisfying than in Minot. It was also much more challenging and demanding for

Ernest than if he had remained a German high school teacher. He moaned about his heavy load, but he was happy! He soon gained a reputation for his excellent experiments and we learned that the students liked him. He had always said, "My classes will be much better when my English is so good that I can make jokes." He had reached that point now. Later he said that he had to teach subjects which he had never studied at the university; they were so new.

In 1949 *Ernest* found out from science magazines that his doctor thesis from 1924 on ferro-magnetism had become known and that the model he had developed and calculated was called the ISING -MODEL. A considerable literature appeared about it and a two-dimensional Ising Model was developed by *Prof. Onsager*, his own model being one-dimensional.

Since *Ernest* could teach two summer semesters in 1949, we had enough money to go and discover a new part of America. This time we went to Colorado - still all without a car.

The news from our parents was not good. They were old people and their children were far away, the chance to see them again was minute. *Ernest's* mother had a deep depression in 1948, not her first one, and after his father had cared for her until his strength gave out, they both had to spend some time in an old peoples' home. My mother, almost 80 years old, was tired of living. She had fallen a year before and had not totally recovered from it. And life in Germany, especially the eastern part, right after the end of the war, was miserable. What we could send was a bare minimum of what they needed. Mother wished she could die.

1950 brought a great change into our lives. We went to Kentucky for our summer vacation and hired a taxi from Cave City to Mammoth Cave. On the return trip, the driver, who had worked for 24 hours, fell asleep and the taxi swerved into three parked cars, totally demolishing them. *Tom*, who sat in front, suffered glass cuts under his chin, *Ernest* had cuts on his forehead. Both were healed after a week in a nearby hospital. I seemed to be least hurt, did not bleed, but lost my voice. I had slumped forward and hit my throat on the back of the driver's seat. My vocal cords were bent, and at first I could only whisper. Gradually my voice gained more strength, but it remained harsh and rough and ugly, and strangers are often sorry that I have "such a bad case of laryngitis." I cannot sing any more - and liked to sing so much - and I cannot laugh loud any more either. This was the bad part of the accident.

But after a week in the hospital we could continue our trip, visit the Tennessee Valley and hike in the Smoky Mountains. The good part was that we got \$8,000 from the taxi owner's insurance for which, in September of 1951, we bought our house on 1014 N. Institute Place, a 45-year old building. This is just across Main Street from the Bradley Campus, so we could easily walk to our classes, and it was attractive for students to rent rooms from us..

During the summer of 1952, while *Ernest* was teaching, I insulated the attic, wearing no clothes because it was so terribly hot and I was sweating profusely and getting awfully dirty; we had two rooms built in there. Together with the 4 bedrooms on the second floor we had 6 rooms to rent! *Ernest* and I slept on the couch in the living-room, *Tom* on a couch in the dining-room. The students used the side entrance, and by a carton wall on the landing we shut off our main floor completely for privacy. The students had to provide their own bed sheets, towels and food. All I did was to clean the rooms once a week. It

was a lot of work, especially when I started teaching again. But it helped us to pay off the mortgage within 9 years. We did a lot of improvements ourselves. In 1962, we changed the butler's pantry into a bright open breakfast nook with a view onto the back yard through a large window. We tore out a lot of heavy dark woodwork, painted the walls white and one red and covered one with shelves and books, put in indirect lighting and Japanese ricepaper lamps and hung up a *Seewald* and two *Curt Laß* pictures and one *Kokoschka* which *Ernest's* parents had saved from their precious collection in Bochum. And with a little bronze dancer by *Milli Steger* and modern furniture from *Knoll's* we gave that old house a new look. It is not what we had in Strausberg, our paradise, but we like it and feel good in it. Our porch does not open on a quiet back yard and woods and a cherry tree flowering in May as in Strausberg, rather on a boulevard full of cars during university sessions. But we had it screened in and live on it all summer long, especially enjoying the cool nights after those 90° days.

For about 25 years we rented rooms to students and usually had a good relationship with them. But when we finally had some very unpleasant experience with two black students, we called it quit. To have had students in the house was a burden, but a small one and it helped us pay off our debt to *Mr. Heinemann*, our benefactor in Luxembourg, and the mortgage on the house and go on very wonderful vacations. When we finally stopped having students in 1975, we painted the upstairs hall and all rooms white and had it all laid with wall-to-wall carpet, took off the partition on the landing and finally moved up into our own bedroom. *Tom* has never had a room of his own in our house.

I hope that we both can stay in it until we die - the only house we ever owned and which we shaped to our liking by putting much sweat and muscle power into it.

In 1951, it looked as if *Ernest* would have no summer classes. He, therefore, took a job with Caterpillar in the metallurgical lab. When three classes did materialize, he did double duty: classes in the morning and Cat from 3 - 11 p. m. Fortunately we had had, early in June, a wonderful 10-day vacation on Mackinac Island. No cars allowed; we rented bikes and explored the island and enjoyed the late blooming of lilac and fruit trees in magnificent profusion. *Ernest* had a new Leica and made our first colored slides. Over the years he was to take more than 10,000 in all parts of the world.

~~My voice gradually became stronger, and after a year I could teach again:~~
~~German and History of Economic Thought.~~ Now we both could moan about heavy work and both could enjoy the satisfaction of a job well done.

In 1952, *Ernest* was asked by a friend in California, *Dr. Kurt Bergel*, to serve as a co-conductor on a two month study tour to Europe. He was extremely happy over this opportunity to see Europe again and meet his parents. He could go to the Black Forest for a day where they were vacationing. It was the last time he saw his father, now 88 years old. The tour had 60 participants and took him to Holland, France, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium and England! *Tom* and I went for two weeks to the Ozarks with a tent, but still without a car. For *Ernest* it was the first time that he flew across the Atlantic.

In 1953 I went along to Europe with *Kurt Bergel*, six years after we had left it. I also was able to see my mother again, 10 years after I had last seen her in Mersch, Luxembourg. My step-sister, *Else Pfeiffer* and her husband, *Emil*, brought her by taxi from Grossdubrau in East Germany right across the

border into East Berlin to the *Kibys* in Grünau. But what a disappointment! She was 84 years old and widowed for a year or two and her mind was already clouded. She did not recognize me! When I ran to the taxi and hugged and kissed her, she pushed me away and said, "You are not my daughter! My *Hanna* was such a pretty young woman!" I was 51 years old then. I sat a long while with her in the *Kibys*' backyard and tried to revoke memories of our common life in Berlin and her later visits to Mersch. She was still distrustful, "You should not make fun of me and tell me you are my daughter if you are not." But finally she accepted me as her daughter and we cried together and hugged each other in happiness. However, it did not last long. She relapsed into her withdrawn world and I did not repeat this strenous effort of calling her back.

It was not possible to talk to her and tell her about *Ernest* and *Tom* and our life in America. But for these 5 minutes of recognition I am eternally thankful. I am grateful to *Else* and *Emil Pfeiffer* who had offered to bring Mother to Berlin and who also took care of her in Grossdubrau. They had engaged a young girl who cooked and washed for her and cleaned the apartment and *Else* and *Emil* looked in from time to time and supervised her. I am grateful to the *Kibys* who once already had taken us in for six weeks when the boarding school of Caputh was destroyed by the Nazis and who now opened their house for this reunion.

It was the last chance I had to see Mother. She died the following year on March 30, 1954, age 85. Dear Mother, she gave me such a happy childhood and later suffered so much on account of me and also in consequence of political upheavals. I could not fulfill her wish to bury her with my Father. She died in East Germany, and the cemetery where Father was buried was in West Berlin and his ashes had already been transferred from a private plot to a mass grave. She is buried with *Robert Diessner* in Zittau, Saxony.

Ernest's father, too, died in 1954, on January 31, and is buried in Basle, Switzerland. For his mother a hard time of loneliness began. Both her children were in America and she started to suffer from deep depressions.

While I was in Europe, *Ernest* and *Tom* had a wonderful vacation in the Northwoods near Ely, Minnesota, close to the Canadian border. They took our tent along, rented a canoe and bought food for \$33.00 - and scarcely saw another human being for two weeks. *Tom* was almost 14 then and a strong, healthy boy, a great help with paddling and carrying the boat at portages. He was long afterwards raving about this marvelous trip.

When I returned to Peoria after two months, I had the strong feeling of coming home. I knew I had put roots in American soil. But while *Tom* after less than a year could not be distinguished from American-born kids, *Ernest* and I never got rid of our German accent and have always been immediately recognized as foreign born.

Reinforcing this feeling of America being "home" now was the fact that on September 15, 1953, soon after my return from Europe, we became American citizens, all three of us. We were given a copy of *Lincoln's* Gettysburg Address, which *Tom* had already learned by heart at school, and part of which was quoted "We here highly resolve..that government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from this earth." We were told by the judge that we were now not hyphenated Americans (German-Americans), but Americans pure and simple like everybody else. The naturalization made no difference in our

work or position, but now we could vote, and we have voted at every election since. We appreciated this right highly after it had once been taken away from us by *Hitler* and we were and still are shocked that such a small percentage here takes advantage of it. When *Tom* could vote for the first time in 1960, *John Kennedy* ran for the presidency and like many young people *Tom* was under his spell. He mounted a huge picture of *J.F.K.* on top of our car, when he came to Peoria, and stationed himself at the front of the cavalcade from the airport to the courthouse catching a lot of the angry bellowing of the policemen on his head. He sat attentively in the first row at the feet of his hero while he spoke downtown and at the airport and led the train of cars again on the way back. He was lucky that the man who got his first vote also won. Later he changed his political conviction.

Thanks to hard work, frugal living and renting rooms we were able in 1954 to go to Europe on our own, all three of us. One of the purposes was to visit *Ernest's* mother, take her along on our travels and bring her to the States, not yet for good, but for a long trial period. We were gone for 3 months, saw many old friends and visited many old places and some new ones. For *Tom* everything was new except Luxembourg. In Bochum, *Ernest's* home town, we met *Heinz Wildhagen*, his old pal, whose intimate theatre, the Piccolo-mödie in Elberfeld, was getting ready to be opened on July 1. Unforgettable for *Tom*: *Heinz* ordered extra for him a bottle of "Cröver Nacktarsch" with a picture of a boy with a "naked behind" on the label.

Ernest could not find his way through Bochum: many ruins, empty plots, new streets, grand new buildings in impressive modern style, a new swimming pool, where his father's elegant ladies' dress store once stood, nothing but rubble where the *Ising* villa had once delighted me so much and where his parents had lived for 37 years.

We visited Rietberg in Westphalia, a small town where *Ernest* and *Lotte* had spent many a wonderful summer vacation. Their father was born here, their grandfather and uncle had been well-known harness-makers. The man now living in their house was still called "Mr. *Ising*." Their saddles were still good and praised after 50 years in spite of 12 years of *Hitler* rule. What impressed *Tom* most was that in the Jewish cemetery outside of town there were still ca. 6 graves on whose tombstones the name of *Ising* was engraved. *Tom*, 14 years old, felt that here were his roots.

In Mersch, Luxembourg, many memories became alive. *Tom* and *Ferni Weiler* did not recognize each other, but quickly renewed the old friendship.

While *Ernest's* mother stayed in Basle, we traveled for 4 weeks through France and Spain to see something new knowing that for a long time to come we would not be able to return to Europe.

At the very end we spent a week in the Austrian Alps. *Ernest* wanted to do some mountain climbing with *Tom*, the European way. We went to the Ötztal and the three of us climbed the Kreuzspitze (10,365') and *Ernest* and *Tom* with a guide, roped together, the Similaun (almost 12,000').

When we returned to the States, we took *Ernest's* mother along. Our suitcases had not arrived in Rotterdam before our departure on the "Johann van Olden-Barnevelt" and we did not get them until 5 weeks later in Peoria. This was very upsetting for Mother and a bad beginning. She did not feel happy here at all. *Ernest* and I were both very busy with our lectures; she knew no one

besides us and spoke English only very poorly. Of course, we introduced her to our friends, especially the German ones and took her along to the concerts. But that was not enough. I remember vividly that we once had taken her out on a beautiful ride for which we really could not afford the time. When we returned home, *Ernest* rushed to his desk and I to mine to get our preparations done for the next day and Mother sat down in the living-room all by herself and cried.

She soon went to her daughter in Miami, where *Hermann Busch* taught cello at the university, and only came to *Peoria* for short visits. *Lotte* had no job and could be with her mother all day long - that was much better. In summer, they always went to Marlboro, Vermont, where *Hermann* together with his brother, *Adolph*, the violinist, the pianist *Rudolph Serkin* and the *Moyses* had founded the Marlboro Summer Music Festival. There she was among people she knew and enjoyed, many of whom spoke German. *Lotte's* daughter, *Trudy Schultz* settled in Pennsylvania, an hour's ride from Philadelphia, where the *Buschs* moved from Miami in 1965. There, too, she felt good at first. But of her 4 great-grandchildren only the oldest spoke German and *Trudy's* husband very little. She went back to Switzerland and tried to live there alone. But she got deep depressions, also fell down the stairs and hurt herself badly.

So she finally dissolved her household and moved to America for good. She brought what was left of her art treasures over with her and gave some to *Lotte* and some to *Ernest*. She never felt really happy in the New World. Her decreasing hearing ability and the shortcomings in hearing aids, many of which she tried out, isolated her still further. For an energetic, mentally alert and active person who used to be the center of gatherings, all this was extremely frustrating. When the *Buschs* decided to move to Philadelphia to be close to their daughter, she dreaded this new unsettling move. Before this happened she died, half a year before her 90th birthday, at *Trudy Schultz's* place in Pennsylvania. She was buried in Marlboro, Vt. where she had perhaps spent her happiest days this side of the Atlantic. That was in 1965.

After our long vacation in Europe in 1954, we tried to see as much as possible of the new country. In 1955, we once more used public transportation, train and bus, to go to the magnificent Tetons and the wonders of Yellowstone Park, always carrying tent, sleeping bags and cooking utensils with us! But in September, 1955, *Tom* was 16 years old and by law allowed to drive a car. He now pestered us to buy one and we ourselves wanted one. For in America, one is not a whole person without a car. Our friends, the *LeForrest Millers* had just traded their 1950 Chevrolet against a new one and we bought the old one from a dealer in Morton. *Tom* never had had driving lessons, but had watched the other people drive. I asked the dealer to allow him to drive the car home with him sitting next to *Tom*. Except for one rather wide curve around a corner he did an excellent job the first time behind a wheel. That was on a Saturday.

On Sunday he practiced in our car with a friend of ours and on Monday morning passed his driver's test before going to school. Then we two old ones, 55 and 53 years old, could practice with *Tom* or a friend. But both of us flunked the first test, however made it on the second. We have later often regretted that we learned to drive with an automatic shift, never with a stick shift. It is so much cheaper to rent a car with a stick shift during vacations in Europe.

So, in 1956, we could travel the typical American way, by car! More than half the time *Tom* did the driving with ease and joy and a feeling of security. When

I drove, I was nervous and tense and not enjoying it at all. There were some critical moments, but all went well. We visited the great National Parks of the Southwest, The three of us hiked down 4 hours on the Kaibab Trail to the bottom of Grand Canyon and next day up 9 hours via Indian Gardens, climbed to the top of Angels' Landing in Zion and hiked a whole day through the fantastic brilliant-red, white and yellow rock formations of Bryce and marveled at the enormous wastelands of the West. We spent \$300.00 in three weeks and returned filled with everlasting impressions of the beauty of America.

In 1957, *Tom* finished high school. He had started in 4th grade at Franklin School 6 blocks from us, when we came to Peoria, and went on to Central High. He was not a top student, but a good one with special strength in math, his father's heritage. He was on the swim team and was an All-American Swimmer in 1957, one of the 20 best in the States in his category and age group.

All through these years *Nicki* was his faithful comrade. He had found him as a one-day-old puppy in our neighbor's doghouse together with her mother and two siblings in the middle of winter in 1949. *Tom* loved her dearly and so did we old ones who had at first rejected the idea of having a dog in the house. She died in 1962, at the ripe age of 13.

As a professor's son, *Tom* could study free at Bradley University or be exchanged with a professor's child from some other school. There was an opening at M.I.T. and *Tom* applied. For three weeks we roamed the West again, this time the Black Hills with the four presidents carved into Mt. Rushmore, Salt Lake City and Dinosaur National Monument, and when we returned home we found the letter of *Tom's* acceptance at M.I.T.!

In 1959, *Tom* had an interesting summer job in Glacier Park; he got it with the help of our Representative, *Robert Michel*. At first in June he cleaned roads and trails from snow and later from fallen trees and branches and repaired bridges. He was one of a crew and enjoyed this outdoor work in a superb natural surrounding immensely.

In 1958, we had acquired a 3 year old Chevrolet station wagon in which we sometimes slept on our trips instead of setting up tent, especially when *Tom* no longer traveled with us. We now systematically visited all the 50 states including Hawaii and Alaska and in between took big trips to conquer the world.

One of our most wonderful trips and the last one with *Tom* was in 1961. We had ordered a little red VW convertible for *Tom* (his dream come true), picked it up in Osnabrück, Germany, and for three months drove through Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, Israel and back through Greece, Yugoslavia, Austria and Germany to London. In Berlin we stood at the wall three weeks after it had been set up in August, 1961, and could not get to Wöhlert Street because it lay one block behind it. I had wanted so much to show *Tom* where I was born and grew up. It was very painful for me to see that the city was now divided. Later, in 1978, *Ernest* and I had a chance to go to Wöhlert Street, but *Tom* has never been there. He celebrated his 22nd birthday on this trip in Brussels and never traveled with us again, but went his own ways. I missed him badly, especially the next year, the first time without him, on our trip to the Pacific Northwest and West Canada.

Tom got his Bachelor's degree in physics from M.I.T. in 1962, then continued at the University of Illinois in Urbana and got a Master's degree in economics in 1964 and his Doctor's degree in 1971 with a thesis on international trade,

"Fluctuating Exchange Rates" with a lot of math in it. He worked as an assistant in Urbana and taught economics for 10 years at Loyola University in Chicago and in Westville, Indiana, a branch of Purdue University. But in 1977, he preferred to become a commercial realtor with the well known Chicago firm of *Sheldon Good*.

In 1964, *Tom* married *Carol Sawyer Ernst* from Chicago whom he had met in Urbana, a beautiful, intelligent girl with a thick braid of red hair reaching down to her hips and a Master's degree in economics. From her first marriage, which ended in divorce, she had a three year old son, *Charles* or *Chuckie*, whom *Tom* adopted and loved like his own. In September, 1967, their son, *Ralph David* was born. Eventually they acquired a house in Homewood, (a southern suburb of Chicago) which had once belonged to *Carol's* parents and in which *Carol* had spent 17 years of her early life. Between jobs, in summer, 1975, *Tom* pulled down the whole upper floor with its slanted walls and built a new second floor with straight walls and a much better outlay of rooms. The magnificent master bedroom had one whole wall of glass, allowing a splendid view of the mighty trunks and green foliage in back of their house. Their friend, *Leroy Bosko*, an architect by education, had made the plans for the new upstairs. *Tom*, with the help of friends and *Chuckie*, did a very good job in constructing and is enormously practical in all repair and garden work.

Carol never tried to find a job in industry or with the government, although I always thought she would be good at it. She preferred to go into school work where she could easier get away if one of her boys should be sick. She was assigned to work with children with learning difficulties where she showed special skill and good success. Unfortunately, she does not enjoy it. But *Tom's* work being uneven with good and lean years, it has been a blessing through the years that *Carol* had a steady income.

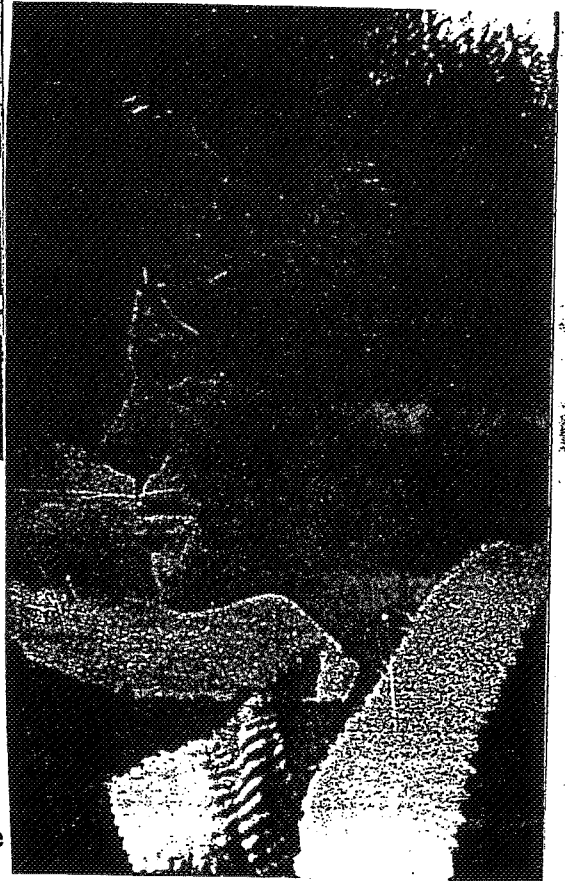
Ernest taught at Bradley until he was 76 years old, when a new regulation prevented anyone over 70 from teaching! He had served Bradley for 28 years and felt quite capable of going on a few more years. In 1968, B. U. gave him an honorary Doctor's degree for his *Ising* Model and the University of Hamburg honored him by renewing his Doctor's degree 50 years after the original one, in 1974. In 1971 he was named "outstanding teacher of the year."

In 1985, the University of Hamburg sent *Ernest* a publication "100 Years of Physics in Hamburg" in which he is mentioned. It states that in 1921, Dr. *Wilhelm Lenz* (1888 - 1957) became the first professor to teach theoretical physics in Hamburg and then continues: "One of his first Dr. students in Hamburg was *Ernest Ising* on whose model for ferromagnetism, developed in 1924 and later named after him, many research papers are still based today."... In his "Enigmas of Chance," 1985, the author *Mark Kac* says: "The most celebrated class of models proposed for the purposes of understanding magnetic phase transitions is the *Ising* models. Introduced in 1925 by *Ernest Ising*, they are still vigorously studied today and the literature on them is staggering." See Appendix I.

I taught part-time economics classes for several years: History of Economic Thought, International Economics and Comparative Economic Systems. I also taught classes in English for the Foreign Born and German in the first five-year round for Gifted Children. But that I was asked to take over the Great Books class in the B. U. Community Service section turned out to be the greatest blessing of all. Because it is still going on, on a private basis, with 10 - 15 women who like to read and to talk about it. It gives me in my



Wedding Thomas Ising
and Carol Sawyer Ernst
3 - 7 - 1964



Chuck
Ising



Ralph at
his favorite
sport

←
Chuck (9)
Ralph (3)



Ralph Ising, age 16

old age something to work for, fills my days, keeps my mind alert and gives me great joy. I read all books twice, then read about the author and criticism of the story. And it is a pleasure to discuss with intelligent women - we all enjoy each other. *Ernest* and I also belong to a private book club of 7 - 8 couples, one of them being *Phillip Jose Farmer*, a well-known science fiction writer, and his wife, *Bettie*. We meet in our different homes once a month and discuss rather different books, not necessarily great ones, more modern publications.

All this is most enjoyable and satisfying. But I did one thing of which I am really proud: I helped establish a birth control clinic in Peoria, and was its first vice-president. The inspiration came from my father. On our summer excursions in Tegel and Hermsdorf, when Father saw a man with a big family, he would go to him and tell him what he can do to prevent having more children, and then tell me that one reason of poverty is too many children. When in the 50's a woman from Chicago tried to set up a birth control clinic in Peoria, she contacted *Dr. Leroy Kohler* from the Sociology Department at Bradley U. He had no time for it, but knew about my interest in this subject and suggested me. We got nowhere in this first endeavor. We went to the poor, distributed leaflets, talked to them. It was at that occasion that I saw from the inside how miserably many people in rich America live. They were often single mothers with a lot of kids. But they did not come to our clinic. They were afraid that their husbands might not like it, that it is a racket or that we intended genocide of the blacks. Also, the Catholic opposition set up all kind of difficulties. After two years we gave up.

Then, in 1965, a minister, *Rev. Keim* of the Church of the Brethren and chairman of the Social Action Committee of the Council of Churches, announced in the newspaper a meeting to set up a birth control clinic. I had to teach that evening and asked *Ernest* to go. Nobody of the old group of the 1950's was there. So I went to *Rev. Keim* the next day and gave him a list of all the people who showed interest in our earlier endeavors. He called a second meeting and invited them all personally and we were off to a good start. We had 300 patients the first year; 20 years later we had 6,000 patients. We had to move several times, from the outpatients' department at Methodist Hospital to rented facilities on S. W. Jefferson and Liberty St. to our own house on N. E. Jefferson. In 1985, we had a big 20th anniversary celebration and with many others I was honored, too. That it was such a wonderful success story is due in a large part to the two excellent executive directors we had over the years, *Joan Crisswell* and *Joyce Harant*.

None of us *Isings* has been seriously ill so far (1986). I have trouble with my eyes. The right one went blind from glaucoma in 1970. The left one had to be operated on to open an outlet for the pressure-exerting fluid behind the eye. It happened just in the middle of a semester when I was called back at age 76 to help out with a class on History of Economic Thought and created for me a rather stressful situation. In 1984 I underwent a cataract operation which restored the brightness of colors around me and since then I have had no trouble with my eye and hope it will serve me well for the rest of my life, with the help of my good *Dr. Tom Wyman*.

We skated once a week until *Ernest* was 80 and I 78. In 1980, the *Owens Ice Arena* was opened with a big show. *Dorothy Hamil*, an Olympic Gold Medal Winner, was the star, and *Ernest* and I were two little stars. We danced the Dutch waltz around the rink while in the center eight 6-year olds did some figures and *Jimmy Stuffings* (78) skated in his wooden Dutch skates. The announcer introduced us thus: "From 6 years old to 80 years young!" But this was our swan

song on the ice. There is arthritis in the knees and the legs are too weak for skating. Not for hiking, though, and not for swimming. We still swim 20 lengths in the Bradley pool 5 times a week.

Between visiting all the 50 states of the U. S., we tried to see as much of this wonderful world as possible. We visited all West-European states, also Russia and Usbekistan, Turkey, Israel, Egypt, Rhodesia, South and S. W. Africa, Japan, China and Taiwan, Hongkong and Bangkok, India and Nepal, Australia and New Zealand, Tahiti and Fiji. Only in the Carribean and South America we have never been.

When Chuck and Ralph were little they often spent Christmas and Easter vacations with us. They made friends with the kids in the neighborhood and played with them outside. In summer we took them along on our trips. At age 7, Chuck was with us in Natchez and Vicksburg, Miss., when the azaleas were in bloom. In Bellingrath Gardens the news reached us that Carol's father, Charles Sawyer, had died. Chuck loved his maternal grandfather dearly and for 15 or 20 minutes he cried loud and sobbed in uncontrollable pain. Eventually we took him to the Mexican Gulf and the new experience of huge waves rolling onto the beach and he throwing himself into them excited his young mind enough to subdue the sorrow. In 1970 we took him along to Florida. He will never forget that in Cypress Gardens we took a picture of him with two alligators without a fence between him and them. Ralph came with us to the Black Hills to see Mt. Rushmore and freely roaming herds of buffaloes. Chuck went with us to Yellowstone Park when he was 13. Ralph saw his first big ocean waves with amazement and jubilation in San Francisco and built sand castles which the advancing tide of the Pacific destroyed again and again. He felt "gypped" twice on this 6-week trip to the west, first when we did not go up to Hearst Castle for lack of time and then when we did not hike down to the bottom of Grand Canyon because we were no longer able to climb back up for 9 hours as we had done with Tom 20 years earlier. I hope so much that some day he will do these things on his own. When Ralph was 13 he went to the Smokies and Washington, D.C., with us, a trip which his mother called "superduper" for him. We had great joy showing them how beautiful America is and hope that we planted lasting impressions on their young minds.

Our lives have spanned most of the 20th century, and during our 85 or so years we have seen enormous changes. We took them in stride and adjusted to them. But we also witnessed terrible upheavals and turmoil. It was through no merit of our own, but through sheer good luck and the help of friends that we got through it unharmed. We lost many lovely things, our beautiful furniture made especially for us by Dickeroff in Bochum, 2,000 precious books, works of art and a position that had promised security - and we lost our home and our homeland. But all this was not really important. What was important was that we were never separated, that *Ernest* was never in a concentration camp or sent into the war and that *Tom* grew up poor - it is true - but unscathed by the terrible events of his young years. Although born in Luxembourg by German parents he is a full-fledged American, who still speaks and understands German. I wished, though, he could have had 10 years of education in German culture and in history of Western civilization. For I, myself, am very grateful to be deeply steeped in German history and culture and on top of it to have become well acquainted with American values and traditions.

I have no grudge against my old homeland, and I cannot blame the new generation for what their fathers did. Fate punished and rewarded. Those who followed *Hitler* enthusiastically paid heavily for their blindness. They died by the thousands during the war, suffered defeat, loss of their Eastern territory and the division of their country in two hostile parts, while all the painful events that happened to us turned out to be blessings in disguise.

Appendix I

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An Introduction to the Ising Model

First page of a 23 page article.

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Introduction

This article is an invitation, or advertisement, for readers to work on a problem which is apparently very difficult, yet certainly extremely important. The problem is known generically as the *Ising model*, named after Ernst Ising, who did the first work on it in the early 1920s. Although unpromising in its initial results, the Ising model has turned out to be an exceptionally rich idea. The number of papers written on the subject is staggering; the number which remain to be written is conceivably even more staggering.

The Ising model is concerned with the physics of phase transitions, which occur when a small change in a parameter such as temperature or pressure causes a large-scale, *qualitative* change in the state of a system. Phase transitions are common in physics and familiar in everyday life: we see one, for instance, whenever the temperature drops below 32°F, and another whenever we put a kettle of water on the stove. Other examples include the formation of binary alloys and the phenomenon of ferromagnetism. The latter is also of interest historically: an understanding of ferromagnetism—and especially “spontaneous magnetization”—was the original purpose of the Ising model and the subject of Ising’s doctoral dissertation. Partly for this historical significance, we shall use ferromagnetism as a reference point later on for interpreting various features of the model.

In spite of their familiarity, phase transitions are not well understood. One purpose of the Ising model is to explain how short-range interactions between, say, molecules in a crystal give rise to long-range, correlative behavior, and to predict in some sense the potential for a phase transition. The Ising model has also been applied to problems in chemistry, molecular biology, and other areas where “cooperative” behavior of large systems is studied. These applications are possible because the Ising model can be formulated as a *mathematical* problem. Although we shall refer frequently to the physics of ferromagnetism and use language from statistical mechanics, it is the mathematical aspects of the model which will concern us in this article. In particular we shall see that the Ising model has a combinatorial interpretation which is powerful enough in itself to establish some of the basic results concerning phase transitions. There are many other approaches and aspects to the

etc.

Stand together in Peace and Harmony

A 90 year old Duisburg-^{born} woman reports from Florida about her youth.

She is 90 years old, lives in Miami and still bathes regularly in the Atlantic Ocean. She spends the late evening of her life lovingly surrounded by family and friends. By chance - an inquiry of her son Dr. Ernest Ising, who also lives in the United States - we learned about the ups and downs of a woman whose path led from the old continent to the other end of the world. Would she perhaps report about her memories? Our request was gladly fulfilled. Thekla Ising, surely not unknown to older citizens of this community, wrote to us. In simple, artless words that nevertheless often touched our hearts she tells about the past: of an unburdened childhood, of the close coherence of her family, of the patriarchally ordered day in a business establishment of the turn of the century and of the written testament of her mother which demonstrates depth of soul and practical wisdom. From this report, in whose composition Dr. Ernest Ising assisted his mother with a sympathetic hand, it becomes clear that the American citizen of Duisburg descent has not forgotten her home town, but kept it in kind remembrance in spite of all the horrors that have happened. In this sense the letter has a special importance at Easter time which exhorts us to self-examination and heart searching.

"90 years ago I was born as the daughter of Emanuel Loewe. I had three older brothers, Max, Siegfried and Philipp. After me came my sister Bertha and my brother Paul. We lived close to Kaiserstrasse, not far from Poststrasse, in a large house that was narrower in the back. There was the department store E. Loewe, formerly Philipp Freudenberg. Philipp was my mother's brother. He had founded a very successful business enterprise in Elberfeld. Later he took over the store of Hermann Gerson in Berlin which was in financial difficulties, and later also the "Kaiserbazar" and developed both under the name of Hermann Gerson into one of the best known and most elegant Berlin clothing stores.

All at a long Table

My father's store was a patriarchal enterprise. The salesladies and apprentices lived in the house and ate with the family at a long table, ca. 40 persons; the "ladies" at one end, the apprentices at the other and in the middle the family. The male persons lived and ate outside. We ate in two groups since always some of the staff had to remain in the store.

The store was closed at 3pm, but before Christmas it was open until 10pm. I still see my father drink his beer in the store. On these evenings my mother did not go into the store, because then the poorer clientele came and it troubled her to take money from them.

Also on Sundays the store was open. Then often half of the

employees who were off-duty walked with the children into the woods in the morning. Since my mother also worked in the store, we children often rode in a cab to the Kaiserberg (Emperor Mountain), where we played in the so-called "Underworld" under the supervision of a governess. Later there was a horse-drawn coach up to the Manning Inn. With a horse-drawn coach we also often went to swim in the Ruhr River. Once, in a bittercold winter, we crossed the Rhine on foot near Ruhrort. I was impressed by the high chunks of ice through which a passage had been cut.

Across from our store was the Böllert butcher shop and the Stöcker inn. A little farther on, at the street corner, you could get good bretzels in a bakery. From cows, which were in the stable in winter and in summer grazed outside Schwanentor (Swan Gate), we often fetched fresh milk.

When Cow Street was widened and lengthened up to Beck Street, my father built a new establishment on Cow Street across from the end of Post Street. My brothers Max and Siegfried moved with their families into the upper floors of the store building while my parents moved into a spacious house on Kühlenwall. This house had a beautiful deep garden. My sister Bertha, who besides me is the only living direct descendant of Emanuel Leawe, cried bitterly when half of the yard fell victim to a street, the Pulverweg (Powder Road), which led from the Kühlenwall to the new City Theater.

My mother was a wonderful woman of great practical wisdom. After her death in 1934 the following fare-well letter was found. "To my children! My whole life always had the purpose of caring for you and your happiness. It is now your duty to take care of your children, to give them only the best example in every respect, especially that of peace and harmony in the family, of love for each other and of mutual help. Keep away any misunderstanding; open discussion without ill-will and prejudice heals everything. Consider this as my heart's last wish which you will fulfill out of love for me. Stand together sincerely just as you wish that your children will stand together. Give your children a good practical education to prepare them for the struggle of life. They must become independent, able to stand on their own two feet so that, when they get into a difficult situation in their lives, they will thank you a thousand times that you gave them an independent and practical outlook on life. One last request I have for you, my beloved children: do not mourn for me. Your love has made me happy. You were for me the best children. Keep for me a loving memory and follow my advice. Thereby you will honor me in your thoughts better than by pain and sorrow for me who has ended her life's course. The death of an old mother is so much a necessity that it must be accepted calmly. I go to rest and you return to your duties, to your work and - so God will - to happiness in life. Try to be cheerful always, also for the sake of your children who are always so much happier with cheerful parents. Nothing did I once love more than your childlike laughter."

I am now living with my son-in-law, the cellist Hermann Busch, and my daughter in Miami, Florida. As most American cities Miami is

3
widely stretched out, for most families live in one-family homes surrounded by green yards with palm trees and southern plants. Many people come here in winter, especially at Christmas, in order to bathe in sun and ocean. My daughter and I go regularly swimming in the Sea, at least once a week.

In summer, when it is very hot in Miami, we always go to Vermont, where my son-in-law teaches at the music school of Marlboro which was founded by Adolf Busch and Rudolf Serkin. In Southern Vermont, in "the land of the green mountains", lies, away from the big traffic, hidden in woods and mountains, the Marlboro College. There, every summer ca. 80 artists from all over the world, most of them professionally active and well known, gather to perfect themselves in their art under the guidance of Rudolf Serkin. On weekends there are public concerts. There is probably no other place where such good chamber music is being performed. During the last years the great cellist Pablo Casals has actively participated in the music-making there.

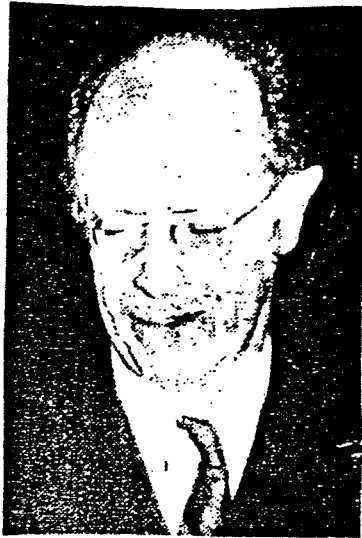
To my beautiful memories of Duisburg belongs the first appearance of Rudolf Serkin in the old "Tonhalle". At that time he was so shy that only very unwillingly did he take a bow after the concert.

The actor Willi Busch, still well known to older visitors of the theater, came to our house in Bochum after World War I to give speech lessons to my son. At that time the Duisburg City Theater which also played in Bochum stood under the direction of Saladin Schmid. Later Hermann Busch and his parents also came to Bochum. We became close friends and my daughter married Hermann Busch who later became the cellist of the Busch-Quartett which his brother Adolf had founded. His oldest brother was the famous conductor Fritz Busch.

The department store E. Loewe was, as all Jewish businesses, "Aryanized" during the Hitler regime. At that time my brother Siegfried was the only owner. He and his wife Hedwig perished in the concentration camp of Theresienstadt. My brother Max had died before the Hitler era, his health having suffered from the hardships of World War I.

My sister Bertha and her husband Harry Epstein, the co-owner of Cohen and Epstein, emigrated to Jerusalem. My husband and I had the opportunity, in 1939, to emigrate to Basle, Switzerland, where Adolf and Hermann Busch and other members of the Busch-Quartett lived at that time. Before America joined the Allied forces in WW II the Busch-Quartett moved to New York.

Only after the death of my husband in 1954 did I move to the United States following the urgent entreaties of my children. In 1963 I became an American citizen.



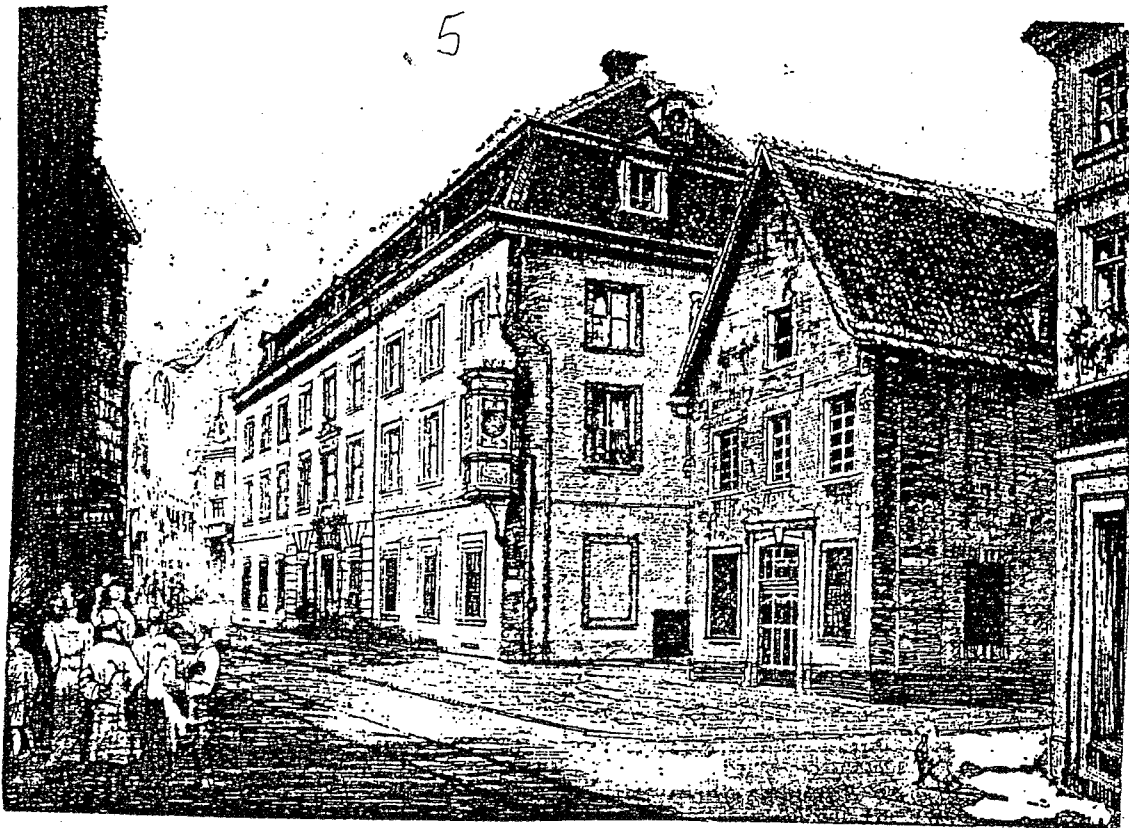
Rudolf Serkin ,
the world-famous pianist,
is related to the family
by marriage.



From Miami, Florida, where she spends the evening of her life protected by her family and faithful friends, we received this photo of Thekla Ising. She has a greatgrandson in her lap. In spite of all the terrible things that happened after 1933 she has not forgotten her home town.

How it was

The department store E. Loewe, in which the author of our article lived with her family for many years, stood at the end of Cow Street, about where the Kepa store is located today, that is in the center of Duisburg old town. For the merchant Franz Baader, for many years the owner of the Fanning department store which was dissolved last year, the name Loewe is still familiar. He is now living in retirement at the outskirts of Duisburg and remembers especially Siegfried Loewe who was a brother of Thekla Ising, born Loewe. Also born Loewe was the wife of the merchant Dr. Epstein, co-owner of the firm Conen and Epstein, from which later the house Fanning emerged. Franz Baader says, "The department store Loewe has specialized in textiles and had a very good reputation. The family stood in high regard with the citizens." Of the building the bombs of the last war have left nothing.



In such an idyllic shape does Thekla Ising, born Loewe, remember Cow Street whose beginning was marked by the beautiful Boeninger house with the clock turret. On the left side of the other end of Cow Street stood the department store Loewe, in which the former Duisburg lady spent happy years with parents and siblings.



Near Post Street, which can be seen on this photo, stood the house in which the author of our story was born, to be precise in Kaiser Street, a very short street which later was called Holz (Wood) Lane. The old Post Office still had the curious hood with the numerous porcellan bells and telephone wires.

It is the year 2001. 16 years have passed since I finished my memoirs. Many happy and sad things have happened and I want to tell about them.

In 1985 we still could travel and we did. We traveled in Europe and America. In 1989 we undertook the last car trip on our own. For 6 weeks we went to the East to see Lotte in Haverford, PA., friends in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Upper New York and attend the Music Festival in Marlboro, Vt. We stayed home in 1990 and 1991.

In 1992, Tom and Carol took us and Ernest's sister Lotte Busch along on a week long cruise to Alaska: whit another week driving to Denali and the Kenai Peninsula. The highlight was an unforgettable 4-hour boat ride on Resurrection Bay by Seward. Next year, 1993, again with Tom and Carol, we went to Nova Scotia for a week and then on a week long cruise on the St. Lawrence Seaway. In January 1995, we went to San Juan to start a 10 day Panama Canal Cruise with 6 days added in Acapulco, Mexico. Our last trip was to the south, in the spring of 1996: New Orleans (on St. Patrick's day) and 7 magnificent Ante-Bellum mansions along the Mississippi River. The azaleas were in bloom and gorgeous. Ernest had already to be taken around in a wheelchair, but he could enjoy it all with us.

While old age was creeping up on us and limiting us, a few nice things besides our trips were happening.

There was Ernest's 90th birthday, on May 10, 1990. Bradley University gave him a reception with punch and cake in the afternoon at the Student Center to which 60 people came. In the evening, 32 people were invited for dinner at the Faculty room above the theater in the Hartmann Center. It was a rather stiff affair. We sat at a table in the center with Lotte Busch and grandson Charles (Tom and Carol came a few days later on the weekend) and Dr. and Mrs. Alan Cannon who had arranged the whole affair. Our guests sat at two tables to the right and two tables to the left of us. We could not talk with each other. Kal Goldberg gave a speech as Provost and John Sathoff as chairman of the Physics Department. On the following Saturday, we celebrated at home with kids and friends.

My 90th birthday party, on February 2, 1992, was much nicer. Pat Howard and a few other faculty wives had planned a surprise party. They reserved 1/3 of the Student Center ballroom with splendid chandeliers. Bradley University provided the hors d'oeuvres and drinks. Theo Jean and Les Kenyon brought the cake and they invited everybody from the university, from the UU church, from Planned Parenthood, from the Book Club and whomever I suggested (they had to let me know about it). It was a Sunday and Tom, Carol and Ralph were there. People sat where ever they wanted. They moved around, chatted with each other, laughed and were joyful. Kal Goldberg spoke for the University and gave me a clock, which now sits on our mantle shelf. Norma Kottemann spoke for Planned Parenthood. John Kenny for the Physics Department and Paul Sawyer quoted Shakespeare just as a friend. When I spoke, I mentioned that we had gone through hard times in Germany, but that things had turned out well for us in America. We sometimes quoted ironically the sentence that Hitler had ordered to be put over the entrance of factories: "*We thank the Fuehrer that we work here,*" (He threw us out of Germany.)

At Ernest's 95th birthday, we only had a luncheon with the physicists at the home of Beverly Williams, the secretary of the Physics Department, who lives close to the university. But Ernest's 97th birthday was a big affair and very nice. Here is a report of it in the Bradley Hilltopics of July 1997:

ISING CONFERENCE ROOM IS DEDICATED

A new conference room in Olin Hall has been dedicated in honor of Dr. Ernest Ising Professor of Physics, Emeritus. The new Ising Conference Room was dedicated on May 8, just two days before Dr. Ising's 97th birthday. Student recipients of the Ising Scholarship escorted Drs. Ernest and Jane Ising from their home near campus to the dedication. As Dr. Ising opened the door to the conference room, a string trio consisting of Dr. Allen Cannon, professor of music, emeritus, Dr. Sam Fan, assistant professor of biology, and Frances Macmillan began to play. The room (Olin 18) is carpeted and furnished with a conference table that seats 12. A large photograph of Dr. Ising, the original article on the Ising Model published in 1925 and other information is displayed in the room. The room will be used for faculty meetings, seminars and meetings with prospective students. Gifts from physics alumni, faculty and friends made the renovation possible. Dr. Ising taught physics at Bradley for 28 years beginning 1948 shortly after emigrating from Germany. The mathematically complex Ising Model describes ferromagnetic phase transitions. It is widely cited in scientific literature."

On the wall across the door, to the left side of Ernest's picture, are two small frames. One contains his curriculum vitae, the other a statement what the Ising Model says in the words of Laura Robinson, a BU student, who had written a study of the Ising Model under the guidance of Prof. Kelly Roos for an English class assignment.

60 people came, among others President John Brazil. As a birthday gift, the department gave Ernest an aquarell painting by Dean Howard of Olin Hall where the Ising Conference Room is located, a copy of the one that is hanging in the Ising Room.

During these years our grandsons got married. In 1988, Charles married Nicole, but after three years she divorced him. He was terribly hurt. He found new companions, but is shy of marrying. After 4 years with the Marines, he had found a job as an inspector of containers on their sea-worthiness. He was in Long Beach, CA and then in Seattle, WA. When his firm folded, he lost his job. He now works as an engineer on a freighter that takes goods to Unalaska on one of the Aleutian Islands and returns to Seattle with up to 30 containers of frozen fish. Ralph was more academically inclined. He got a bachelor's degree from Governor's State University in Chicago. He specializes in working with computers, changing jobs a few times to get more responsible assignments and better He currently has a well-paid position as a regional supervisor. In 1994, he married Wendy Willoughby. Their first son, Jacob, was born in 1995, their second son, Joseph, in 1997 and finally a daughter, Rebecca, on December 1, 2000. My two great-grandsons are both well-behaved, intelligent, darling little boys and the great granddaughter is a joy to hold. Ralph and Wendy gave up smoking soon after Jake's birth - with my help. Carol and Tom

had tried in vain for a year to make them quit. Then Ralph needed some money and asked me for help. I told him, "Not a penny as long as you smoke". He hung up the phone and never lit a cigarette again. It took Wendy two more weeks, then she, too, quit. I am very proud of this achievement. Charles is godfather of Joseph and very interested in his nephews and niece.

After Christmas 1996, Ernest had to go to the hospital for observation and when he came out early in January, he could no longer walk without a walker. I made a bed for him on the couch in the dining room and one for me on two benches in the living room to avoid the stairs. Ernest gradually got weaker and weaker. With the help of Mary and Tom Cummings and a wheelchair, we took him to concerts and the opera. But eventually it became too strenuous and he gave up, also the Book Club. He still attended the three big Christmas parties of 1997, at the Kenyons, the Roths and the Farmers.

Most of the time he sat at his desk reading, sleeping a bit in between. I liked to see him sitting there, peacefully, without pain. When I helped him to go to bed, he often said, "*What would I do without you?*" Once he wrote to his sister: "*If I would not have my Hanna, I would be bad off.*" Often he said, "*Ich kann nicht mehr*" (I can't go on) and twice he said, "I wished I could die." For many years (25 to 30), he had gotten monthly, later every three month Lupron injections, but still the prostate cancer spread. The PHA which measures the spread had gone up from 8 to 15 to 30 to 125 to 300 and finally to 700. Food did not taste very good any more and was difficult to swallow. Often the tears were coming. Finally, on Friday, May 8, 1998, he could not get up from his bed any more. I called the Hospice people and a nurse and a social worker came very quickly. They ordered a hospital bed for Ernest. And while this was brought in, Lotte arrived from Haverford, PA, to be present at her brother's 98th birthday on Sunday. On Saturday, a nurse's aid came to wash Ernest thoroughly, and then he gradually relapsed into unconsciousness. When Tom and Carol came on Sunday, I don't know if he still recognized them. Peggy and Hap Cornelius came with food as a birthday present. Our neighbors, the Neuberts, came with a birthday cake. Others came and sat in the living room. But Ernest did not know. He called me once and asked me, "*Turn the page in my book. I have one more page to read.*" Later he told me that there were people at the door. And these were his last words. In the evening, he became very fidgety, and on the advice of Hospice, I gave him 2 sleeping pills. He calmed down and slept until Monday morning. Then the breathing became harsh and at 9:30 it stopped. My dear Ernest, my companion of 67 years had died.

I called Tom and then Leslie Kenyon who came over right away and stayed all day. He called the funeral company (Davison and Fulton) and the physics department, and Dr. Stutz and the secretary Beverly Williams came over right away. Michael Brown of the UU Church came and we arranged for a memorial service to be held on Sunday, May 17, at 3pm. I am a long-time member of the UU Church, but Ernest never was, although he would have fit there very well. He said, "*I have suffered as a Jew. I do not want to join a 'church'*". But he also did not join the Temple or the synagogue.

Grandson Charles came from Seattle to Chicago and to Peoria on Saturday, May 16. We drove to Grandview Drive and sat there for an hour, overlooking the beautiful Illinois valley and talked. He wanted to move to Peoria so he could take care of me. But I convinced him that I could take care of myself and that he should not give up his job in Seattle.

150 people came to the Memorial Service and 9 people spoke. Rev. Brown spoke about Ernest's "extraordinary" life, the others about their memory of him: Tom (very good), grandsons Charles (with a Mohawk haircut) and Ralph (especially good), Dr. Kenny and Dr. Sathoff from the Physics Department, Joyce Harant from Planned Parenthood, Les Kenyon as a friend. The last one was Doris Kolb from the Chemistry Department who had made a poem which is so good, I want to preserve it here.

**In Memory of
Ernest Ising**

*He was a scientist, in every sense-
Great curiosity...Intelligence...
Active, industrious, and energetic.
He came up with a model of magnetic
Phenomena. In many people's eyes
He really should have won the Nobel Prize.
But though he missed that special bit of fame,
World physicists all recognize his name!*

*He was a teacher, skillful in his craft.
Though serious, he smiled a lot and laughed.
His class would watch with eager expectation
As he would carry out each demonstration.
He worked with wires, and batteries, and toys,
Sharing excitement with the girls and boys.
Long after students took his Physics section,
They still remember him with much affection.*

*He was a gentleman, caring and kind,
an agile body and an active mind.
A loving husband, father, grandfather, friend.
His time was much too valuable to spend
On petty things. He'd rather swim or skate,
Read, practice yoga, or just contemplate.
Married to Jane for sixty-seven years
They shared so very many joys...and tears.*

*Like an eternal flame lit long ago,
Four score and eighteen years his radiant glow
Has brightened up that world he cared about.
Then, quietly, that lovely flame... went out.*

Doris Kolb
May 17, 1998

Ernest's body was cremated and later, in summer, when Tom and Carol were in Peoria, we went to Bradley Park and sprinkled the ashes along a half circle of bushes behind three benches where Ernest and I often sat on Sunday afternoons.

Besides Ernest's obituary an editorial and two articles appeared in the local newspaper. Barbara Mantz Drake ended her editorial by saying that *"liberal democracy and freedom of religion and speech and the right of all people to be treated justly is our particular genius and has brought here some of the world's finest people, chased out of their homelands by the world's biggest fools. It is a great service when somebody points out our particular genius, as the Isings have, by choosing to live among us."* In one of the other articles a student is quoted who was working nights and fell asleep in his 8 am physics class. *"I was sitting in the front row and he woke me up with an electric charge from a battery. That's the way he energized his students. He just absolutely turned his students on."*

I got many sympathy letters. One, shakily hand-written, was different. *"Dear Mrs. Ising, I was one of your husband's pupils at Bradley in 1948. He was truly a remarkable and unassuming teacher. His smile and approach to his work made every pupil achieve beyond his or her expectations. He will not only be remembered by me, but by hundreds of others. Horace Payton and family."*

All this, of course, makes me very happy.

The Institute of Physics at the University of Maryland decided that everything concerning the Ising model should be collected at the library of Bradley University. So, I gave them all I had about Ernest, above all his original Doctors thesis plus the 6-page publication in the Zeitschrift fuer Physik, 1925, and all else I had, photos, articles, books.

But now, I am alone and that is much harder than I had expected. I thought of myself as a strong, energetic person. But without Ernest I feel incomplete, lost, life is no longer happiness in itself. The house is empty. There is no one there to talk to, to share news with, to hug and kiss occasionally. Our friends are wonderful and very helpful, the Kenyons, Cummings, Sawyers, Elli Hansen and others. Tom calls about twice a week.

In September 1998, Dick and Trudy Schultz invited me to join them and Trudy's mother Lotte Busch (Ernest's sister) on a trip to Martha's Vineyard and to Vermont where they own a house and where the fall coloring was just most brilliant. But this nice vacation had an unfortunate ending. We went to hear a Bach Passion directed by Blanche Moyse in Marlboro and sat in one of the last rows which were a bit raised. Upon leaving, I forgot to step down into the aisle, fell and broke my left thigh. A very painful week in the Brattleboro Hospital, followed by two more weeks of therapy in a nursing home across the street. Tom and Carol came, stayed a week at Trudy and Dick's wonderful house and then

took me to their home in Homewood to recuperate. So 1998 was not a good year for me: in May I lost my husband and in October I broke my leg. I stayed in Homewood over Christmas and New Year until March 1999 - to avoid the snow. Since then I spend Christmas and January and February in Homewood.

- Christmas Day we always celebrated at Ralph's house. The last time I found out that Ralph's wife Wendy is a gifted painter. She showed me a copy of a Raphael like 'Madonna with Child' which was absolutely amazing. She is now taking classes once a week.

In 1999 all 9 Isings spent the Thanksgiving week on the Caribbean island of St. Lucia where Tom's brother-in-law Dennis Nardoni (who owns a golf course there) also came with 16 members of his family. We had a wonderful time there.

In February 2000, Tom had business in Orlando, FL. I went along and Tom and Carol took me to Merrill Island where the Cummings have a beautiful winter home. I stayed 9 days, while Carol and Tom visited Carol's mother on the Gulf coast. We visited the nearby most interesting Kennedy Space Center. Again in January 2001, I spent 10 days in Florida. This time I flew alone (!) to Fort Myers where the Sawyers have acquired a new winter home in a gated development, sunset on the Gulf of Mexico, visit to Sanibel Island and then 5 days with the Cummings on the Atlantic side. So, there are still some nice things to do although I am now a very old, a 99 year old woman. (Only the presidential elections of 2000 did not please me. Gore won the popular vote by 535,000 votes. George W. Bush was selected by the Supreme Court and became president. It does not seem right to me.)

Ernest's sister died, age 96, on October 5, 2000. I miss her very much because we were corresponding regularly. But I cannot be sad because she wanted to die and she had a wonderful death. She died in her sleep and had only two weeks before returned from a 3 week trip to Germany and Switzerland. On her last weekend, she had worked, as always, at the Bryn Mawr library. She had often asked me in her letters "*Don't you think we have lived long enough?*" And she did not go to get a flu shot in the hope to get the flu and die from it. Her death announcement said:

2-19-04 - 10-5-00

Lotte Ising Bush
widow of Hermann Bush, cellist
sister of Ernest Ising, physicist

The Ising Model.

The most wonderful thing that happened at the end of our lives is the development of the Ising Model. When we came to Peoria in 1948, Ernest found out that his doctor thesis "*Beitrag zur Theorie des Ferro - und Paramagnetismus*" (Contribution to the Theory of Ferro - and Paramagnetism) was mentioned in scientific journals. The model he had developed had become known as the Ising Model and is widely applied. His was a one-dimensional model. Prof. Lars Onsager had correctly calculated a two-dimensional model

and had received the Nobel Prize for it. Over the years, the Ising Model found an amazingly wide range of application and 700 or more articles using the Ising Model are now published every year.

In 1994, Dr. Kobe came into our lives and brought much joy with him. In December of that year, Ernest got a letter from Dr. Sigismund Kobe, professor of physics at the Technical University of Dresden, Germany. He wrote that for many years he had occupied himself with the Ising Model with never diminishing fascination, but never found much about its author or its history. He had found our address by chance: Ernest's name was mentioned on the radio in connection with an exhibit of the Caputh Boarding School at the Fach-Hochschule in Potsdam. From them he got our address. An eager letter-exchange followed, and in March 1996, Dr. Kobe visited us after attending a physicists' meeting in Athens, GA, and we became real friends. While here, he took the last, very good picture of Ernest.

When he teaches the Ising Model in his class, he always adds a political lesson on the stupidity of the Nazis to force valuable citizens to leave Germany. On Ernest's 95th birthday, he published a letter to him in the *Physikalische Blätter*. He attends physicists' meetings all over the world: Japan and China, Australia, Chile, Argentina, USA, Paris, many places in Germany and always speaks about the Ising Model and Ernest. He instigated an Ising meeting in Lvov, Ukraine, and they decided to have one every year.

Dr. Juergen Schuetz, son of a student friend of Ernest's in Hamburg and professor at the University of Muenster, reported to us about Dr. Kobe's lecture there. *"March 20, 1997: Dear Dr. and Mrs. Ising, I hasten to tell you about the grandiose lecture of Dr. Kobe on the Ising Model, yesterday and today... The interest in this subject was very great, the lecture hall was overcrowded, many people had to stand, the applause was great. Dr. Kobe understood very well to combine science, history of science, history of the time and personal data of the name giver. The speaker ended his report - although time was almost running out - by showing pictures of Caputh and Peoria. Too bad that my mother could not live to attend this great event. 13,000 articles have been published on the Ising Model since its publication in 1925 and 700 are now added every year. What a success!..."*

Dr. Kobe went to places where Ernest had lived: to Goethestrasse 18 in Bochum where Ernest grew up, although his parent's house had been destroyed during WWII. He went to the Boarding School in Caputh, now "The Ann Frank Children Home" and put his name and the last picture of Ernest in the guestbook. He looked up the house in Paretzerstrasse, Berlin-Wilmersdorf, where Ernest was arrested by the Gestapo in January, 1939.

When in summer of 1999 Dr. Kobe again attended a meeting in America, this time in Colorado, he came to Peoria again and visited me. He also looked up Tom and Carol, I happened to be there on that day, and together the four of us drove to Ralph with whom he had already been in e-mail contact. Now he knows the whole Ising family except Chuck.

An article by Barry Cipra in "Science" on 2 June 2000 says: *"For decades, the Holy Grail of statistical mechanics has been a mathematical problem known as the Ising model.*

Introduced in the 1920s by German physicist Ernst Ising, the Ising model is a powerful tool for studying phase transitions: the abrupt changes of state that occur, for instance, when ice melts or cooling iron becomes magnetic."

Prof. Somendra Bhattacharjee, Institute of Physics, Bhubaneswar, India, when informed of Ernest's death, wrote to Dr.Kobe: *"I feel sorry about the sad demise of Dr. Ising. Dr. E. Ising's contribution to physics can never be overemphasized and that simple model is still haunting scientists all over the world for its richness. No physics curriculum is complete without a discussion of the solution of the 1-D model."*

It was through Dr. Kobe's effort that Prof. Stauffer of the University of Cologne arranged an Ising Centennial Conference on July 15, 2000 in the city where Ernest was born 100 years ago. There were 13 speakers (their articles were later published in a book). A second Ising Centennial Conference took place in Bela Horizonte in Brazil on August 1-4, 2000. There were ca 95 people attending. Dr. Kobe was the chair and the first of 10 speakers. He wrote from there that it was a wonderful meeting with new and interesting contributions.

All this makes me very happy. I wished Ernest could know.

In a news release on April 24, 2000, the Sandia National Laboratory reported that their computational biologist Sorin Istrail has shown that a three-dimensional solution for the Ising Model can never be found. "Researchers who have tried read like a roll call of famous names in science and mathematics." The article closes by saying: "As for Ising whom Istrail describes as 'a genius', the young German-Jewish scientist was barred from teaching when Hitler came to power. The modeler was restricted to menial jobs and, though he survived World War II and taught afterwards in the United States, never published again."

I translated into English the six pages that Ernest had published of his doctoral thesis in the Zeitschrift für Physik in 1925. When I was in Florida in February, Tom Cummings went through it and made corrections and thus it was put on the Internet by our friend Uli Eger-Harsch in Augsburg, Germany.

In July, 2001, a list of "Famous Physicists" was published on the Internet. It covers four centuries, from 1600 to 2001. It contains 283 names. Galileo is number 2 and Ernest is on it also, one of 283 "famous physicists."