

Hans-Ludwig's Historical Biography

26 October 1934
Through
01 November 1958

by Bettina von Schweinitz

Introduction

In December 2023 I began to write my Papa's (Hans Ludwig von Schweinitz) memoirs for a writing club where I lived. These writings are derived from Papa's Autobiography and Biography that I wrote. The Autobiography was based on interviews, resumes, and writings by Papa. The Autobiography is based on facts as told by Papa. The Biography was based on the Autobiography along with my memories of tales told by Papa and also research material. The Biography still tries to stay with facts and is written in third person.

This document can be considered Historical Fiction and expand on Papa's Autobiography and Biography. The first-person narrative is used and dialog is included. The major events were actually experienced by Papa. The minor events may not have been experienced by Papa, but could have been. Since I was not present, the dialog is completely fictional. The dialog is being used to connect the events to surrounding historical events. Supporting photos and documents mentioned are in their original compendiums, autobiography, biography, or albums.

The Summary is a quick explanation of the major events that happened to Papa between 1934 and 1958. The chapters that follow provide more details.

Hans or Hans-Ludwig

So many of the male members of the family had Hans as their first name. From the time my Papa was born in 1934 until 1957 he was called Ludwig, his middle name. He did not use Hans until he was drafted in the US Air Force and he was required to use Hans as a first name. In this biography he is called Hans-Ludwig, or just Ludwig. Confusing, I know. What was more confusing is that whenever family from Germany would visit us in USA, they would call him Ludwig and his USA friends called him Hans.

Sources used

German Surrender 1945 Victor von Schweinitz 250317 compendium

Hans Autobio 23051911

Hans Bio WBLib Historical Fiction 250426 compendium

Hans Bio Writing Club 25051713 Compendium

Hans Emigration 1957 250612 compendium

Hans Letter GrossMutti 25053013 compendium

Meine Liebe Tante Lotte 25031702 compendium

Names of vS Family Members 250426

Hans-Ludwig's Historical Biography 1934-1958

Hans Family and Friends List Compendium 25060101

Sources still need to add

Hans Emigration Need to complete

Hans Biography 24031517

Helga's Autobiography

Alt Raudten

Photo Apprentice and labs

Old farmhouse

Albums

Education

Parents timeline

Table of Contents

Contents

Introduction	2
Hans or Hans-Ludwig	2
Sources used	2
Sources still need to add.....	3
Table of Contents.....	4
Summary 1934-1958.....	9
1934 Pre: Before Birth on 26 October 1934	10
Back Story of Family “Schweinitz”	10
Back Story of Estate Alt-Raudten	11
How the Estate Alt Raudten was Managed.....	12
Significant History Events before Hans-Ludwig’s birth October 1934.....	13
1934 Alt Raudten when Hans-Ludwig was born, October 1934.....	15
1934 October: Hans-Ludwig Birth 1934 October 1934.....	16
1934-1939:.....	16
1934-1939 Tales are in Biography Add to here	16
1939 September: Lebensraum	16
1939 September and October Add from Bio	16
1940 Summer: Appendicits.....	16
1941 July: Boarding School or Tutor?	19
1941 August: Going to School (Third Person)	21
1941 August: Going to School (First Person).....	23
1941 September: The Power of Candy (Third Person)	26
1941 September: The Power of Candy (First Person).....	28
1941 September: Ini Leaves for Swidnica.....	30
1941 October: Schoolmate versus Playmates	30
1941 December: Festivities.....	31
1942: Diphtheria	31

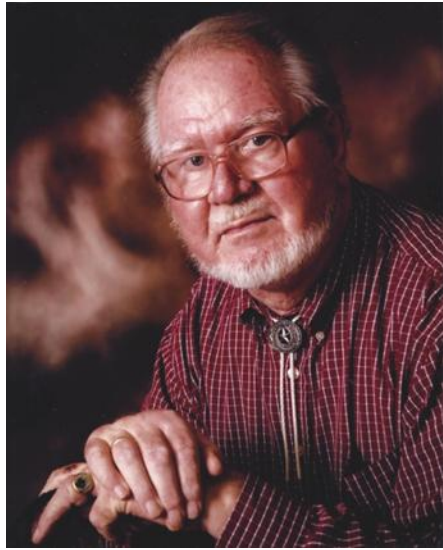
School Teacher Interrogation	31
Assassination Attempt on Hitler.....	32
New Governess, Ursula.....	32
Mutti and Diphtheria and Death	32
1943: Rebellion Part One	36
Stuttering	38
Teacher's Trousers.....	38
The Stone and the Steam Train	39
1944: Rebellion Part Two	39
Nazi SS Confiscating Weapons.....	40
Assassinations and Treason.....	41
More Family Leaving August 1944.....	42
Wedding 15 October 1944 Vati and Ursula.....	42
1945 The Flight Part One.....	43
1945 January 11-22 Leaving Alt Raudten	43
Life On the Road.....	46
1945 The Flight Part Two	47
On the road to Dresden	47
1945 February 13-15 Dresden, Germany	48
1945 The Flight Part Three	51
1945 after 13 th February: Leaving Dresden	51
Why West?	51
On the Road Again.....	52
Not Going to Make It.....	53
Fingernails	53
1945 March 19, Meine Liebe Tante Lotte Letter.....	54
Introduction	56
English Translation	56
Locations Mentioned with large map	59
Photos of Saalfeld	61

1945 The Flight Part Four: Feb-Apr, Saalfeld Germany.....	62
Introduction	62
Saalfeld, Germany	62
Boarding School in Wickersdorf.....	64
1945 March-April Lt Col Victor von Schweinitz and High Treason	65
Background.....	65
Oath to Adolf Hitler	66
Adam von Trott.....	67
Operation Sunrise in Italy	67
Instrument of Surrender Signed	68
1945 The Flight Part Five	70
Introduction	70
April Saalfeld Germany and the Train to Salzberg Austria.....	70
The Uniforms.....	71
Onkel Peter	73
Salzburg Arrival.....	74
1945 Flight Part 6	75
1945 April to 9 May, Salzburg Austria	75
9 May 1945 Celebration.....	78
1945 The Flight Part Seven.....	80
1945 Flight Part 7: 9 May to 14 July, Salzburg Austria.....	80
US Soldiers and Schwarze Soldiers.....	81
Schooling.....	82
Returning to Alt Raudten?	83
Schwarze Troops move in.....	83
1945 The Flight Part Eight-A.....	84
1945 Flight Part 8a: May - July, Salzburg Austria.....	84
Occupation and Dividing Germany	85
Ulla's Pregnancy and Monkey Butter.....	85
Saturday Baths and Sunday Meal.....	86

Trading for Vegetables.....	87
Becoming Farm Laborers.....	89
1945 The Flight Part Eight-B	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1945 Flight Part 8b: May - July, Salzburg Austria	90
1945 Flight: Sonderbefehl Special Order	98
1945 The Refugee Part 1.....	99
1945 Refugee Part 1: Mid July, Salzburg Austria to Munich: Expulsion and Train ride	99
1945 The Refugee Part 2: Niederseeon	103
1945 Refugee Part 2: Late July, Niederseeon	103
1945 The Refugee Part 2: Niederseeon	105
1945 Refugee Part 3: August, Niederseeon	105
1945 Refugee Part 4: September to 1946 February, Niederseeon.....	109
1946: February Letter from Grossmutti.....	110
English Translation of Letter.....	110
Town/Locations in Letter	115
Map.....	117
People Mentioned in Letter	118
Image of Letter	120
1946 Refugee Part 5: February to Dec, Niederseeon to Wiesbaden.....	124
1947 Refugee Part 6: Jan1947-15Mar1949 Wiesbaden	128
1947-1948 Opa Cab Driver ADD.....	131
1948 Hotel Tamara, Wiesbaden	131
1949 Refugee Part 7: Wiesbaden: Black Market 16Mar1949-Nov1949	135
1950 Self Supporting ADD	138
1950 Refugee Part 8: Wiesbaden: Apprenticeship Nov1949-May1950.....	138
1950 Refugee Part 9: Wiesbaden: Apprenticeship May1950-May1952	141
1952 Refugee Part 10: Wiesbaden: Photographer March1952-May1954	144
1952 Model add	148
1954 Refugee Part 11: Wiesbaden: Photographer May1954-Oct1955.....	148
1955 Refugee Part 12: Wiesbaden: Photographer Oct1955-Aug1956	153

1956 August: Auerbachs Keller in Leipzig	155
1956 Refugee Part 13: Wiesbaden: Photographer Aug1956-Mar1957	157
1956 December Hamburg	159
1957 Documents required to Emigrate to USA	160
Image of List of People not Acceptable	160
German Transcript	162
English Translation	165
Hans' List of Contacts 1957	169
Letter of Character and Reference	170
1956 Nov Immigration VISA Hans-Ludwig: Admitted 2 March 1957	172
1957 Emigrating Part 1: Germany to Chicago USA Mar1957-Oct1957	172
1957 US Air Force Part 1: Oct1957-Dec1958	175
1957 Oct-Nov Basic Training	175
1958 January to 1958 November Wisconsin	176
Appendix A: Alt Raudten Family Tree	179
Appendix B: Characters in Biography	180
From the Vati's von Schweinitz family tree	180
Mutti's family tree	182
Others – may be	182
Schools 1941-1957	184
Places lived pre 1958	185
Places worked pre 1957	186
Appendix C: Family Dates	187
The End	187

Summary 1934-1958



I was born on October 26, 1934, in Liegnitz, Poland, in the province of Silesia (Schlesien). My name is Hans Ludwig von Schweinitz. My father (Vati) was Hans Wilhelm von Schweinitz, my mother (Mutti) was neé Sigrid Freiin von Zedlitz-und von Leipe. I had a happy childhood living on the ancestral estate until I was 10 years old.

Our family lived on an estate called At Raudten. My Vati was the Lord and my Mutti was the Lady. I, being the oldest boy, was the hier apparent to the estate.

Then, in January 1945 when I was only 10 years old our world changed. Russian troops rolled into Silesia and our family, together with millions of other Germans, had to flee. In February 1945, we happened to be on the streets of Dresden Germany when Allied planes dropped phosphor bombs and over 33,000 people burnt to death. The smell of burnt flesh haunted me for the rest of my life.

Sometime in 1946, we eventually settled in a small cottage without water and plumbing in the woods near Wiesbaden Germany.

At the age of 14, I started a three-year apprenticeship as photographer and photo lab specialist. Afterwards, I worked as a Photographer in West Germany until I was 23 years old. My pay was so low, that I often went hungry. I starved enough that I contracted Tuberculosis (TB).

In March 1957, I emigrated out of Germany and went to the United States. By November 1957, I was drafted, despite being a German citizen and could barely speak English. I joined the US Air Force. In 1958, I met and married Helga Pörtner in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

1934 Pre: Before Birth on 26 October 1934

This was written in February 2024. The February submission was supposed to be about Diphtheria, but some of the readers were asking questions about the estate and family history. I wrote this section to provide some background on how estates operated using the Germanic system. Most of the Writing Club readers are American and have only been exposed to the Great British version of estates. I included some background on family history also.

The name Hans is used repeatedly in the family. By the time my Papa Hans-Ludwig was born there were at least three “Hans” living in the same household. To distinguish, they usually went by one of their middle names. But my Papa changed to using Hans when he emigrated to USA, so I am using the combined name of Hans-Ludwig.

Back Story of Family “Schweinitz”

Hans-Ludwig was born into the “Alt Raudten branch of the von Schweinitz” family. The family started with Hans Suentexas in 1350. Family members came into Silesia area around the 1300’s as settlers. They probably came from the northern mountains of what is now Italy, or maybe even Asia Minor. In the 1300’s the Black Plague was spreading out of Asia Minor and going north fast, and the family could have been looking for a safe heaven. The area which is now Silesia/Poland was spared the worst of the trifecta of the Black Plague. Eventually the family name became “Schweidnitz”, then “Schweinitz” and grew to over 160 estates in Silesia. Through the years the family tree split into branches as more and more sons survived into adulthood and began their own families. Silesia sometimes belonged to Prussia, Poland, Bohemia, Austria, and sometimes to Germany. Many famous Germans came from Silesia, such as Wernher von Braun, Richard Wagner, and Johann Sebastian Bach.

In August 1919, at the beginning of the Weimar Republic (1919–1933), Germany's first democratic constitution officially abolished royalty and nobility, and the respective legal privileges and immunities, but most were able to keep at least some of their estates. Former hereditary titles are permitted as part of the surname, and these surnames can then be inherited. The Schweinitz families in Silesia were allowed to keep their estates and surname (including the Graf, de, and von).

Before the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, the estates of Nobility had to live off the income of their land. The Treaty of Versailles allowed Nobility to mortgage their

land. Eventually many of these estates couldn't make the mortgage payments and the property was foreclosed and the families lost the estate. Many of the Schweinitz estates were lost to the family between WWI (The Great War) and WWII because of mismanagement of the mortgages. This was actually happening to Alt Raudten before Hans-Ludwig was born, tale to follow.

Back Story of Estate Alt-Raudten

At the location of Alt Raudten, the first documented settlement took place here around 1210. Land was in the middle of a jungle swamp area that was fallow and had to be cleared. The original manor house was built by the provincial governor Count von Nostitz around 1210. Later the estate passed to a Baron von Sack. The estate stayed with the von Sack family until late 1600's.

In 1688, Anna Maria von Sack married "Ludwig" von Schweinitz, and through this marriage Alt Raudten went from the von Sack family into the Klein Krichen branch of the von Schweinitz Family. Between 1790-1875, the Klein Krichen branch had three surviving sons and it was divided into three branches, with the second son inheriting the smaller estate of Alt Raudten. Estates being split between sons was unusual, but would sometimes occur if the original estate was large enough. The split was up to family discretion.

In about 1890 to 1897, Hans-Ludwig's Opa, Hans Hermann Heinrich "Wilhelm" von Schweinitz inherited the Alt Raudten estate. On 1 October 1897, "Wilhelm" married Hans-Ludwig's Oma, "Gabriele" von Tresckow. "Wilhelm" and "Gabriele" both were members of the court and like to lavishly entertain. They began to lease out the land and used that money to pay for their life style. After the 1919, the Treaty of Versailles allowed them to mortgage the estate, they also used that money for more parties. They also sold land which significantly reduced the size of the estate. In 1934 Alt Raudten estate was reduced to 377 Hectares (about 932 acres) with another 300 Hectares of leased forest land and the village (now called Stara Rudna).

By the mid 1920's they were about to lose what remained of estate of Alt Raudten due to debts. Luckily their first born son "Hans" Wilhelm Hermann Egon Tassilo von Schweinitz (born 21 December 1901 in Alt Raudten) was studying Agricultural Management at University. And they found a suitable wife that came from a family still with money. On 7 July 1927 their son "Hans" married "Sigrid" Frein von Zedlitz und Leipe. With "Sigrid's" money, the debts could be paid off and the estate was saved and stayed in the von Schweinitz family. With the marriage, their son "Hans" took over the finances and management of the estate.

“Hans” severely curtailed his parents spending towards lavish entertainment. Eleven months after the marriage on 3 April 1928, “Hans” and “Sigrid” had their first child, daughter “Ingrid” Sigrid von Schweinitz. Wilhelm and Gabriele were now Grandparents. But for Alt Raudten to stay with the ‘von Schweinitz’ family there needed to be a son to inherit. A son did not arrive for another six years, on 26 October 1934, Hans-Ludwig von Schweinitz was born. The estate was now securely in the ‘von Schweinitz’ family.

How the Estate Alt Raudten was Managed

In the 1200’s, the land in the estate of Alt Raudten is predominately swamp with plenty of iron in the soil. At that time, the land was considered worthless and there were very few inhabitants, farms, or trade routes. Canal and ditches were dug to drain the land. The water ran bright red with iron and the soil was black with nutrients.

Every estate developed with a different purpose, but there were several similarities such as being multi-generational, inheritance, workers, and security.

The estates were multi-generational. Any family member had the right to live in that estate. Family members would move away because of marriage, career pursuits, or ‘wanderlust’. And many would move back in because of death, retirement, career changes, safe heaven, or a multitude of reasons.

Also, the first born son usually inherited the estate. Families at that time had 10 or more children. And, the other members of the family, usually the sons, when they were not part of the estate, they would become officers in the military or became politically active. Another practice was for one son to become a member of the church as a safe heaven.

The estates also needed workers. These workers were not slaves or servants, or in servitude. The manager (heir) of the estate may establish how many workers and what type of workers are required in the estate, but the manager did not own the workers. Most workers were craftsman, tradesman or had skills who worked for the estate and also ran their own business. Once a worker was part of the estate, they were there for life, they could raise their own families, expand their business, and take on apprentices, and leave their business to their children as inheritance. The work that was done for the estate was often paid with a mixture of allotment, goods, food, and supplies. Payment for services was done more through the bartering system than through monetary paper.

The estate family felt an obligation to take care of their own family members, and to take care of all the worker's families. There was no retirement system or health care system before 1890's (Bismark Germany Unification). Therefor the village would also have workers that could provide for the health care of everybody and also support the infrastructure. Once a worker was part of the estate, they would always be useful, even if they had to change careers due to their circumstances. The workers were free to leave anytime for another estate or adventure, but like everywhere in Europe, it was best if they left with Letters of reference, Certificates of good standing (no unpaid debts both monetary and criminal) and if under the age of ascension (21 in Germany) then a letter of approval from a parent/guardian.

The estates were run like a business, and each estate was different. Some estate ran resorts, spa's, health institutions, conference centers, farms, retail trades (ceramics), and many other ventures that created money. By 1934, Hans-Ludwig's father "Hans" was managing the estate of Alt Raudten as a self-sufficient agricultural estate. The land consisted of rich black soil that was meters thick. This soil was ideal for potatoes and sugar beets. The land was rich in iron and the acres of forests produced fast growing timber trees. While growing, these trees provided ideal habitat for wildlife that could be harvested (hunted) for consumption or sold at market. There were several ponds on the estate and a thriving fishing farming industry was developed. Near the manor house there were barns full of breeding pigs which could be consumed on the estate or sold to market. Several acres around the village (Stara Rudna today) were cultivated by the workers as their own gardens. Other acres were used to raise crops such as wheat, rye, and corn (for animals).

Significant History Events before Hans-Ludwig's birth October 1934

Before Hans-Ludwig was born there were several significant historical events that would influence his life at Alt Raudten. Since Hans-Ludwig was so young, he may not have been aware of why certain decisions were being made by the adults and why his world was changing. Other events will be explained later. The effects these events will be made clearer during each of Hans-Ludwig's tales.

On 1919 June 28, in the final version of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany was required to give up all its colonies. With the exception of German Southwest Africa, where some descendants of German settlers still live today (the German Namibians), all Germans were required to leave the other colonies.

On 1932 February 25 Adolf Hitler became a German Citizen. He had been born in Austria and immigrated to Germany in 1913.

On 1933 January 30 Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor in the Weimar Republic.

On 1933 March 23 the Weimar Republic (1919-1933) of was replaced by German Reich.

On 1934 January 26 A 10-year German–Polish declaration of non-aggression is signed by Nazi Germany and the Second Polish Republic

On 1934 January 30. In Nazi Germany, the political power of federal states such as Prussia is substantially abolished by the "Law on the Reconstruction of the Reich" (Gesetz über den Neuaufbaudes Reiches). This is important because all power is now only in the federal government.

On 1934 June 30–July 2 – Night of the Long Knives in Germany: Nazis purge the Sturmabteilung (SA), the left-wing Strasserist faction of the Nazi Party, and prominent conservative anti-Nazis, in a series of political murders. Many of those murdered where from Noble families which had ties to the von Schweinitz families or were members of the von Schweinitz family.

On 1934 August 2 – Adolf Hitler becomes *Führer* of Germany, or head of state combined with that of Chancellor, following the death of President Paul von Hindenburg.

1934 Alt Raudten when Hans-Ludwig was born, October 1934

On 1934 October 26, Hans-Ludwig von Schweinitz was born into this world of Alt Raudten. He lived with his family in a Manor house big enough to be considered a castle (Schloss), it even had a moat and drawbridge. When Hans-Ludwig was born, his Vater (Father) "Hans" was 33 years old and his Mutti (Mother) "Sigrid" was 32 years old. Hans-Ludwig's only sibling was his sister "Ingrid" who was already 6 years old.

Since the Manor house was multi-generational, there were plenty of other family members in permanent residence.

Tante (Aunt, Sister of his Vater) Sigrid Melitta

Tante (Aunt, Sister of his Vater) Gabriele Annie Sophie Helene

Oma (Mother of his Vater) Gabriele von Tresckow

Opa (Father of his Vater) Hans Hermann Heinrich "Wilhelm" von Schweinitz

There were always other family members that would stay temporarily because they were traveling, need a vacation in the country, fleeing the war, were expelled, need a safe haven, and many other reasons. There was also a large house staff to care for the family's needs. Hans-Ludwig even had his own nanny. The staff members that helped to directly take care of the family such as butler, housemother, valet, Lady's Maid, and Nanny would reside in the Manor house. The others, such as the cook, kitchen staff, and maids would live in the village with their own families. These will be introduced in the following tales by Hans-Ludwig.

1934 October: Hans-Ludwig Birth 1934 October 1934

Hans-Ludwig von Schweinitz was born on October 26, 1934, to Schloss Alt Raudten, in the province of Silesia (Schlesien), Germany. His father was Hans „Wilhelm“ von Schweinitz, his mother was neé „Sigrid“ Freiin von Zedlitz-und-Leipe. In Hans-Ludwig's own words “On October 26th 1934, joy went through the estate of a wealthy land baron in Silesia; because, his wife had given birth to her first son and the continuation of the family seemed to be secured. I was this boy, who was expected to carry on the tradition and take the responsibility to manage the estate which had been a family possession for over five centuries.”

1934-1939:

1934-1939 Tales are in Biography Add to here

31 Oct 1934 Baptism

Toys

Playmates

Pets

Adults, relationship

The Park

Fields and Farming

Fish ponds

Manor House

Village and their sheep etc

1939 September: Lebensraum

On 1 September 1939, the Third Reich had implemented Hitler's Lebensraum initiative by invading the northern portion of Poland to annex Danzig area in order to reunite Germany with Prussia. Therefore, Great Britain declared war on Germany on 2 September 1939.

1939 September and October Add from Bio

1940 Summer: Appendicits

In the summer of 1940, Vati and Mutti were deciding whether I should begin my formal schooling with a tutor at home, or attend a boarding school.

I was excited about this change in my life. I was five years old, and in October I would become six years old. My older sister, Ini, was attending a boarding school in Liegnitz. She was home for the summer vacation. A couple of her school mates were also staying with us for the summer. She was five years older than me, and rarely spent much time with me. She preferred to spend time with her school

mates. They were often huddled together and giggling, or taking long walks in the park and giggling. One day, they were sitting on the veranda, so I sat with them. I asked my sister what it was like at boarding school. Boy, did that question set them off. All of them started to talk at the same time. Working together on assignments was 'so much fun', the teachers were either 'pretty' or 'handsome', planning events was 'challenging', and talking after lights-out was the 'best'. Seeing them talking together and seeing their friendship made me jealous. For the last 5 years I had playmates that came and went, but not really friends. I decided that I wanted to go to boarding school.

As I help my Mutti around the manor house and in the garden, I dropped hints. When I went out onto the estate grounds with Vati, I dropped more hints. During dinner with both Mutti and Vati, Mutti came right out and asked if I wanted to go to boarding school. I said yes, I wanted to have friends, I wanted to be challenged, I was ready. Vati said he did not believe boarding school was appropriate for the heir apparent for the first four years of schooling. For hundreds of years, the heir of the manor house was taught by tutors for the first four years of primary (Grundschule) schooling. Then the heir would go off to boarding school for further education (Hauptschule and beyond). The heir apparent must learn more than just traditional education, he must also learn the basics of how to run the estate. This additional education is provided by the tutor and the current Lord. This is the way Vati was taught and also Opa, and Gross-Opa. I pushed away my food in disappointment. I needed to come up with a stronger reason for going to boarding school.

I thought and thought. I was thinking so much, that I seemed to have lost my appetite. Mutti noticed that I was not eating, and asked if I would like to have the cook make one of my favorite dish. I could always eat boiled eggs mixed with butter. When the dish came, I could not eat anything. Vati said that something is not right when a growing boy does not eat. Mutti had our Doctor come to the manor house. He poked and prodded my abdomen. It was very tender in the lower region. He smelled my breath, and then very firmly told my parents that I must go to the hospital in Liegnitz immediately. We all bundled into our Automobile and drove to the hospital which was at least 40 kilometers away. I was getting scared and I could tell my parents were worried.

At the hospital, our Doctor had a quiet conversation with the Hospital Doctor, then with my parents. Mutti said that I must be brave and go with the Hospital Doctor. That they needed to operate on me to remove my pain. All will be okay afterwards. My Parents were always very truthful with me, so I believed them.

The Hospital Doctor was telling the staff and nurses what to do, and they seemed comfortable following his orders. I believed that the Hospital Doctor was the expert. I went with him, confident that I was in good hands.

Later, I woke up and Mutti was by my bedside. The operation had gone well. But the appendix had burst and there was a lot of infection. It was up to me to be brave and fight the infection. In 1940 there was no penicillin for civilians in Germany. Sulfa based drugs were available and helped to combat the infection. I spent a month in the hospital. Either Mutti or my Nanny would come to visit every day. Then I moved back home to convalesce. It was well into the early winter months of 1941 before I recovered from the operation.

1941 July: Boarding School or Tutor?

In summer of 1941, I was ready to start my campaign again for boarding school. I started with my Vati.

He sat me down, and said that I was ready to start me education right at that moment. He talked to me as if I was his partner in the business side of the estate. The war had been raging elsewhere for almost two years with little effect on the estate. The estate of Alt Raudten had been self-sufficient for hundreds of years. But the estate was having a personnel and cash flow problem. Many of the able-bodied adults from both the manor house and the village had left and were active in the war effort. They did not have a choice; if they did not volunteer, they would be drafted, or ‘picked-up’. The various governments were also demanding high payments (taxes) from all estates to pay for the war effort. Since Silesia was on the border of Germany and Poland, both governments were claiming sovereignty over the estate, both governments were demanding their taxes. The only cash crops that the estate produced was sugar beets and pigs. The cash they produced was not enough to cover two tax bills and therefor the estate was in financial difficulties.

I felt honored that my Vati was talking to me as if I was an adult. I wanted to show that I understood about the financial difficulties so I suggested “If boarding school is too expensive, maybe having a tutor would be cheaper?”

Vati countered, “A tutor would also cost extra money, money which the estate this year just does not have. We need another solution.”

I came up with an idea, “How about Onkel Ernst? [unmarried brother of my Vati] He would make a good tutor. He is already teaching me so many things about running this estate.”

Vati sighed, “Yes I agree, but Ernst needs to help me run this estate. He does not have the time to teach you all the basics such as reading, writing, and arithmetic. And there are so many other subjects that you need to learn. Learning how to run the estate is only a portion of your education.”

Then Vati dropped the bomb. “We have decided that you should attend the local village school.”

I was shocked. “Are you sure? I am not even allowed to play with the village children. Did Mutti agree with this?”

“Yes, Mutti and I made this decision together. I know that it is unusual, but these are unusual times. We are all having to adapt.” Vati said quietly.

I felt betrayed. For almost seven years, my parents would find suitable playmates for me, usually from members of our extended family. I was taught that I could not play with the village children, but to keep a distance and show respect because they would become the future workers on the estate. They would become the future knowledge, skill, and manpower that the estate needs to remain profitable. My world was starting to turn inside-out. “How am I going to attend school with the village boys and still be respected as the future Lord?”

Vati nodded his head, “Yes, that will be your new challenge. It will not be easy. You are going to have to be brave and figure out a solution. It won’t be easy and will take time. But we have no choice, there is no money for boarding school or a tutor.”

I knew I was beat. Even going to Mutti was not going to help. I told my Vati that I would be brave and accept the challenge. I could put the needs of the estate above my own personal desires.

1941 August: Going to School (Third Person)

This was my first submission to the Writing Club from my Papa's memoirs. I submitted it in December 2023. This memory was one of the first major turning points in Papa's life and I thought it was a memory that most readers could relate to.

The telling of this part of my Papa's life is taken from his own writings from Learning English classes, my own recollections of our talks, and from interviews.



Hans-Ludwig von Schweinitz was born on October 26, 1934, in Liegnitz, Germany, in the province of Silesia (Schlesien). His father was Hans Wilhelm von Schweinitz (von Tassilo), his mother was nee Siegrid Ingeborg Freiin von Zedlitz-und-Leipe. Up until his 6th year, Hans-Ludwig had a happy childhood living on the ancestral estate Schloss Alt-Raudten.

In August of 1941, Hans-Ludwig entered first grade. He was 7 years old. Normally schooling in Germany starts at age 6. His entry into school was delayed because he had contracted a burst appendix in the summer of 1940. In 1940 there was no penicillin or anti-biotics for civilians in Germany. It was well into the winter months of

1941 before Hans-Ludwig to recover from the operation. So, his schooling was delayed.

The estate of Alt Raudten had been self-sufficient for hundreds of years. But by the fall of 1941 the estate was having a personnel problem and a cash flow problem. Many of the able-bodied adults from both the manor house and the village had left and were active in the war effort. They did not have a choice; if you did not volunteer, you were drafted, or you were 'picked-up'. The various governments were also demanding high payments (taxes) from all estates to pay for the war effort. Since Silesia was on the border of Germany and Poland, both governments were claiming sovereignty over the estate, both governments were demanding their taxes. The only cash crop that the estate produced was sugar

beets and pigs. The cash they produced was not enough and the estate was in financial difficulties.

For hundreds of years, the children of the manor house were taught by tutors for the first four years of primary (Grundschule) schooling. Then the children would go off to boarding school for further education (Hauptschule and beyond). But now there was no money to pay for a tutor. The decision was made to send Hans-Ludwig to the public school in the village, where the local kids attended.

The village school had one teacher and one class room for all grade levels of schooling. The farm and village children went to this school for their first 4 years of primary education. Because of the war, there were also 'displaced' children from the cities. They had been sent out into the southern country side for safety from the armies and bombing in Northern Europe.

On the first day of school, Hans-Ludwig proudly received his cone of candies, mid-morning snack, and school supplies and walked to the village school. He was different from day one. He was the only child from the manor house, he was a year older than others in his grade, and he was a boy.

The other boys were merciless. The village and farm boys resented Hans-Ludwig because he was from the manor house and he was going to become the future manager of the estate. The city boys resented him because he represented the ruling families that were linked to the various governments that were at war and they blamed him for their 'displacement' from their families.

School was from 8am to midday, about 1pm. There was a pause for a mid-morning snack. School was over in time to return home for lunch. There was no school in the afternoon.

During the lessons the students would behave and treated each other with respect. The teacher would maintain control in the class room. But the fun would begin at snack time and on the way home. In the 1940's when children were at play, the adults would only provide general oversight and supervision, not micro-manage the children. The children made their own decisions and resolved their own issues. The children learned quickly exactly what they could get away with and how far they could take their behavior, before an Adult would become involved.

At snack time they would ignore Hans-Ludwig, so he ate alone. After school, as he walked back to the manor house, they would taunt him. While walking through

the village, there were still adults around, so the other children would only slightly taunt him. But between the village and manor house was a section of woods. There some of the boys would wait in hiding. Sometimes the boys would also hide in the woods also during the morning walk to school. Hans-Ludwig tried to give-back as much as they gave him. Still, this made walking to and from school very stressful. This taunting went on for weeks.

Stay tuned for next month's submission – How did Hans-Ludwig find a resolution to these issues? How did he convince the other children to let him eat with them? How did he stop the taunting?

1941 August: Going to School (First Person)



On the first day of school, I proudly received my "Schultüte" (school cone) of candies, mid-morning snack, and school supplies. I took the candies out and left them in my room. Vati walked with me to the village school. I was a year older than the other students that were entering first grade. They were around 6 years old, and I was almost 7 years old. My recovery from the appendicitis had cost me a year.

The village school had one teacher and one class room for four grade levels of schooling. The farm and village children went to this school for their first 4 years of primary education. Because of the war, there were also 'displaced' children from the cities. They had been sent out into the southern country side for safety from the armies and bombing in Northern Europe.

School was from 8am to midday, about 1pm. There was a pause for a mid-morning snack. School was over in time to return home for dinner [lunch to Americans]. There was no school in the afternoon. During the lessons we all behaved and treated each other with respect. The teacher maintained control in the class room.

My problem began on the way home. The other students walked towards the village. I turned down the road towards the manor house. Then I noticed that a few boys were following me. They started to yell insults. I could not tell if they

were village boys or displaced boys. I walked faster. They also sped up, but did not come closer, they just kept yelling at me. I finally made it to the drawbridge over the moot at the entrance to the manor house. The boys turned away and went back to the village.

At dinner we all sat down for our main daily meal. Everybody was seated at the table. There were several Grandparents, Tantes [Aunts] and Onkles [Uncles] and extended family members whom were living in the manor house. Sometimes there would also be various business managers from the estate and household staff sitting at the dinner table. The main subject for discussion usually concerned the daily business of the estate. But on this special day, my first day in school was the main subject.

My Mutti started the conversation by asking me “How was your first day in School?”

I concentrated my answer on all the new things that I learned and how knowledgeable the teacher was. I did not know how to explain that after school some boys were taunting me on the way home. Then Oma Gabi [Grandmother, mother of Vati] ask “How did the other boys treat you?”

I started with “I don’t think they liked me,” when Onkel Ernst spoke up,

“I still do not think this is a good idea. Sending him to the village school. The village and farm boys are going to be resentful because he will become their future Lord. The city boys will resent him because he represented the ruling families that are linked to the various governments that are at war and they blamed him for their ‘displacement’ from their families. Of course they are never going to accept him.” Trust Onkel Ernst to take my side.

Vati countered with “Ernst, our world is changing. He has to learn how to earn their respect and maybe even become friends. Just like the world changed between our parents and our generation, the world is changing again. Remember Oma and Opa [Grandfather, father to Vati], when you were in charge of this estate, it was all about your relationship to the court of Emperor Wilhelm II. Attending balls and hunting parties. Then the Great War happened and everything changed. You saw the change that was coming. You made sure that I was the first in the family to attend University and get a degree in Agricultural Business Management. Because, the estates changed to being run as a business. Now estates are all about making a profit and expanding. I now see another change coming and our son

needs to learn new skills and be ready. The class lines between the village and the manor house are beginning to blur.”

Oma Gabi was not finished, “So Hans-Ludwig, the other children did not like you?”

I was still processing what Vati and Onkel Ernst had said. I needed time to think. I did not want to start whining. So, I choose a safe answer, “It was just the first day. There was so much to learn. I did not have enough time to make friends. I will try again tomorrow.”

Vati seemed to like this answer. “That’s my boy. I know you are brave. I trust that you will find a solution.”

Yes, I had to do a lot of thinking.

1941 September: The Power of Candy (Third Person)

This was submitted in January 2024 to the writing club. The first submission was well understood by the readers. I continued to add explanations of the historical events that might have influenced Papa's memories. I am trying to make sure that I do not embellish the memories beyond what Papa would have remembered for his age at that time.

Hans-Ludwig von Schweinitz was born on October 26, 1934, in the province of Silesia (Schlesien) which at that time was part of Germany. Up until his 6th year, Hans had a happy childhood living on the ancestral estate Schloss Alt-Raudten.

In September of 1941, Hans-Ludwig entered first grade. He was 7 years old. Because the estate had financial problems, Hans-Ludwig had to attend the village one room school house instead of being tutor in the manor house. The other students resented him because he was going to be the future manager (Lord) of the estate. They taunted him mercilessly while in school. After school, Hans-Ludwig had to walk back to the manor house and they would chase him, threatening him with a beating if they caught him. This went on for weeks. Then Hans-Ludwig found a resolution.

Although Hans-Ludwig was only 7 years old, his father was already grooming Hans-Ludwig to become the manager of the estate. His father encouraged Hans-Ludwig to follow along while affairs of the estate were being resolved or discussed. Before leaving his office, his father would often fill his pockets with small items such as cigars or packages of preserved fruit/nuts. As his father walked around the estate and talked with the various workers, he would reward some of the best with a small item for a job well done. Hans-Ludwig witnessed how well these cigars or packages of fruit/nuts were received. Hans-Ludwig had an idea.

Hans-Ludwig went down into the kitchens to visit the cook. Manor House children were allowed to go 'downstairs' without any formal announcement and freely talk with the downstairs staff. He asked the cook, if he could have extra sweets, such as the preserved dried fruit or maybe some of the precious sweets? The dried fruit came from the estate's fruit trees, were dried, and then sprinkled with sugar granules. The sweets were hard candy, made from only sugar, flavoring and water. The sugar was from sugar beets that were grown in the estate fields. The cook asked Hans-Ludwig why he needed extra sweets. He told her that he

wanted to give them to his new friends at school. She thought that was so considerate of him, and gave him a bag full.

But what friends? The ones that were taunting him? The next school day, Hans-Ludwig brought along his bag full of sweets and dried fruit. Hans-Ludwig carefully choose a few of the boys, asked them if they could be friends, and offered them sweets. The boys had a choice, taunt Hans-Ludwig or accept the sweets? The sweets won. Others wanted sweets also. Hans-Ludwig said that he had to ask the cook for more and could bring them on another day. The taunting stopped and Hans-Ludwig could leisurely walk home after school. The cook continued to give Hans-Ludwig small bags of sweets or dried fruit. Hans-Ludwig learned how to ration the sweets to maximize the good-will of the other students.

When Hans-Ludwig returned to the manor house each evening, he did not have any other kids to play while he was upstairs. He did have a sister, Ingrid, but she was already 14 years old (7 years older than Hans-Ludwig). Ingrid, as the future Lady of an estate, had to learn how to run a manor house. The traditional method to teach these skills was to send the teenage girl to another estate, either from the same family tree (there were 23 estates in the Schweinitz family tree) or the estate of another family of the same Nobility status. There the future Lady would further her formal education, learn to be a Lady, and learn how to run the business of a manor house, all without having to rebel against her own mother. Because the effects of the war in the northern section of Central Europe it was decided to send Ingrid to an estate further south. So Ingrid had already left and was being trained by the Lady of another manor house in the family near Swidnica in the southwestern portion of Silesia.

Hans-Ludwig could not bring any of this schoolmate home to the manor house. Not just because his father would not have approved, but because even the families of the village children would not have approved. Farm children did not mix with the manor house children. Nobility had its rules, and even children did not have the freedom to break the rules. Hans-Ludwig had bought his schoolmate's kindness with the sweets, not their friendship.

Hans-Ludwig predicament about being an only upstairs child soon was resolved. The same war effect that sent his sister Ingrid to the south, was now having an effect in the manor house. But by fall of 1941, England had built an effective Air Force and were bombing northern Central Europe. Germany and Poland had built equally effective air defense around every town, city, and bridge in the northern section. The British Air Force quickly learned not to bomb towns and cities. It

was better to avoid the anti-aircraft guns and bomb the unprotected railroad tracks or roads in the countryside. Without tracks or roads, the trains and factory goods were stuck in the towns, and the German military was not being restocked. Problem was, that the estates of the Nobility were in the countryside.

The village had already absorbed several children from the northern towns. Now the village was absorbing whole families from the northern farms who were leaving and heading south to relatives. The same was happening in the estates. The manor house was filling up with distant relatives that were fleeing their estates in the north. These estate families included children.

Soon it was the beginning of December. Time to prepare for all the festivities that honor the birth of Christ and then followed by the bringing in of the New Year. To have the big Hall warm enough for the parties and formal dinners, all the fires in the fireplaces had to be lit all day and night beginning on December 1.

Early in 1940, an epidemic of malignant diphtheria that started in Copenhagen began to spread through central Europe. In 1942, diphtheria arrived in estate Schloss Alt-Raudten with deadly consequences. In Germany alone, in 1942 over 237,000 civilians died.

Stay tuned for next month's submission – diphtheria.

1941 September: The Power of Candy (First Person)

For the next few weeks, I did a lot of thinking. I tried to make friends. The boys kept taunting me on the way home. During school, nobody would sit with me during snack time. They behaved during class, so the teacher never caught on that I was being treated different. He thought that I preferred to be alone.

In the afternoon continued I would tag along with Vati and Onkel Ernst while they resolved or discussed the affairs of the estate. I noticed that before leaving his office, Vati would often fill his pockets with small items such as cigars or packages of preserved fruit/nuts. As Vati walked around the estate and talked with the various workers, he would reward some of the best with a small item for a job well done. I witnessed how well these cigars or packages of fruit/nuts were received. I had an idea. I think I found a resolution.

The next day at school, I brought with me the candies I had saved from my "Schultüte". During our snack time, I approached a group of boys that had been taunting me and asked them if we could be friends while I offered them some candy. They had a choice, continue to taunt me or be friends. They choose the candy. Others wanted sweets also. I told them that I could bring more tomorrow.

That afternoon, I could leisurely walk home, there was no taunting.

Once at home, I went down into the kitchen to visit the cook. I asked the Cook, "Could I have some sweets and dried fruit?"

Of course, the Cook asked "Now why would you ever want extra sweets and dried fruit? Don't I put enough on the Coffee and Cake table?"

I explained that "I would like to give them to my new friends at school during our snack break."

She exclaimed, "Oh, that is so considerate of you. The village children do not get many sweets. Here, have a bag of sweets. They are made from the sugar beets grown on this estate and flavored from the fruit and berries also grown here. If you need more, just come down and ask."

For the rest of the school year, I continued to bring sweets for snack time. I did learn how to ration the sweets to maximize the good-will of the other students.

1941 September: Ini Leaves for Swidnica

When Hans returned to the manor house each evening, he did not have any other kids to play while he was upstairs. He did have a sister, Ingrid, but she was already 14 years old (7 years older than Hans). Ingrid, as the future Lady of an estate, had to learn how to run a manor house. The traditional method to teach these skills was to send the teenage girl to another estate, either from the same family tree (there were 23 estates in the Schweinitz family tree) or the estate of another family of the same Nobility status. There the future Lady would further her formal education, learn to be a Lady, and learn how to run the business of a manor house, all without having to rebel against her own mother. Because the effects of the war in the northern section of Central Europe it was decided to send Ingrid to an estate further south. So Ingrid had already left and was being trained by the Lady of another manor house in the family near Swidnica in the southwestern portion of Silesia.

1941 October: Schoolmate versus Playmates

Hans could not bring any of this schoolmate home to the manor house. Not just because his father would not have approved, but because even the families of the village children would not have approved. Farm children did not mix with the manor house children. Nobility had its rules, and even children did not have the freedom to break the rules. Hans had bought his schoolmate's kindness with the sweets, not their friendship.

Hans predicament about being an only upstairs child soon was resolved. The same war effect that sent his sister Ingrid to the south, was now having an effect in the manor house. But by fall of 1941, England had built an effective Air Force and were bombing northern Central Europe. Germany and Poland had built equally effective air defense around every town, city, and bridge in the northern section. The British Air Force quickly learned not to bomb towns and cities. It was better to avoid the anti-aircraft guns and bomb the unprotected railroad tracks or roads in the countryside. Without tracks or roads, the trains and factory goods were stuck in the towns, and the German military was not being restocked. Problem was, that the estates of the Nobility were in the countryside.

The village had already absorbed several children from the northern towns. Now the village was absorbing whole families from the northern farms who were leaving and heading south to relatives. The same was happening in the estates.

The manor house was filling up with distant relatives that were fleeing their estates in the north. These estate families included children.

1941 December: Festivities

Soon it was the beginning of December. Time to prepare for all the festivities that honor the birth of Christ and then followed by the bringing in of the New Year. To have the big Hall warm enough for the parties and formal dinners, all the fires in the fireplaces had to be lit all day and night beginning on December 1.

Early in 1940, an epidemic of malignant diphtheria that started in Copenhagen began to spread through central Europe. In 1942, diphtheria arrived in estate Schloss Alt-Raudten with deadly consequences. In Germany alone, in 1942 over 237,000 civilians died.

Stay tuned for next month's submission – diphtheria.

1942: Diphtheria

This was submitted in March 2024. The death of his Mutti was the second major turning point in his life.

Hans-Ludwig von Schweinitz was born on October 26, 1934, in Liegnitz, Germany, in the province of Silesia (Schlesien). Up until his 6th year, he had a happy childhood living on the ancestral estate Schloss Alt-Raudten in Silesia (now part of Western Poland near the German border).

By January 1942, the World War II was already over a year old. There was no fighting between armies in Silesia, but some effects of the war were slowly being felt.

School Teacher Interrogation

In 1942 Hans-Ludwig, 7 years old, was attending the local village school, instead of being tutored or sent to boarding school. Nazi Germany required every school

day to start with a pledge to Hitler and Nazi Germany. Hans-Ludwig remembers that "I had to kneel before Hitler's picture on my knees and promise I would not wet the bed". Then the teacher would quiz the children about what the family had done the day before. For example, did the family listen to Hitler's speech on the radio the evening before? What did they think about his speech? The assumption was that Children at this young age usually repeat what the adults say, rather than express their own opinions. Any adverse statement by the Child would be reported and then? Because of this the adults were very careful about what they said in front of Hans-Ludwig. When the adults began a serious discussion, somebody would be tasked to take Hans-Ludwig's for a walk through the Park.

Assassination Attempt on Hitler

Sometimes it was his cousin, Anne von Tresckow. She was three years older than Hans-Ludwig and really was not that interested in baby-sitting Hans-Ludwig. Anne was a niece of a high ranking Nazi Officer (Major General Henning von Tresckow) in the Germany Army and Anne was living with the von Schweinitz family for safe keeping. The Tresckow and Schweinitz family were closely linked by marriage at multiple levels. By 1937, General von Tresckow was no longer in agreement with the Nazi Party agenda and had begun to organize several German resistance units against Hitler. In 1942, he was trying from within to eliminate Hitler and his cabinet while secretly maintaining his Party position. If General von Tresckow was discovered, the Nazi Party would punish him, his immediate family, and extended family, often using murder. Only Anne was at Alt Raudten, the rest of her immediate family were distributed on other estates. She was confused, depressed, and just not interested in much of anything, especially not a boy cousin three years younger.

New Governess, Ursula

Another was his new Governess, Ursula von Frankenberg-Lüttwitz. Ursula was from another Noble family so Ursula also needed to learn how to be the Lady of an Estate. Hans-Ludwig's Mutti would spend time with Ursula, educating her on the ways of an Estate. So, Ursula only had limited time to spend with Hans-Ludwig. Anyway, Ursula wanted to be with the adults during the discussions, and would often just escort him back to his room, then leave him there, alone to play. He would then leave his room, sneak around until he could listen to the discussion. He never repeated anything to the teacher.

Mutti and Diphtheria and Death

But the best, was when his own Mutti had time, and they could explore the Park together. It did not matter how much or little time Mutti had available; Hans-Ludwig enjoyed their time in the Park. Mutti would also arrange trips to the neighboring estates, or visit nearby relatives, or even into Rutan, the nearest large town. Mutti would also take Hans-Ludwig into the village of the estate. As Lucjan Sobera, a worker on the estate, would later in an interview would state, “the first wife of heir von Schweinitz, and the doctor, took care of the food and health of laborers.”

The first devastating effect that the war would have on the estate Alt Raudten happened next. Before 1939 a vaccine for Diphtheria was produced and the world was in the middle of vaccinating all the children and adults. Once war was declared in September 1939, the United Kingdom and most of the Allied portion of Europe continued the vaccination program. Germany and German occupied areas did not. Also, the Soviet Union and Soviet occupied areas stopped their vaccination program.

Early in 1940, an epidemic of malignant diphtheria that started in Copenhagen began to spread through central Europe. In 1942, diphtheria arrived in estate Alt-Raudten with deadly consequences. In Germany alone, in 1942 over 237,000 civilians died. Diphtheria spread so rapidly because the population was on the move. The civilian population in the north lived in cities that had been bombed and were without functioning sewer and water systems. They then moved out of the area, many traveling on crowded trains. Medical supplies and treatment were restricted, the civilian population only received basic medical treatment, the rest was reserved for those directly involved in the war effort (Army, Luftwaffe, high commanders). Large portions of the population that were considered undesirables (Jews, Gypsies, Prisoner of War, Political Prisoner's, handicapped, etc) were all forced to live in squandering conditions of low food, poor sanitation, and overcrowding. Soldiers that guarded this population would return home on leave spreading diseases. These conditions of overcrowding, population on the move, and poor medical conditions allowed Diphtheria to spread fast and to mutate. How Diphtheria entered Alt Raudten and the village is speculation. In both locations there were plenty of families from North Europe cities that had arrived by crowded trains, or Soldiers on home leave. No matter how Diphtheria traveled, it came to Alt Raudten, in its most deadly form – Malignant Diphtheria (also known as hypertoxic or gravis Diphtheria).

In August of 1942, Hans-Ludwig returned to the village school for his second year of education. Just in time for the outbreak of Diphtheria in the village. This

Diphtheria was different, it was not primarily affecting children under age 5, but was going after older children (Hans-Ludwig was 8) and Adults. After the first few days of school Hans-Ludwig developed the normal symptoms of sore throat, swollen neck glands, nasal discharge, and fever. Hans-Ludwig then stayed home. Nobody knew if it was the flu which often infects people in the fall, or something else. The local Doctor was called and with one look into Hans-Ludwig's throat and seeing the gray membrane covering the tonsils, he knew it was Diphtheria. Diphtheria is caused by bacteria and there was very limited anti-bacterial treatment available in 1942. The Doctor did find some antitoxin that he gave Hans-Ludwig and others in the village. The rest of the normal course of action was isolation, rest, and hope that the throat does not swell closed due to the inflammation. Hans-Ludwig was isolated to his room, with only his Governess Ursula and his Mutti having contact with him.

Then it happened! His Mutti suddenly began to vomit, had an extremely high fever, and her throat began to swell. The Doctor was immediately called and he administered doses of the antitoxin – with limited effect. Lucjan Sobera who worked on the estate and was taking Mutti to the village Train Station said in an interview in the 1970s or 1980s “The first wife of heir von Schweinitz. She became infected. I was taking her to the train. Saying goodbye to her husband, she said: I will never see my beloved palace again. She died in the Lubin hospital at the age of 40.” Mutti died on 3 September 1942. Mutti had contracted the fatal version of Malignant Diphtheria. This version is immune to antitoxin and antibacterial (penicillin) treatments.

This was a very traumatic event in Hans-Ludwig's life. When his Mutti was buried a few days after the 3rd of September 1942, he was still too sick to attend the funeral. Nobody knew if he was contagious. He was still isolated in his room with limited contact. The antitoxin treatment was working on him, so he had not contracted the Malignant version. But the Medical world was still unsure how the treatable version of Diphtheria turns into the Malignant version. Not everybody survives the treatable version, but Hans-Ludwig was getting better.

Now, his only contact was with his Governess, Ursula. He often could hear her talking with his Vati in the Bibliothek nextdoor. He would call out for her, but many times they would just continue talking and ignore him. Or there would be nobody on the upper floor to respond to his calls. He felt abandoned. His physical needs were taken care-of but not his emotional needs. He was only 7 years old (8 in October), and before the Diphtheria he was a strong healthy boy, so he

rebounded quickly from his physical ailments. Soon he was back with the family and back to school.

But there was no Mutti to spend time with him. He tried to spend time with his Governess, Ursula, but she would not dot over him like a mother. Instead, she spent more and more time with the older Aunts or with Vati. So, he tried to spend time with the older Aunts looking for one that was willing to be a substitute mother. They were friendly to him and would spend time with him, but again, not like a mother. The adults would include him in their gatherings but Hans-Ludwig was craving attention.

He did not completely understand what had just happened and why. When he had just turned 8 years old, in one of the gatherings of old Aunts, he asked why his Mutti had died. One Aunt told everybody that Mutti had died from diphtheria, the diphtheria had come from the village, and Hans-Ludwig had brought it into the Manor House because he had attended the village school. Hans-Ludwig's brain froze – he could not think – was it true that he had caused the death of his own Mutti! [Hans-Ludwig, our Papa would never tell us which old Aunt said this, but he remembered]. He loved his Mutti dearly; she had been the center of his world.

Now Hans-Ludwig felt abandoned, was craving attention, and felt extremely guilty. His emotional world was in turmoil. In typical Hans-Ludwig way of thinking, he found a solution. Act sick, but you had to choose the right ailment, something that was not contagious. If he developed any flu like symptoms he was put in isolation (so was anybody else with similar symptoms), but if he complained about a nausea, headache, or diarrhea he would receive attention. Even his Governess, Ursula, had to pay attention to him.



*Sigrid Frein von Zedlitz und Leipe —
von Schweinitz, auch: Muckchen
auch: Mutti*



Stay tuned for next month's submission about 1943 through 1944, which includes glueing the teacher's trousers, to assassinations attempts on Hitler, and Vati marrying the Governess Ursula.

1943: Rebellion Part One

This was submitted in April 2024. From now on I am submitting in chronological order. In 1943, Papa was 9 years old.

The war had come into the Manor House at Alt Raudten as Diphtheria. Both Hans-Ludwig and his Mutti contracted Diphtheria, Hans-Ludwig survived, his Mutti did not. Mutti was buried on 3 September 1942 at age 40. Hans-Ludwig was only 8 years old. In 1943, the British Royal Air Force began raids over Germany in May and the US Air Force began their bombing on 4 July 1943. The Allies began to use Tourist Books to select public sites for bombings, but none were close to Alt Raudten. On 8 November 1942, US ground troops arrived in the European theater – but both US and British ground troops were only deployed in Countries on the southern side of the Mediterranean. In 1943, Ground fighting in Central Europe was left up to the local Countries own Army or local resistance groups.

Hans-Ludwig's Vati was even more busy with running the estate. In January of 1943, farm labor was in short supply because men between 16 and 65, and women between 17 and 50 were now being conscripted/drafted in the Germany Army. Also, Hans-Ludwig was now almost 9 years old, and his Vati was becoming stricter. Vati was grooming his son to behave and become the next heir, and Vati had high standards. Per Hans-Ludwig's memories "during the following years I was placed under the care of several governesses. The switch to the stiff authoritarian treatment only resulted in the drive to have my caretakers fired or to make them resign. The war [World War II] had very little effect on my life until Russian tanks and guns were firing over our house on a cold January night in 1945."

The tide was turning against Germany. On 30 January 1943, they heard Hitler on the radio announcing that no German Army had ever surrendered or been captured. On 31 January 1943, the German 6th Army surrendered and was captured at Stalingrad. The Soviet Union Red Armies did not move east from Stalingrad, instead the Red Army spent the rest of 1943 and early 1944 concentrating their action on occupying southern countries with access to the Black Sea (Ukraine, Moldova, Romania), then occupying southern countries with access to the Adriatic Sea, and then occupying northern countries with access to the Baltic and North Sea. Germany concentrates on Siege of Leningrad. The portion of Poland near Alt Raudten was solidly in German Occupied territory and spared from battles during 1943 and 1944.

At home in Alt Raudten, Ursula was no longer Hans-Ludwig's governess. Ursula was still living in the manor house but was spending all her time with either Vati or the older Tantes. In her place came several different governesses. Hans-Ludwig continued to complain about a nausea, headache, or diarrhea so he would receive attention. This list of symptoms is not uncommon during the 1940s. All the food

was grown in the farm fields and gardens. Being seasonally grown, the food was often preserved or stored for long periods of time. Under the kitchen in the basement was another basement normally called the root cellar which stayed cool year-round. Here a lot of the food was stored. Even with the best of care in preparing, washing and cooking, often the food was contaminated and some members of the household would have digestive issues. It was rare that any one person could go a month without having some kind of reaction to something they had eaten. The most common culprit would be fruit, which is usually just washed and eaten raw. Throughout his life, Hans-Ludwig would always ask us to make sure the fruit was properly washed. When we would pick berries or peaches directly from the bush or tree, he would not eat any until after we came home and washed the fruit.

Stuttering

After his Mutti died, Hans-Ludwig began to stutter. Part of his treatment was to join the local Church Choir. The family was active in the village Evangelical Church [was more like today's Protestant rather than today's Evangelical], and Hans-Ludwig was still an Alter boy with his candles. But now he joined the Boys Choir. He enjoyed the Choir and actually was pretty good. He continued joining Choirs until 1957. The stuttering continued well into his adulthood. As an adult Hans-Ludwig learned English and never stuttered in English. When he met his to-be wife, he did not stutter in English or German when talking with her. But whenever he was around his Vati, he would begin to stutter when speaking German. Hans-Ludwig believed that the stress of living up to his Vati's expectations caused the stutter. Although the stuttering grew less obvious over the years, it did not completely go away until after January 1969, after his Vati died.

Teacher's Trousers

In the fall of 1943, Hans-Ludwig continued to attend the village school, and he entered the equivalent of 3rd grade. Despite being treated differently by most students because he was the heir to the estate, he did foster some kind of friendship with a few students. He still could not invite them to play with him in the Manor House, because of the Social Class structure and separation. But he developed a good enough friendship with one other boy, because they both decided to play a trick on the Teacher. The Teacher was a male who had a war injuring and had been mustered out of the army into a Teaching position. They spread glue on the teacher's chair. When the teacher sat down, the glue went all over the back of his trousers. The trousers did not stick to the chair, like it would in a Hollywood movie, because the teacher immediately stood up before the glue could dry. The trousers were ruined though. Exactly what happened next, Hans-Ludwig never

told. But he did say that his Vati was informed of the incident and had to pay for new trousers for the teacher. When asked about what punishment his Vati inflicted upon him, Hans-Ludwig would never answer, only would say that his Vati said that the new trousers were very expensive.

The Stone and the Steam Train

Hans-Ludwig's imagination led him into trouble also at home. In the 56 acre park behind the Manor House was a foot bridge over the railroad tracks. In 1943, the trains were still steam powered with the tall smoke stack with wide opening on top. He and one of his playmates spent months practicing their skill at tossing rocks into the smoke stack as the train passed below. The small pebbles were not the problem. When they began to use larger stones, there was a problem. One day they lifted a more significant sized stone, tossed it off the bridge, and it went right down the smoke stack. Their celebration was brief. As soon as they returned to the Manor House they found out that the Engineer had seen the boys on the bridge, witnessed the toss, then when the train stopped at the Station in the village, the Engineer called (in 1939 there were already 224 phones on the estate, including the village) the Manor House and talked with Vati. When asked about what punishment his Vati inflicted upon him, Hans-Ludwig would answer that he did not want to talk about it.

Stay tuned for next month's submission about 1944 with more rebellion, a visit from the Nazi SS, and a wedding.

1944: Rebellion Part Two

This was submitted in May 2024. Papa was 10 years old in 1944 and his memories are more detailed.

Hans-Ludwig remembers that in 1944 he had lots of freedom. The adults were often in deep discussion and Hans-Ludwig was not allowed to hear any of these deep discussions. Since Hans-Ludwig was still attending the village school, where the Teacher would quiz the children every morning about statements that they had heard at home, and then the Teacher would report anything derogatory to the Nazi Party. Instead, the adults would tell Hans-Ludwig to go out in the park and play, or go into another room. The adults were trying to determine what was actually going on in the war. The radio and Newspapers were full of positive news. Any negative News was considered Treason. There was no News at all about anything happening outside of the German Controlled area of Europe, because of the News blackout and censorship. But many of the family members were high-up officials

in various parts of the German Government, Nazi Party, or Army. They would often come back to Alt Raudten for a few days, and brought their own News. Their News often contradicted the censored News. Any discussion that was not pro-Hitler could be prosecuted as Treason.

Nazi SS Confiscating Weapons

Hans-Ludwig probably got his rebellious imagination from his Vati. Just that his Vati was up against much higher stakes, the German Third Reich and the Nazi Party. As Hans-Ludwig remembers, that sometime in the late summer of 1944, Vati somehow found out that German Nazi SS officers were coming to confiscate the estate's weapons.

The 1919 Treaty of Versailles had disarmed Germans that were in Weimar Germany, but not Germans that were living outside of Weimar Germany. Alt Raudten was outside of the Weimar Germany. Then in 1928, under Hitler the Third Reich Germany removed the restriction for certain Germans (not Jews) as long as the weapons were registered. When Germany occupied Poland, this new gun control law applied to Poland, and like a good German, Vati had registered the estate weapons. This same registry was now being used by the German Nazi SS to confiscate weapons of "undesirables" or people that could begin to exhibit behavior not in favor of the Third Reich's agenda. The owners of the registered weapons were lucky if only the weapon was confiscated, often the Nazi SS would use the same weapon on the family, with deadly results.

Later in Hans-Ludwig's life he would re-tell the following tale concerning his Vati, with intense pride. Sometime in early 1944, the local branch of the Nazi SS (Schutzstaffel, the Protection Squad, was the elite guard of the Nazi), sent notice that all weapons were to be surrendered at a certain date and time. Upon learning of the Nazi SS upcoming visit, Vati prepared the weapons. He knew how many he had registered and what kind. So, he laid the weapons and all their parts out on to the Gun room's table and began to disassemble the weapons. It was a tense time, because the Nazi SS did not always stop at just confiscating the weapons. When the Nazi SS arrived, Vati first invited them to join the family for refreshments (wine and spirits) and snacks on the Terrace with the rest of the family. After a couple of hours, when the Nazi SS were nice and relaxed, Vati showed them into the Gun room and innocently stated that "he was just cleaning the weapons and did not have time to reassemble." They believed Vati. They collected all the parts, the number of firing pins, stocks, barrels and other parts matched the quantity and type of registered weapons. The Nazi SS left satisfied that the von Schweinitz family

had been disarmed. The Nazi SS officers did not take any other action against the von Schweinitz family in Alt Raudten. That was a relief.

The Nazi SS Officers had not taken all the weapons. What Vati had done was add spare parts to the collection on the table. Enough to make it seem that there were the right number and type of weapons to match the registry. Vati had hidden away a hunting rifle and a couple of hand guns along with their ammunition. Hans-Ludwig could not believe the courage his Vati had in planning and completing this plan that was pure Treason. Later in 1945, these “illegal” weapons would save the families lives.

Assassinations and Treason

In June 1944, the Allies were preparing to land army troops into Central Europe. Up until this point ground fighting in Central Europe mostly consisted of the Army/Resistance/Underground of the occupied country, fighting to evict either Germany, or Soviet Union. By 1944, the Armies of the English and United States were mostly deployed in Northern Africa, Italy, or the Pacific. On 6 June 1944, D-Day occurred in Normandy France. The Ally Armies had landed and were on the move East to Berlin and South to Austria/Switzerland. Again, very little about this event reached Alt Raudten by Radio or Newspaper. The information blackout, census, and propaganda was very effective.

Anne von Tresckow was a niece of Oma Gabriele (Mutti's side of the family) and was staying at Alt Raudten for safe-keeping. Anne was just two years older than Hans-Ludwig. In late July 1944, the family had just gotten word that Anne's Onkel (Uncle) had committed suicide. Her Onkel, General Henning von Tresckow, had been the mastermind behind the several assassination attempts against Hitler. One was on 13 March 1943, for which he miraculously was not executed. And he also was one of the masterminds behind the attempt on 20 July 1944 called “Valkyrie”. (Tom Cruise did a movie of this attempt). He committed suicide on 21 July 1944, when he learned that the “Valkyrie” coup had failed. He died trying to protect his co-conspirators and his family. Right after receiving the news of his death, Hans-Ludwig's Oma and Opa, from his Mutti's side, left the estate and began to travel to the West in an attempt to cross the American/British Ground Troop line, into a zone no longer occupied by Germany. Oma's maiden name was Gabriele von Tresckow and she was the Tante (Aunt) of General Henning von Tresckow. Anne von Tresckow, Hans-Ludwig's playmate, also left with them, since she was a niece of General von Tresckow. This linkage between the two families, von Schweinitz and von Tresckow, was probably being traced by the German Nazi SS. If any member of the von Tresckow family was found by the

Nazi SS to be living at Alt Raudten, their presence could jeopardize the lives of everybody at Alt Raudten.

More Family Leaving August 1944

Later in August 1944, the Polish Underground tried to evict the occupying German Army from Warsaw Poland, in the Warsaw Uprising. Warsaw is only about 200 miles east of Alt Raudten. The German Army was retreating from the advancing Soviet Red Army. The Soviet Red Army had been successful in occupying the Baltic Sea, Adriatic Sea, and Black Sea countries and was now concentrating on occupying the rest of Poland. Their ultimate destination was Berlin, Germany. The Soviet Red Army was winning and was advancing towards Germany, pushing the Germany Army in front of them. The estate was quickly going to be between two armies.

More of the family members began to leave the estate and go west. Vati's sister Gabriele left and began to travel to Salzburg Austria. Vati's other sister, Sigrid left for Wiesbaden Germany.

Wedding 15 October 1944 Vati and Ursula

In October 1944, Hans-Ludwig found out why Ursula, who had been his Governess during his Diphtheria illness, had not paid much attention to him. She was in love with his Vati. That is why they were spending so much time together. On 15 October 1944, Vati married Ursula von Frankenberg-Luttwitz. Vati was already 43 and Ursula was less than half his age, at only 20.

Stay tuned for next month's submission about 1945 from January to August: The Flight.

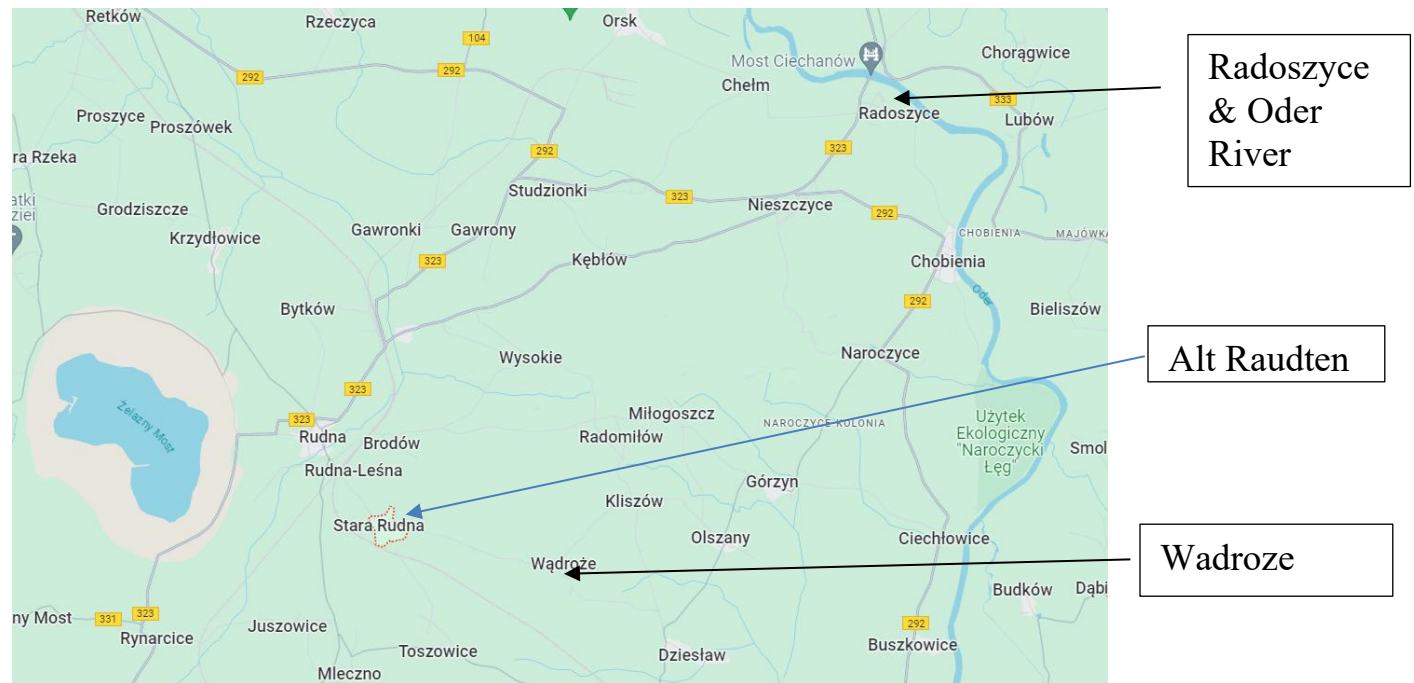
1945 The Flight Part One

This was submitted in June 2024. Papa was still 10 years old in 1945 until October and his memories are more detailed very detailed about leaving the only home that he knew. The world as he knew it was changing.

1945 January 11-22 Leaving Alt Raudten

In October 1944, Hans-Ludwig had just turned 10. In January 1945 his world completely changed, never to return to the way it used to be. "The war (World War II) had very little effect on my life until Russian tanks and guns were firing over our house on a cold January night in 1945. My father (Hans Wilhelm), whom I hardly saw since he had been either away building the East-wall or he had been occupied with the running of the estate, hastily over-night assembled a convoy of horse drawn-wagons. The following morning our trek of about 600 families joined the millions on the road, fleeing from the Russians. My father had remarried just before we fled." And why flee the Red Army? Is answered by a letter that General Patton wrote to his wife on 21 July 1945, when he finally entered Berlin after the Red Army had been occupying Berlin since 2 May 1945 (3 months) "for the first week after they took it (Berlin), all women who ran were shot and those who did not were raped. I could have taken it (instead of the Soviets) had I been allowed."

The following is a mix of historical events that were happening around Hans-Ludwig and had an effect on his life. There were thousands of other events happening in Central Europe but these more directly influenced Hans-Ludwig. The tales that our Papa (Hans-Ludwig) told us kids were usually very consistent if he was involved, but tales that involved other members of his family were not always consistent or were vague. Remember, Hans-Ludwig was just 10 years old in January 1945, when all this happened. Later when Hans-Ludwig was interviewed he said he "was excited more than scared."



Map of Stara Rudna (Alt Raudten), Wadroze, Radoszyce

In January 1945, the Soviet Union Red Army was advancing west across Poland. The Red Army was killing everybody in their way. There were over 9 million people being chased by the Russians. The roads around Alt Raudten were packed with refugees as they fled West.

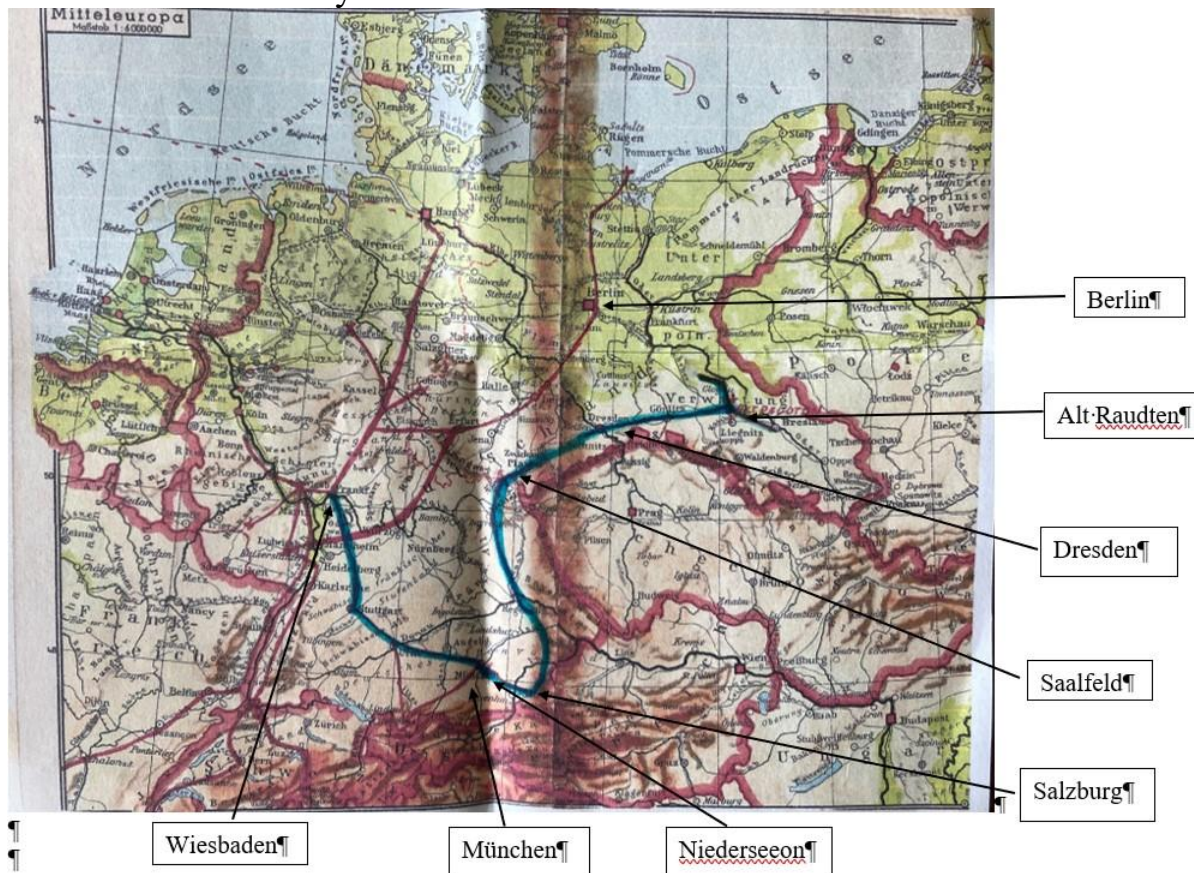
On 11 January 1945, many in the village evacuated and headed West towards Zwickau, a town in Germany about 40 miles west of Dresden and 40 miles south of Leipzig. By 17 January 1945, the Red Army had advanced to the Oder River and the village could hear the sounds of fighting near Radoszyce, about 30 miles away. Many from the village met at the RailRoad Station in Polkowice and went West.

On 22 January 1945, the von Schweinitz family began to evacuate. There are several tales about what happened on this day, they are all similar, but slightly different.

Vati and one of the Onkels were to stay behind, encase the German Army managed to push back the Red Army and Alt Raudten might be saved. The rest of the family packed up and left. Their possessions were loaded onto wagons. One was a heavy-duty wagon (sometimes called a Truck, because it is designed to carry heavy loads). They needed so many, that another was the “Honey Wagon” or manure wagon. There was not enough sensible farm horses, so they also had to use some

of the high-stepping carriage horses. Even though they needed multiple wagons, they did not take everything. Most of the furniture was left behind. “There was always hope that we might be able to go back.” stated Hans-Ludwig when interviewed later in life.

They decided to head NorthWest on the road to Berlin which was about 180 miles away. “We didn't go to West Germany, we went, we wanted to go to Berlin first and we cut off with the Russian armies.” stated Hans-Ludwig when interviewed later in his life. So they had to turn South and later West.



The blue marking is trek they took during the Flight beginning in January 1945.

Why did they try to reach Berlin first. Could be that information that they had received from other family members, was that Germany was making a last stand in Berlin, and if that failed, the American were going to take Berlin. What they did not know was that the Western Allies had already decided to allow the Red Army to take Berlin. General Eisenhower had ordered General Patton not to advance to Berlin. Berlin was being bombed during the day by the US Army Air Force and at night by the RAF. A large part of the civilian population in Berlin had already fled or been evacuated. The Americans were not coming to their rescue.

Back at Alt Raudten, On 23 January 1945, (the day after Hans-Ludwig left with most of the family) the fighting could be heard from the direction of Wądroże (about 5 miles away). On January 26, 1945, the German Army entered the village of Alt Raudten. But the Red Army was right behind them. On the morning of January 28, 1945, the Soviet army entered the village of Alt Raudten. Overnight, the German Army had fled into the countryside. For the next few weeks there were several battles and skirmishes between the Armies in and around Alt Raudten. In the meantime, Vati and one Onkel were still in the Manor House. They were hiding in the sub-basement. The Manor House had an “echo chamber” that was either attached to the front entrance or in the sub-basement (conflicting tales). This ‘echo chamber’ was a round empty hollow room that will amplify certain specific sounds. This room amplified sounds from the road that lead up to the Manor House, especially when the traffic passed over a certain bridge. Vati and Onkel heard the Red Army’s heavy tanks and trucks pass over the bridge, and only had enough time to run down into the sub-basement. The Soviet Soldiers did enter the Manor House but stayed on the above ground floors. After dark, Vati and the Onkel left using an underground passage out of the sub-basement, and the Red Army soldiers had no idea. No one stopped them, and the local residents helped in their escape.

How Vati and the Onkel knew where to meet up with the family, is unknown. The family was no longer on their way to Berlin, they were heading south and trying to make their way to Dresden, which was classified as a sanctuary city.

Life On the Road

The high-stepping carriage horses were too high strung and could not take all the commotion caused by the bombings and troop movements. They were constantly spooking and turning the wagon over into the ditch. By the time the family got to Dresden, they were completely shattered emotionally (horses and people), and their possessions that were in the honey-wagon were strewn over miles of ditches.

The other issue on the road to Dresden was that the German Army was also using the road. The civilian population that was in flight was allowed to use only one side of the road. Luckily, they were all heading in the same direction, West away from the Red Army. The German Army was moving their equipment back and forth on the other side. Until one day. Hans-Ludwig remembers this event and told the tale multiple times as the following. The civilians were at a stand still for some reason, and the road was blocked on either side by cliffs or large buildings. The other side of the road was completely full of German Army equipment also all

heading West, the German Army was in retreat. When the civilians asked each other, “why are we not moving?” the word filtered back that there was one German Guard at the intersection ahead that was holding the whole line at a standstill to let the German Army have full use of the whole road up ahead beyond the intersection. Okay, being at a stand still was not an unusual occurrence. They waited patiently. Then the screaming started. It was coming from the back. And more horrific sounds were added, crunching sounds. Vati jumped into the wagon, came out with one of his illegal hand-guns (a hand-gun that he had hidden from the Nazi’s in 1944) and ran towards the front. A few other men also pulled out their illegal hand-guns and joined Vati. A couple of minutes later he was running back, yelling at everybody to get ready to start moving forward. The civilian line began to move forward, and as they passed the intersection, Hans-Ludwig remembers looking towards the ditch and seeing a dead German Soldier. As the line moved forward, they finally come out of the cliff area and more and more of the wagons turned off into fields or side roads. The family also found a place to pull off the road. The German Army was now using both sides of the road. Hans-Ludwig could see that there were pieces of wagons and other un-imaginable things stuck underneath some of the heavier vehicles, such as the tanks.

Much later they would return to the road and continued to travel South and West to Dresden and they arrived in Dresden just in time for 13 February 1945.

1945 The Flight Part Two

This was submitted in July 2024. Papa was 10 years old in 1945 until October. On 13th February, his whole world changed, again.

On 22 January 1945, the remaining members of Hans-Ludwig’s family left their homestead estate, Alt Raudten, in Silesia (West Poland now). They were fleeing from the Soviet Red Army. By end of January, they were fleeing west with Dresden Germany as their destination. Dresden was recognized by the Allies and Axis powers as a sanctuary city. Sanctuary meaning a city where civilian could take refuge because there would be no military presence and war supporting industry. Because Dresden was a sanctuary city, the City had no ant-aircraft guns/defenses, and no governmental presence (no SS, no Nazi’s, no Gestapo, no Army, etc). Dresden did not even have a radar system to detect approaching bombers, and its Air-Raid sirens were hand-crank models that could only be heard a few hundred meters. The City only had a few bomb shelters. In February 1945, Dresden was defenseless city with a population of over 630,00, mostly refugees.

On the road to Dresden

For a boy of only 10 years, Hans-Ludwig found life on the road very exciting. Since he was no longer in school, the threat of the teacher interrogating Hans-Ludwig no longer existed, so he could join-in any conversation with adults. Discussion on any subject now flowed freely, and asking questions no longer represented a possible threat. Also, social standings were relaxed. Hans-Ludwig could play with any of the other children, no matter what their social class. He was making new friends daily. As they walked past the farms, the farmers would invite the refugees to take what they wanted from storage, so food was more than plentiful. The farmers did not want to leave anything behind for the advancing Soviet Red Army. Once storages were empty, the farmers would join the long line of refugee fleeing west.

1945 February 13-15 Dresden, Germany

The family arrived in Dresden a few days before the 13th of February 1945.

The first thing that Vati [Hans-Ludwig's father] did when they arrived in Dresden was to stable the horses at the Royal Palace that had been converted to stables. The wagons were stored in the ground floor and the horse stall were in the upper floor and there was a ramp for the horses to climb up. Some of the family traveled to the outer-suburbs of Dresden to stay with distant relatives. But Vati had found a couple of rooms at a Hotel that was near the Royal Palace, between the Elbe river and the Frauen Kirche in Alt-Markt [old town center]. There Hans-Ludwig stayed with his Vati, his step-mother Ursula, Onkel Ernst, and maybe a couple of other family members. Hans-Ludwig did not remember how many were staying in those two rooms, because he was hardly ever there.

During the day, Hans-Ludwig run through the streets with his new friends, and he remembers climbing out of the window at night and sliding down the drain pipe. He would join his new friends and they often would climb the hills just outside of town and look down over a cliff onto the city. It was especially interesting if there were girls along. His Vati and Onkel were so busy, that they only cared that Hans-Ludwig was with the family at breakfast and dinner [lunch to Americans], and his step-mother did not seem to care about him at all.

Unknown to the refugees, the Allies in early February 1945 were making plans at the Yalta Conference. They needed a city to bomb that would demoralize the German civilian population and also aide the Soviet westward offensive. They picked Dresden, Leipzig, and Berlin. Leipzig and Berlin were already being bombed and had defenses, but Dresden was a new city on the list.

Then in the night of 13 February 1945 it happened. Well after sunset, while Hans-Ludwig and his friends were on their hill looking down on Dresden, the bombers arrived. Usually, the planes just flew over Dresden and continued to the military sites. This night they did not. The first wave of bombing lasted just under 30 minutes and historians say that 881 tons of bombs were dropped during this time. Many of the bombs that were dropped during the first wave of bombers were phosphorus bombs which are designed to primarily create fire. Hans-Ludwig and friends watched the bombs drop and the city burn in the fire storm. There was nothing that they could do but watch. After the first half hour, more waves of bomber flew over but they continued on and did not drop more bombs on Dresden. In the city below, the civilians were coming out of the side street towards the bombed sections, to try and extinguish the fires and assess the damage. But many acted strangely, they would be running toward the fires and then drop to the ground, and never moved again? Hans-Ludwig and friends waited almost two hours after the last wave of bombers, and were just deciding to come down from their hill when more bombers could be heard. These bombers dropped another round of bombs on Dresden, with all those civilians in the streets. This second attack, just three hours after the first, included more than 1,800 tons of bombs. The Third Reich had terrorized the world with the invention of the “Blitzkrieg” which consisted of one wave of bombers on non-military targets. Now the Allies upped the war with a new strategy, two waves of bomber about two to three hours apart on non-military targets.

When the second wave of bombers arrived, Hans-Ludwig and friends were still on top of the hill, looking down the cliff onto the burning city. Hans-Ludwig does not remember how it happened. Was it because the ground was shaking, or because he leaned forward too far, or why, but he suddenly was falling down the cliff. He dug his fingers into the cliff’s side to try and stop his decent. No matter how hard he dug his fingers into the dirt he kept going down, and he was going faster, faster, faster. Then suddenly, he stopped, he had fallen into a large Manure Pile. He pulled himself out, and headed into the City, looking for his family.

Hans-Ludwig remembered going past every imaginable devastation. Both to people and buildings. The concussion waves of the second round of bombs had mostly but out the fire storm. Now there was a scattering of burning buildings. Death was everywhere. First the corpses were recognizable as adults, maimed or just lying there, but human adults. As he approached the Alt-Markt in the city center, near the hotel where the family was staying, there were burned bodies everywhere, tiny shriveled up black corpses, shrunken down to the size of a child, just black tiny black skeletons. People were screaming and yelling. Groups were

frantically digging through rubble, they were trying to get people out of the basements or the few bomb shelters, the people were burning inside because the phosphorus had leaked down through cracks and causing fire. Most deaths that night were caused by lack of oxygen because the fires consumed the air, from being burned directly by the fire, or from the concussion waves from the second round of bombs. Hans-Ludwig would remember the smell of burned humans for the rest of his life and his most vivid memories were the “the bodies, the death, and the screaming”.

Hans-Ludwig was never very clear about how he found his family, only that they were alive. By then it was already 14 February, and Vati collected one of their wagons [with a pair of farm horses] and they left Dresden to head West. They rejoined the westward flow of refugees on the road. Hans-Ludwig was the only family member with obvious injuries. The end of every finger was raw, bleeding, and ripped open from trying to hold onto the cliff as he slide down. Other than cleaning the wounds, there was little that could be done. The availability of doctors, nurses, or medicine for civilians was almost nonexistent, especially in the middle of a disaster zone where there were hundreds of victims with worse injuries. The family cleaned Hans-Ludwig up as best as they could, and they left the Dresden.

The decision to leave Dresden turned out to be the right choice. For the next two days, Dresden was repeatedly bombed by the Allies. By the end of 15 February, two days later, 90% of Dresden city center was destroyed using 3,900 tons of bombs and 1,600 acres of the city had been bombed. How many people died can never be determined, because nobody knows how many were in the city and how many had fled. Many of the bodies in the bomb shelters and basements were not found for years. While the city buildings burned for days, the fire pyres (to burn the dead) also were burning for days, there was no time to count bodies. The Allies claim that less than 25,000 civilians were killed. The Soviet Union occupied Dresden from 1945 until late 1990 and did very little to help find any bombing victims. Since 1990, when Dresden began to rebuild the Alt-Markt area, they have found more than 25,000 extra bodies in the basements and under the rubble.

Next Month

“Leibe Tante Lotta” letter that Step-mother Ursula wrote to her Aunt Lotta, from their next destination Saalfeld, Germany

1945 The Flight Part Three

This was submitted in September 2024. Papa was 10 years old in 1945 until October. After surviving the bombing of Dresden on 13/14th February 1945, the family is trying to survive. In this biography the September submission is presented before the August submission.

1945 after 13th February: Leaving Dresden

Dresden was bombed twice on the night of 13-14th February 1945. The second and last wave of bombing stopped just before 2am on the 14th. Hans-Ludwig had watched both bombings from the top of a hill just outside of downtown, along with several of his new found friends. At the end of the second bombing, Hans-Ludwig somehow fell down the side of a cliff, and ripped the end of his fingers into bloody strips trying to control his fall. He survived because he landed in a manure pile. He climbed out of the manure pile and walked into the burning devastated downtown section of Dresden, searching for his family. Hans-Ludwig does not remember how, but he found his family and they were alive. His father and Onkel Ernst were rounding up the family, loading up the “truck” wagon, and calming the horses. The decision had been made, the family was leaving Dresden. The Tantes (Aunts) were going south of Dresden to stay with some distant relatives, if they will accept them. Vati, Onkel Ernst, Ulla (Hans-Ludwig’s stepmother), and Hans-Ludwig were going back onto the main road with the “truck” wagon to continue west.

In the chaos and confusion Hans-Ludwig rushed around helping to load the wagon, leaving blood on everything he touched. There was no time for first aide for something as minor as bloody hands. People were dying, building were collapsing, the air was too thick to breath, body parts were laying around, and the noise.

Why West?

By sunup they were on the road going west again. Why west? To the east was the Soviet Red Army with its history of war crimes against civilians. To the west was the same Allies that had just bombed Dresden. To the north was Leipzig and Berlin, still under the control of the Third Reich and both were being heavily bombed by the Allies. To the south was Czechoslovakia which was still occupied by the Third Reich but was not being so heavily bombed by the Allies. Many people who were fleeing the Red Army did go to Czechoslovakia, and over 2.8 million were of German nationality or heritage. The exodus from Dresden the morning of the 14th went in all directions. The von Schweinitz family was going west because one of Vati’s sister, Gabriele, had already moved to Salzburg,

Austria. This had been the family's destination before they made the fateful stop in Dresden.

On the Road Again

As they traveled on the road, hardly anyone was talking, everybody was traumatized, including the horses. Both Vati and Onkel Ernst had to walk along side the horses to keep them calm. Ulla (Hans-Ludwig's stepmother) could hardly breath and kept stepping away from the road to throw-up. By late morning, everybody had calmed down and Onkel Ernst could leave the side of the horses. Onkel Ernst could now administer to Hans-Ludwig's bloody hands. There was a limited supply of first aide in the wagon, and no doctors around, but Onkel Ernst tried his best.

Then the bombers came. This time they came in daylight, it was just after 12 noon, and there were more than 200 planes. The family had not traveled far from Dresden, maybe only a few miles. The bombers were low and ready to drop their loads. The noise was deafening. People did not know what to do; take cover against bombs, where? How? The horses knew what to do, they screamed and started to run from the noise. Everybody grabbed the horse's bridles and hung on, trying to stop the horses. At least that gave them people something to do, other than just stand and wait for fate. It seemed to take hours for the planes to pass over, but it took less than 15 minutes. Then from behind them, they could hear and see the effects of the bombs being dropped on Dresden. The noise, fire, and smoke. This was the second bombing raid on Dresden. This time, because it was daylight, they could see the markings on the bombers, they were from the US Air Force.

For the next few days, they traveled west. Traveling on the road was now different. The farms were empty of food and the fields were picked clean. Vati was depressed and in shock because he could not deal with the fact that he had lost everything including the estate. His job was to walk with the wagon and horses and keep them on the road. Ulla was trying to organize and find food for both the family and horses, while she herself could not eat in the morning without throwing up. Hans-Ludwig spent the day, like most of the kids on the road, scrounging through the dirt in the fields looking for left over crops, or climbing into trees to pick fruit. Onkel Ernst was in charge of finding more supplies, such as shoes or anything that can be used to protect the feet of people and the horses. Their shoes were wearing out and everything was in short supply. Vati was constantly coughing and had problems breathing. Ulla was throwing up and having difficulties with the high fiber diet of rotting fruit, cabbage remains, turnips, and half rotten potatoes. Hans-Ludwig's hands were becoming infected despite Onkel

Ernst's attempts at first aid. If Onkel Ernst was having issues, he kept quiet about them. The distance from Dresden to Salzburg is over 600 Kilometers (about 375 miles). They were not going to make it. They had been traveling for days and only covered about 100km (60 miles) and were just now approaching the outskirts of Zwickau.

Not Going to Make It

What were their options. Were there any family, distant relatives, or family of friends nearby that might be able to provide? Yes, there were, but could they take on the burden of four more people. The four were of German Heritage and had signed the oath to the Third Reich as loyal Germans, but they were not German Citizens, therefore they did not have ration cards. All the potential hosts lived off of the main road. Leaving the main road had its own risks. The Allies up until now had not been bombing main roads because they need the roads for their own armies. Why destroy a road if you are just going to have to rebuild it in a few weeks so that your army can use it? Orders not to bomb a potential useful infrastructure is not unusual in war, Hitler had told his Luftwaffe that any Pilot that bombed Windsor Castle would be shot for treason, because Hitler wanted to live there after invading Great Britain. Secondary roads and farm fields, though, were often targets for bombers. Mostly because the roads and fields were not protected by anti-aircraft guns. So, any bomber that could not for some reason drop their bombs on the intended target would find an undefended road or field to drop their bombs. Bombers in WWII, generally could not land at their home base with a bomb load.

Fingernails

The condition of Hans-Ludwig's hands made the decision for them. He needed medical help, what was left of his fingers was becoming infected. They left the main road and headed north into Zwickau, in search of medical treatment. Most of the medical treatments and medical personal were part of the military and were not available to treat civilians. They did find a medical clinic in Zwickau. Painkillers were almost non-existent for civilians and penicillin or any new anti-biotics were definitely reserved for only military use. Hans-Ludwig remembers that what ever they gave him for pain, did not work. Every one of his finger nails had to be pulled off to release the infection. It took both Vati and Onkel Ernst to hold him done during the procedure. Hans-Ludwig had never felt such pain, and it kept repeating – 10 times. The medical clinic did provide them some Sulfonamide based cream to control the infection and his hands eventually healed. Something that resembled fingernails grow back. The new nails were always wavy, brittle, and yellowish.

There was no time place for the family to stay in Zwickau. They had no contacts in town and the town was already over full of refugees. So, they were back on the road again, this time using the secondary roads to find a family or friend where they might be able to stay and recover.

Next Month

Travel to, and stay in Saalfeld Germany, 18 February 1945 to 30 March 1945



1945 March 19, Meine Liebe Tante Lotte Letter

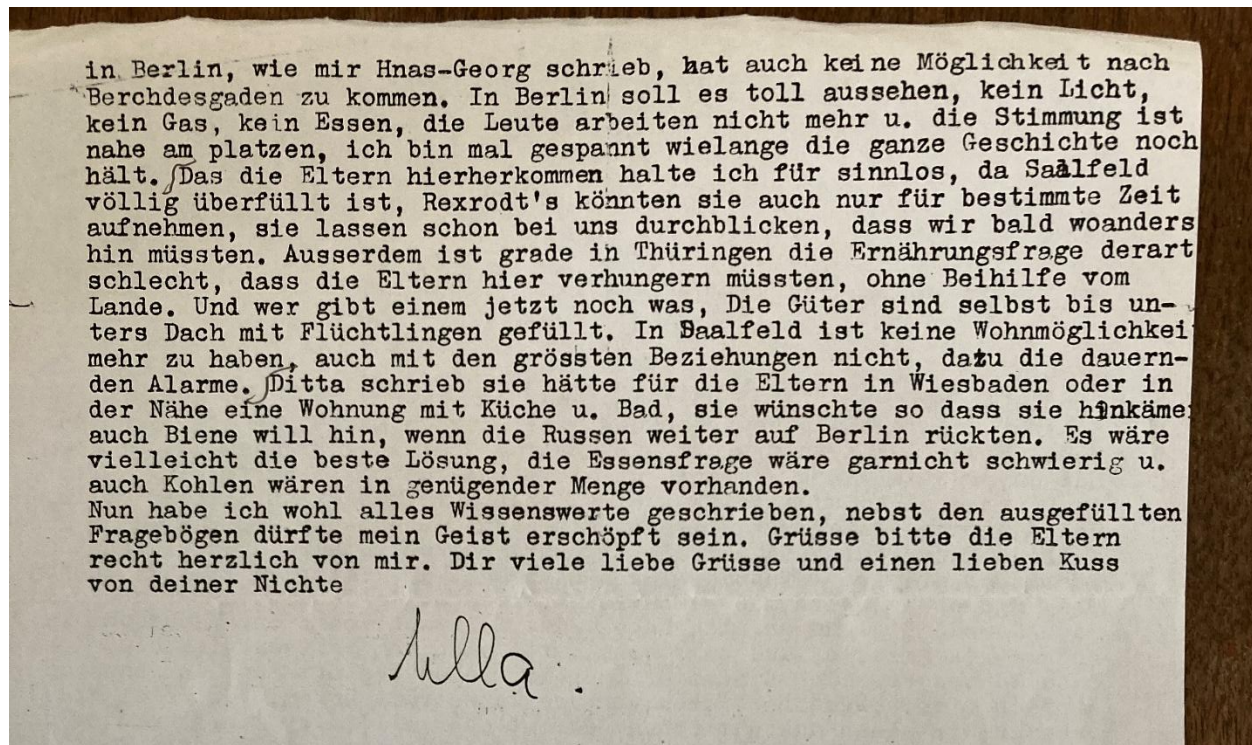
This was submitted in August 2024. Papa was 10 years old in 1945 until October. By end of February 1945 the family was in Saalfeld Germany. Ulla (Hans-Ludwig's step mother) wrote this letter to her Tante Lotte.

Hotel Anker-Guldene Gans

L. A. H. H.
mae
Denke

Meine Liebe Tante Lotte!

Für deine beiden Briefe, hab' tausend Dank. Auch sie waren das erste Lebenszeichen von Euch, ausgenommen einer kurzen Karte von Oma. Wenn uns Onkel Ernst und Esther nicht ausführlich über euer Ergehen geschrieben hätten, wüsten wir gar nicht, wo ihr seid. Aus Oma's Karte ging hervor, dass ihr erst auf dem Weissen Hirsch bei Dorothee Unruh bleiben wollt, und dann nach Meisdorf zu Gräfin Asseburg. Also haben wir, da keine gegenteilige Nachricht, bis auf die zwei Briefe von Esther u. Onkel Ernst die aber auch erst vor ein paar Tagen ankamen, kam, immer an die beiden von Oma angegebenen Adressen geschrieben. Auch Oma's Geburtstagsbriefe sind nach Meisdorf gegangen. Ich habe jedes Mal wenn von Biene Nachricht kam, an Oma geschrieben, und zwar eine Karte nach dem Weissen Hirsch u. eine nach Meisdorf. Auch Bimlem u. Inri schrieben des öfteren. Ich kann es einfach nicht begreifen, dass von uns keine Post ankam. Von Onkel Ernst bekamen wir einen ausführlichen Bericht über all' die Strapazen und Fürchterlichkeiten, die ihr bei dem Angriff auf Dresden durchgemacht habt, wir hatten ja keine Ahnung davon, auf diesen Brief hin haben sowohl Bimlem als auch ich sofort an euch nach Bergiesshübel geschrieben, mal müssen die Sachen ja ankommen. Also sag! Oma, sie soll nicht böse auf uns sein, wir können tatsächlich nichts für die Postverhältnisse, denn auch von euch kam ja nichts an. - Nun will ich dir mal ein bisschen von uns erzählen. Wir wohnen hier in einem mehr oder weniger schönen u. gemütlichen Gastzimmer, das Essen ist so doll, dass man es einfach nicht essen kann, Kohlrüben u. gallebitterer Spinat früh Mittags u. abends. Es widert einen gradezu an. Wir haben uns nun heimlich eine Heizplatte verschafft, was hier im Hotel streng verboten ist, u. kochen uns mal Griessbrei oder Nudeln. Natürlich müssen wir ausserdem im Lokal essen, weil Rexrodt's sonst eingeschnappt sind und uns einfach an die Luft setzen. Dazu kommt, dass täglich 3-4-mal Alarme sind, ganz zu schweigen von den Voralarmen die den ganzen Tag andauern. Es gibt jedenfalls keine Minute des Tages wo die Luft völlig rein ist, dazu kommt, dass bei jedem Alarm Bomben fallen. Sehr gemütlich ist also auch hier nicht, und wir werden auch bald das ungastliche Thüringen verlassen. Elisabeth hat mir nämlich geschrieben, dass sie eine 3 Zimmer-Wohnung für uns frei hätte, ausserhalb Salzburg's. Sowie wir unsere Bezugscheine u. sonstigen beantragten Sachen haben, das kann noch 8 Tage dauern, fahren wir mit Sack u. Pack nach Salzburg. Es ist dort für meine Begriffe in jeder Beziehung am ruhigsten. Hans-Wilhelm bringt uns per Bahn runter, will versuchen durch meinen Schwager oder seinen Freund Armin Gutscher Arbeit zu bekommen, wenn es gelingt bleibt er unten sonst fährt er wieder nach Saalfeld und tritt die Landesbauernschaft bis sie ihm endlich einen Betrieb zuweist, versprochen hat sie es schon vor vier Wochen. Das letzte Wochenende waren wir in Lausnitz bei Wurmbs um mal wieder anständig zu essen, was sich auch in jeder Beziehung lohnte. Unsere Koffer aus Berlin haben wir auch glücklich durch einen netten Ungarn, der sie mit dem Auto holte, leider fehlte ein Teil unserer Seife u. Wolle, sowie die Sachen von Hans-W. die er Hildegard zur Fahrt geborgt hatte. Wir haben nochmal einen Boten hingeschickt, aber vergebens, sie rückt das Zeug nicht raus. Nun wollten wir Anfang dieser Woche selbst mit einer Autogelegenheit nach Berlin fahren um das Zeug zu holen, aber der Mann mit dem wir fahren wollten muss in einen Angriff gekommen sein, denn er ist noch nicht aus Giessen zurück. Hildegard hält es auch nicht für nötig mal eine Zeile zu schreiben, sie scheint noch mit uns zu grollen, weil wir sie auf dem Treck so schlecht behandelt haben. Sie ist -



Introduction

On 19 March 1945, Ulla wrote a letter to her Tante (Aunt) Lotte. Ulla is Ursula von Frankenberg-Lüttwitz. She was a former Governess of Hans-Ludwig then step-mother when she married Vati Hans-Wilhelm, Hans-Ludwig's Vati in October 1944.

Ulla was born on 24 March 1924. So when she wrote this letter she was about to turn 21 years old.

When Ulla wrote this letter, she was in Saalfeld/Salle in south east Germany about 200KM west of Dresden. Tante Lotte was in Bergiesshübel, which is just 37KM south of Dresden. Due to the effects of the war, the family was scattered throughout Germany and Austria. This letter describes some of the trials and tribulations that families encountered when trying to communicate, trying to find a safe place to wait out the war, or trying to reunite.

English Translation

Saalfeld/Saale 19 March 1945
Hotel Anker-Gülden Gans

My dear Aunt Lotte [Ulla's Aunt]

Thank you so much for your two letters. They were also the first sign of life from you, with the exception of a short card from Grandma [Ulla's Grandmother]. If Uncle Ernst and Esther hadn't written to us in detail about your situation, we wouldn't even know where you are. Grandma's card showed that you first wanted to stay on the Weisser Hirsch with Dorothee Unruh, and then to Meisdorf to see Bräflin Asseburg. So, since there was no message to the contrary, apart from the two letters from Esther and Uncle Ernst that only arrived a few days ago, we always wrote to the two addresses given by Grandma.

Grandma's birthday letters also went to Meisdorf. Every time I received news from Biene, I wrote to Grandma, with a card to the Weisser Hirsch and one to Meissdorf. Bimlem and Inni also wrote often. I just can't understand why no mail arrived from us.

From Uncle Ernst we received a detailed report about all the hardships and horrors that you went through during the attack on Dresden [13-15 February 1945], we had no idea about it. In response to this letter, both Bimlem and I immediately wrote to you in Bergiesshübel, Sometimes things have to arrive. So tell Grandma not to be mad at us, we actually can't do anything about the postal situation, because nothing arrived from you either.

Now I want to tell you a little bit about us. We live [Hotel Anker-Gülden-Gans in Saalfeld/Saale] here in a more or less nice and cozy guest room, the food is so dull that you simply can't eat it, turnips and bitter spinach early in the afternoon and in the evening. It's downright disgusting. We have now secretly gotten a heating plate, which is strictly forbidden here in the hotel, and are cooking ourselves semolina porridge [German grits] or noodles.

Of course we also have to eat in the restaurant because otherwise Rexrodt's [owner of Hotel Anker-Gülden Gans in Saalfeld/Saale] will get nervous and just sit us out in the open air [eviction]. In addition, there are alarms 3-4 times a day, not to mention the pre-alarms that last all day. In any case, there is not a minute of the day where the air is completely clear, and bombs fall every time the alarm goes off.

So it's not very comfortable here either, and we'll soon be leaving inhospitable Thuringia [German state where Saalfeld/Saale is]. Elisabeth [Elisabeth von Schweinitz. Sister of Opa Hans-Wilhelm von Schweinitz and therefore Aunt to

Vati Hans-Wilhelm von Schweinitz] wrote to me that she had a 3-room apartment available for us, outside of Salzburg. As soon as we have our ration certificates and other requested items, which can take another 8 days, we will move to Salzburg with everything. In my opinion it is the quietest there in every respect.

Hans-Wilhelm [Vati to Hans-Ludwig] will bring us down by train, he wants to try to get work through my brother-in-law or his friend Armin Gutscher, if he succeeds he will stay down there otherwise he will come back to Saalfeld and keep contacting the State Farmer's Co-op Office until they finally assign him a position they had promised four weeks ago.

Last weekend we went to family Wurmb's in Lausnitz to have a decent meal, which was worth it in every way. We also got our suitcases from Berlin thanks to a nice Hungarian who picked them up in his car. Unfortunately, some of our soap and wool items were missing, as well as Hans-Wilhelm's things that he had lent to Hildegard for the trip.

We sent another messenger [Berlin], but in vain, she [Hildegard] won't return the items. Well, at the beginning of this week we had a chance to drive to Berlin with a car to get the stuff, but the man we wanted to go with must have been caught in an Air Raid attacked because he hasn't returned from Giessen yet.

Hildegard doesn't think it's necessary to write, she still seems to be grumbling with us because we treated her so badly on the trek [attempted move from Alt Raudten to Berlin to avoid the Russian Red Army]. As Hans-Georg wrote to me, she is now in Berlin and has no way of getting to Berchtesgaden [In German Alps just north of Salzburg Austria]. Things are supposed to look great in Berlin, no light, no gas, no food, people don't work anymore and the mood is almost bursting. I'm curious to see how long the whole story will last.

I think it's pointless for our Parents to come here because Saalfeld is completely overcrowded. Rexrodt's could only take them in for a certain period of time, they're already letting us know that we'll have to go somewhere else soon. In addition, the food situation here in Thuringia is so bad that our Parents would starve here without any help from the state. And who will give you anything now? All the buildings are filled to the roof with refugees. There is no longer any housing option available in Saalfeld, even with the most well-connected people, plus the constant [Air Raid] alarms.

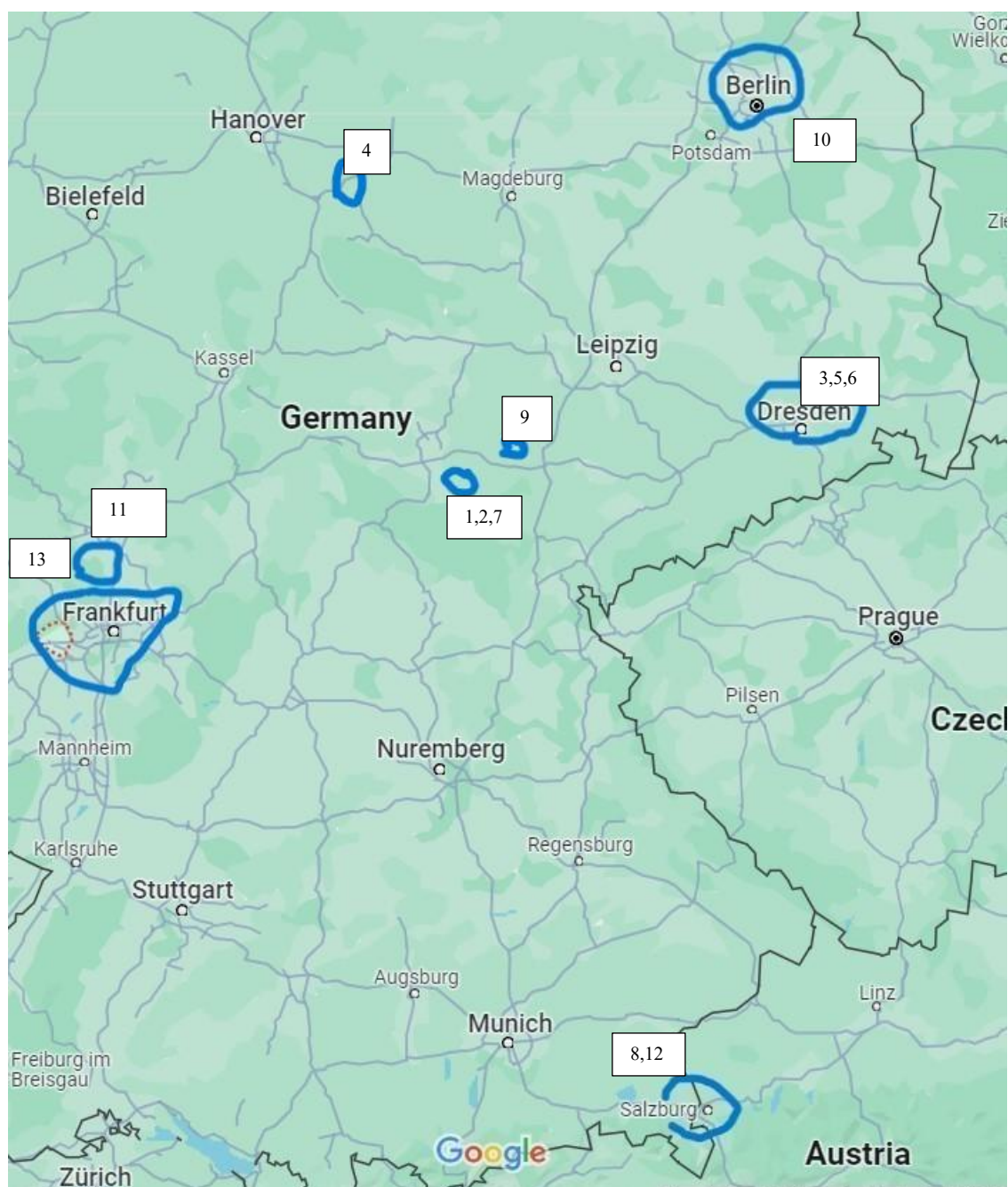
Ditta wrote that she had an apartment with a kitchen and bathroom for her parents in Wiesbaden or nearby, and she wished she and Biene could go there, maybe if the Russians advanced further on Berlin. It would perhaps be the best solution, the food issue would not be so difficult and there would also be enough coal available.

Now I have probably written everything I need to know, and in addition to the completing all possible questions, my mind is exhausted. Please send my warmest regards to the parents. Lots of love to you and a sweet kiss from your niece

Signed "Ulla"

Locations Mentioned with large map

- 1 Saalfeld/Saale: Town in state Thuringia in southern Germany, about 200KM west of Dresden
- 2 Hotel Anker-Gülden Gans: Hotel in Saalfeld/Saale where Ulla and family were staying.
- 3 Weisser Hirsch: district in northeastern Dresden where Dorothee Unruh lived
- 4 Meisdorf: village located in state Saxony-Anhalt Germany, nearest large City Leipzig, north of Dresden
- 5 Dresden: Capital city of state Saxony in south east Germany
- 6 Bergiesshübel: Now Bad Gottleuba-Berggiesshübel a spa town in state Saxony in south east Germany. South East of Dresden.
- 7 Thuringia: German state where town Saalfeld/Saale is located.
- 8 Salzburg: Austria: City in Austria that is near the southern border of Germany, south of Munich and 605 KM southwest from Dresden Germany.
- 9 Lausnitz: Small district in state Thuringia in southern Germany, about 10 KM east of Saalfeld/Saale
- 10 Berlin: Capital of Germany in 1945. About 300KM northeast from Saalfeld/Saale
- 11 Giessen: town in state Hesse, in central Germany, north of Frankfurt. About 250 KM west of Saalfeld/Saale
- 12 Berchtesgaden: district in southern Germany near border with Austria. Just north of Salzburg Austria
- 13 Wiesbaden: Part of the tri-city (Frankfurt, Mainz, Wiesbaden) in state Hesse in western Germany. On the junction of the Rhine and Main Rivers.



Photos of Saalfeld



Unser Truck Wagen im Saalfeld 1945



Die Flucht. Hans [Hans-Ludwig] in Saalfeld, 1945, vorm „Goldenen Anker“
[Hotel]

1945 The Flight Part Four: Feb-Apr, Saalfeld Germany

Introduction

This was submitted in December 2024. Papa was 10 years old in 1945 until October. By end of February 1945 the family was in Saalfeld Germany. I have changed the voice of the narrator to first person. The reason is that most of these events are from tales that Papa told us (my brother and me) and from other family members such as Ulla's letter.

Saalfeld, Germany



My life as I knew it was dead and I was only 10 years old. Just one month ago I was the heir-apparent to an Estate that supported over 900 people. Now I was walking behind a horse-drawn wagon that contained all that was left of our family's possessions. Adding to my agony was that my voice was also gone. I lost my voice yesterday, screaming while a Doctor ripped out every one of my fingernails.

I was still trying to process and understand what had happened to us in the last month. In late January 1945 we left the estate and spent two weeks walking on the roads fleeing to the west. I have fond memories of this time; it was one big adventure for me. My adventure continued when we arrived in Dresden, until the bombs came on 13 February 1945. I cannot determine which experience was

worse; surviving the night Dresden was bombed or the day I had my fingernails ripped out.

Our old life may be dead, but we were trying to establish a new life. With the fingernails removed, my hands could heal and my voice would eventually return. Vati (my Father) had family and friends near our current location in Zwickau Germany. Maybe they could help us.

When we had left Dresden, we went west and were walking like zombies, still in shock. After our stop in Zwickau (for the removal of my fingernails), we continued walking west. This road walk was not an adventure. We needed to find help. We stopped often at family and friends. They could help us for the day, but we could not stay. There were so many refugees that the houses were already full and food was in short supply. They did recommend some of their friends and gave us letters of character. We kept traveling west. Finally, in Saalfeld Germany, one of the recommendations secured us a room at the Hotel Anker-Gülden Gans, owned and run by Heinrich Rexrodt. We had one room for the four of us; Vati (my Father), Ulla (my Step-Mother) Erlich (my Uncle), and me.

My hands and voice had healed. I was feeling much better and I wanted to explore the town and look for other boys my age (10 years old). But the Air Raid Sirens would sound several times a day. When bombers passed over us while we were traveling on the road, we would just stop and hold onto the horses. If we were visiting family or friends, we would go into a safe section of the house. But Saalfeld had Bomb Shelters. The first day, Ulla took me into one of the Bomb Shelter. It was terrifying. Crammed full of women, children, and few older men. The tension was high, while we listened for the bombers. Many of women tried to keep the children busy, but I was not interested. I wanted to be with my Vati and Uncle Erich.

I asked my Vati if I could stay with him during Air Raids. He told me that most of the men stay outside of the Bomb Shelters, so that if there was a bombing, the men could start to put out the fires, and after the bombing, dig out the entrances to the Bomb Shelters. The few men that were in the Bomb Shelters would dig from the inside. I could stay with him if I listened, behaved, and helped. Yes, of course! I would have agreed to anything so that I did not have to spend any more time than required with Ulla. The daily Air Raids continued but the anti-aircraft defense kept the bombers away. Most of the bombers were targeting the larger city just to the north, Jena, where several factories were located.

Food was a big issue. Especially to Mr Rexrodt, the owner of the Hotel Anker. The Hotel had a restaurant where we had our three daily meals. But we did not have Ration Cards yet. We were limited to vegetables (turnips and bitter spinach) and semolina porridge [German grits from wheat germ]. No meat, sugar, butter, or other food that a growing boy needs. Mr Rexrodt talked to Vati and recommended that I be enrolled in the Boarding School in Wickersdorf. I would be with other boys my age, be properly feed, and Wickersdorf was 10 more miles away from Jena. Boarding school! I was thrilled with the idea. Many of the other boys would also be from noble families like me (not public-school boys) and I would be more accepted. Being able to have friends my age was also attractive. Because of the multiple daily Air Raids, I was finding it hard to find friends.

Boarding School in Wickersdorf

Arrangements were made. On 23 February 1945, Vati and I traveled the 10 miles to Wickersdorf and we met with the Headmaster. He asked Vati lots of questions about family lineage, loyalty to the “Father Land”, and had Vati taken the required oath to Hitler. The Headmaster seemed to be satisfied with Vati’s answers but there was one important issue that had to be resolved. Was Vati trying to pass-off a Jewish boy as his own boy? Was I Jewish? There was one easy method of determining if I was Jewish. The Headmaster told me to lower my trousers and underwear and expose my genitals. I looked at my Vati. Up until now I had only undressed in front of family members or my Nanny. I was not expected to undress in front of another male until I had reached my Maturity and would have a Valet. Vati gave me a choice, Boarding School or return to Saalfeld where my Step-mother Ulla would be taking care of me. Vati had an opportunity to find work and would be gone most of the day. Boarding School or Ulla? I dropped my trousers and underwear. I had not been circumcised – I was not Jewish.

I instantly made friends with the other boys and was accepted. Most of the teachers were Soldiers that had been mustered out of the military because of injuries. Being in the military they were required to be Nazi Party members and had taken the military oath to Hitler. Being teachers they had to take the Civilian oath to Hitler, which they took very seriously. They were all still devoted Nazi Party members. We were receiving our required subjects but between we were drilled/indoctrinated into being loyal Nazis. I knew how to behave as if I agreed. Vati and Uncle Erlich had been good mentors in teaching me how to keep my thoughts to myself. A person’s outer facade does not always reflect the inner self.

Food was still an issue. At least our vegetables and porridge were augmented with a small portion of meat. Usually, chicken or pork. I was always hungry. I was 10

years old, but very small and thin for my age, and I could fit inside the dumb-waiter. At night I would ride the dumb-waiter down into the kitchen, steal some food (I preferred the cooked chicken) and ride the dumb-waiter back to the dorm. I stole enough to share with the other boys in the dorm. This act of disobedience proved to the other boys that I was not completely brainwashed. Still, we never voiced this acceptance. You cannot voice anything, because the voice is part of the outer façade because you never know who is eavesdropping.

I stayed at this Boarding School until the night of 30 March 1945 (1 month and 7 days since I had arrived). We were already in our dorms, but luckily, I had not gone down with the dumb-waiter to the kitchen yet. There was a commotion at the door to the dorm and in walked the Headmaster and Uncle Erlich. I left with Uncle Erlich and we traveled back to Saalfeld.

Within a few days we were on a train to Salzburg Austria. Vati had not received the job that was promised to him in Saalfeld. The Ration Cards had arrived. Great-Aunt Elizabeth von Schweinitz (Aunt to Vati) in Salzburg Austria had invited us to stay with her. What made Vati and Uncle Erlich the most nervous was that the Red Army had passed Dresden and was moving West towards Saalfeld. It was time to leave and go west.

We were lucky. We had been lucky on 13 February 1945 when Vati decided to leave Dresden after the first bombing raid. Dresden was bombed again on the 14th and 15th. We left Saalfeld in the first few days of April 1945. Between 9 and 11 April, Saalfeld was heavily bombed by the 9th US Air Force. Over 208 people were killed and a large part of the town was destroyed. The raids on Saalfeld continued for the rest of the war because Saalfeld was an industrial center and had a large railway station. The same railway station we had used when we left Saalfeld.

1945 March-April Lt Col Victor von Schweinitz and High Treason

This was submitted in January 2025. Papa was 10 years old in 1945 until October. By April 1945 the family was traveling from Saalfeld Germany towards Salzburg Austria. This submission is a summary of the compendium about the “Surrender of Germany” which contains all the backup documents and research done by Papa and Mutti.

Background

In early April of 1945, Hans-Ludwig and his immediate family (Vati, Step Mother Ulla, and Uncle Erich) were fleeing their estate in Silesia (now West Poland) and were on a train to Salzburg Austria. They were not the only ones fleeing to Austria in hope of finding a safe heaven. Many of the Nazi Bureaucrats who had implemented the “Final Solution” (think Killing Concentration Camps) were Austrian. Even Hitler was originally an Austrian and his “Teahouse” was in Berchtesgaden Germany just north of the border with Austria, allowing Hitler a quick get-a-way if needed. Before World War II, the Austrian SS was an active terrorist organization which later became the enforcement arm of the German Nazi Party’s military wing known as the Waffen-SS. The war was not going well for Germany and many who had contributed to the atrocities were fleeing back to Austria.

In 2 February 1943, Germany’s 6th Army surrendered to the Soviets in Stalingrad. On 13 May 1943 the 1st Italian Army and the German Africa Corps surrendered to the Allies in North Africa. On 8 September 1943, all of Italy unconditionally surrendered to the Allies. Italy’s surrender was kept a secret because German Army was still fighting the Allies in Italy, and Italy was worried about German reprisals. On 6 June 1944, D-Day occurred along the French Northern coast. This western front led by the Allies was moving fast to the east. In the summer of 1944, the Soviet Red and White armies began to move west. The Western Front and Eastern Front were both heading for Berlin.

Oath to Adolf Hitler

There are 12 main branches in the Schweinitz family tree, and like many families of Nobility, the men were Officer’s in the Army/Luftwaffe/Navy or held high level Nazi Party Bureaucrat positions. All of these positions required taking the Wehrmacht Oath of Loyalty to Fuhrer Adolf Hitler:

"I swear to God this holy oath
that I shall render unconditional obedience
to the Leader of the German Reich and people,
Adolf Hitler, supreme commander of the armed forces,
and that as a brave soldier I shall at all times be prepared
to give my life for this oath."

Hans-Ludwig and his family were part of the “Klein Krichen” branch of the family tree. Of course they were supposed to be good Germans and be loyal to Fuhrer Hitler, Country, then family, in that order. But some family members would put Country or Family before Fuhrer Hitler, which is High Treason. Already

mentioned is the effect of General Henning von Tresckow roll in assassination attempt against Hitler known as Valkyrie on 20 July 1944. Hans-Ludwig's grandmother maiden name was von Tresckow and her niece Anne von Tresckow were both living on the estate, Alt Raudten, and had to quickly flee to the west for safety. Both were already safely in Wiesbaden Germany which was already occupied by the Allies.

Adam von Trott

Also involved in the Valkyrie plot was Adam von Trott. He was the Grandson of Lothar and Anna (nee Jay) von Schweinitz also part of the "Klein Krichen" branch of the family. Adam was the son of Lothar's and Anna's daughter Eleonore who had married August von Trott zu Sltz. Adam was arrested and put on trial for his role in the plot and executed on 26 August 1944.

Operation Sunrise in Italy

That part of the "Klein Krichen" branch of the family was not done yet in expressing their loyalty to country over Fuhrer Hitler. Adam's cousin Viktor von Schweinitz played a pivotal role in Operation Sunrise which was a cooperative effort between American and German Officers to unconditionally surrender the remaining German Wehrmach forces in Italy and in the South. This operation began in secret on 23 February 1945, more than two months before Fuhrer Hitler committed suicide on 30 April 1945.

In early April, Hans-Ludwig and his immediate family were going to Salzburg Austria hoping for a safe heaven, the Nazi's were going to Austria to regroup and hoping to rise again, other family members had already fled west and were safe in the occupied zones, and Viktor von Schweinitz was secretly in Caserta Northern Italy trying to end the war. Fuhrer Hitler was still in his Teahouse (Eagle's Nest) in Berchtesgaden. Berchtesgaden is just 10km (6 miles) north of the Austrian border. Fuhrer Hitler did not leave his Teahouse until 19 April 1945 and went to Berlin to celebrate his birthday on 20 April 1945.

On 23 February 1945, Lt Col Viktor von Schweinitz began his journey to Caserta in Northern Italy. Lt Col von Schweinitz was representing General Heinrich von Vietinghoff, Commander-in-Chief of the Southwest Command and of German Army Group C.

Lt Col Viktor von Schweinitz was questioned by the Chief of Staff over why he was selected to represent General von Vietinghoff. Mr Dulles of the Allied Forces provided intelligence that " Schweinitz had been involved in the 20 July 1944

assassination conspiracy Valkyrie against Hitler, and his American-born grandmother [Anna (nee Jay) von Schweinitz, also Grandmother of Adams von Trott] was a direct descendent of John Jay, one of the first chief justices of the U.S. Supreme Court.”

The family story about why Lt Col Viktor was chosen, was because in 1945 he had no wife or children. Any act towards surrender was considered treason by Hitler, and would have resulted in execution. But Hitler's enforcement arm, Gestapo, did not just stop with executing the military Officer, they would also executed his wife and children. So being a bachelor, he was probably 'volunteered' for the assignment or he may have willingly taken on the assignment. The family does not know how General von Vietinghoff convinced Lt Col Viktor von Schweinitz. During the negotiations, Lt Col Viktor von Schweinitz and Major Eugen Wenner were in uniform. But on 29 April 1945, when Lt Col Viktor von Schweinitz and Major Wenner signed the Instrument of Surrender, Führer Hitler was still alive. While signing the Surrender, Viktor and Eugen were in civilian clothes – this was done to emphasize that they were no longer loyal to Fuhrer Hitler, and were signing on behalf of the German Wehrmacht. Lt Col Viktor von Schweinitz signed the Instrument of Surrender on behalf of General von Vietinghoff. Major Eugen Wenner represented S.S. General Karl Wolff.

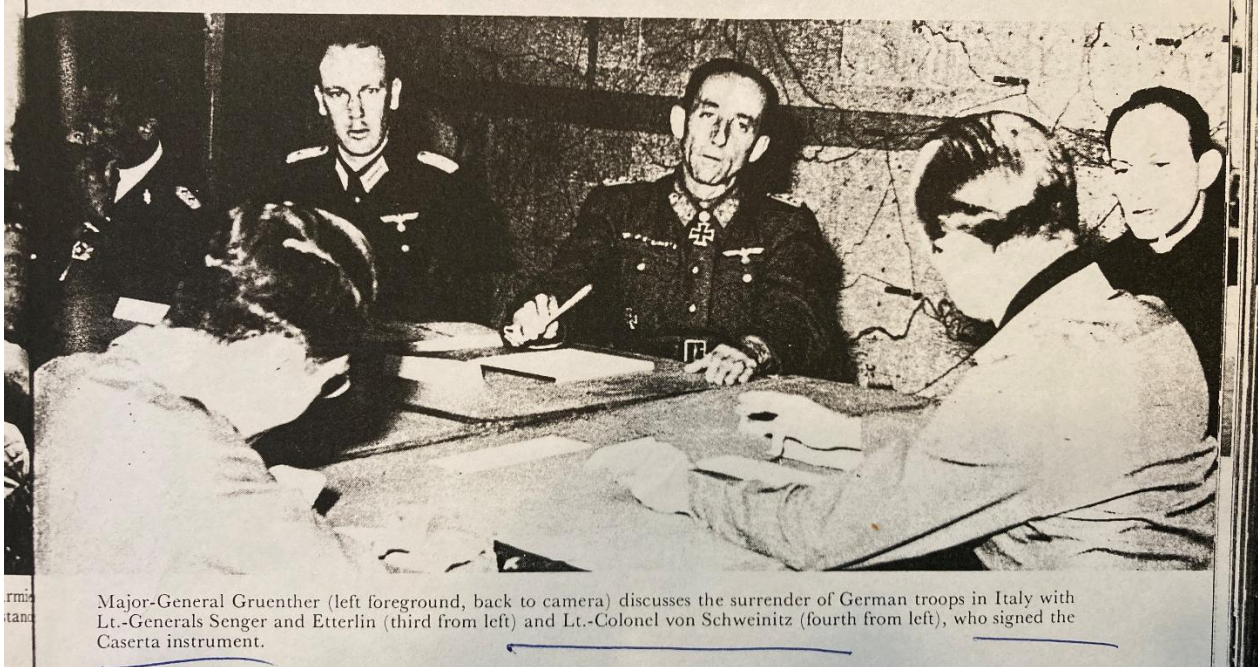
Instrument of Surrender Signed

Although signed on 29 April, the Instrument of Surrender was not effective until 2 May 1945. Lt Col von Schweinitz and Major Wenner received 3 copies and began their journey through Switzerland to deliver the document to General Field Marshall Kesselring in Berlin. By 30 April 1945, both Lt Col von Schweinitz and Major Wenner were stuck in Switzerland. Fuhrer Hitler committed suicide on 30 April 1945 in Berlin. On 2 May, they were still stuck in Switzerland. The Military in Germany was in chaos, and so was the German government. Luckily, Mr Dulles had been in contact with General Kesselring in Berlin about the contents of the Instrument of Surrender. Despite the actual signed documents being stuck in Switzerland, at 4am on 2 May 1945, German Field Marshal Albert Kesselring approved the surrender and by 2pm, Wehrmacht troops in Italy and Southern German occupied areas began to lay down their arms.

The official historical unconditional surrender of all of Nazi Germany was signed on 7 May 1945 in Reims France and effective at 11PM on 8 May 1945 (V-E Day).

For more details and backup material see website
HansAndHelgasCorner.com

Under Tab Hans' Corner, von Schweinitz Family
Scroll down until „German Surrender 29 April 1945 and Lt Col Viktor von Schweinitz”



Surrender of German Forces in Italy and Western Austria

Lt. Col. Victor von Schweinitz signs the documents of unconditional surrender for all German troops in Italy and western Austria at Allied Forces' headquarters in Caserta, Italy on April 29, 1945. On that same day, Hitler married his longtime mistress Eva Braun in a Berlin bunker and wrote his final testament. (Photo by © CORBIS/Corbis via Getty Images)





Adam von Trott in the People's Court (15th August, 1944)

1945 The Flight Part Five Saalfeld to Salzburg

Introduction

This was submitted in May 2025. Papa was 10 years old in 1945 until October. By April 1945 the family was traveling from Saalfeld Germany towards Salzburg Austria.

April Saalfeld Germany and the Train to Salzburg Austria

Now that we had ration cards, Vati's sister, Tante (Aunt) Gabriele invited us to stay with her in Salzburg Austria. We could not enter Austria before we had German ration cards. If we entered Austria without ration cards, we would be sent to one of several forced labor subcamps around Salzburg. Austria was not going to support a bunch of people that were homeless, starving, and not working. If the authorities found out that you had entered the country without the proper support documents, you went to the labor subcamp. Later we found out that these subcamps were collection centers for the 'killing' concentration camps in

Czechoslovakia and Poland. At least Austria had borders that you could cross if you meet their requirements. Switzerland had completely closed borders. If authorities found you and you were not a Swiss citizen or resident, then you were arrested and if you were lucky – deported. This is what Switzerland called ‘being neutral’.

In the first few days of April 1945, Vati (my Father), Ulla (my StepMother), and I boarded a train in Saalfeld and traveled towards Salzburg Austria. All our worldly positions were still in our horse drawn truck (wagon) and Onkel (Uncle) Erlich was going to drive the wagon from Saalfeld to Salzburg. The trip was about 500km. The train could cover the distance in less than a day, the wagon was going to take at least 5 days. Later I found out that not all our worldly positions could safely go on the train. We still had the illegal rifle and weapons that Vati had used to save our lives back in February along the road to Dresden. These weapons were illegal because Vati had not surrendered them to the Nazi SS (Schutzstaffel, the Protection Squad, was the elite guard of the Nazi) as he had been ordered.

We had to leave Saalfeld because the Russian Red Army was coming from the east and the 9th US Air Force was increasing the bombing from above. Saalfeld was receiving too much attention by the invading Allies. Again, we timed our departure well. A few days after we left, on 9 April 1945, Saalfeld was heavily bombed by the Allies, killing 208 people.

The train was packed. We went from compartment to compartment looking for vacant seats. Vati and I could not find a seat. Ulla was given a seat. In the month that I was in the boarding school, Ulla’s belly had noticeably grown bigger, and it was not because her diet consisted mostly of cabbage and porridge. Ulla was pregnant. That explains why she kept throwing up on our long walk from Alt Raudten, through Dresden, to Saalfeld. Now Ulla is always tired. As long as Ulla did not “Mother me”, I did not care, she was my Vati’s problem. He got her pregnant.

I was still only 10 years old, and a train trip was an adventure waiting to happen. Vati was standing inside the packed compartment, leaning against the far window, and I was standing in the doorway. I asked, and Vati told me to go ahead and explore the train and find my own adventure.

The Uniforms

I weaved my way through the crowd. I was small for my age and since I had lost so much weight at the boarding school (remember we were not given enough food)

I was often mistaken for a scrawny 7- or 8-year-old. There were so many men in paramilitary uniforms. I was not seeing any uniforms from the Wehrmacht (Army, Navy, Air Force). During the last few months, when we had been traveling on the main roads, we saw a lot of Wehrmacht uniforms. Their uniforms consisted of olive tunic and pants made from very dense wool like material called tracht in German. The material provided protection of the elements, rain, and straps from the gear you had to carry. Also, it was stiff enough to both provide some back support and protection of small sharp objects, such as shrapnel or a knife fight.

On the train, every compartment and the corridor was packed with abled body men in various uniforms. I had learned to be careful around any outfit that looked like a uniform. Because of the shortage of material, there was no official uniform except for the Wehrmacht. Members of the Nazi Party (political), Third Reich (government), Gestapo, SS (Schutzstaffel), and SA (Sturmabteilung) could design their own uniform. Usually, the uniform was then adorned with the Nazi Party armband swastika and a shoulder or collar insignia patch to indicate rank or position. What surprised me was the number of uniforms that showed stitch marks on the shoulder or collar because an insignia had been removed. I decided to be careful around these uniforms. Uniform with no insignia could be SS or a high-ranking Nazi Party member. Any able-bodied man in plain cloths could be the Government or Gestapo.

The Nazi Party was the only remaining political party and governed most of the Third Reich (think Hitler). Within the Nazi Party was the SA, SS, and Gestapo (and many other divisions).

The SA (Sturmabteilung) or Stormtroopers often would wear brown. The SA primary purposes were providing protection for Nazi party, disrupt the opposing parties, and intimidating Romani, trade unionists, and especially Jews. All during WWII, Führer (Leader) Hitler was the Commander of the SA with Wilhelm Schepmann being the Deputy.

The SS (Schutzstaffel) was under the SA and was the foremost agency for security, mass surveillance, and state terrorism within Germany and German-occupied Europe. Heinrich Himmler was head of the SS. Subsections of the SS ran the concentration camps, domestic and foreign intelligence. It was the SS that had confiscated Vati's weapons back in early 1944. At least they thought they had all the weapons.

The Gestapo (Geheime Staatspolizei, home police) was under the SS and was the official secret police of Nazi Germany and in German-occupied Europe. The Gestapo was extremely effective due to the willingness of ordinary Germans to report on fellow citizens. The power of the Gestapo was used to focus upon political opponents, ideological dissenters (clergy and religious organizations), career criminals, the Sinti and Roma population, handicapped persons, homosexuals, and, above all, the Jews. Heinrich Müller was the head of the Gestapo.

I weaved and explored, but did not talk to anybody. I did not want to get my Vati in trouble by accidentally saying something that might be interpreted as inappropriate, or worse yet – against our Führer Hitler.

When I reached the train car right behind the locomotive (steam) and coal car, I turned around. Right into two paramilitary uniforms. One was dressed in a grey ‘tracht’ tunic with dark red insignia on his collar with two gold cords down the center – a high up official Nazi party member probably from Berlin. Führer Hitler’s uniform was also the same grey color. The other was in a brown colored uniform with a lightning bolt patch on his sleeve – he was from the SS - he was probably looking for enemies of the Nazi state. The grey uniform bent over and asked me ”Kleiner Junge, wo sind deine Eltern?” In English this translates to “Young boy, where is your parent?” But because of the war, so many children where being taken care of by other family members or friends, the “Eltern/parent” now meant ‘your guardian’. I blurted out something, and took my skinny scrawny body and dove between the two uniforms and weaved my way to the back of the train car. I could hear laughter behind me. But nobody was following me or grabbing my shoulder. I safely made it through the remaining cars and found the compartment where Vati and Ulla were. I needed to tell them what had just happened. I had to tell them about my great adventure.

Onkel Peter

Breathlessly, I opened the compartment door and darted inside, and stopped with my mouth open – no sound. Vati was still standing against the window, but now he had his Nazi swastika arm band on. Vati said “Na Hans-Ludwig, hast du Onkel Peter gefunden? (English: Well, Hans-Ludwig, did you find Onkel Peter?)” Who is Onkel Peter? We do not have a Peter in the family. Then I looked at the others in the compartment. All were wearing Nazi swastika arm band. Just in time I remember, any reference to ‘Onkel Peter’ meant danger was present, beware. I replied “No, I did not find Onkel Peter, the train is too crowded. I hope he made it onto the train.” I bowed my head and added “Heil Hitler!” Everybody answered

“Heil Hitler!” (The salute and heel clap is not used as often as in Hollywood movies.). I stayed in the doorway and tried to breath normal. This train trip was turning into a bigger adventure than I could handle.

We had to change trains a couple of times. Every train was just as crowded with able-bodied men in paramilitary uniforms. I helped to move our bags while Vati concentrated on helping Ulla. The motion of the train and the stuffiness of so many people packed together was causing Ulla to feel nauseous and very tired.

Salzburg Arrival

Finally, we arrived at the Salzburg train station. Tante Gabriele and her husband were waiting for us on the platform. Tante Gabriele greeted Ulla with a big hug. Then she pushed Ulla back by her shoulders while she exclaimed “Mein Gott, du bist schwanger! (My God, you are pregnant!). Then Tante Gabriele and Ulla began to talk and cry all at the same time. Vati, I, and Tante Gabriele’s husband (Onkel Willy to me) gathered all of our bags, while we waited for the Ladies to calm down. It was hard to understand exactly what they were saying. But it seems that Ulla, in all her letters, never mentioned that she was pregnant. I couldn’t tell if Tante Gabriele was upset because she did not know, or happy because Ulla was blessed with child in the middle of all the chaos of a World War. We left the train station.



1945 Flight Part 6 Salzburg to 9May45

1945 April to 9 May, Salzburg Austria

This was the June 2025 submission to the writing club.

Finally, we arrived at the Salzburg train station. Aunt Gabriele and her husband were waiting for us on the platform. Aunt Gabriele greet Ulla with a big hug. Then she pushed Ulla back by her shoulders while she exclaimed “Mein Gott, du bist schwanger! (My God, you are pregnant!). Then Aunt Gabriele and Ulla began to talk and cry all at the same time. Vati, I, and Aunt Gabriele’s husband (Uncle Willy to me) gathered all of our bags, while we waited for the Ladies to calm down. It was hard to understand exactly what they were saying. But it seems that Ulla, in all her letters, never mentioned that she was pregnant. I couldn’t tell if Aunt Gabriele was upset because she did not know, or happy because Ulla was blessed with child in the middle of all the chaos of a World War.

Finally, we left the train station. We had to walk to Aunt Gabriele's villa. The Allies had been bombing Salzburg since September 1944 and over 46% of the city was in ruins (Ruinen), especially around the train station. Our route to the villa was clogged with debris. We had to step carefully. There could be un-exploded bombs under the rubble. The sharp edges of broken bricks and metal could seriously cut our legs. I was carrying most of our bags. Vati had to help Ulla keep her balance. And Uncle Willy was helping Aunt Gabriele. Everywhere there were people. Many were wandering around the rubble that used to be their homes. But there were more men in the brown or black uniforms. The same type of uniforms that I had seen on the train. I wanted to ask my Vati why these young men were not on the Front Lines fighting for the Glory of the Third Reich? But I knew to keep quiet when out in public, no questions.



Once we reached the villa, we were shown to our room. Aunt Gabriele was making a fuss over Ulla. Ulla needed to lay down and rest. Gabriele would bring up some restorative tea and food for Ulla. The rest of us men were to leave Ulla alone, and go to the kitchen. On the kitchen table was a nice spread of various foods. More food than I had seen in over a month. Uncle Willy said that I could eat my fill. Does Uncle Willy remember how much a 10-year-old boy can eat? I looked at my Vati for confirmation. Vati told Uncle Willy that I was a very hungry growing boy and was he sure about the offer. Yes, because they knew we were coming they had been saving their ration cards so that they could offer us a celebration feast. I chowed down. Uncle Willy fetched a couple of bottles of sparkle water (club soda to Americans). He filled an adult size mug just for me. After I had eaten a couple slices of pumpernickel bread with toppings, I could start to listen to their conversation.

Uncle Willy was explaining that Salzburg was full of members of the Nazi Party that were fleeing Germany, especially Berlin. They were coming in by the train load. The rumor was that the Party was trying to re-group in Austria. The Nazi Party had been strong in Austria since 1930 and felt safe in Austria. Especially, since Austria people had voted (99.7% agreed) to be annexed by Nazi Germany back in April 1938. And Führer Hitler was just across the border in his Kehlsteinhaus (Eagles Nest) in Berchtesgaden Germany. Führer Hitler used to be Austrian, and he was expected to come to Salzburg any day now. Maybe for his 56th birthday celebration on 20 April. Hitler's speeches and official publications were full of how the German Wehrmacht was holding back both the Russian armies and the American armies. In the air, the German Luftwaffe was still superior to any Allied Air Force. It was just a matter of time, and Germany would regain all the territory that has been lost.

Aunt Gabriele had already come to the kitchen table, made a tray for Ulla, and had taken it up to her. Now she sat down with us. She had received a letter from her sister (my Aunt) Sigrid with some good news. My ears perked up. Back in 1944, my sister, Inni, had gone to Aunt Sigrid's to learn how to be a "Lady" of an estate. When we fled our Alt Raudten estate in Silesia (West Poland now) in January 1945, there was not enough time to notify anybody. Aunt Sigrid's estate was also in Silesia. We did not know if Inni was still alive, or worse, captured by the Russian Red Army. The letter had been postmarked in some small town in Germany between Dresden and Munich. Aunt Sigrid's family had managed to escape Silesia, went through Dresden Germany after the 13-15 February 1945 bombing, and were on the road to Salzburg. They were walking with all their worldly possessions balanced on bicycles. Any day now, they should arrive in Salzburg. I could see instantly, that Vati was filled with joy. His daughter was safe and will soon be part of his family again.

For the next month, I was not allowed to roam outside of the villa's grounds. I did not mind. Soon Uncle Erlich arrived with the horse drawn truck (wagon) with what was left of our worldly possession. Vati, Uncle Willy and Erlich let me become part of their group and treated me like a little adult. My sister, Inni did arrive with her bicycle. The rest of Aunt Sigrid's family also arrived. The villa was getting crowded. Inni is six years older than me, so we were never really playmates. Inni, the Aunts, and Ulla spent most of their time around the kitchen table talking about subjects women normally talk about – especially the expecting baby. I preferred the men talk.

Because of the news blackout (propaganda) we were not aware of the important events that were happening.

12 April FDR dies in America

12 April Hitler leaves his Kehlsteinhaus (Eagles Nest) to go to his Führerbunker in Berlin.

20 April Hitler is in Berlin to celebrate his 56th birthday

27 April Austria proclaims independence from Nazi Germany

28 April Mussolini of Italy is executed

29 April Lt Col Victor von Schweinitz and Wenner sign the German Instrument of Surrender in the royal palace in Caserta Italy. (This surrender is never delivered to Berlin, but does become the basis for the surrender in Reims France on 5 May 1945)

30 April Hitler commits suicide

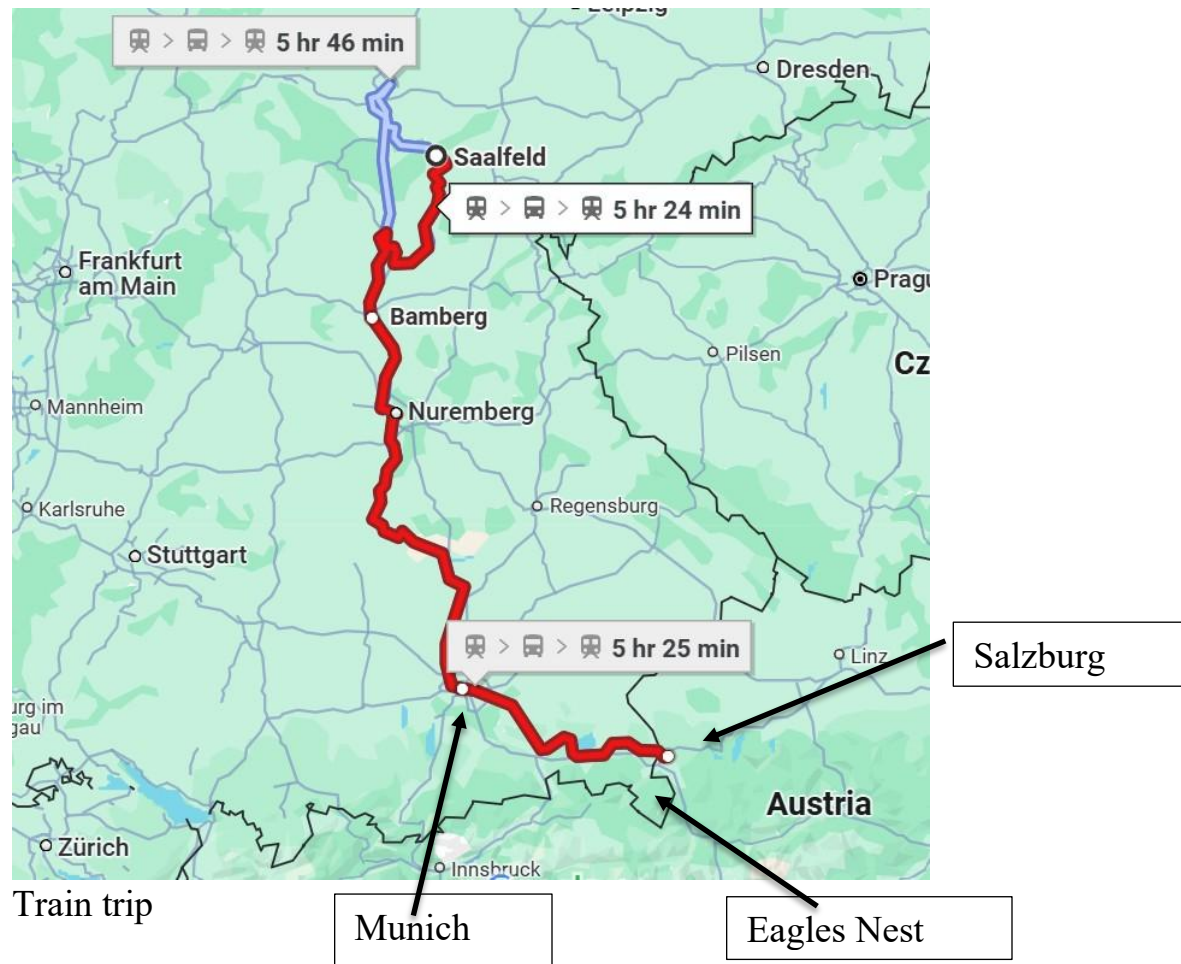
Then on 5 May 1945, the German high command surrendered unconditionally all land, sea, and air forces at Reims France to be effective on 9 May 1945. In Salzburg, on 5 May American General Patton's Army enters as Liberators. I remember 5 May started as an eerie quiet day, then we could hear the rumble of tanks and trucks. Nobody knew what to expect. Was there going to be a battle? Would what remained of the Nazi Party begin to fight? We hung white linen out of the windows as a welcome (surrender) flag to the Americans. We hoped that a Nazi would not show up and shoot us for treason. We could not hear any gun or artillery fire, so we stood at the upstairs windows and tried to see the Americans. There was so much debris in the street around the villa, that the vehicles could not come close. We could not see anybody in any of the Nazi uniforms or wearing the Nazi armband. Had they had all left or were they hiding. There were very few people in the street except for the Americans. The Americans entered without resistance. It was 5 May 1945 and the war was over in European theater. Pacific theater would continue until 2 Sep 1945

9 May 1945 Celebration



For the first few days after 5 May, only Uncle Willy left the villa. He had a position in the Salzburg council and was working with the Americans to establish some kind of occupation government for Salzburg. There was so much confusion. The Americans had just spent the last year in battles and were used to a good fight. Now, almost overnight, they were supposed to be diplomats and provide aid to people that just a week ago were the enemy. These young men were very confused. More details will be provided in the next chapter.

On 9 May, the Americans and the Salzburg council put on an 'end of the war' celebration. Where did they get the fireworks? We watched from the upstairs windows. Just a week ago, this amount of noise would have had us running for safety or into the bomb bunkers. Now we watched with joy and relief.



1945 The Flight Part Seven Salzburg after 9May45

This was the Sep 2025 submission to the writing club.

1945 Flight Part 7: 9 May to 14 July, Salzburg Austria

The war had ended on 9 May 1945, there was even a celebration, but the peace in Salzburg was almost completely suppressed by the confusion and distrust. The American army had liberated Salzburg on 4 May, and then the French and British armies arrived. The Allies (French, British, Americans, and Soviets) were meeting in Potsdam to iron out the future of Germany and the German occupied countries. The process was slow, because they did not want to repeat the mistakes of the Treaty of Versailles after the Great War (now called World War I)

Uncle Willy was on the City Council and therefore had some knowledge of the concerns of the occupying forces. Even so, he was worried that these occupying

forces would behave just like prior forces. I remember sitting with the adults while they discussed the potential hazards. Very resent history of Lower Silesia, where our Estate Alt Raudten is located, is full of the atrocities committed by occupying forces. The von Schweinitz family arrived in Lower Silesia in the 1350's and had acquired the Estate Alt Raudten around 1688. It seemed that every war between countries resulted in armies marching through Silesia, pillaging and raping. Why would the current occupying armies in Salzburg behave any different? By the end of this discussion, it was decided that the women would stay in the Villa which was considered safer. The men would venture out to do the shopping and other tasks. We were running low on vegetables, bread, and other non-rationed provisions. Uncle Willy knew of one store that had some stock. So, he and my Vati would venture out, while Uncle Erlich would stay in the villa to protect. I asked my Vati if I could come along, I was ready for some adventure. Yes, as long as I listened and stayed close by.

US Soldiers and Schwarze Soldiers

The store was located some distance from the Villa. We had to walk through large sections of town that had considerable bomb damage. It was sad. People that had survived the bombing, probably by hiding in the bomb shelters, had returned to find their house a pile of rubble. Many had built some kind of shelter out their debris. Uncle Willy knew many of these people and called out greetings as we walked by. Then we came upon one destroyed house, and a couple came running up to Uncle Willy. They were pointing at two American soldiers that were walking all over the debris and picking up items. Could Uncle Willy stop the soldiers, this was their house and the debris contained all their worldly precious items. Uncle Willy could speak very limited English and I could not understand any English. But he approached the soldiers saying something in a very normal tone of voice. The soldiers immediately turned towards him, pointed their weapons, and yelled at him. Uncle Willy could do nothing; he returned and told the couple that it was better to stay alive another day and let the soldiers take what they wanted. Just be grateful that at least so far, the occupying forces were not burning, torturing, and raping. As we continued walking, I now noticed more soldiers in various uniforms searching through and picking up items in the debris.

Finally, we reached the store. Just as Uncle Willy and Vati entered the store, I noticed another group of American soldiers walking toward us. I stopped and stared. They were a group of "Schwarzer" (Black) American soldiers. I was used to seeing "Schwarzer" or "Afrikaners". Some family members, "von Schweinitz" are Afrikaners from the Germany African colonies and would come to visit us at

Alt Raudten. In the village were people who had Moor or Berber ancestry due to past invasions from the African/Arabic nations. But one of the “Schwarzer” caught my attention. He was very dark, but he had pinkish enlarge lips and pink palms. I had seen a person like this before when I went with my Mutti to Berlin (before the war) to see a Vaudeville act. The act had a troop of white performers that blackened their skin and painted their lips pink. I wandered if this was a group of White American soldiers that were performers. I was so curious that I let them approach me. They were not performers. What happened next would influence me for the rest of my life. When I was 80 years old and interviewed, I stated “the Black American soldiers were extremely kind to me and when they would see me, they would stop and give me chocolate. The black soldiers were particularly friendly.”

I could not understand a word they said, but chocolate has its own universal language. I thanked them for the chocolate and one of them patted me on the head. I ran into the store, showed my Vati the chocolate bar, and explained what had just happened. The store proprietor said that he had also noticed that the “Schwarzer” American soldiers were friendly. Some even knew a little German and would talk with the local people. The white American Soldiers seemed to be more interested in collecting souvenirs. When I think back on all the soldiers that I saw searching through the debris, I now remember that they were all white.

When we got back to the Villa, Inni and the Aunts began to store what produce we managed to procure. I showed my sister, Inni, the chocolate bar that I had received. I wanted to only share it with her, but she said it was polite to offer everyone a piece. There were so many people now living in the Villa, that I only got one small square. Being polite has its price.

Schooling

Despite all the confusion and uncertainty, we tried to return to a normal life. Most of the school buildings were destroyed or heavily damaged. But somehow a few buildings were made safe enough that schools were re-opened. To accommodate all the children, the school day was divided into two shifts. I was assigned to the morning group. It was a relief to get out of the Villa and be with other children my age, I was still only 10 years old. As the days passed, the adults became more relaxed and we children were allowed to roam around the town in small gangs. It was still noticeable that the white American soldiers were leery of Germans, while the black American soldiers would interact. The blacks introduced us kids to a new game, called baseball. It was not quite as much fun as football (soccer) but

we enjoyed hitting a ball with a wooden plank (salvaged from debris) and then running around in a big circle (rounding the bases).

Returning to Alt Raudten?

At the Villa, Uncle Willy would bring back news from his position in the City Council. Some was promising; the Potsdam conference was going to divide up Germany and the occupied areas between the three Allies (USA, Great Britain, and Soviets, the French were only interested in part of Berlin). Then a stable government would be put into place in each area. It seemed that Lower Silesia, where Estate Alt Raudten is located, was going to again be part of Poland, but in the Soviet occupied area. Salzburg would be assigned to the American zone. The date when all this was to happen was expected to be 9 July 1945. Vati was cautiously elated. He was not happy about being under Soviet rule, but he said that in the 250 years that Alt Raudten had been with the 'von Schweinitz' family, the rulers had changed often. Sometimes Poland, then Germany, then Czechoslovakia, and even Austria. Vati and Uncle Erlich were looking forward to returning to Alt Raudten and were constantly making plans.

The not so promising news, was that part of the Potsdam agreement was going to include a provision for the removal of German populations from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. The three allied leaders agreed that transfers of German civilians should proceed in an orderly and humane manner. There was supposed to be a process where a German civilian could apply for a non-evacuation certificate. Vati and Uncle Erlich were trying to find out about this process. They were confident that because of the agricultural output of the estate that they would be granted this certificate. During the Third Reich, both had been granted a waiver from Military service because they were managing an estate that provided sufficient resources to the cause.

We were ready to travel back to Alt Raudten, except for one issue; Ulla's pregnancy. It was not easy to determine how far she was in the pregnancy, but she looked like she was going to give birth any day. Aunt Gabriel, Aunt Sigrid, and Inni insisted that Ulla could not travel the 600km back to Alt Raudten. Vati was not about to argue. We were staying in Salzburg until Ulla gave birth.

Schwarze Troops move in

In order to house all the troops, the specialized Office of Military Government, United States (OMGUS) was established and they would confiscate houses. Sometimes evicting the residence with three hours' notice. The residence could take a few personal possessions and the OMGUS personnel would provide receipts

for the buildings' remaining contents. But the displaced residents nonetheless had to find other housing on their own. Rather than wait and let the OMGUS determine if the Villa would be confiscated, Uncle Willy decided to take matters into his own hands. He approached the OMGUS and offered the ground floor of the Villa to the USA Army. To sweeten the offer, he offered accommodations for the "Schwarzer" (Black) troops. Although the USA army was desegregated, often the occupying troops were housed separately. The offer was quickly accepted. We moved into the upstairs rooms, and the Schwarze troops had the ground floor.

This turned out to be a good decision in various ways. In other villas where troops lived on the ground floor and the family lived upstairs, the troops preferred not to interact with the family. Most troops believed that all Austrian and Germans were Nazi's, were not to be trusted, and needed to be 'de-nazified'. The Schwarze troops that moved into our ground floor were different. They actually invited us downstairs for a 'get to know each other'. We all sat down in our prior 'living room' and they provided some American food while we provided some non-rationed vegetables. Uncle Willy used his limited English to talk with them and translated for the rest of us. Then one of the Schwarzer spoke German. It was a strange dialect but we could understand him. This was my first introduction to the friendliness of people from Central Texas. The USA army tried to assign troops from the same geographical area to the same unit. This group was from the hill country in Central Texas, where lots of Germans had settled. In the 1940's the dominate languages in the hill country was German, Spanish, and English. Most of the Germans had left the German kingdoms (there was no unified Germany) in the 1840's, and they still spoke the old German dialect. The soldier that could speak German was a Ranch foreman for a German family. Several of the other Schwarzer could speak some German. From that day on, we would sit together in the evenings. Soon we learned why they did not fear that we were all "Nazi's". They understood about being part of the suppressed population. Just because you had to join organizations or swear allegiance to survive, does not mean that deep down you practice or believe. USA might be the land of the free, but in the southern states, such as Texas, there were still the lingering effects of the "Jim Crow" laws. We did not actually understand, but we were grateful for their friendliness and understanding.

1945 The Flight Part Eight-A and B Salzburg May-July 1945

This was the Sep 2025 submission to the writing club.

1945 Flight Part 8a: May - July, Salzburg Austria

This was the Sep 2025 submission to the writing club.

World War II in Europe had ended on 9 May 1945 and by then we were living with Vati's sister Aunt Gabriel and her husband, Uncle Willy, in a Villa in Salzburg Austria. "We" consists of me Hans-Ludwig, a 10-year-old boy, Vati is my father, Ulla who is married to Vati (and my step mother), Inni is my older sister (17-years-old), and Uncle Erlich is Vati's younger brother.

Occupation and Dividing Germany

In Potsdam, the Allies were deciding the future of Central Europe. It was decided to divide Central Europe into zones to be controlled (occupied) by USA, Great Britain, France, and Soviet Union. Sections of west Germany were going to be given back to France (through the years these areas were often traded between countries). Berlin was to be divided into four zones, one for each Allie (which also included France). This was to occur on 9 July 1945. Austria (including Salzburg) and Southern Germany (Bavaria) was to be in the American zone. Salzburg had been liberated by the USA Army on 4 May 1945, and shortly thereafter the French and British armies also arrived. In anticipation of this date, the French army left to go west to their zone along the French/German border and the British army left to go further north to their zone in North West Germany.

In order to house all the troops Salzburg, the specialized Office of Military Government, United States (OMGUS) was established. The bottom floor of the villa was now housing "Schwarzer" (Black) troops. We moved into the upstairs rooms.

We were hoping that by now that the violent part of the war was over, and Salzburg was occupied by US troops, that order would be reestablished by our new overlords. Central Europe was used to being occupied and having an overlord represent the new Government. The Overlord would establish the new laws, new official procedures, and most important – maintain the peace. We were waiting with renewed hope of a peaceful and stable future under the new Overlord, the US Occupying Forces.

Ulla's Pregnancy and Monkey Butter

Ulla was still very pregnant. Her belly was ballooning out, but she was getting thinner. We were living mostly on vegetables and porridge. The war was over, but food, such as protein, fats, and dairy, was still rationed. The stores were almost out of everything but small amounts of locally grown food. Because of the effects of the heavy bombing in the area, a lot of the farm crops were damage or the fields had not been cleared of un-exploded bombs. The Schwarze noticed Ulla's

condition and asked if there was something the matter with Ulla. We explained that there were no Doctors available for the civilian population so we did not know if there was anything wrong. They said they could ask an US Army doctor to examine her, but he was going to be a Schwarze, was that okay with us? Not a problem. We explained that many branches of the 'Schweinitz' family tree had Schwarze ancestors. Mostly because of the association with the German Colonies from before the Great War (World War 1) and mixed marriages. Actually, Ulla's father and oldest brother were not Schwarze, but were currently in Africa and have a farm (African for Ranch) in South West Africa. We had to explain that when Germany lost her African colonies in 1918, South Africa did not want to expel all the Germans, just German rulers, so they sectioned off the northern part, created South West Africa (later became Namibia), and forced the farming Germans in South Africa to resettle to South West Africa. The Doctor came and examined Ulla. As far as he could tell, the baby was strong, healthy, and due any day now. Ulla was getting so thin because all her nutrients were going to the baby. She needed more protein and fat. The two items that were rationed and almost impossible to find in the stores.

The Schwarze began to bring us powdered milk, dry beef, and something they called 'monkey butter' for Ulla. All the Schwarze wanted in exchange for the food was to socialize with us. So, most evenings, we went downstairs and sat together. During one of those evening get-togethers, they brought the 'monkey butter' and offered it to Ulla. Ulla spread a spoonful of the 'butter' on top of slice of bread. Germans traditionally make open bread sandwiches, without a top slice of bread. Ulla took a bite and almost choked; it bound her tongue to the top of her mouth. The Schwarze immediately knew what was happening, and told Ulla to drink some of her tea. We had to learn to spread the 'butter' between two slices of bread, then Ulla could eat it without getting tongue tied. The 'monkey butter' was made from peanuts and vegetable oil, so it was a good source of protein and fats. The name on the can was "Peanut Butter".

Saturday Baths and Sunday Meal

The house is a Villa, so it is not divided into apartments. The only kitchen was downstairs. Luckily there was toilet stall on both floors. The bathtub was portable and stored in the cellar. We could either carry hot water from boiler in kitchen down to the cellar, or carry the tub up to the kitchen. Because the kitchen was on the ground floor with the Schwarze, the bathtub stayed in the cellar and we carried the hot water. We still had pots/pans that could be used in a fire place, so we would cook our food in our fireplace and boil water. The Schwarze used the kitchen when they did cook. But they usually took their hot meal at the central

mess hall (cafeteria) were they worked. They mostly used the kitchen to heat water for their baths. Sometimes they would let us use the kitchen, especially on Sundays to make a special midday meal. There were no Sunday services yet (we were still too unsure about US interpretation of religion, because European history has occupying forces inflict their version of religion on the population). But we still celebrated the rest of our normal Sunday's rituals which included bathing on Saturday evening, and on Sunday: dressing up in good cloths, making a special noon meal, spending the day together with family and/or friends, and taking an after meal walk in fresh air. We invited the Schwarze to our Sunday noon meal. At first, we thought they would not like our meal. Rationing was still in effect and there was a food shortage, so most of our meal consisted of various vegetables. They were elated. Turns out that the American meals that they received at their mess hall did not include very many vegetables. They explained that at home in America their meals included lots of different vegetables, and that our meals reminded them of 'home'.

Trading for Vegetables

Finally, we had a way to pay the Schwarze back for all the help and food they have provided us, especially with Ulla's pregnancy. We could provide them with evening meals consisting of vegetables. If we could find more vegetables. The problem was the lack of currency. When Austria voted to "Anschluss" (merge) with Germany in 1938, the currency was changed to the German Reichsmark. Since the war ended on 9 May 1945, the Reichsmark was almost worthless, and a new currency had not yet been issued. Commerce was now done through bartering. We needed something to trade for vegetables. When we had evacuated our estate Alt Raudten, we expected to spend a few weeks on the road and then return. So, Vati and Uncle Erlich loaded the truck (horse drawn wagon) with essentials for living on the road, and a few pieces of jewelry. Maybe we could trade the jewelry. Then Uncle Willy had an idea. The two draft horses that had pulled our truck were staying in the Villa's stables. He was sure that a farmer would trade vegetables for a couple of good draft horses. Vati and Uncle Erlich at first objected to trading the horses. They said that as soon as Ulla gave birth, the family was going to travel back to Alt Raudten (600 km away) and we would need the horses to pull the truck. Aunt Gabriel and Inni immediately countered with their objection. Once Ulla gave birth, it would be weeks before Ulla and the baby could safely travel such a distance. By then the family could travel by train. We all agreed that we would try to trade the horses for vegetables. Uncle Willy said he could use his contacts with the local farms and try to find a farmer that would trade vegetables for the horses.

That evening Uncle Willy came back home and said that he had no problem finding a farmer more than willing to trade for horses. When the war started in 1939, Germany had confiscated (drafted) almost all the horses in the area. And the tractors were worthless during the war because there was no fuel except for the military (and now the occupying US forces). Uncle Willy had made arrangements with a farmer who had been pulling the wagons and plow by human power – mostly his wife. Now we just had to get the horses to his farm and complete the trade.

The next morning, Vati, Uncle Erlich, and I went to the stable yard. We gave both horses a good grooming and then put on their wagon harnesses. This kind of harness uses a breast collar or wide strap across the horse's chest. The horse pushes into this strap to pull the wagon. The back of the harness has a breeching strap that goes around the horse's haunches. The horse can use this strap to slow down the wagon. We then walked next to the horses and lead them down the street to the countryside. After a few minutes, Vati lifted me up onto the back of one of the horses. Because of the girth and all the straps of the harness, I was not able to sit in the normal 'riding' position. So, I just grabbed onto the top of the girth and sat there enjoying the ride. The roads in town had been cleared of debris and we walked past building after building that had been bombed. Once we were in the countryside, the air was fresh without so much dust. Soon we arrived at the farm.

The farmer and his wife greeted us. They were pleased with the horses, but first they wanted to test the horses. Did these horses know the difference between pulling a wagon with wheels and pulling a plow through heavy soil? We were not sure because Vati had bought these horses in February and since then they had just been pulling our truck (enclosed wagon designed for heavy loads) while we traveled through a war zone. We did know that they remained calm while planes pass overhead, heavy vehicles pass them within inches, and bombs were exploding around them. The farmer changed their wagon harness for a plow harness. This harness has a thick collar which the horse can push against with great strength and not cut off its air supply. The horses were hooked up to the plow, while the plow was still in the transport position (wheels were attached that kept the plow blade from contact with the soil). The wife led the horses out to the field while the farmer walked behind giving the horses commands and balancing the plow. The horses understood the commands which was a good sign. Once in the field the wheels were taken off the plow and he stood on the plow so that the blade was pushed into the soil. Now for the real test. The farmer gave the horses the command to walk forward. They moved forward and felt the drag from the plow blade. Both lowered their heads, pushed into their collars, and pulled the plow

forward in a straight line. The wife was elated. She said her husband would take care of the horses while we would go into her kitchen for negotiations.

We then learned their story. At the beginning of the war, the German Wehrmacht had confiscated their farm horses for the war effort. Then their three sons had joined the war effort as soldiers. That meant that all the farm work had to be done by her and her husband. She often had to do the work of the horses, such as pull the plow while her husband kept the plow upright. At first her husband tried to pull the plow, but she did not have the weight to keep the plow upright and pushed it into the soil. She did have the strength to pull the plow. All during the war they had no news from their sons. Just a few weeks after the end of the war (8 May 1945 in Europe) they finally got news about two of their sons. One had died in Northern Africa fighting the US Armies lead by General Eisenhower and Patton. Another son had died in Italy fighting the US Armies lead by General Clark. The only news they had about their third son was that he had been in the German 6th Army fighting on the Eastern Front around Stalingrad. The 6th Army had surrendered on 2 February 1943 and the prisoners were taken to camps in Siberia. The Soviet Union refused to release the names of prisoners in these camps.

Her husband came into the kitchen and we began the serious business of bartering. They had a root cellar full of provisions. They had prepared for all three of their sons to come home after the war. Now they would not use all those provisions during the upcoming winter. Trading their current provisions for the horses so that they could have provision in the future made a lot of sense to them. And with the horses, they could again plow all of the fields and sell the extra crops. We came to an agreement on the trade. Now we just had to get the provisions to the Villa in town.

They offered to help us. They had a buckboard wagon and now they had two horses to pull the wagon. We went down into their root cellar and started to carry out apples, pears, cabbages, carrots, onions, cucumbers, turnips, leeks, Brussel sprouts, and potatoes. When we were done, there was still lots of provisions left in the root cellar. The horses were hitched up to the wagon and we all got in. Uncle Erlich and the farmer rode upfront on the bench seat. The rest of us rode in the back and sat on top of the provisions. When we arrived back at the Villa, Aunt Gabrial and Inni came out to greet us. They could not believe how much we received for the horses. There was enough fruit and vegetables for all of us and the Schwarze soldiers through the coming winter.

Becoming Farm Laborers

As we were unloading the wagon and carrying the produces into the root cellar we were talking about the state of the world. There was a shortage of able-bodied people to do manual labor. The farm needed workers to bring in the fall harvest and then to put winter seeds into the ground. And as soon as the fall cooler weather arrived, there was a pig to be slaughtered and processed. The farm could be much more productive if they could only find farm workers. Vati immediately offered our support as farm workers. He explained that we all had experience in farming because we had just fled a large farming estate in Lower Silesia. And even my sister Inni and I could be put to work. Inni knew how to process meat and fruit for storage and resale. Although I was small, I was almost 11 years old and strong. I knew how to work in a kitchen garden, how to work with laying hens, and how to pick ripe fruit and berries. I had been taught well by my Mutti and the estate's cooking staff. And Vati told them that instead of paying us with the useless Reichsmark, we could work for some of the field grain, meat, fat, and dairy products that we helped them bring to market. The Farmer and his wife quickly agreed. Vati, Uncle Erlich, Inni, and I were to start the next day. Aunt Gabriel was staying in the Villa to take care of Ulla, and Uncle Willy had his job with the city. Now we had a source for the protein and fats that were missing in our diet.

Although we had to deal with the disappointment of not being able to immediately return to our Estate Alt Raudten in Lower Silesia, we were hopeful that there was now a future. The war was over and as long as we kept the Occupying Allied forces appeased, there should be enough stability to rebuild towards a future.

1945 Flight Part 8b: May - July, Salzburg Austria

This was the Oct 2025 submission to the writing club.

World War II in Europe had ended on 9 May 1945 and by then we were living with Vati's sister Aunt Gabriel and her husband, Uncle Willy, in a Villa in Salzburg Austria. "We" consists of me Hans-Ludwig, a 10-year-old boy, Vati is my father, Ulla who is married to Vati (and my step mother), Inni is my older sister (17-years-old), and Uncle Erlich is Vati's younger brother.

Now that the war was over and Salzburg was occupied by the United States Army, life was starting to settle into a routine. For most issues, the occupying US and the Salzburg city council could come to an agreeable resolution. But not everything worked as planned. For example. Soon after 9 May, a few of the schools reopened. The curriculum was limited to only the basic subjects. The US did not want the schools to indoctrinate our young minds with any 'nationalism' and

‘fatherland’ thoughts so the subjects were limited to reading, writing, and math. All young people that were between 6 and 14 years old had to attend. I attended the morning session, and was really enjoying the experience. Then one day the school system fell victim to the disputes between General Patton and General Eisenhower. General Patton believed that not every person that had been a Nazi party member needed to be ‘de-nazified’. If the person had not held a position within the Nazi party, then the person just had to agree not to continue to promote the Nazi Party’s agenda (to be de-oathed). General Eisenhower believed that every person who was a Nazi party member could not be trusted and needed to be ‘de-nazified’ through trials in Nuremburg. Salzburg was in the zone that was being commanded by General Patton. There were other issues where General Patton and General Eisenhower disagreed. By end of June, General Eisenhower was feed-up with General Patton’s public announcements that disagreed with him, and he had General Patton reassigned to the Pacific front (WWII was still going on in the Pacific between US and Japan). Then General Eisenhower ordered all the schools in the US occupied zone in Europe to be closed and the teachers were ‘dismissed’ until the teachers could be ‘de-nazified’.

A few days after the schools were closed, Vati and Uncle Erlich had traded our horses for food at a local farm. That lead to the Farmer and his wife, offering that we could work on the farm for additional food. There was no currency yet in Salzburg, so the only way to get food was through bartering. Since I was no longer in school, I could also work on the farm. Vati and Uncle Erlich worked mostly in the fields. I helped my sister Inni in the garden and kitchen. Just yesterday, Inni and I were picking black berries. We brough a bucket full of berries and a bottle of the creamy portion of milk back to the villa in the evening. We made a special occasion of eating this sweet treat. We invited the Schwarze (Black) troops that lived on the ground floor to come up to our second-floor rooms. They enjoyed the desert just as much as we did. It was a special treat for them also.

The next morning, we were eating breakfast and getting ready to walk to the farm for another day of work. Inni was giving me my daily instructions. Inni is 7 years older than me, and while we were living on our estate in Alt Raudten, Inni and I were not close. Inni was usually away from home attending boarding schools or later being an Opare at another estate. Now that she was again with the rest of us, she was taking on the role of our Mutti (mother) who had died back in 1941. My work for today was to continue picking the black berries. She was going to work in the kitchen and start to preserve the berries. I was to take one of the buckets and only put the largest and juiciest berries into it. The other berries (small or squashed) go into the other buckets and would be used for preserves. The daughter

of a friend of Aunt Gabriel was getting married and we were invited to the wedding party. The big juicy berries were to be our wedding gift. This led us to reminiscing about Aunt Ditta's wedding that was held at Alt Raudten just a few months before our Mutti died. Family members and close friends had come from all over Germany. There must have been over 50 attendees. The manor house was stuffed full of guests, and many stayed in the village. Before the wedding, we had spent days picking wild Black Berries. With the dinner after the wedding, we served the wild Black Berries covered in rich cream from our own dairy cows. Such good memories.

That brought the conversation around to our favorite subject 'when can we return to Alt Raudten'. Uncle Willy said that he heard that the Soviet occupied zone was far more advanced in the rebuild. The Soviets were behaving just like occupying forces had for hundreds of years in central Europe. They quickly establish the new laws, new religion (no organized religion allowed), new monetary system, and new local governments. And the Soviets differentiated between the different types of Nazi Party members. Those that just had to take the Nazi oath to keep their jobs (teachers, retail owners, and many others) were only required to take another oath, and this time denounce any alliance to the Nazi party and announce support to the Soviet Union instead. Then they were allowed to go back to work. Because of the quick action by the Soviet Union, their occupied zone was fully functional already and people were able to plan for a future. We could not understand what was taking the US occupying forces so long in establishing stability in their zone. How could we plan for the future if we did not know how to appease the Americans? It is almost two months since the end of the war, and there is no currency, no local government structure, and no teachers. Even though we could not currently leave for Alt Raudten because of Ulla's pregnancy, it was looking very promising that once Ulla could travel that we would be able to return to Alt Raudten. And since Alt Raudten was in the Soviet zone, we would be able to reclaim Alt Raudten and lead it towards a new future under Soviet rule. Why not, the family had led Alt Raudten through several changes in government ever since 1185. The Schweinitz family is Germanic but not always German.

Displacement Notice

We were finished with breakfast, and Aunt Gabriel and Ulla began to clean up the room we used as our kitchen. Vati, Uncle Erlich, Inni and I left the villa to walk to the farm. As we walked along the road, we notice fliers stuck on several walls and posts. Vati walked up to a flier and began to read. He suddenly became very pale, and waved us towards the flier. As we read the flier, we were in disbelief. (A copy of a similar flier is at the end of this chapter). Per the flier, Salzburg had

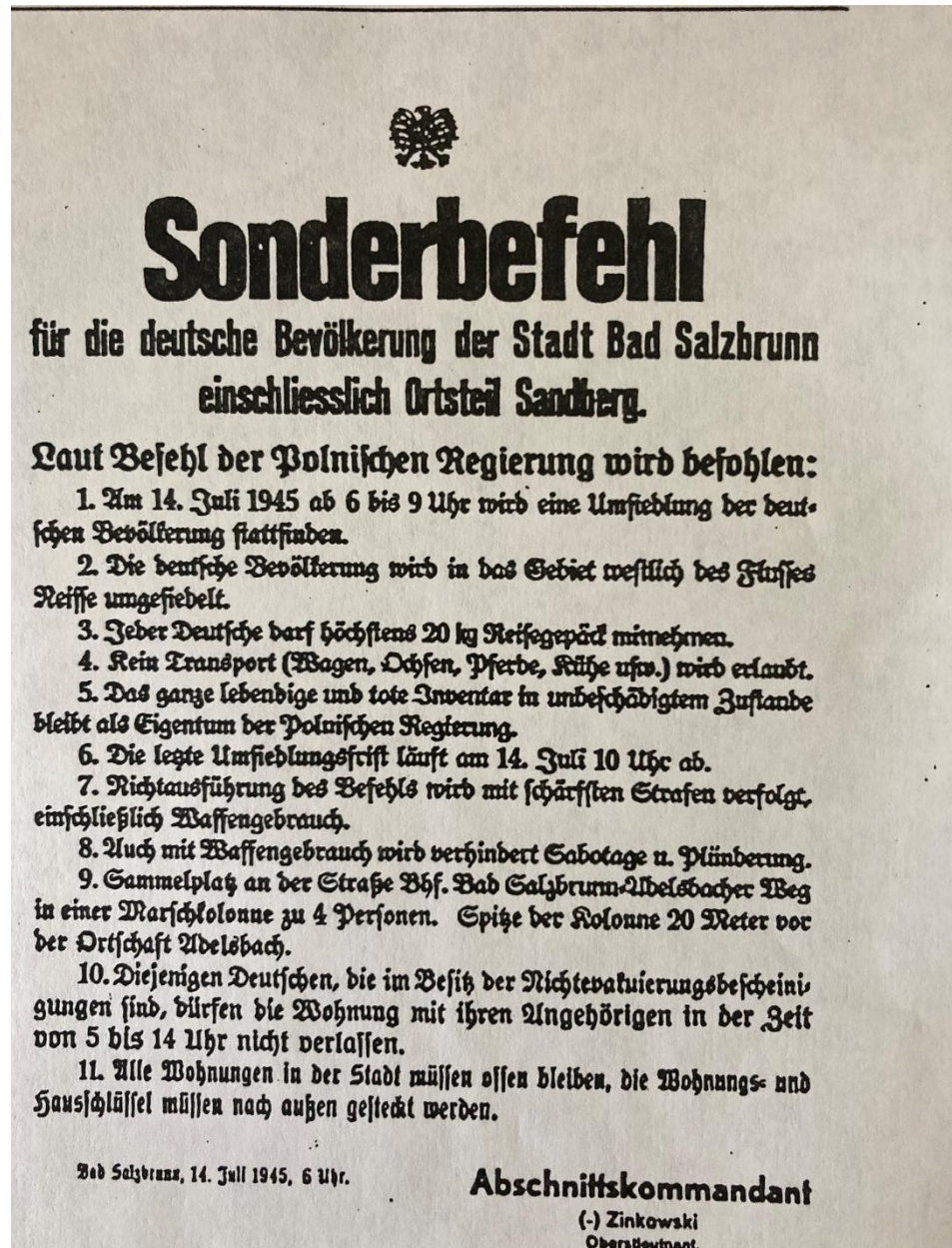
decided to expel all Germans, immediately, actual by tomorrow. Vati ripped that flier off the wall (there were several others nearby) and we returned to the villa.

We sat at the kitchen table in disbelief. We did not know that the Potsdam agreement had a provision that countries other than Germany could, if they wanted, expel the Germans. If an expulsion was to occur, the Potsdam agreement said it was to be orderly and humane. Is this an example of orderly and humane? And, did it apply to us? Uncle Willy and Aunt Gabriel were Austrian citizen, so they could stay. But the rest of us, were we German citizen or Polish? The Estate Alt Raudten was in Poland before the war and is still in Poland, does that make us Polish? But to enter Austria we had to have ration cards and when we lived in Saalfeld we applied and received our ration cards. Our ration cards were issued by Germany. Does this make us Germans? All our other documentation never survived the bombing of Dresden on 13 February 1945. The bombing happened without warning (no air raid sirens) and we were lucky to survive the bombing of the hotel by just running and leaving everything behind in the hotel room. The only possessions that we were able to take with us had still been on the truck (heavy duty wagon) that night. That night we found the truck, hitched two horses, and left Dresden.

We all bent over the flier and read. The flier stated that we were only allowed 20kg of luggage and had to be at the train station before 9am tomorrow. It also stated that if we did not comply, that force, which included weapons, would be used. We understood this to mean deadly force. Was the US Army expelling us, or which authority was doing this expelling in Salzburg? We were very confused and had so many unanswered questions. And we were scared.

Maybe the safest course of action was to just move across the border into Germany and then sort out everything. The border was less than 32Km (20 miles) away. Okay, the plan was to pack some luggage, take the train tomorrow to Munich, sort out everything, and then come back. It should just take a couple of days. Uncle Willy had a brother in Niederseeon just east of Munich. He was sure that his brother could provide for us for a couple of days. He wrote us a letter of reference and provided us with directions. There was not enough time to write to his brother, or warn him of our arrival so he could pick us up at the railroad station. Instead, we would have to change trains in Munich and then when we arrived in Niederseeon Railroad station we would have to find our own transport out to the farm. Compared to our other problems, this was a minor issue.

We never did work at the farm that day, instead we spent the day packing our one suitcase each, not to exceed 20kg (about 44pounds) and speculating about our future.



Bad Salzbrunn is now Szczawno Zdroj in Poland about 60 miles south of Alt Raudten

Translation to English

Special order

for the German population of the city of Salzbrunn including the Sandberg district.

Hans-Ludwig's Historical Biography 1934-1958

According to the order of the Polish government:

1. A resettlement of the German population will take place on July 14, 1945 from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m.
2. The German population is resettled in the area west of the Neisse River.
3. Every German is allowed to take a maximum of 20 kg of luggage with them.
4. No transportation (wagon, oxen, horses, cows, etc.) is allowed.
5. All living and dead inventory in undamaged condition remains the property of the Polish Government.
6. The relocation deadline expires on July 14th at 10 a.m.
7. Failure to carry out the order will result in the most severe penalties, including the use of weapons.
8. The use of weapons also prevents sabotage and looting.
9. Assembly point on the Bad Salzbrunn-Adelsbacher Weg station road in a marching column 20 meters before the town of Adelsbach.
10. Those Germans who have non-evacuation certificates are not allowed to leave the apartment with their relatives between 5 a.m. and 2 p.m.
11. All apartments in the city must remain open; apartment and house keys must be kept outside.

Bad Salzbrunn, July 14, 1945, 6 a.m. Section commander (-) Zinkowski, first lieutenant

This special order not only affected the town of Bad Salzbrunn; It was enacted in tens of thousands of towns with Germans.

XX

Items still to add to Salzburg chapters.

School

Aid services provide a meal to kids. School was in two sessions.

Then schooling stopped because teacher with ties to Nazi party were “dismissed”.

Problem was that to teach, the teacher had to be a member of the Nazi party.

So all the teachers were ‘dismissed’. No school from July to september

Confusion

Patton vs Eisenhower

By the end of the war Patton was defeated. As Eisenhower prepared for the political stage, every misspoken or emotionally charged word uttered by his

greatest fighting general threatened to undermine Eisenhower's credibility and authority, as well as the progress of a post-war order. Patton's outspoken and unsolicited opinions, coupled with his unwillingness to punish all German citizens during the de-Nazification period, caused Eisenhower to sideline the general. Patton believed in the righteous cause of the military and revealed his plans to fight those who were destroying its morale and who endangered America's future by not opposing the growing Soviet threat. As a result, he was silenced

On June 14, 1945, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson decided that Patton would not be sent to the Pacific but would return to Europe in an occupation army assignment. Patton made a final stop in Washington, D.C., before returning to Europe in July to serve in the occupation forces

Postwar

Patton was appointed as military governor of Bavaria, where he led the Third Army in denazification efforts. [212] Patton was particularly upset when learning of the end of the war against Japan, writing in his diary, "Yet another war has come to an end, and with it my usefulness to the world." [212] Unhappy with his position and depressed by his belief that he would never fight in another war, Patton's behavior and statements became increasingly erratic.

Patton attracted controversy as military governor when it was noted that several former Nazi Party members continued to hold political posts in the region. [212] Privately, Patton expressed a soldier's respect for the Germans as adversaries and a resistance to removing Nazi Party members from power. "I had never heard," he wrote to his wife Bea, "that we fought to de-Nazify Germany—live and learn. What we are doing is to utterly destroy the only semi-modern state in Europe so that Russia can swallow the whole.... Actually the Germans are the only decent people in Europe." [217]

Patton was an outspoken defender of the Nazi Party and was deeply against the Nuremberg trials and anything meant to hold any Nazi accountable for their crimes, saying, "I am frankly opposed to this war criminal stuff." [218] Rather than policing the captured Nazis that had run the concentration camps, he gave them guns and assigned them to making sure the Jewish victims didn't leave. [218]. Patton decided to keep the Jews detained, according to his diary, because he thought releasing them could lead to violence and re-arrests

He believed future wars were imminent and the Nazis should not be tried as criminals or considered an enemy, but rather felt the US should embrace the Nazis

as allies, saying, "The obvious thing for the cavalryman to do is to accept the fighting machine as a partner, and prepare to meet more fully the demands of future warfare." [218]

When he faced questions from the press about his reluctance to Denazify post-war Germany, Patton noted that most of the people with experience in infrastructure management had been compelled to join the party in the war. He compared Nazis to Democrats and Republicans, bringing negative press stateside and angering Eisenhower.[224] When Eisenhower ordered him to hold a press conference correcting his statements, Patton instead repeated them.[225]

On September 28, 1945, after a heated exchange with Eisenhower over the denazification controversy, Patton was relieved of his military governorship. He was relieved of command of the Third Army on October 7,

See TIMES article Scandal in Salzburg 1945. Patton vs Eisenhower. US in West Austria and USSR in East Austria. USSR better organized already, US in confusion. Difficult to know how to appease US. US not acting like a occupation force. Better if US did behave like occupation force, then after the looting, pillaging, burning and raping, an overlord would be put into place. Overlord puts in place their own laws and structure. Then remaining citizens know who and how to appease.

Looting changed to black market bartering. Germans trading personal items to US troops in exchange for food. Results are that US troops stopped looting and walked around with something to exchange (coffee, cigarettes, chocolate, food). Germans looked for US troops. Money (Reich Mark) was inflation and almost useless.

Add about missing Nazi's

All the Nazi refugees that became hikers? And underground and black market.

Eisenhower – de-Nazification and Nürburg trials. All Germans are Nazi just waiting to re-implement the Nazi party platform.

Patton – Nazi party is a political party like democrats and republicans, no all citizens are enforcers. Against de-Nazification and Nürburg trails. But keep Jews in encampments otherwise if released they will steal and ?

Closing of the two work camps before US arrived.

Where in Salzburg did Hitler live.

Hitler's life in Salzburg?

Anschluss 1938 the in 1944 separation

1945 Flight: Sonderbefehl Special Order

Similar posters were placed in various regions in countries around Germany. The expulsions of Germans after the war were carried out pursuant to the decisions of the Polish authorities and international agreements of the victorious allies (including the agreement in Potsdam).

Polish: Polish announcement ordering Germany to leave Poland immediately after the end of World War II, started by Nazi Germany's attack on Poland.

Commentary on point 5 and 11, the wording of the announcement translated below: Private property and houses left by the displaced, satisfied Polish demands only in a small percentage under the right to war reparations confirmed by the US authorities, the United Kingdom. Britain and the USSR in Potsdam.

1945 The Refugee Part 1

1945 Refugee Part 1: Mid July, Salzburg Austria to Munich: Expulsion and Train ride

In the middle of July 1945, all Germans were expelled from Salzburg. This was done per the Potsdam agreement established by the Allies. The three allied leaders had agreed that transfers of German civilians should proceed in an orderly and humane manner. We were not quite sure if we were German citizens or Polish. We should be Polish, because the estate Alt Raudten was and is still in Poland. But we did agree that it was better to be safe than right.

The day before we had packed our suitcases with no more than 20kg (44pounds) of personal possessions and some food for the trip. We were planning to take the train across the border into Germany and stay with Uncle Willy's brother in Niederseeon for a few days, while we sort our way through all this confusion, and then return to Salzburg. My suitcase did not way 20kg with all my possessions, so Vati added and added until it did weigh 20kg. I could hardly lift it.

So early in the morning we set off for the railroad so that we could arrive by 6am. Uncle Willy and his wife Aunt Gabriele could not join us, because they were Austrian citizen and had to stay in the Villa until after 2pm. Our group consisted of our family (Vati, Ulla, Uncle Erlich, Inni, and me) and Aunt Sigrid's family. Vati was helping Ulla to walk, so Uncle Erlich, and Inni were carrying two suitcases each and I had to carry my own. After a couple of minutes, I could hardly lift my own suitcase so I started to drag part of it on the ground (suitcase with wheels had not been invented yet). Inni, my older sister, told me to stop being a wimp and lift the suitcase and carry it properly. Before I could come up with a retort, Uncle Erlich told Inni to stop teasing me, I was trying my best. Good old Uncle Erlich, he often came to my rescue.

We arrived at the railroad station and found complete ciaos. We could not believe that there were so many German citizens in Salzburg. The platforms were already crowded at 6am. We stood there waiting on a train, being jostled and squeezed. I small for my age (10 years old and looked like I was 7) that nobody noticed me. Elbows kept hitting me on my head, and I was often squeezed between suitcases. I tried my best to endure. Ulla was getting the worst treatment. With her belly

ballooning out so far, she was often squeezed between people. We tried to protect her as best as we could. Trains were arriving, but they were coming from further south in Austria and were already full. Actually, over full. We could see people standing on the platform between the train cars, and some were just barely hanging on to the handles on the sides. These trains were moving very slowly, about 20-25kph (less than 15mph), but they did not stop.

People started to worry and become discontent. If they could not leave Austria in time, what was going to happen to them. Many started to leave the railroad station with the idea that they were going to walk to the border with Germany, which was just over 30km away (20miles). We discussed joining the walk, but with Ulla, it was not an option for us. We had to wait for train with enough room to accept new passengers. After an hour of trains passing through without stopping, we began to really get worried. How could there be so many German Citizens in Austria, and all had to leave between 6-9am. Then the announcement began to change. Before, the announcements gave the destination of each train. But because the train did not stop, who cared. We had already decided that if a train did stop, we were getting on the train no matter the destination. Now the announcement was that every train was going to Munich, all passengers were to get off in Munich, and the train was going to return to Austria for more passengers. The crowd breathed a sigh of relief, there was hope.

The first train coming from Munich pulled into the station. It was a Steam Locomotive, bellowing black smoke over everybody. Who cared, we surged forward. Our family managed to get on the train together. Somehow in all the chaos we were separated from Aunt Sigrid's family. The Locomotive huffed and puffed and eventually got the train moving. We were on our way. We were some of the last to get on the train, so we were packed into the corridor (train cars had a corridor on one side and compartments on the other side). As we were leaving Salzburg, we could see a long column of people carrying one suitcase each, walking north. I hoped that they would make it to the border before the 'authorities' who were enforcing the Expulsion would use "enforcement with weapons".

At first, people were closing the windows to prevent the black smoke from coming into the cars. But so many people were packed into such a small space, that soon there was not enough air and the temperature began to rise. Also, Ulla was starting to turn green. We opened the window (only the upper portion opens, which prevents people from accidentally fall out of the train), and placed Ulla right next to the open window. She immediately began to feel better. I was not doing so well.

There was no room for me among everybody's legs. Vati took our suitcases, laid them flat on top of each other and told me to climb on top. I did, and pulled my knees up under my chin. Much better. Again, my small size was a blessing. I was so bruised, I knew I was going to be black and blue tomorrow.

Once the train left the Salzburg area, it picked up speed to just about 70kmh (about 45mph). The trains were not going fast, because there were so many trains on the rails, evacuating Germans not just from Austria, but also from Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary. Controlling the train traffic was now dependent on visual and switch-men. Munich is about 150km from Salzburg (89 miles). It took our train almost 3 hours before we reached Munich. At the Munich Railroad station, the train stopped in the train yard instead of pulling into the station. The Munich station is an enclosed station and the steam locomotive would quickly fill the station with black smoke. The men in charge of the train were running down the length opening the car doors and yelling for everybody to get out. The train was going back to Austria. We made our way out of the train car.

As we were stepping over the other tracks, I looked back at our train. There was a steam locomotive at each end. The men were hurriedly reloading the coal bins and pumping water into the tanks. I learned later that both locomotives were kept operational the whole time. That one locomotive pulled the train south, while the other went was idle and going backward. Then in Salzburg, the other locomotive was brought to full steam pressure and pull the train back to Munich. The train was returning to Austria with the hope of picking up more passengers. There were so many German Citizens being Expelled, that not all could leave in the designated three hours (6-9am). The Expulsion went on all day. By the end of the day over 100,000 Germans arrived by train in Munich alone. This was happening to cities all along the German border.

We had just left the railroad train yard when Ulla said something quietly to Inni. Inni turned to Vati and said that we had to find a hospital. Uncle Erlich heard Ulla, and said that we were lucky that we had stopped in the train yard. He had been to Munich before, and we were not far from the City Hospital. He was right, a couple of turns and we were at the hospital. Uncle Erlich and I stayed outside with all the luggage, while Ulla, Vati, and Inni went into the Hospital. I was starving. Uncle Erlich said I could have some of the food we had brought, but that he was still too worried to eat. I choose some carrots and pickles. I was tempted by the food that the Schwarze had provided for Ulla, but I knew better, she may need food when she comes back. We waited. The streets were becoming more crowded with

people. More and more people were arriving at the Railroad station and were now trying to find accommodations.

Finally, Vati and Inni came out of the hospital. Ulla was staying, she could give birth any time, and then she would stay in the hospital for the normal 5-10 days after giving birth. Inni and Uncle Erlich discussed what we should do next. Vati was strangely quiet. Since Ulla had a safe place to stay for at least 5 days, they agreed that we should continue on to Uncle Willy's brother in Niederseeon which was over 34km to the east of Munich. Since the Munich railroad station was full of refugees and probably all the trains were going to and from Austria, we decided to take a bus to another town to the east of Munich. From that town we could board a local train that will take us to Niederseeon. These local trains are sometimes called 'peasant' or 'milk' trains. They go slow and stop at every little village.

It was slow and long process, but finally we reached the Railroad station in Niederseeon. We found a bus that could take us to Uncle Willy's brother farm. We arrived late in the evening (it was still July so sunset was after 8:30pm) and knocked on their door. They were not expecting us and were surprised to have visitors so late in the evening. Inni quickly explained who we were and what had happened. Then she reached into Vati's jacket and extracted our letter of reference. They were more than happy to welcome us a family. They quickly provided us accommodations in the worker's housing. As we collapsed in exhaustion onto the beds, I wondered about Vati. Ever since the hospital, he had been unusually quiet.

The expulsion of Germans would continue until 1950, and those evacuated, migrated, or expelled between 1945 and 1950 totaled over 8 million. According to modern estimates, between 600,000 to 2.2 million Germans died during this flight and expulsions.

When I was almost 80 years old, I was interviewed about this time in my life. This is what I had to say: "they kicked us out of Austria at a certain time limit and was supposed to take was 20 pounds of Personal belongings and anyway, we got kicked out of Austria. And we went from Austria near a small-town South of Munich." In answer to the question "What did your family take with you?" his answer was "The only thing we can carry. And Father, father carried some jewelry and a basic jewelry, if it was gold or jewelry."

In another interview I said to the question “You said you were forced to leave?” my answer was “Yes, the Austrian sent us a paper hanger. Hitler was an Austrian originally. The Austrians kicked all Germans out in 45. They restricted us to 20 pounds. We came out with very little. But we lost a lot when we left Austria. And went to near Munich. Friends of my father, which had in this estate outside of Munich.”

1945 The Refugee Part 2: Niederseeon

1945 Refugee Part 2: Late July, Niederseeon

It was late July 1945, and we were staying at a farm in Niederseeon, east of Munich. We had just been expelled from Austria, because we might be German citizens. We went by train from Salzburg to Munich, and then had to leave Ulla at the Munich City Hospital. She was in the last days of her pregnancy. The rest of my family, Vati, Uncle Erlich, Inni, and me, took another train to Niederseeon.

The day after we arrived, Vati and Uncle Erlich left to return to Munich. They went to visit Ulla in the hospital. And they were going to try find an organization that could establish our situation or citizenship. Inni and I stayed behind at the farm. Our job was to establish relations with the family that owned the farm. We had come late yesterday evening and were given a one room worker's cottage to spend the night.

As Inni and I walked to the main house, we noticed the workers. They were mostly women, older men, and few young adult males who had obviously received war injuries. There were a few younger children running around between the farm buildings. We found the family in the main house, and sat down with them. Inni was only 6 years older than me, but I was amazed how much she had matured in the last few months. She behaved and talked like an adult. Since we had no idea how long we need a sanctuary, she offered that we could work on the farm in exchange for our lodging and food. Vati and Uncle Erlich not only managed Alt Raudten, they also worked side-by-side with many of workers out in the fields. They knew how to get their hands dirty. She, Inni, knew how to work in a kitchen, cleaning and cooking, and also how to grow/harvest/preserve garden food. The family quickly agreed to the arrangement. They had been making do with their current workers (women, old men, and cripples), but now need more. Many of the fields currently could not be farmed because they still possibly had un-exploded bombs or worse yet, dead animal corpses. Squads of people were roaming the

countryside offering to clear out these fields in exchange for food. With more workers available it was worth it have a squad clear some more of the fields. That left only me, what was I supposed to do. I could join the other children. The children took care of the animals in the barn yard (feeding and mucking out) in the morning. In the afternoon, they walked down the road a couple of kilometers to the village school for the afternoon session. Because of the risk of bombs and contamination of corpses, the children were only allowed to be in the barn yard and on the road. No playing in the fields or woods. I went outside to introduce myself to the children, while Inni went into the kitchen.

That afternoon, I walked with the other children to the village school. I told the Head Master that before we left Alt Raudten in January, I had received 3 years of schooling in the local village school. Since then, I, like many other kids on move, had attended the local school when ever it was safe day for school. He told me that he was going to give me a test to determine the extent of the education. While I was sitting there waiting for him to find a test, I counted how many schools I had attended since January, just seven months ago. Some schools I had only attended for few days, others for almost a month. I was up to eight when he returned. The first part was verbal. He was impressed with how well I expressed myself. I told him that I was 10 years old and almost 11. He was surprised; he had thought that I was only 7 or 8 years old. But he said that even for an almost 11-year-old, I still expressed myself well beyond my age group. The curse of the 'von Schweinitz' genes, males stay small for years, but we do continue to grow into our late 20's and end up over 6 feet tall and well boned. My reading and math skills were also beyond my age. Then I had to write. Because of the bombing in Dresden, I had developed infections underneath everyone of my fingernails. Several days later, every fingernail had been pulled out, so that the puss and infection could be treated. Six months later, I still did not have fingernails. It was hard to control the pencil. I tried my best. The Head Master noticed that I had an issue and that I was trying. He said he was also impressed with how I persevered despite adverse conditions. The one-room-school in Alt Raudten had provided me with a solid foundation. He was going to place me in the grade that matched my age, even though my education was at a high level. I could move up later. Right now, it was more important that I stayed at the same level as the farm worker children and could established some friendships.

That evening, Vati and Uncle Erlich came back from Munich. Ulla was doing well at the hospital, and she was going to stay until after giving birth, which is any day now. As far as establishing our citizenship or status. They could not find any official office that could help. In Munich, everything was in chaos. Thousands of

people were sleeping on the streets and had no access to food. (Estimates went between 600,000 to 2.2 million Germans died during the flight and expulsions. Over 8 million Germans were displaced. Displacement at this scale would not happen again until India was divided in August 1947, Partition of India and Pakistan).

We all settled into farm life and were happy to stay in the one-room cottage. The Munich hospital allowed visitors for two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening. Every couple of days, Vati would travel back to Munich to visit Ulla in time for the evening visiting hours. Vati would not be back at the farm until after dark. Then one evening, Vati came back early. He was elated. Ulla had given birth to a healthy boy. It was a relief that the baby was healthy. Ulla was actually already pregnant when our flight began in January 1945 when we left Alt Raudten. She was with child during the bombing in Dresden, and while on the endless days on the road, so the baby had been exposed to bombing, extreme physical exertion, malnutrition, and stress while in her womb. My half-brother was named Kurt Balthasar von Schweinitz and was born on 31 July 1945. Kurt was later called Hemmi as a nickname.

Vati said that Ulla was very weak. All her nutrients and strength had gone in Hemmi. She was going to stay in the hospital for the full 10 days. And she was not allowed visitors. That is why Vati had come back to the farm early. He was not allowed into the hospital. Actually, the hospital was in quarantine. Only patients and hospital personal were allowed in. In Munich (and elsewhere) infectious diseases were on the rise, such as typhus, tuberculosis, diarrhea, and smallpox, due to widespread malnutrition, displacement, and poor living conditions. In Munich, these conditions were exacerbated by the large population influx and movement. The infrastructure was breaking down and there was a food shortage. Just like during the Black Plague in the 1300 hundred and during the last five years of bombing; every morning there were carts that patrolled the streets, picking up dead bodies. The corpses were taken to funeral pyres to be burned. People were dying faster than they could be buried.

Vati said that not being able to see Ulla was a minor inconvenience, his son was healthy and Ulla will be rejoining the family in 10 days.

1945 The Refugee Part 2: Niederseeon

1945 Refugee Part 3: August, Niederseeon

My half-brother, Hemmi was born on 31 July 1945, in Munich. Both Hemmi and his mother Ulla were staying at the hospital for another 10 days. The Hospital was not allowing visitors, so Vati was not going to travel back to Munich to visit Ulla for the next 10 days. Vati and Uncle Erlich had been working around the farm to pay for our keep. But there was not much work for them. All the fields that could be plowed already had crops. The farmer had found a squad to remove the unexploded bombs and decomposing animal corpses from the other fields. There was a squad working for a neighboring farm and they were scheduled to work on this farm within a day or two. Once they started, it would still take them a few days to complete the job. This was a slow and delicate process.

Since there was a slow period of a few days, Vati and Uncle Erlich decided to take a chance and return to Salzburg to retrieve the remainder of our possessions. The farmer would not lend them a truck (vehicle with motor) since he could not afford to lose it if it was confiscated in Austria. Vati and Uncle Erlich would have to take the train back to Salzburg. Once back at the Villa with Aunt Gabriele and Uncle Willy, they would have to decide how to best transport our possessions. Our truck (wagon drawn by horses) was still at the Villa. But because the horses could not live at the Villa in town, they had been traded to a farmer for a large supply of provisions. The root cellar of the Villa was heaps of potatoes, carrots, apples, turnips, and cabbage. Enough for ten people to eat through the winter. Now there was only Aunt Gabriele and Uncle Willy. Our family and Aunt Sigrid's family had left due to the expulsion. Vati and Uncle Erlich could buy another pair of horses and use the truck, or they could load our stuff into trunks and pay for transport on the train.

Vati and Uncle Erlich left. Inni and I stayed behind. Every morning, I helped around the barn yard with feeding the animals and mucking out. Afterwards the other children would play. I preferred to find Inni in the kitchen or garden. At first, she had me cleaning pots, pans, and vegetables in the large sink. Then she started show me how to prepare the food. And we would go together into the garden and I helped her picking and maintaining the plants. I remembered doing all of this with my Mutti before she died in 1942. I actually started to think of Inni as my Mutti. I accidentally called her "Mutti" once. Inni stopped, sat cross-legged in the garden, and started to cry. That is when I found out that she missed our Mutti just as much as I did. We both sat and had a good cry. From that day on, we had a much closer relationship. Inni was no longer my older sister that was always away at boarding school or on other estates, and I was no longer the annoying younger by six years brother. Inni now became my protector, almost like a mother,

and I became her partner. We worked well together in the kitchen, garden, and through out the rest of lives.

The squad did come to the farm, and they spent several days clearing the fields. As each field was cleared, the farm workers would plow the field and plant winter crops. Anything that was edible, such as wheat, rye, barley, and rapeseed (canola in America). One very hot afternoon, the workers came in from the fields for their afternoon break. Inni and I had put out a spread of sweet cakes, bread, cheese, sausage, and drink, on the tables just outside of the kitchen door. Everything had been made on the farm. We were well into our break, when there was a massive explosion. The buildings shock, the earth trembled, and we felt the pressure wave on our chests. The war was over, what had happened? We looked out over the fields and saw a cloud of soil drifting down. The cloud was over the very field that had been plowed that day. The squad had missed a bomb. We quickly verified that we could account for everybody. Nobody had been in the field. We did not blame the squad for missing the bomb. Unlike land-mines which are laid near the surface, bombs could bury themselves deep into the ground, especially in the soft deep soil in Southern Germany. The fertile dark soil on this farm could be over 6 feet deep. Who knew why the bomb detonated now, was it because of the hot temperature, or had the plowing disturbed it? Who knew? In June 2025, three 20ton WW2 bombs were found in Cologne (Köln) city center. Over 30 thousand people had to be evacuated. Luckily the bombs were defused, if they had exploded, the center of Cologne would have been destroyed. In February 2025, a WW2 un-exploded bomb was found under a children's playground in London England. Needless to say, nobody went back into that field for a few days, and then only nervously. It was up to the Farmers to feed the world,

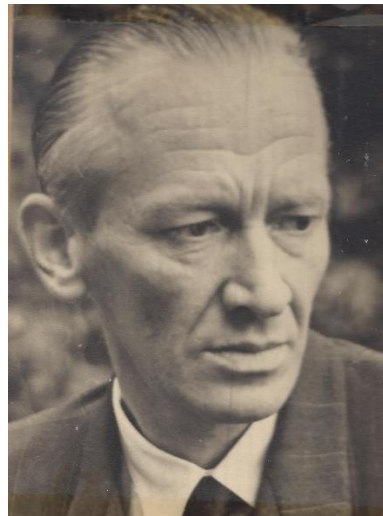
Vati and Uncle Erlich were gone for several days, when they suddenly showed up again. They had been successful in getting some of our possessions out of Salzburg by using the train. Our possessions were at the Niederseeon Railroad station. The Farmer let us borrow the farm truck (vehicle with motor). So, we piled in and retrieved our possessions. There was a lot less then we thought. Aunt Gabriele and Uncle Willy had been slowly emptying our truck (horse drawn wagon) and bringing our possession into the villa. Then one night the truck was gone, with everything that was still in the back. In January, we had left Alt Raudten with several wagons full of possession, now we only had a small portion.

Finally, the 10 days were over and Ulla could leave the hospital. Our first plan was to take the bus and trains, but the Farmer again let us borrow one of the farm

vehicles. So, Vati and Inni drove to Munich to pick up Ulla and Hemmi. When they returned to the farm, we were one happy family again.



Nov/Dec of 1945 in Neiderseeon,
Hans-Ludwig, Vati, Hemmi,
Ursula (Ulla), Inni)



Vati in November 1945,
he was only 44 years old

I was enjoying the village school and was doing well. Then in the middle of August a letter arrived from a boarding school in the German Bavarian Alps. I had been accepted and could start in the new school year on 4 September. I was shocked. How had this happened, were they trying to get rid of me? I approached my Vati and asked him, why was I being sent away to boarding school? He told me that it was best for my future. I started to ask, why was the village school not good enough? When he told me not to argue with him. Then he turned away from me. Ever since the train ride during our expulsion from Salzburg to Munich, Vati had been rather quiet and reserved. His eyes had sunk into his skull and were dull. He rarely talked with me anymore. And worst yet, he had aged in just the last few weeks. His 44th birthday was not until December, and he looked like he was old. Uncle Erlich had heard me trying to talk with my Vati. He beckoned me over, and sat me down. Uncle explained that the village school's Head Master had been so impressed with me that he asked Inni and Vati, if he could send my test results to the boarding school. As I probably already noticed, Vati was taking the loss of Alt Raudten very hard and now being homeless was almost the last straw. If and when the family can return to Alt Raudten, I might have to take my role as Lord and Heir to the estate, much earlier than expected. Therefore, I needed to have a proper education, much more than what the local village school could provide. The future of the family and the estate may depend on me.

By 4 September 1945, I was at Kinderheim (Children's Home) Vorderhindelang, Bavarian District. It was near Bad Hindelang in South German Alps, about 60 miles SouthWest of Munich. Later, in my 80's I was interviewed and remembered that "I went to a boarding school, in the Alps. I have become very honorably. And I had a very good education. Good teachers and the nuns were very good." Since it was not far from Niederseeon, I could come home during school vacations and holidays. But I did have my 11th birthday on 26 October 1945, at the school.

1945 Refugee Part 4: September to 1946 February, Niederseeon

We had arrived in Niederseeon in July 1945 and were living in a one-room cottage on a farm. Vati and Uncle Erlich worked as laborers on the farm. Ini and Ulla worked in the kitchen and garden. Ulla had given birth to my half-brother Hemmi, and his job was to poop in his diapers and to giggle. In early September 1945, I was sent off to a boarding school just 60 miles away in the Bavarian Alps, so that I could receive a better education. I was able to come 'home' on school vacations and holidays. Our lives had become fairly normal. It was very different than the life we had in the Estate Alt Raudten. But we considered ourselves lucky. We had housing and steady food. So many people in Germany had nothing, they were homeless, starving, and dying from diseases. Vati and Inni wrote letters to all our relatives. Since January 1945, the family had scattered and went different directions, all looking for a safe haven, or running from danger. Many of the letters were returned, the address did not exist anymore, or somebody else lived there now.

Opa Hermann von Schweinitz (on Vati's side) and his wife Gabriele von Tresckow were in Wiesbaden with Anne von Tresckow. Many of Vati's aunts and uncles were also in Wiesbaden, Aunt Dora and her husband Siegfried, Aunt Lizzi and Uncle Curt and his wife, Frieda. Vati's younger sister, Gabriele was still in Salzburg with her second husband, Willy. Vati's older sister Sigrid was in Wiesbaden with her husband, Ulrici.

That just left Mutti's side of the family. We might have buried Mutti on 3 September 1942, in Alt Raudten, but Inni and I still felt very connected to her family. We knew that her father, Franz Adolf Eduard Benjamin Freiherr von Zedlit und von Leipe, had died on 29 March 1944. We had attended his funeral. But what happened to Mutti's mother, Baroness Elsa Margarethe Freiin von Zedlitz und von Leipe. When we fled Alt Raudten in January 1945, there was not enough time to help other family members. Everything was happening so fast. In January 1945, the Baroness lived in her manor house in Moltketal, Poland with

only her staff. Moltketal was only about 30km east of Alt Raudten. What had happened to her?

1946: February Letter from Grossmutti

In February 1946, we received a letter from the Baroness. An image of the letter is attached at the end of this chapter. The following is the English translation followed by a map of the locations mentioned in the letter.

The Baroness died sometime in 1947 in Eichich (now called Eichigt) in Germany. No family member was at her funeral.

English Translation of Letter

Baroness von Zedlitz Date 9 February 1946 to 13 February 1946
(15) Ranis Thüringen, Kreis Saalfeld, Kreiskrankenhaus (Hospital)

My Dear beloved Inilein!

I was so happy when I received the letter from your father. You are alive, healthy and safe! Thank God! I was just sad that you hadn't included a single word. Yesterday I received your letter with the explanation. I don't understand why your letter was returned when I usually receive letters forwarded.

Now I want to tell you about my experience and ask that you consider that I am also writing for your father, because I can't write it twice as it is too tiring and I will have to spend several days writing this letter and even so I won't be able to tell you everything that I experienced, because that would fill an entire book.

On January 21, 1945, we had to leave Moltketal. I didn't want to; I wanted to stay by my grave, but the whole village had to leave. The Kuhlmanns and I traveled with the convoy of wagons in the biting cold! We traveled for five days and nights, with only a few hours of rest for the horses. We stayed one night in Priesnig, where I was warmly welcomed, but they were already on their way out. Then we came to Jacobsdorf, district of Jauer, where we were supposed to stay. So I was close to you, my little Inilein, near Hirschberg. But the axle on Brüchtner's wagon had broken, so we had to leave it behind for any further journey, and so when they said there was a special train from Jauer, I was advised to use it. Well, I saw that they wanted to get rid of me, and I complied.

The entire overcrowded train was occupied by Germans from abroad: Russians, Ukrainians, Slovenes, Hungarians, etc. We traveled for two days and three nights, stopping more than moving. I, without anything to eat or drink, sat on my suitcase in the aisle in front of the train, unable to move. Then we ended up in Teplitz-Schönau in the Sudetenland. Here we were taken to a school in the camp, where we found accommodation in large classrooms, boys and girls all mixed together. However, the beds were stacked on top of each other [bunk beds], with paper sacks filled with wood shavings. Everyone had feather duvets with them; I only had my suitcase as a pillow and my coat as a blanket.

The food was good and plentiful. I lay there for eight days on my bed; I had no more room. And then a miracle happened. A lady came to me, introduced herself as Countess Baillet-Latour, sister of Prince Clary, whom I knew in my youth, and took me to her brother's castle. You can imagine how happy I was. It was your mother's birthday! [12 Feb] But I was sick and miserable and had to stay in bed. Baroness Geyer (Wallenberg), whom we had met in Alt-Raudten and who was staying at the castle in Teplitz, also visited me there.

Unfortunately, she died a few weeks later from a bone in a rabbit stew that caused an abscess in her esophagus. Since I wasn't getting any better, the Countess said it would be better if I went to the countryside, where I would receive proper care and everything. She wanted to send me to her cousin, Princess Windisch Graetz, who was currently living at Rothenhaus Castle, which belonged to her brother, the Prince of Hohenlohe-Langenburg, who had a Spaniard as his wife and was currently in Spain. So I came to Rothenhaus and was treated like a queen. Rooms with silk furniture, silk beds, silk-covered walls, furniture, a marble bathroom, and staff: a maid, a housekeeper, two servants, etc.

I was here for a quarter of a year, until the end of May. At the end of April, a refugee woman took her own life right in front of my eyes, which shocked me deeply. I assume that was the reason I suffered a stroke a few days later and lay unconscious for seven days. Four doctors were at my bedside one after the other: one German, one Ukrainian, one Czech, and a Russian doctor. The Russians moved in; I didn't notice anything, and they left me, the apparently dying woman, alone in the large castle with hundreds of halls and rooms, undisturbed after everyone else had fled.

But everything I wasn't wearing had been stolen: my suitcase with all its belongings, coat, clothes, shoes. There was nothing left. And it wasn't the Russians who had taken it, but Ukrainians who had been housed there in the village. The

Russians behaved decently. It was also the staff who were housed in the castle and they sent the doctor to me who also spoke German. I was with the Russians for three weeks, then they left and the Czechs came. They wanted to celebrate a Czech victory at the castle and so they took me to the hospital in Görthaus where I only stayed for a few days.

On June 4th, I was taken out of bed at 6 a.m. by the Czechs and taken with two other women in an open carriage to the border, 12 km away. From there, it was another 15 km to the train station. From there, we took a train to Dresden, where we arrived at 2 a.m. Of course, this didn't all happen in one day. I won't even mention all the terrible things that happened in between. There were thousands of people on the train, who were waiting asleep on the platform to take the same train to Chemnitz. It was a crush and shove. You couldn't fall. If you were crushed, you were pushed along anyway. There were stairs down. Was it a bunker or a potato cellar where you ended up? You couldn't see; it was pitch black. The crowd began to disperse, and I stayed where I stood, I fell and lost consciousness.

When I came to, it was broad daylight, and I was lying on the street. Refugees filed past me in groups, but no one cared for me. Then paramedics from the Train station came and took me to the refugee hospital. I lay there for three weeks. The refugee hospital had no food, however. The refugees who were there had relatives who looked after them and cooked for them. Only I had no one. So I lived on bread and water for those three weeks and starved. Then I was taken in a handcart by boys to the train station, and arrived in Neustadt in Saxony. There, the railway bridge had been blown up, and everyone had to walk 8 km. Of course, I couldn't do that, so I stayed there. I lay in the waiting room on the bare floor for four nights, without a blanket and without anything to eat. Then a doctor there took pity on me and had me taken to the hospital. So I stayed in Neustadt for 11 weeks, first in the hospital and then in a nursing home.

Then I wrote to Mrs. Rexrodt in Saalfeld, first by registered mail and then again, and received no reply, while Anna, to whom I wrote by the same mail, replied immediately that I should come. So I set off again on the dreadful journey, which was in no way inferior to the previous ones, because I could not stay in Neustadt and arrived in Saalfeld on September 8th at 9 p.m. Anna and Leise were very kind to me and did everything they could to help me recover, because I was again in a state of complete exhaustion, just like before in Neustadt. Their house had been badly damaged by a mine. To our horror, the police rejected our application because the town of Saalfeld was no longer accepting refugees as it was overcrowded.

What now? I could wait no longer. The Red Cross took in the refugees and then housed them in the rural areas of the district. But I had to stay and sleep in the Red Cross accommodation, which was in the youth hostel on the floor under the roof, on straw. Then I remembered that Hilde Weppler in Könitz, who had been an apprentice in our office at the time - your father called her the stinking booger - had written to me in Moltketal and invited me to visit her if I came to Könitz. She is married, and her husband is a British prisoner. She has no children and lives in her parents' house.

She didn't answer me, but came immediately to get me herself. I felt like heaven had opened up for me. Finally, finally, a place to stay where they would want me. Let me remain silent about the 11 weeks I spent in Könitz with Hilde Weppler. I'm not exaggerating when I say they were the most terrible months of my life, for I was always treated with love and warmth, along with warm care. I would never have believed it possible that a young, healthy person, who is not entirely uneducated and even considers herself very educated, could be as cold-hearted, so unkind, and full of spite as this Hilde. So why did she take me in?

I conclude from her words that she wanted revenge on me, claiming that I had treated her so badly at the castle, while all I can blame myself for is not caring for her at all, since she was only under Mrs. Rust. She tormented me terribly, physically and mentally, and I suffered terribly until I couldn't take it anymore and collapsed. She had just gone away for three days when, weakened by hunger and excitement, I suffered another stroke, and they brought me here, where I lay unconscious for the first five days.

This time, however, I've been hit harder. My left shoulder and upper arm are paralyzed. I can't sit up in bed on my own. And the worst thing is, my legs have completely given way. I can move them, but I can't stand or walk; they don't support my body. It's also worth mentioning that my hands are mostly stiff. So I'm completely helpless and have been lying here for 10 weeks. Nevertheless, I've found peace here, because I can't and don't need to go back to Könitz. Only the future frightens me. If only I could die.

I can't stay here in the hospital as long as I'm still alive, can I? But now I need care and injections because I'm in a lot of severe pain. They've talked about a retirement home. Oh, I'm afraid of that. I know the good Dr. Muldatus here from before. Anna and Liese visited me, both of the Wepplers and even Hilde, perhaps to take

comfort in my suffering, because she only told me unpleasant things, which made me cry, so the nurses were not very pleased by the visit.

Now I have given an outline of my experience, all the horrific, gruesome things that lie in between; let me cover them with the cloak of the past that is better left shrouded in silence. It would upset me too much to speak of it, or even to write about it, as this letter already upsets me so much. But now I have it behind me. You wrote, could I travel to Wiesbaden or Ast in the American zone? Oh, dear child, even if I could, Uncle Fritz in Wiesbaden and in Ast Castle have no room for me. Everyone's house is full. And even if it were possible, Uncle Fritz and Paul are both so old. Think, if they died before me, what would become of me? No, no, it's better this way, I'll stay here. I can't travel either, I can't take the train, and the Russians are no worse than the English or Americans.

If only I weren't so terribly lonely and abandoned! This terrible torment has certainly improved within me, ever since I received your and your father's letter, and letters from Uncle Fritz and Paul, Aunt Lucie and Hemans, I'm still suffering terribly. The visiting days here, Sundays and Wednesdays, are unbearable for me. I lie in my room with two beds, sometimes alone, but mostly with another sick person who has been here for so long. It makes me very sad now when I see them receiving packages and visits and being showered with gifts of love, while I alone am empty-handed.

Anna and Liesel were only able to visit me once in the 10 weeks because of the poor rail connections, especially since there are no trains on Sundays and only workers' trains on weekdays. It's understandable that I find my abandonment particularly painful. But now I've talked enough about myself and would like to chat a little about you. So, you want to go to South West Africa? [Ulla's brother lived in South West Africa – now Namibia] Well, that probably won't happen that quickly.

But I must say one thing to you and your father, based on my experience with friends and family: Are you physically able to cope with the tropical climate? Have you had yourself examined by a specialist? Please do so, by all means. Your father is not very strong or healthy. I don't know how things are with you children and Ulla. But it would be terrible if you were to lose your father on a foreign soil because he isn't tropical-proof, or if he were to mourn the loss of one of his loved ones and plead guilty. So listen to my warning; it is well-intentioned, and I would be pleased if the doctor had no reservations whatsoever.

And now I ask you, my little one, to write to me again soon and tell me about your experiences. How did you come to be in Moosach near Niederseon [east of München]? Do you have any relatives or friends there, and how do you live there? Do you have a job? Does Hannelu [Hans-Ludwig] go to school there? What does your father do? What does the little one do, and what do you call him? Surely not by his name, Kurt Balthasar [his nickname is Hemmi]? I can't ask much about Ulla, because I only saw her once as a schoolchild in Lüben near Alt-Raudten.

I hope that the borders from the American to the Russian zone and vice versa will be opened very soon, and that you will visit me wherever I am. This hope will keep me going if it doesn't work out one day, because you and Hannelu are the only things I have left in the world. I don't want to do your father an injustice, as his second marriage hasn't made him any further away from me and who delighted me so much with his letters. So let him read this letter, as it was written for him too, and send him my warmest greetings from me and Ulla too. In my thoughts, I embrace you, my darling, and my dear Hannelu, and send you a heartfelt kiss.

Deine, Eure Yours, Truly
Großmutti Grandmother

If you ever have a nice book, please send it to me to read. I'm sure you send me packages here, too. And reading is the only way I can pass the time.

Kuhlmann is in Frauenwald in Thuringen. I don't know if that address is sufficient. I don't have a letter here and have to have it sent to me from Könitz.

Maybe you have to pay a penalty postage fee for the letter because it's too heavy. I also had to pay a penalty postage fee for your letter.

Town/Locations in Letter

Order in letter

Moltketal (21 Jan 1945) North of Brauslau (Wroclaw), just South of Trebnitz

Priesnig (Jan 1945) Just North of Trebnitz

Jacobsdorf (Jan 1945): District of Jauer, Near Hirschberg (Jan 1945)

Teplitz-Schönan in the Sudetenland Castle (Feb 1945)

Alt Raudten in Lüben district North of Liegnitz

Schloß Rothenhaus [Feb-May1945] in Czechoslovakia

Görthaus [May1945 4Jun1945]

Dresden [4Jun1945]

Chemnitz [Jun-July 1945]

Neustadt in Sachsen [July1945-Sep1945] Saxony

Saalfeld [8Sep1945]

Könitz [Oct-Dec1945] with Hilde Weppler, west of Saalfeld

Kreiskrankenhaus Kreis Saalfeld Ranis Thüringen [Dec1945-Feb1946]

Wiesbaden

Ast Castle in Wiesbaden

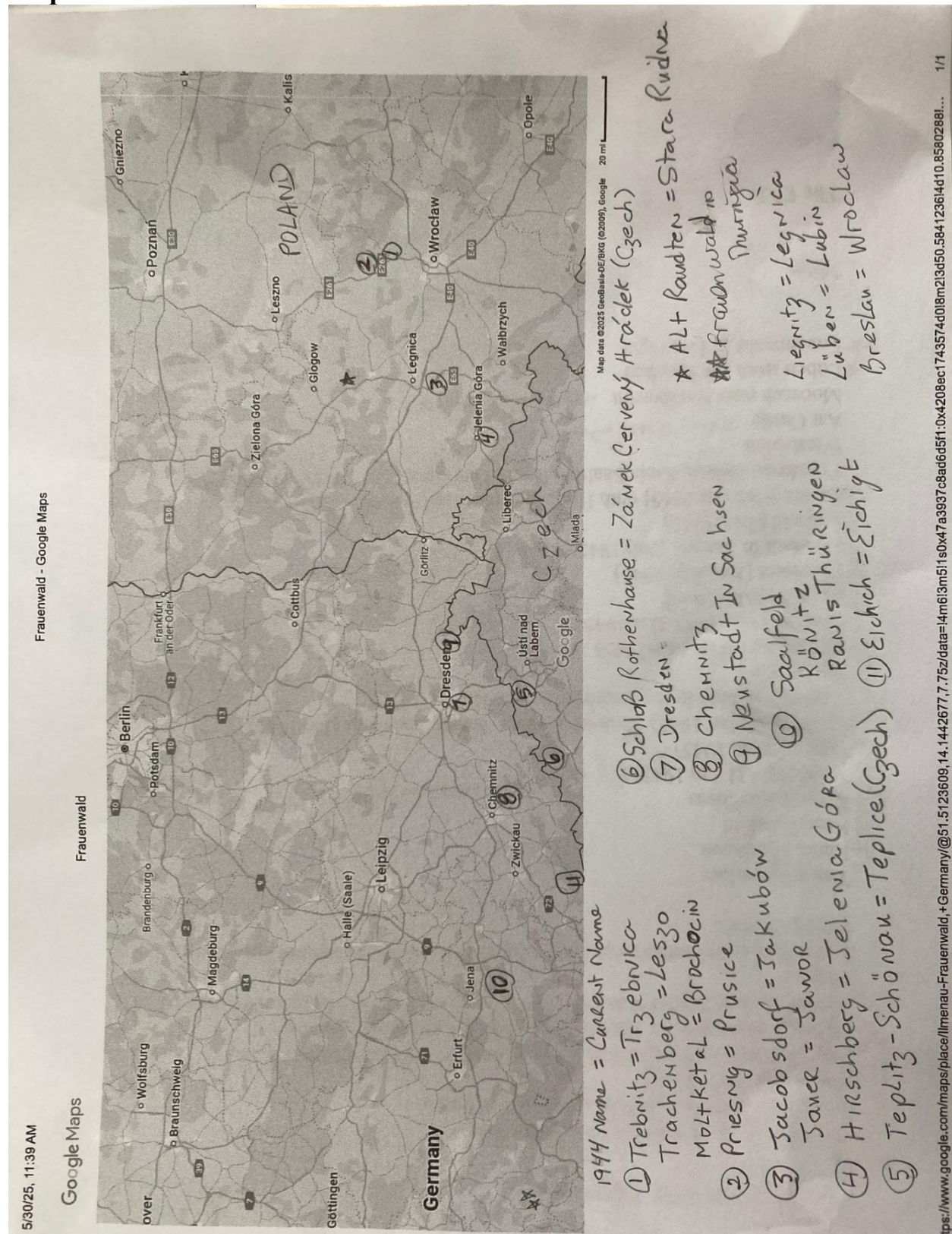
Moosach near Niederseon near München

Lüben from Alt Raudten Poland

Frauenwald in Thüringen

Eichich or Eichigt

Map



People Mentioned in Letter

Order appearing in Letter:

GroßMutti: see Baronin v. Zedltiz

Baronin v. Zedlitz: Mother of Mutti: Baroness Elsa Margarethe Freiin von Zedlitz und von Leipe (née Böttcher, born 21Apr1876-1947 in Eichich). Grandmother of Ini and Hans-Ludwig on their mother's side.

Inilein or Ini: Ingrid Sigrid von Schweinitz (3Apr1928-2016) [older sister of Hans Ludwig von Schweinitz]. Granddaughter of Großmutti.

Vater: Hans Wilhelm Hermann Egon Tassilo von Schweinitz (21Dec1901-18Jan1969). Married Mutti Sigrid on 7July1927. Father of Hans Ludwig and Ingrid von Schweinitz

Kuhlmanns: travelled with Grossmutti in Jan 1945. Went to Frauenwald in Thuringen

Countess Baillet-Latour: Sister of Prince Clary in Feb 1945. House of Baillet, a noble family with roots in Belgium.

Prince Clary: Brother to Countess Baillet-Latour. The House of Clary is prominent Austro-Hungarian princely family.

Mütterchen or Mutti: Sigrid Ingeborg Freiin von Zedlitz und von Leipe (12Feb1902-3Sep1942). Mother of Ini and Hans-Ludwig.

Baroness Geyer (Wallenberg). The Wallenberg family is a prominent Swedish family renowned as bankers, industrialists, politicians, bureaucrats and diplomats.

Princess Windisch-Graetz: The House of Windisch-Graetz, also spelled Windischgrätz, is a Slovenian-Austrian aristocratic family, descending from Windischgrätz in Lower Styria (present-day Slovenj Gradec, Slovenia). The noble dynasty serving the House of Habsburg achieved the rank of Freiherren in 1551, of Imperial Counts in 1682 and of Princes of the Holy Roman Empire in 1804. The family belongs to high nobility.

Prince of Hohenlohe-Langenburg: Ernst, was a German aristocrat and 7th Prince of Hohenlohe-Langenburg from 9Mar1913 to 11Dec1950. He served as the Regent of the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha from 1900 to 1905.

Mrs Rexrodt in Saalfeld. Husband Mr Rexrodt is owner of Hotel Anker-Gülden Haus in Saalfeld/Saale.

Anna and Leise in Saalfeld: Probably acquaintances or distant family members from von Zedlitz, von Leipe, or Böttcher

Hilde Weppler in Könitz: was apprentice in Alt Raudten

Mrs Rust: from Alt Raudten, supervisor of Hilde Weppler

Dr Muldatus: in Saalfeld Kreiskrankenhaus

Uncle Fritz and Paul: in Wiesbaden in Ast Castle: Probably family members from von Zedlitz, von Leipe, or Böttcher

Aunt Lucie and Hemans: Probably family members from von Zedlitz, von Leipe, or Böttcher

Ulla: Ursula von Frankenburg Lütwitz (born 26Mar1924). 2nd wife of Vati, married 15Nov1944. Former Governess of Hans-Ludwig then step-mother when she married Vati.

Hannelu: nickname for Hans-Ludwig von Schweinitz (26Oct1934-26Aug2015) [my Papa]. Grandson to Großmutti.

Kurt Balthasar: Son of Vati and Ulla born 31July1945 in Munich as Kurt Balthasar von Schweinitz. Nickname Hemmi.

Franz Adolf Eduard Benjamin Freiherr von Leipe: (born 21Apr1976, died 29/3/1944) husband of Großmutti Else, and Father of Mutti. Grandfather of Inni and Hans-Ludwig on mother's side.

Image of Letter

Baronin v. Zedlitz
(15) Ranis Thüringen
Kreis Saalfeld
Kreiskrankenhaus

d. 9. 2. 46
bis 13. 2. 46

} Februar 1946

Mein liebes, geliebtes Inilein!

Ich hatte mich ja so gefreut, als ich den Brief von Deinem Vater erhielt. Ihr lebt, seid gesund und wohlbehalten! Gott sei Dank! Ich war nur traurig, dass Du nicht ein Wort beigelegt hattest. Nun erhielt ich gestern Deinen Brief mit der Aufklärung. Warum Dein Brief zurückgeschickt wurde während ich sonst die Briefe nachgeschickt erhielt, verstehe ich auch nicht. Nun will ich Dir von meinem Erleben berichten und bitte Deinen Vater als für ihn mitgeschrieben zu betrachten denn ich kann es nicht zweimal schreiben da es mich zu sehr anstrengt und ich so schon einige Tage an diesem Brief werde schreiben müssen und werde trotzdem nicht alles berichten können, was ich erlebt habe, denn das würde ein ganzes Buch füllen. Am 21. Januar 45 mußten wir von Moltketal weg. Ich wollte nicht, wollte bei meinem Grabe bleiben, aber das ganze Dorf mußte weg. Kuhlmanns und ich fuhren mit dem Gemeindetreck mit bei schneidender Kälte! Wir fuhren 5 Tage und Nächte, nur immer mit wenigen Stunden Ruhe für die Pferde. Eine Nacht blieben wir in Priesnig wo ich sehr liebevoll aufgenommen wurde, doch waren sie auch schon auf der Abreise begriffen, dann kamen wir nach Jacobsdorf Kr. Jauer wo wir bleiben sollten. Ich war also in Deiner Nähe mein Inilein, bei Hirschberg. Nun war aber bei Brechners Wagen die Achse gebrochen so daß wir ihn bei einer Weiterfahrt zurücklassen mussten, und deshalb riet man mir, als es hieß, es ging ein Sonderzug von Jauer, diesen zu benutzen. Nun, ich sah, daß man mich gern loswerden wollte und fügte mich. Der ganze überfüllte Zug war nur von Auslandsdeutschen besetzt, Russen, Ukrainer, Slovenen, Ungarn u.s.w. Nun fuhren wir mehr haltend als fahrend 2 Tage und 3 Nächte, ich, ohne etwas zu essen oder zu trinken habend im Gang vor dem bl. auf meinem Koffer sitzend ohne mich rühren zu können. Dann landeten wir in Teplitz-Schönau im Sudetengau. Hier wurden wir in eine Schule ins Lager gebracht wo wir in den großen Klassenzimmern, Männlein und Weiblein alles durcheinander ein Unterkommen fanden. Allerdings mit übereinanderstehenden Betten mit Papiersack mit Holzwolle gefüllt. Alles hatte Federbetten mit, ich nur meinen Koffer als Kopfkissen und Mantel als Decke.

Das Essen war gut und genügend. Hier lag ich 8 Tage nur auf meinem Bett, mehr Platz hatte ich nicht. Und da kam das Wunder. Eine Dame kam zu mir, stellte sich als Gräfin Baillet-Latour, Schwester des Fürsten Clary, den ich in meiner Jugend kannte, vor und holte mich zu ihrem Bruder aufs Schloß. Wie froh ich war kannst Du Dir denken. Es war gerade an Deines Mütterchens Geburtstag! Aber ich war krank und elend und mußte zu Bett liegen. Dort besuchte mich auch die Baronin Geyer (Wallenberg) die wir in Altraudten kennen gelernt hatten und die sich auf dem Schlosse in Teplitz aufhielt. Leider ist sie einige Wochen darauf gestorben und zwar an einem Knochen in einem Kaninchenragout der ihr in der Speiseröhre einen Abseß hervorgerufen hat. Da es mit mir auch nicht besser wurde, sagte die Gräfin es wäre wohl besser wenn ich aufs Land käme wo ich auch gute Pflege und alles hätte und sie wollte mich zu ihrer Cousine, der Fürstin Windisch-Graetz schicken die zur Zeit auf Schloß Rothenhaus wäre, das aber ihrem Bruder dem Prinzen von Hohenlohe-Langenburg gehöre der eine Spanierin zur Frau habe und sich in Spanien befinde. So kam ich nach Rothenhaus und wurde wie eine Königin aufgenommen. Zimmer mit seidenen Möbeln, seidenem Bett, seiden bespannte Wände,

Möbel, Marmorbade, Bedienung: Jungfer, Beschließerin, 2 Diener u. s. w. Hier war ich 1/4 Jahr bis Ende Mai. Ende April geschah es, daß so ungefähr vor meinen Augen sich eine Flüchtlingsfrau das Leben nahm, was mich sehr erschütterte. Ich nehme an, daß das die Ursache war, daß ich wenige Tage darauf einen Schlaganfall erlitt und 7 Tage ohne Bewußtsein lag. 4 Ärzte sind nacheinander an meinem Bett gewesen, 1 Deutscher, 1 Ukrainer, 1 Tscheche und eine russische Ärztin. Die Russen sind eingezogen ich habe nichts gemerkt und sie ließen auch die scheinbar sterbende Frau, die, nachdem alles geflohen war allein in dem großen Schloß mit hunderten von Sälen und Zimmern, zurückgeblieben war unbehelligt. Aber alles was ich nicht auf dem Leibe hatte, war mir gestohlen worden, mein Koffer mit allen Sachen, Mäntel, Kleider, Schuhe. Es war nichts mehr da. Und es waren nicht die Russen, die es genommen hatten, sondern Ukrainer die dort im Ort untergebracht gewesen waren. Die Russen benahmen sich anständig. Es war ja auch der Stab, der im Schloße untergebracht war und die Ärztin zu mir sandten die auch deutsch sprach. 3 Wochen war ich mit den Russen zusammen, dann zogen sie ab und die Tschechen kamen. Die wollten auf dem Schloß ein tschechisches Siegesfest feiern und so brachten sie mich nach dem Krankenhaus in Görlitz wo ich aber nur wenige Tage lag.

Am 4. Juni wurde ich früh um 6 von den Tschechen aus dem Bett geholt und mit noch 2 Frauen im offenen Wagen an die 12 km entfernte Grenze gebracht wurden wo es dann noch 15 km bis zur Bahn waren. Von da ging es mit einem Zug nach Dresden wo wir nachts um 2 ankamen. Das geschah natürlich nicht alles an einem Tag. Alles furchtbar Erlebtes was dazwischen liegt, will ich übergehen. Es waren tausende von Menschen die mancher Zug brachte und schlafend warteten auf dem Bahnsteig um mit demselben Zug nach Chemnitz zu fahren. Es war ein Gewühl und Gedränge. Fallen konnte man nicht. Wer erdrückt wurde, wurde trotzdem mit weitergeschoben. Es ging eine Treppe hinunter. War es ein Bunker oder Kartoffelkeller wo man hin kam. Sehen konnte man nicht, es war stock dunkel. Die Menge fing an sich zu zerstreuen und wo ich ging und stand fiel ich hin und verlor das Bewußtsein. Als ich zu mir kam war es heller Tag und ich lag – auf der Straße. Flüchtlinge zogen in hellen Haufen an mir vorbei, doch keiner kümmerte sich um mich. Dann kamen Sanitäter vom Bahnhofsdienst und brachten mich ins Flüchtlingslazarett. Hier lag ich 3 Wochen. Das Flüchtlingslazarett hatte aber keine Verpflegung. Die Flüchtlinge, die da lagen, hatten Angehörige die für sie einholten und kochten. Nur ich hatte niemanden. So habe ich die 3 Wochen nur von Wasser und Brot gelebt und gehungert. Dann wurde ich zur Bahn gebracht im Handwagen von Jungen gezogen und kam nach Neustadt in Sachsen. Hier war die Eisenbahnbrücke gesprengt und alles mußte 8 km zu Fuß gehen. Das konnte ich natürlich nicht und so blieb ich auf dem Bahnhof liegen. Vier Nächte habe ich im Wartesaal auf dem blanken Fußboden ohne Decke und ohne etwas zu essen zu haben gelegen. Dann erbarmte sich ein dortiger Arzt meiner und ließ mich ins Krankenhaus bringen. So blieb ich 11 Wochen in Neustadt, erst im Krankenhaus und dann im Alterspflegeheim. Dann schrieb ich nach Saalfeld an Frau Rexrodt erst eingeschrieben und dann noch einmal und bekam keine Antwort während mir Anna, an die ich mit gleicher Post schrieb, sofort antwortete ich sollte kommen. So machte ich mich denn wieder auf die furchtbare Reise die den vorhergegangenden in nichts nachstand, denn in Neustadt konnte ich nicht bleiben und kam am 8. Sept. Abends um 9 in Saalfeld an. Anna und Hier waren sehr lieb zu mir und taten alles damit ich mich nur erholen sollte, denn ich befand mich wieder in einem völligen Erschöpfungszustand wie vorher schon in Neustadt. Ihr Haus war von einer Mine stark beschädigt worden. Zu unseren Schrecken wies die Polizei die Anmeldung zurück da die Stadt Saalfeld keine Flüchtlinge mehr aufnahm da sie überfüllt sei. Was nun. Ich konnte nicht mehr

warten. Das rote Kreuz nahm sich der Flüchtlinge an und brachte sie dann im Kreis auf dem Lande unter. Ich mußte mich aber in den Unterkunftsräumen des roten Kreuzes aufhalten und schlafen und das war in der Jugendherberge auf dem Boden unterm Dach auf Stroh. Da erinnerte ich mich, daß mir die Hilde Steppeler in Könitz, die seinerzeit als Lernende bei uns im Büro gewesen war, Dein Vater nannte sie den Stinkpöpel, an mich in Moltketal geschrieben und mich eingeladen hatte, wenn ich nach Könitz käme, sollte ich sie doch besuchen. Sie ist verheiratet und ihr Mann in englischer Gefangenschaft. Kinder hat sie nicht und wohnt im Hause ihrer Eltern. Sie antwortete mir nicht, sondern kam sofort selbst um mich zu holen. Ich glaubte der Himmel öffne sich mir. Endlich, endlich eine Bleibe wo man mich haben will. Laß mich schweigen über die 11 Wochen die ich in Könitz bei Hilde Perlberg verbrachte. Ich sage nicht zuviel wenn ich sage, es waren die furchtbarsten Monate in meinem Leben, denn mir ist immer Liebe und Herzlichkeit mit warmer Fürsorge zuteil geworden. Ich hatte nie für möglich gehalten, daß ein junger, gesunder Mensch, der doch nicht ganz ungebildet ist, sich sogar für sehr gebildet hält, so gemütsroh, herzenskalt und von einer Gehäßigkeit zeigen kann wie diese Hilde. Warum sie mich dann zu sich geholt hat? Ich schließe aus ihren Reden, daß sie sich an mir hat rächen wollen, denn sie behauptete, daß sie auf dem Schloß von mir so schlecht behandelt worden sei während ich mir doch nur den Vorwurf machen kann, daß ich mich gar nicht um sie gekümmert hatte, denn sie unterstand nur Frau Rust. Sie hat mich furchtbar gequält, körperlich und seelisch, und ich habe entsetzlich gelitten, bis ich nicht mehr konnte und zusammenbrach. Sie war gerade auf 3 Tage verreist als ich von Hunger und Aufregung entkräftet einen neuen Schlaganfall bekam und man mich hierher brachte wo ich wieder die ersten 5 Tage ohne Besinnung lag. Diesesmal hat es mich aber schlimmer gepackt. Meine linke Schulter und Oberarm ist gelähmt. Ich kann mich im Bett nicht allein aufrichten. Aber das Schlimmste ist, die Beine versagen ganz. Ich kann sie zwar bewegen, aber ich kann weder stehn noch gehn, sie tragen den Körper nicht. Daß auch die Hände zum größten Teil steif sind verdient auch Erwähnung. Ich bin also ganz hilflos und liege schon 10 Wochen hier. Trotzdem habe ich hier Ruhe gefunden, denn ich kann und brauch nicht zurück nach Könitz. Nur die Zukunft ängstigt mich. Wenn ich doch nur sterben könnte! Ich kann doch nicht, solange ich noch lebe, hier im Krankenhaus bleiben? Allerdings jetzt brauche ich Pflege und Spritzen weil ich viel und starke Schmerzen habe. Man sprach von einem Altersheim. Ach, ich fürchte mich davor. Hier kenne ich von früher noch den guten Dr. Muldatus. Anna und Lieschen haben mich besucht, Wapplers beide, sogar Hilde, vielleicht um sich an meinem Leiden zu erbauen, denn sie erzählte mir nur unangenehmes was mir allerdings einen Weinkrampf brachte so daß die Schwestern wenig erbaut über den Besuch waren. Nun habe ich in Umrissen von meinem Erleben erzählt, all das Entsetzliche, Grauensvolle das dazwischen liegt, laß mich zudecken mit dem Mantel des Vergangenen das besser in Schweigen gehüllt bleibt. Es würde mich auch zu sehr aufregen davon zu sprechen oder nur auch darüber zu schreiben, wie mich dieser Brief so schon reichlich aufregt. Aber nun habe ich ihn ja hinter mir. Du schriebst ob ich nicht nach Wiesbaden oder Ast reisen könnte in amerikanische Zone? Ach liebes Kind, selbst wenn ich es könnte, Onkel Fritz in Wiesbaden und in Schloß Ast haben keinen Platz für mich. Jeder hat ja das Haus voll. Und selbst wenn es ginge, Onkel Fritz und Paul sind ja beide so alt. Denke, wenn sie vor mir stürben, was würde dann aus mir? Nein, nein, es ist schon besser so, ich bleibe hier. Ich kann ja auch nicht reisen, nicht mit der Eisenbahn fahren und die Russen sind nicht schlimmer als Engländer und Amerikaner auch. Wenn ich nur nicht so entsetzlich einsam und verlassen wäre! Zwar hat sich diese furchtbare Qual in mir schon gebessert. Seitdem ich Deinen

Lucie + Hemaus

und deines Vaters Brief und Briefe von Onkel Fritz und Paul und Tante Biene und erhalten habe, doch leide ich noch ganz schrecklich. Die Besuchstage hier Sonntag und Mittwoch sind mir unerträglich. Ich liege in meinem Zimmer mit 2 Betten, manchmal allein, doch meistens mit einem anderen Kranken die in der langen Zeit die ich schon hier bin... Da stimmt es mich nun sehr traurig wenn ich sehen muß wie diese Päckchen und Besuche bekommen und mit Liebesgaben überschüttet werden und ich allein leer ausgehe. Anna und Liesel? Bernd konnten mich in den 10 Wochen der schlechten Busverbindung wegen auch nur einmal besuchen, zumal Sonntags keine Züge und Wochentags nur Arbeiterzüge gehen. Daß ich mein Verlassensein da ganz besonders schmerzlich empfinde ist wohl zu verstehen. Doch nun habe ich wohl genug von mir gesprochen und möchte jetzt ein wenig von Euch plaudern. Also Ihr wollt nach Südwesafrika gehen? Nun, so schnell wird das wohl nicht gehen. Aber eins muß ich Dir und Deinem Vater aus meinen Erfahrungen aus Bekanntenkreis doch sagen: Seid Ihr auch körperlich dem Tropenklima gewachsen? Habt Ihr Euch von einem Facharzt daraufhin untersuchen lassen? Bitte tut es auf jeden Fall. Dein Vater ist nicht sehr kräftig und gesund. Wie es mit Euch Kindern und Ulla steht, weiß ich nicht. Es wäre ja aber furchtbar wenn Ihr auf fremder Erde den Vater verlieren würdet weil er nicht tropenfest ist, oder er müßte den Verlußt eines seiner Lieben beklagen und sich schuldig sprechen. Hört deshalb meine Mahnung, sie ist gut gemeint und es würde mich freuen wenn der Arzt keinerlei Bedenken hätte.

Und nun bitte ich Dich mein Inilein schreib mir bald wieder und erzähle mir auch von Euren Erleben. Wie seid Ihr nach X bei Niederseon gekommen? Habt Ihr da Verwandte oder Bekannte und wie haust Ihr dort? Hast Du eine Tätigkeit? Besucht Hannelu dort die Schule? Welche Beschäftigung hat Dein Vater? Was macht der Kleine und wie ruft Ihr ihn? Doch wohl nicht bei seinem Namen Kurt Balthasar? Nach Ulla kann ich wenig fragen, denn ich habe sie ja nur mal als Schulkind von Altraudten aus in Lüben gesehen. Ich hoffe ja daß recht bald die Grenzen von der amerikanischen zur russischen Zone und umgekehrt geöffnet werden. und daß Du mich dann wo ich auch bin, besuchen wirst. Diese Hoffnung hält mich aufrecht wenn es einmal gar nicht gehen will, denn Du und Hannelu sind ja das einzige was ich auf der Welt noch habe. Damit will ich Deinem Vater nicht unrecht tun der mir durch seine zweite Ehe nicht ferner gerückt ist und der mich mit seinen Briefen so erfreut hatte. Laß ihn also diesen Brief lesen, er ist ja auch für ihn mit geschrieben und grüße ihn ganz besonders herzlich von mir und auch Ulla. Dich mein Herzenskind und meinen lieben Hannelu schließe ich in Gedanken in meine Arme und bin mit innigem Kuß

Deine, Eure
Großmutter

Wenn Du einmal ein schönes Buch hast, so schicke es mir doch zum lesen. Es gehen ja auch wohl Päckchen von Euch nach hier. Und Lesen ist das Einzige womit ich mir die Zeit vertreiben kann.

Kuhlmann ist in Frauenwald in Thüringen. Ob die Anschrift genügt, weiß ich nicht. Ich habe seinen Brief nicht hier und muß ihn mir erst von Könitz schicken lassen.

Vielleicht mußt Du für den Brief Strafporto zahlen daß er zu schwer ist. Ich mußte für Deinen Brief auch Strafporto zahlen. (16 Pf)

1946 Refugee Part 5: February to Dec, Niederseeon to Wiesbaden

We considered ourselves lucky. We were living on a farm in Niederseeon, near Munich. We had a safe place to live, a one room workers cottage, and we had food. We worked on the farm to in exchange for our food and lodging. Vati and Uncle Erlich worked in the fields. Inni and Ulla worked in the kitchen and garden. I was away at boarding school in the Bavarian Alps. I was applying myself to the school work and doing well. On school holidays and vacations, I would come back to the family. Now that Ulla had given birth to my half-brother Hemmi, she was gaining weight and strength. Hemmi was growing fast and healthy. The events in the first 8 months of 1945 had resulted in our lives being completely altered. We started 1945 as a Family in charge of a large estate, Alt Raudten, lived through being bombed, homeless, starved, injured, evicted, and to now being farm laborers. And we were grateful. As far as I was concerned, we could live this life for many more years.

Vati and Uncle Erlich were not trying to find a way to return the Alt Raudten and reclaim the estate. They often went into Munich and talked with officials. But the official were too busy rebuilding Munich and the surrounding area to be concerned about an Estate over 650km away in Poland. And to make matters worse, Munich was in the American zone and Poland had been given to the Soviet Union. The Americans were not interested in cooperating with communists. For some reason, the officials believed that since Alt Raudten was now in the Soviet zone, anybody from that area must be communist.

Inni and Ulla were doing their part also. Both wrote letters to anyone that might be able to help. A lot of Ulla's family had found refuge in or around Berlin. The response letters from Berlin were asking us for help. The situation in Berlin was dire. The population was starving and dying from diseases. The Soviets were in control of most of Berlin and were not interested in rebuilding or helping. They were interested in revenge. Inni wrote to the von Schweinitz family members that had made it to Wiesbaden. Wiesbaden, like Munich was in the American zone. The Americans were more interested in rebuilding Germany and helping the population survive. Many relative recommended that we come to Wiesbaden. The Americans had established some kind of occupation governmental structure that could trace ownership and reunite people with lost assets, including land. One organization was the International Tracing Service or ITS (later Arolsen Archives) and another organization was run by the Red Cross. Also, there was another organization called the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) that could provide economic assistance and aid to refugees.

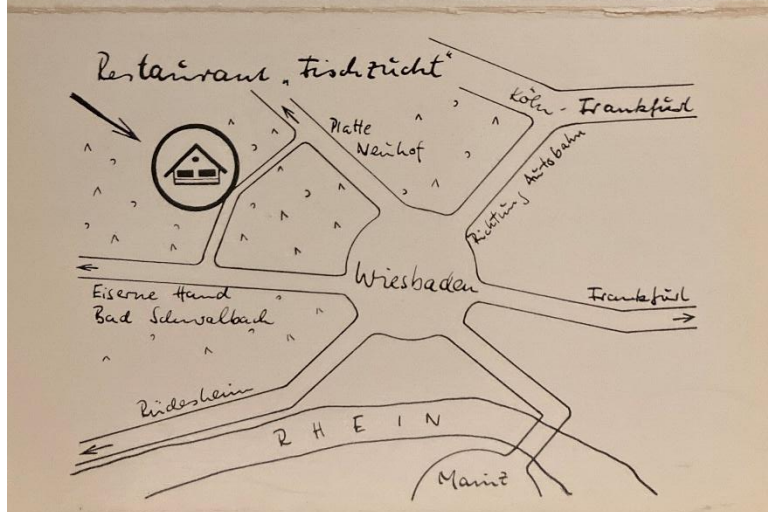
The letters from Wiesbaden sounded more and more promising to Vati and Uncle Erlich. They were getting nowhere with their inquiries in Munich.

In May of 1946 the school year had ended and I returned to Niederseeon. There was a short break in the school year and I expected to go back to school in June. I then learned that we were going to leave the farm and move to Wiesbaden. Okay, I could still go to the boarding school in the Alps and take the train to Wiesbaden. The travel time was almost the same, because the train to Wiesbaden was a fast train while the train to Niederseeon was the slow 'milk' train. Vati said no, I was going to move with the family. But I was doing so well at the school and anyway, wasn't I sent to this school to get a good education? Vati said that there were just as good schools in Wiesbaden. My effort at the boarding school had been so good that I was eligible to attend a Gymnasium (Advanced 14-year High School that prepared you for University) and then I might earn a position in a University and receive an Agricultural and Husbandry Diploma like he had.

So, we packed what was left of our possessions, loaded them onto the train, and left for Wiesbaden. Once we reached the Wiesbaden Railroad station, we left our trunks in the store room. We were going to walk to our nearest relative which was Vati's Aunt Dora and her husband Siegfried. They had lived in Wiesbaden since before the war and were well connected with society. All the letters we had received from relatives in Wiesbaden had been so friendly and recommended that we come to Wiesbaden, that we naturally assumed that we would be welcomed to stay. Wrong! As soon as we walked into Aunt Dora's house, she was incensed. We were not properly dressed, we were filthy, and we looked and smelled like farm workers. Vati tried to explain that the only clothes we had with us, had come with us from Alt Raudten and had been worn daily. That, yes, we had been working on a farm, and it would take a good bath to remove all the soil from under our fingernails. She ordered us out of her house, and told us to come back when we were presentable. And to leave quickly, before any of her society friends would see us. We walked to the next nearest relative, Vati's Uncle Curt and his wife Frieda. They had been living in Lower Silesia, not far from Alt Raudten until the summer of 1944, when they left for Wiesbaden. They had left Silesia because some relative on Frieda's side of the family had angered Führer Hitler and they were afraid of the repercussions. They let us stay a couple of nights.



Finding housing was almost impossible. There were so many displaced people and refugees. Inni finally found an abandoned structure that was heavily bombed but there were still a couple of rooms on the ground floor that were livable. We moved in. So much for relatives.



We needed to find a better place to live and also a way to earn a living. After about a week, Vati and Uncle Erlich found a fish farm/restaurant (Fischzucht) just outside of Wiesbaden. The owner was looking for somebody to run both the farm portion and the restaurant. We had the skills for both. We lived in a little two room shack in the back of the property. The fish were grown in the pond and the restaurant building overlooked the pond. The kitchen was in the basement, the restaurant on the ground floor, and upstairs were hotel bedrooms.

We were very busy. Again, the work was divided. Inni

and Ulla worked in the kitchen. Vati and Uncle Erlich ran the fish farming ponds. Everybody helped with serving in the restaurant. I had to help with cleaning the hotel rooms each morning before walking off to school. In July 1946, I was

enrolled in Städt RealGymnasium in Wiesbaden. I was put into 4th grade which was the correct level for an 11 year old. I tried really hard at school. But it was a long walk to the school and in every weather. Also, there was a lot of work at the Fischzücht. I worked in the morning before school, and again after school. School is only half day in Germany, even an advanced school such as a Gymnasium. Then you are supposed to do your class exercises at home. I kept nodding off when I finally was able to sit down and do homework. In my first year of Gymnasium (1946-47), I missed 88 days of school. Some of the days I missed because Ulla was pregnant again. Just like when she was pregnant with Hemmi, all her energy went into the baby. I had to help Inni down in the kitchen and also help serve in the restaurant. And we all shared trying to babysit Hemmi. Hemmi though was almost raising himself; he spent most of the day waddling around in the restaurant babbling with the clients. At least he was having a good time. There was not always enough time in the day for me to also go to school.

On bad weather days, we sometimes did not open the restaurant, because we did not have customers. Then Vati, Uncle Erlich, and Inni would often go into Wiesbaden and visit various organizations in an attempt to reclaim Alt Raudten. Everybody was getting depressed. The organizations wanted proof of ownership. This became a problem. When we left in January 1945, we expected to be back within a month or two. Once the front lines passed west of Alt Raudten and battles moved west, then we could return. Alt Raudten would no longer be on the battle lines between two armies. So we left almost everything but enough provisions and possessions to last us a couple of months. All the precious heirlooms, antiques, furniture, and business files were left behind. And, any way the organizations established by the Americans did not seem to understand that the nobility did not own the land, they were awarded the rights to manage the land, village, and people. There were no deed or titles recorded anywhere. The royalty (King or Queen) owned the land. But since the Kaiser (King) position had been abolished with the fall of Kaiser Wilhelm (the last German Emperor and King of Prussia) in 1918, there was not clear title to the land.

On 15 December 1946, Ulla gave birth to my half-sister, Therese Maria (Heise) von Schweinitz in the Wiesbaden hospital. Inni was delighted, now she also has a sister. I have a bother, Hemmi. So, we were even. After the 10 days in the hospital, Ulla came home with Heise. Soon the Aunts and Uncles showed up at the Fischzücht to see the new baby. They were not interested in us before, but now they are showing up. Of course, after they had a visit with Ulla and Heise, we offered them a place at the tables in the restaurant and I was told to serve them a

meal. I knew that they probably were not going to pay, they just expected to be feed.

For some reason they began to talk about their opinion of Vati and Uncle Erlich. I was serving them and could hear every word, but they behaved as if I did not exist. I don't think it was because I was a 'server', because I remembered that the months after my Mutti had died of the fatal version of Malignant diphtheria in September 1942, the Aunts staying at Alt Raudten did the same thing. I was sitting among them, and they would talk as if I did not exist or that I was deaf. They believed that I had been responsible for bring the diphtheria into the manor house and infecting my own Mutti and causing her death. The Aunts refused to recognize that many adults were coming to Alt Raudten and were traveling from areas that were heavily infected with diphtheria. And that Mutti was always helping the village Doctor treat the villagers that had diphtheria. Now, in the Fischzücht, I was hearing what the Aunts had to say about my Vati. Vati was a loser, he had lost Alt Raudten, and estate that had been in the Schweinitz family for over 250 years. Vati was a loser, because he is not able to prove that he was the rightful heir of the estate. Vati was a loser. I took my tray down to the kitchen, and slammed in onto the serving table. I told Inni why I was so upset. The Aunts were at it again, and this time they were saying bad things about Vati. Inni said that the Aunts were getting old, and old people say nasty things. Inni had me take over the cooking, and she served the Aunts and Uncles the rest of their meal. I think I put extra salt into the pot of boiling fish.

1947 Refugee Part 6: Jan1947-15Mar1949 Wiesbaden

In 1947, we were living in a Fischzücht just outside of Wiesbaden. Ulla just had another baby, a girl we called Heise. The Fischzücht had a pond where we grew the fish, a restaurant where we served the fish, and a few hotel rooms on the upper floors. We lived in a small two room shed in the back of the property. We were barely able to survive. We ate the leftovers from the plates we served in the restaurant and trimmings from the kitchen. During the fall of 1946, we were making some money from the hotel bedrooms, because people would come out from the cities nearby; Wiesbaden, Mainz, and Frankfurt, and enjoy walks through the woods with the fall colors.

Now it was 1947 and winter. This winter was particularly difficult. There was a lot of rain and rivers were overflowing more than they ever had in history. The basements in houses were flooded with sewage floating in the flood water. The

food shortage was getting even more critical. Many people had put food away in storage in their root cellars, and now that food (potatoes, apples, cabbage, carrots) were soaking in sewage water. Then the temperature became very cold for weeks. People were not coming out of the cities to enjoy the country. We huddled for days in our cold two room shed. We had no customers. We also ran out of firewood, while we were living within the woods. In Germany, you cannot cut down a live tree without a permit. The trees belong to the people/state. All we could do is look for a dead tree or limbs that had already dropped due to snow or cold weather. But we were resourceful. While we searched for dead wood, if nobody was around, we would cut the bark and inner bark all the way around a live tree. If you do this below the mulch line, nobody can see the damage. With the inner bark cut, the upper section of tree will die in a few days. Dead wood for next week or month.

Finally, the winter weather lost it grip and the days became warmer. People began to come out to the woods again for spring walks and a nice meal. We were back in business. And people came and stayed overnight in our hotel rooms. We had been operating the Fischzücht for several months before I caught on to what was happening in the hotel rooms. During the day I would help wash the sheets and many days here seemed to be a lot more sheets than beds. I could never figure out why. Then Ria arrived. Ria had been one of our house maids in Alt Raudten. She arrived sometime in February of 1947 to the Fischzücht, two years after we had fled Alt Raudten. Ria did not have her own family, and used to stay with a family in the village. When we fled in January 1945, she was one of villagers that had stayed. She described what happened with the Soviet Red army arrived. The soldiers had pillaged, burned, terrorized, raped, and tortured the villagers. The officers moved into the Manor house. Within a couple of days, the Manor house was in flames and then there was an explosion that took out most of the upper floor. Within a week, the villagers were very sick and began to die. The soldiers collected the dead villagers and dropped the corpses into the ponds and down the wells. One night, Ria had enough, and quietly and secretly walked away from the village and kept walking west. She would not tell us what had happened to her, only that she could not take it anymore, so she left. She had been working in the Manor house when Opa Hermann (on Vati's side) and his wife Gabriele still lived there and knew that they had left with Anne for Wiesbaden. She had found Opa Hermann in Wiesbaden and they had recommended that she come to the Fischzücht because we definitely could use her help. Vati, said yes, we could do with extra help, especially if she could help in the kitchen and with the cleaning the hotel rooms. Ria was willing to help and she also offered to help with Hemmi and Heise.

A few days after she arrived, we were hanging the sheets on the drying line. I mentioned that there were so many sheets. Ria laughed. Did I not know what Vati and Ulla were doing with the hotel rooms? I said yes, they were renting them out so that people could sleep in the bed overnight. She laughed even harder. Vati was renting the rooms, but not for sleep. The first person/couple to rent the room each night would sign the register and that name was reported to the authorities. Part of their fee that they paid for the room would be sent as "hotel fee" fee to the authorities. After an hour or two, they would be finished with the room. Ulla, Inni, or now Ria would enter the room and remake the bed. The room would be rented out again for another hour or two. The new couple would not sign the register and their fee was pure profit. I was 11 years old and did not want to admit that I only understood part of what she was implying. I could not believe that Inni had never told me about these night time activities. I always thought Inni, Ulla, and Vati were in the main building, preparing for the next day.

Also, in the spring of 1947, I continued to attend the Gymnasium. But now I was no longer trying in school. Vati would often send me into Wiesbaden with money to buy provisions. We were still using the Reichsmark and its buying value changed by the hour. I had to spend most of the day, bartering with vendors to make sure I bought all the provisions. I learned to 'up buy'. In the morning, I would buy one product from a vendor, for example apples, then just before lunch time sell the bag of apples at a higher price to a vendor outside the Kurhaus which had been taken over by the Americans. Americans like to eat apples with their lunch. By afternoon, I had increased the amount of money and could afford all the provisions. There was no time left for school. Anyway, I was learning more about life, being on the streets, than reading all those silly books in school by Kafka, Schiller, or Nietzsche.

In the summer of 1947 my Mutti's mother, Baroness Elsa von Zedlitz und Leipe died. Inni had received a letter from her in February 1946. We did not hear from her after that letter. She died in Eichich Germany, and no family member attended her funeral, because we did not know. Also, on 22 June 1947, Vati's father, Opa Hermann von Schweinitz died. He and his wife Gabriele used to live with us in Alt Raudten and then they moved to Wiesbaden in 1944. There was a large family presence at his funeral.

In September 1947, I was supposed to start my fifth school year at the Gymnasium. Vati and the headmaster had a conference on 18 September to decide my fate. Most of my grades at the end of the prior year were 'not without blame',

‘inadequate’ or ‘enough’, except in Math where I received a ‘good’. And the teacher’s comment was “Despite repeated discipline he shows no signs of improving his work or behavior.” I was to be transferred to Oranien Strasse Volks School. I was no longer good enough for the Gymnasium or University. I was in full rebellion because the adults couldn't say anything anymore. They had screwed up the country so bad. They were either crippled, had lost their arms and legs. Or had been in prisoner of war camps. Starved half to death full of diseases. They had lost all my respect. I attended the Volksschule for the next two years and did not change my attitude. I preferred to be on the streets learning how to survive. Most of my grades were inadequate or insufficient, except in math. I needed to be good in math so that I could be successful in the bartering.



Hemmi, Ria, Michi, Heise

On 27 February 1948, my second half-brother was born to Ulla. They named him Michael. Ulla was turning into a baby making machine. Hemmi in July 1945, Heise in December 1946, and now Michael in February 1948. I was losing respect for my own Vati. He was not only renting out the rooms several times a night, he was also offering the services of his wife. But first he made sure she was pregnant

with his child. I did not like Ulla, because she had stolen away my Vati while Mutti was sick with Diphtheria. I could never forgive her. I knew that times were hard at the Fischzücht, and we were barely making it as a family, but I could never really accept that this was a good solution. I asked my sister, Inni, if Vati ever rented her and she told me, definitely not. Ria would not directly answer my question.

1947-1948 Opa Cab Driver ADD

Business so bad at Fischsuckt – became a cab driver

1948 Hotel Tamara, Wiesbaden

Later in 1948, we left the Fischzücht and moved to The Hotel Tamara was near the Kurhaus (spa house) within Wiesbaden, which had been taken over by the “Amis”, Americans, so there was a steady supply of guests. The sheets continued to be changed multiple times each night. I preferred to be gone during the day. I would spend my days taking on odd jobs so that I could bring food back to feed the family. When interviewed in his 80’s he remembered that “I was heavily involved in black marketing. Because there was a shortage of everything. Hair Combs and I had silky nylon stockings. These were my best trading goods. I had money coming out of my ears. But the money wasn't worth very much. I would also trade in cigarettes and coffee beans.”

In September 1948, I was transferred to Volksschule Söbernheim Thrutgrach (near Wiesbaden). I was still in the same 5th grade. I had not attended enough days to be moved up a grade. I did not care. Actually, the streets were full of other children my same age (13 years old) doing odd jobs, dealing in the black market, and otherwise making themselves useful. We were not trouble makers. One of the jobs I like the best was breaking mortar off of bricks. So many buildings had been bombed and turned into rubble. The bricks were still useful, if the mortar was removed. I would work all day helping a family rebuild their home and receive a few pieces of jewelry. I would then approach the Amis (American soldiers) and trade the jewelry for food, especially the ‘monkey butter’ and dried meat.

Then suddenly on 15 March 1949, somehow, I received my Volksschule Leaving Certificate (Diploma) and made all “Gut (Good)” grades. The minimum schooling requirement in Germany was schooling through the 8th grade at a Volksschule. I had miraculously completed three grades in one year (5th in September 1948 and 8th by March 1949). Not really. The new Federal Republic of German (West Germany) government was being formed and the department of education had decided that refugee children did not make good students because they no longer respected the adults. They had seen the real world and became “disruptive because of the atrocities and killings that took place” and preferred to be on the streets and learning how to survive the real world, not sit in classrooms. The new German Government decided to just graduate the refugee children when they reach the age of 14 (which I had in October 1948), which is when they should have been in 8th grade Volksschule, not matter what their grade or what they had learned.

At the same time that I received my Volksschule Leaving Certificate, I also received my new Identification Papers. I was officially declared a Refugee. These ID papers were important. Like many German Refugees, we no longer had official Identification Papers and because we used to live in another country (Silesia was in

Poland) they might not be German Citizens, just of part of the German Ethnic group that spoke German and had been identifying themselves as German. Confusing. The Refugee ID Papers identified me as a person having the rights of a German Citizen. Over time there were some other benefits or compensations, that will be explained when they happened.

**BUNDESREPUBLIK
DEUTSCHLAND**

AUSWEIS
für Vertriebene und Flüchtlinge

A

Nummer des Ausweises

7532/3595

Dieser Ausweis gilt nur in Verbindung mit einem gültigen
Personalausweis.

Name (bei Frauen auch Geburtsname)
v. Schweinitz

Vornamen (Rufname unterstrichen)
Hans Ludwig

Geburtstag *26. Okt. 1934*

Geburtsort (Land, Kreis) *Liegnitz / H. Posen*

Kinder unter 16 Jahren

	Vorname	Geburtstag
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Ständiger Aufenthalt im Bundesgebiet (Berlin-West)
seit: *August 1945*

Wohnort und Wohnung
Grünstadt
Schlesingerstr. 28

Hans L. v. Schweinitz

Unterschrift des Inhabers

Frankenthal, den 15. Juni 1956

Ort Datum

Ausstellende Behörde
[Signature]

Dienststempel
**Landratsamt
Frankenthal**

Unterschrift

Nr. des Personalausweises
RPV 29 937

Behördliche Eintragungen

1949 Refugee Part 7: Wiesbaden: Black Market 16Mar1949-Nov1949

By March 1949, we had moved out of the Fischzückt and was managing The Hotel Tamara in the center of Wiesbaden. On 15 March 1949, somehow, I received my Volksschule Leaving Certificate (Diploma) and made all "Gut (Good)" grades. The minimum schooling requirement in Germany was schooling through the 8th grade at a Volksschule. We also had been official declared Refugees and received our Identification papers. There were an estimated 8 million Refugees in West Germany.

The year 1949 was a transition year for Germany and for our family. The Allies had finally agreed that Germany was not going to be united, there was going to be an East and West Germany. This was made official in 23 May 1949. And Berlin was no longer the capital of Germany. Bonn was to be the capital of West Germany. Poland was to be occupied and controlled by the Soviet Union. The chance that our family could return to Alt Raudten was becoming even more remote. How remote the possibility was made very clear when the Soviet Union imposed a blockade in Berlin which went on from 24 Jun 1948 to 12 May 1949.

I was spending most of my time trying to stay away from The Hotel Tamare, by roaming the streets and trading or bartering on the Black Market. In June 1948, the ReichMark had just been replaced by the more stable Deutschmark. The exchange rate was terrible, 10 ReichMarks were only worth 0.65 Deutschmarks and 100 ReichMarks to 1 US Dollar. Bartering was still the preferred method of commerce, with cigarettes being the currency. I learned that anything that was addictive made good currency, such as coffee, chocolate, alcohol, cigarettes, and matches (for the cigarettes). The German stores did not have these products. The Amis (American Soldiers) were a good source of addictive products. They could buy them cheaply in their stores, and were willing to barter them for something that their store did not sell. My favorite trade was to go through the Cemetery and collect fresh flowers, then barter them to the Amis. I then took the addictive product to the Farmer's Market and bartered for food. The food was my contribution to the family. Somebody had to help feed the family and the babies, Hemmi, Heise, and Michael. For years later, all through the Cold War of 1960-1980s, I would make sure to have a stock of cigarettes, matches, and coffee in our closet, just encase of Armageddon.

In the evenings I would return to the Hotel and give my Vati, my goods. The sheets were still being changed multiple times each night. Since the Hotel was

close to the Kurhaus where the Amis were billeted, the 'night' business was doing well. Since the Hotel was making a profit, Vati hired more personnel to serve in the restaurant, work in the kitchen, and clean the rooms. There was still a lot for the family to do each morning, but we now had help. People were more than willing to work, even after they found out what the main business was at the Hotel. Unemployment was high. Because of the Morgenthau Plan, over 60% of the factories in Germany by 1949 had been dismantled or shut down. The plan was to revert Germany back to the agriculture economy that existed in the 1800's. The Morgenthau Plan also had restrictions on rebuilding and government. The Morgenthau Plan was eventually replaced by expanding the Marshall Plan (that was already in effect since (1948). The Marshall Plan emphasized rebuilding businesses, integrating the European Continent, and removing barriers. Of the total amount of aid (which was actually a loan), the UK received 26%, France 18% and Germany 11%. The remainder went to other European countries not under the Soviet Union control. Germany, the UK, and Sweden repaid their Marshall Plan loan. But the positive effects of the Marshall plan were not being felt in 1949, only the restrictive effects of the Morgenthau Plan.

Since I was in contact with Amis, I would hear their comments about the Hotel just across the street from the Kurhaus. I heard that the Hotel was a good place to take their "German Girlfriend" of the night. No questions asked, just pay by the hour. I knew that the only way some German females could survive was to 'sell' themselves to the Amis. There were no other honorable jobs for women or men, and the Amis were to the only ones with money that could be converted to food. A study in 1949 by the UK government finally acknowledged that Morgenthau plan was not working. German Adult death rates had risen to 4 times the pre-war levels and German Children death rates were over 10 times pre-war levels. The calorie level of official rations and self grown food was below 1,000 kilocalories.

I confronted my Vati about his Hotel business. Was there not another way to support the family? What about help from our other family members? Why did the Aunts and Uncles just say negative things instead of helping us? Couldn't we move to East Germany and then possibly return to Poland and Alt Raudten? Everything has to be better over there. Were the Russian that much worse than the Amis? I even asked my sister Inni. I did not like their answers and became very disgruntled. We had to stay with the Hotel and do our best. At some point Germany would no longer be occupied, restrictions would be lifted, and then hopefully, the economy would improve.

In the morning, I still joined the family in cleaning the rooms and preparing the Hotel for the coming day. As so as I could, I left and continued roaming the streets. I just could not stay. Then one morning, late in 1949, I came into the Lobby and saw Vati just sitting there with a piece of paper in his hand. He looked completely devastated. I thought about just sneaking past him and out the door, there had been so much bad news lately, I did not want to hear more. But instead, I asked Vati, what was wrong. He said that Ulla had left. What does that mean, left? Ulla has taken Hemmi with her, and left for South West Africa. Vati waved the paper and said that Ulla had written that she did not believe that Germany was ever going to survive the occupation and that she could do better with her father and brother in South West Africa (later became Namibia). I asked Vati about Heise and Michael, who were also her children, why only take Hemmi. Ulla wrote on the paper that Hemmi was old enough to travel the distance, while Heise and Michael were too young. My sister, Inni, then came into the Lobby. She told me that it was better if I would just leave and go barter for food. There is more to the story, and she would explain later. But it was better if I left her to comfort Vati. Ria already knew what had happened and was talking care of Heise and Michael.

I left to roam the streets. I did not do much bartering that day. I was too confused. Why had Ulla left so suddenly. After dark (it was winter already) I went back to the Hotel and asked Inni. Vati and Ulla had another of their many rows the night before. More of the Amis were bringing their own ‘girlfriends’ and the Amis did not need her services anymore. That meant she was not longer ‘earning’ as much during the night hours. Vati had made the mistake of blaming her for the reduced revenue – it was due to her bad attitude. Ulla had enough of being ‘sold’ and had told Vati that she wanted it to stop. Vati said, maybe when the economy improved then maybe then her ‘services’ would not be needed anymore. She took the only way out that she could, by leaving. This was November 1949, I had just turned 15 years old, I was no longer naïve, I understood what “services” and “sold” meant.



1950 Self Supporting ADD

I had 8 years of formal school at the age of 15 years and decided to become self-supporting with my father's permission.

Emancipated

1950 Refugee Part 8: Wiesbaden: Apprenticeship Nov1949-May1950

In November 1949, Ulla left with Hemmi (4 years, 3 month) for South West Africa. She no longer wanted to 'sell her services' every night and Vati was not ready to her to quit. So, she left for a better life with her father and brother in city Karibib, South West Africa (later called Namibia). Ulla left behind her other two children, Heise (2years 10 months) and Michael (1year 8 months). Vati, my sister Inni, Ria, and I were now in charge of running The Hotel Tamara and taking care of Heise and Michael.

The first couple of months were difficult. But there was no shortage of "German girlfriends" for Amis, so that part of the hotel business was profitable. We did not need Ulla's 'services' anyway. Vati realized that he had driven Ulla away, just because he was too stubborn to notice that everything was changing. The Morgenthau's plan had been abandoned. Especially the restrictions that prevented other countries or agencies from sending aid to Germany. And the plan had restricted agencies from helping the general German population. Now the new West German government could trade with other countries. So, goods and food were coming into West Germany. The factories were being rebuilt through the

Marshall Plan using aid from the USA. The United States had set up appeal courts throughout West Germany to 'de-nazify' the general population. Any person that had been classified as an 'active Nazi' due to a position held during the war, could now appeal to the court. Thousands of 'block leaders', shop owners, preachers, and other Local Nazi party positions had been classified as 'active Nazi' and they were not allowed to be employed. Once the appeal court had determined that they may have held an 'active' position within the Nazi Party, but they had never taken any action that was detrimental to their local society, then they would be 'de-nazified' and could be employed.

It was almost 5 years since the end of the war, and finally West Germans were beginning to rebuild their country and society. The Hotel had a couple of large reception rooms on the ground floor that we could finally rent out for parties. At first it was dancing parties for the Amis and their new 'girlfriends'. Several of these relationships were starting to become serious. The Amis enjoyed music and dancing just as much as Germans. Food rationing was being lifted, and we began to catering food and drink at the parties. Soon the party rooms were booked almost every Friday and Saturday evening. Then the wedding and baptism parties started. We were busy. Finally, there was hope for a future.

We hired help just for the parties. And also hired additional services, such as a photographer. Inni was in charge of the parties and all the temporary hiring. At first there a different photographer for each party. But then I noticed that same photographer kept being hired. Inni seemed to be smitten with him. He was the same age as Inni (20 years old) and already a Master Photographer. His name was Gunter Wolf and his family was originally from Berlin. They had fled Berlin when President Roosevelt and General Eisenhower had decided to let the Russian Red army 'liberate' Berlin in April 1945. Like our family, they had to leave so fast, that they lost everything. As soon as his family arrived in Wiesbaden, Gunter had entered into an Apprenticeship for Photography. Now, 5 years later he was a Master and was running his own business. I began to make sure that I was back at the Hotel in time for the parties, so that I could be his assistant. Gunter started to become a role model for me. He was earning enough of a living right now to support himself, with future earning power to support a family.

Early in 1950, Vati received a letter from Ulla. She was in South West Africa, living on the Farm run by her father and brother. Hemmi was with her. And she was not coming back. She hoped that Heise and Michael were in good health. She was interested in coming back for them, nor having the two children travel to be with her. Until Vati received this letter, he had hoped that she would come back to

him. Ria and Inni spent many evenings talking with Vati about what to do now. Finally, they convinced him to petition for a divorce. In Germany (then and now), grounds for a divorce includes when one spouse abandons very young children. And Heise (2years 10 months) and Michael (1year 8 months) were considered toddlers and too young to be abandoned by either parent. Ironically, there were thousands of children with only one parent, because the other parent (usually the father) had died in the war. But the surviving spouse became a widow with war benefits. Vati petitioned the court with the letter as evidence. By the summer of 1950, Vati was divorced.

In May of 1950, Gunter had found a Master Photographer that would take me on as an apprentice. On May 1st, 1950 I started my apprenticeship at Strauch, owner Kurt Lohmann, Wiesbaden, Bahnhofstrasse 12, as a photo laboratory technician. This apprenticeship was to last 2 years and also include tutoring in other basic subjects, such as mathematics, geography, history, composition, and others. While I was doing my apprenticeship, I moved into a bedroom with Kurt Lohmann's family. I was 15 years old, just the perfect age to start an Apprenticeship.

Name		van Schweinitz	
Vorname	Nachname	Hans-Ludwig	
Geburtsdatum	26. Oktober 1934		
Geburtsort	Liegnitz / Schlesien		
Wohnort	Deutschland		
Beruf	Labanten-Lehrling		
Wohnort	Alttraudten / Kr. Lieben		
Größe und Gestalt	160 cm schlank		
Farbe der Augen	blau		
Wichtige Merkmale	Blinddarmnarbe		
Andere Merkmale	keine		



Unterschrift des Kandidaten

Hans-Ludwig van Schweinitz

Wiesbaden, den 1. Juli 1950.

Der Oberbürgermeister
Polizeipräsident

In May 1950, Vati, Inni, and Ria were left to manage The Hotel Tamara and take care of Heise and Michael. Inni's relationship with Gunter was getting serious, and she would travel with Gunter as his assistant. Soon she moved out of the Hotel and moved in with Gunter. Now Vati and Ria were the only family members still at the Hotel. With the economy improving and more German's able to be employed (de-nazified), they could hire plenty of staff.

Inni and I would often come back to the Hotel. Now that we all had our own lives and were no longer living together, we actually got along better as a family. There were still issues to be resolved, such as returning to Alt Raudten and re-

establishing the respect of our relatives in Wiesbaden. At least now, we were all looking forwards to the future again.

1950 Refugee Part 9: Wiesbaden: Apprenticeship May1950-May1952

On May 1st, 1950 I started my apprenticeship as a photo laboratory technician. I was living with my teacher, Herr Kurt Lohmann. Vati and Ria were managing the Hotel Tamara and taking care of the toddlers, Heise and Michael. Inni was living with her fiancé, Gunter Wolf, a professional Master Photographer.

I was doing very well in my apprenticeship. I was also doing well in subjects that in Volksschule I could not get a passing grade. Geography, history, composition, and reading were easier to learn when Herr Kurt Lohmann provided practical examples. I was always good in mathematics and memory. Herr Lohmann like to invite his friends over to play chess, poker, and other card games. I already knew how to play chess since I played often with Vati. Poker was a new and especially the betting. Herr Lohmann taught me the basic rules and some strategies. Soon he realized that I had a good at math and had a good memory. So, he taught different strategies on how to count cards. And also, how to predict the probability that other players have a particular card or set of cards. I was invited to his evening poker gatherings. I became so proficient that I had to be careful not to win too often. Grown men do not like loosing all their money to a 15 years old boy.

Inni continued to live with Gunter and would visit Vati often at the Hotel. I would also often come and visit. But I was starting to develop some friends, so I began to spend weekends camping, bike riding, or taking train trips with my new friends. In 1951, I went on a train trip with my new friend, Otto Wagenpfeil, to Würzburg und Regensburg. We were gone almost a whole week. It was wonderful to be able to move around our own country again without threat of bombs, roadblocks, or soldiers. Why did we choose Würzburg and Regensburg? Würzburg has been in existence since the 4th century and has often been the center of historical events, from battles, to Catholic religious events, massacres, and even witch trials. A month after the Dresden bombing on 16 March 1945, Würzburg was bombed by the Allies. 90% of the city was destroyed. The purpose of the bombing was to 'break the spirit of the population' which consisted mostly of women, children, and old men. About a month later on 3 April 1945, the American's arrived to liberate

the city. For 2 days the women and old men of Würzburg resisted. The battles/resistance continued until 5 April 1945, when the American's could finally enter the city. The tenacity of the Würzburg citizens have always been legendary throughout history. In 1951 when we toured through Würzburg, the city was still being rebuilt by the 'rubble women' (Trümmerfrauen). Many cities after the war were being rebuilt by women because their husbands and sons were either dead or still prisoners. Military prisoners (POWs) were being held in US Prison camps or by the Soviet Union in Siberia Prison camps. Regensburg is further south and has been settled since the Stone Age (before Christ). Regensburg is on several trade routes. The First Crusaders marched through in the 10th century. During the Holy Roman Empire, Regensburg was the permanent seat of the Imperial Diet. During World War II, Regensburg was home to the Messerschmitt aircraft factory and various oil refineries. Despite these military strategic targets, the city suffered very little bombing damage. Possibly, because the city and military targets were heavily fortified and protect by anti-aircraft guns. Very little of the city had to be rebuilt after the war and the only bombing damage still visible was the destruction of the Romanesque church of Obermünster, only the belfry survived. On this trip, Otto and I visited one city that had to be 90% rebuilt and another city whose buildings had survived over two thousand years of human conflicts.

In 1951, Inni started to spend more time at the Hotel. We had noticed that Vati's health was declining. He was having tremors in his hands. Also, he was now more prone to depression. The Doctors blamed Vati's declining conditions to the bombing while Vati was in Dresden. The Doctors were seeing similar symptoms in many of the Dresden's survivors. They also attributed the accelerated aging to the bombing. Vati was only 50 years old (born Dec 1901) and looked like he was in his seventies. Inni began to stay at the Hotel and becoming a 'mother' to Heise and Michael. Ria was taking care of Vati.

Vati was not the only German that was suffering from side effects from bombing and other war related exposure. Vati applied for a form of Social Security Disability from the West German government. The approval process was going to take some time. Young men that had been injured while in the Wehrmacht (army, navy, and air force) were already receiving their disability compensation. Processing the civilian population with disabilities due to war, was taking longer. There was a whole generation of men missing. The war had drafted any male between the ages of 14 and 40 for the Wehrmacht. Only a few, such as Vati and Uncle Erlich had received Certificates of Exemptions (supporting the Third Reich through proceeds from Alt Raudten). Women were 'drafted' into the factories and hospitals. In the 1950's, many German mothers were again looking for husbands.

They had already raised one family of sons, who had died in the war. Now they needed to decide, raise the war orphans (what Ria was doing with Heise and Michael) or start another family.

Vati also petitioned the West German government for compensation for Alt Raudten under the Burden Equalization Act (LAG) and the Determination Act (FG). It had taken the Home Information Office in Liegnitz District (where Alt Raudten was located) over 5 years to confirm ownership and also to determine how much of the estate was actually being used as agriculture. Of the only 377 hectares (931 acres) were agriculture. The remaining land was the village, buildings, forest, and ponds. At the time the land lost in January 1945, its value was 820 Reich Marks per hectare. So Vati's compensation was about 309,550 Reich Marks. But the Reich Mark does not exist anymore in 1951. When the new Deutsche Mark was release in 1948, the exchange rate was 10 Reich Marks to 1 Deutsche Mark. Luckily the Valuation Act was using an almost 1 RM to 1 DM exchange rate. Vati received 300,000 DM compensation for losing Alt Raudten.

Ria also applied for compensation for being displaced and also compensation for being Vati's caregiver. Vati's health had deteriorated enough that he did need a caregiver, so Ria was eligible for a government caregiver compensation but not displacement compensation. Vati and Ria gave up the management of Hotel Tamara and moved into the ground floor of a house near Wiesbaden. If they lived frugal, they would have enough money.

Inni and Gunter found another place to live where they could also take care of Heise and Michael. Inni and Gunter did not get married until 1954, when Inni became pregnant.

After two years of apprenticeship, on 19 March 1952, Herr Lohmann wrote a letter declaring that I had successfully completed my apprenticeship. On 28 March 1952, I first took the Photo laboratory technician before the Wiesbaden Chamber of Industry and Commerce and passed. I was now a Professional Photographer. I was ready to venture out into the new West Germany and begin my adult life at the age of 17.

L

**INDUSTRIE- UND HANDELSKAMMER
WIESBADEN**

BANKKONTEN: WIESBADENER BANK EGM.BH. / HESSISCHE BANK WIESBADEN
MITTELDEUTSCHE CREDITBANK WIESBADEN / POSTSCHECK: FRANKFURT/MAIN 98 56
FERNRUF: 59426

h

WIESBADEN, 28. März 1952
Adelheidsstraße 23


Ihr Zeichen: Ihre Nachricht vom: Unser Zeichen: V/Bla.
(Bitte bei Antwort angeben)

B e s c h e i n i g u n g .

Es wird hiermit bestätigt, dass Herr Hans-
Ludwig von S c h w e i n i t z die Prüfung
als Fotolaborant vor der Industrie- und
Handelskammer Wiesbaden abgelegt und mit
nachstehendem Ergebnis bestanden hat:

Theoretische Prüfung: gut
Praktische Prüfung: gut

Industrie- und Handelskammer
W i e s b a d e n
Berufsausbildung
Brandau
Brandau)



Sprechstunden: täglich von 8—12 Uhr außer samstags

1952 Refugee Part 10: Wiesbaden: Photographer March 1952-May 1954

After two years of apprenticeship, on 28 March 1952 I finished my apprenticeship and became a Professional Photographer. I was ready to venture out into the new West Germany and begin my adult life at the age of 17.

Since I was no longer an apprentice, I had to move out of Herr Lohmann's house, so I first moved in with Vati, Inni, and Ria. They had left The Hotel Tamara and were living on the ground floor in a Gothic like house that was just outside of Wiesbaden. It was a wonderful house to raise two young children. The back yard

was fenced and big enough to run around. At the bottom of the back yard were the train tracks. It was a local main line, so you had to get used to trains rumbling through all hours of the night. In the 1950's many of the locomotives were still steam engines. As they puffed past the house, the back yard would fill with black smoke. Inni's fiancé, Gunter, had a vehicle that he used in his photography business. I remember, Heise had been selected to attend a special children's camp in Switzerland for three months. In late March 1952, we were going to take the slow milk train to Frankfurt Main Railroad station, where Heise would join the rest of the camp children. We all piled into Guner's car and drove to the local Railroad station, but for some reason, we missed the train. We had just decided to drive all the way to Frankfurt Main Station, when the local station master said that we could follow the road that paralleled the track and catch the train at another station. We would easily see where the train was, because the locomotive was a steam engine. Just look for the rising smoke. Off we went. The train was moving slower than road traffic, because that is what local 'milk' trains do, so we managed to bet the train to the next station. But the train was leaving the station by the time we got out of the car. So, we raced on, this time we reached the next station before the train. Actually, we could see that for sometime the rising smoke did not move, so the train was probably flagged to a stop by a local farmer needing to get goods or his family to town. Stopping when flagged by farmers is a service these slow 'milk' trains provided. Ria got onto the train with Heise and they went the Frankfurt Main Railroad Station.

The camp that Heise was attending was a special program for inner city children. The idea was to give that children three months in the fresh mountain air and beautiful vistas of Switzerland. Eleven children were selected from the Wiesbaden/Frankfurt area. After three months, on 21 May 1952, Vati and Ria picked Heise up from the Frankfurt Railroad station. Heise had pink cheeks, had finally gained some weight (2 Kilos) and was very exuberant. A reporter from the Wiesbadener Kurier was at the station and interviewed her. The article and Heise's picture took up half a page. For months she would constantly talk about her wonderful experience in Switzerland. This program continues to this day, helping inner city children spend a few months in the country.

On 15 April 1952, I started my first job as a professional photographer. I went to work for Helios, an AGFA color processing lab which was at the Army Base in Kaiserslautern, Wiesbaden Germany. I was certified as a photographer and also certified for Darkroom work, especially color processing. With my first paycheck, I moved out of Vati's house and into a room in a boarding house near the Army Base. I felt self-conscious about bring my girlfriends into my Vati's house. And at

17 years old, I was turning into a 'babe magnet'. With my second and third paycheck I bought small motorcycle. I had everything I needed, a job, my own place, and transportation. Bring on the girls.

During the day I worked in the Darkroom processing color film. In the evenings, I joined friends in gatherings. Money, food, and alcohol were in short supply, so we were good at just meeting up in parks or each other homes and enjoying each other's company. We did not need much money, and since food and alcohol require money, we did not consume. Conversation and merry-making were cheap. The merry-making is what I looked forward to the most. After an evening of conversation, I would often be invited by one of the girls (women) to their home or room. I remember one evening, I was with one of my girlfriends in her room, in her family's house. We must have been making too much noise. Her father woke up and began to pound on her door. She opened the window and told me to get out, her father would not approve. I jumped out the window and began to run. The problem was, I was naked, not even shoes. I ran around the house and down the road. I could hear the father come out of the front door and yell at me. I ran faster. Now I had another problem, the street was cobblestone, the soles of my feet were being cut to shreds. I don't remember if I ran past anybody. I made it to my boarding house, ran up the stairs and into my room. I was sitting, naked, on the side of my bed, contemplating my bloody feet, when there was pounding on the door. My heart stopped; her father must have followed me. No, it was the HausFrau that owned the boarding house. I grabbed something to make me decent, and opened the door. She pointed down to the steps, there were several bloody foot prints on her polished stairway. I was standing there with bloody feet. I had to take responsibility. She insisted that I scrub the stairs, right now. I spend that night treating my bloody feet and scrubbing the stairs.

Almost every weekend, I was with friends on bike or hiking trips. Sometimes I would take Friday off so that we could get an early start on our trips. Friends and I decided to take a long 11-day bike trip in August 1952. At first my boss okay the extended vacation in August. The by late July he said I could not go on the trip, because August was a busy season for the Darkroom. Also, by the beginning of August I had already taken 12 days of vacation. He told me I needed to decide if I wanted the job or wanted to be with friends. I choose friends and went of the bike vacation from 7 to 18 August 1952. When I returned, he had fired me for cause. He even wrote a letter to the Unemployment office. I tried to apply for unemployment but was denied.

August 1952 was not a good time to lose a job. I had no money, no job, sold my motorcycle, was not going to return to Vati's house, and I had my pride. I kept trying to find another job, but without a good reference, it was difficult. I was getting more and more hungry. I sold my mattress just to get money for food. I had to leave the boarding house and was living on the streets. I bought a small bottle of alcohol and searched the gutters for a piece of discarded bread. Tied the piece of bread to a length of string, soaked the bread with alcohol and sat on a bench in the center of town and waited for a pigeon to swallow the bread. A pigeon could not ignore the sweet smell of alcohol, the pigeon swallowed the bread still tied to the string, I had a nutritious lunch by converted discarded bread to protein. Hunting, city style. My starvation was so bad that my immune system was compromised and I actually contracted Tuberculosis. I probably contracted TB from the water supply. Since I had no money, I began to drink from the city water supply. In the 1950's, Germany had still not rebuilt the sewage and fresh water infrastructure nor the water sanitation plants. I remember coughing a lot, and being very tired, but I thought these symptoms were from the cold night air and starving. I never knew that I had tuberculosis until I was tested years later for TB when entering basic training in the USA Air Force. But I am getting ahead of myself

On 31 October 1952, I finally found a job, being a presser at a Drycleaning and Laundry Plant. At least I had some money for food again. I recovered my health and the Tuberculosis became 'encapsulated' in my lungs and remained that way for the rest of my life. I could no longer pass the 'skin test' for TB, instead I had to have lung Xrays every year. I also had money so that I could rent a room again. I found a room in Grünstadt with the Hobachs' (or Hubachs) family.

I worked at the Drycleaners until January 1953, when I finally found another photography job. I worked at the Central Exchange Wiesbaden Photo Finishing plant in Grünstadt (south of Frankfurt). My position was Custom Printer and Copier. I had learned to improve my attendance at work. I restricted my time with friends to evenings and weekends. In March 1953, the Photo Finishing Plant at this location was closing so I had to find another job. This time I had a good reference from this job and quickly found another photographer job at the Photo Finishing Plant at the Opel House.

I started at the Opel House on 1 April 1953 and worked there until 1 May 1954. This Opel House provided me with access to many available young women. I decided to change my tactics. Instead of one-night relationship, I worked on a relationship called a "BratKartoffelverhältnis" (Fried Potato Relationship). My

starting pay at the Opel House was so low that often I could not afford food and rent. I still rented a room with the Hobachs. This kind of relationship starts with her inviting me to visit with the family. I would meet her at her family's house and we would sit down to dinner. I could get a good meal, some good company, and good girlfriend, but no fringe benefits. Since potatoes were readily available, most evening meals would include sliced potatoes that are fried with onion and scrambled eggs. That explains the name of the relationship. Fringe benefits had to wait until her parents left the house for the evening. In the year that I worked at the Opel House, it seemed that the Opel Girls enjoyed passing me around. I was still a 'Babe Magnet' and not ready to go steady.

In May 1954, the Opel House was being liquidated and I was out of a job again. I did have good letters of recommendations from the Opel House, so finding a job should be easier this time.

1952 Model add

1952: Model Portfolio Börsch payment 17,000 DM for performance on Film by Luther-Film-GmbH paid 11 August 1952

1954 Refugee Part 11: Wiesbaden: Photographer May1954-Oct1955

Since March of 1952, I was Professional Photographer in Wiesbaden/Frankfurt metro area of Germany. I had various jobs of the years and I worked Opel House Photo Finishing Plant from 1 April 1953 until 1 May 1954. In May 1954, the Opel House was being liquidated and I was out of a job again. I did have good letters of recommendations from the Opel House, so finding a job should be easier this time.

While working at the Opel House, I also took on modeling and movie jobs with payment. Why not capitalized on my 'babe magnet' good looks. I often would model clothing. The best-selling photos were with me in my Lederhosen (Leather shorts). I was also paid 17,000DM for my contribution to a film by Luther-Film-GmbH about Martin Luther's (from the Catholic church, not the American Civil Rights leader). My contribution was to be a courier (gopher) and sometimes a stand in so that the lighting could be properly set.

Also, while at the Opel House I worked on getting my first Driver's License. I did not need a license to ride the motorcycle, but I needed a license to drive the Opel truck. In Germany there are more steps in the process of getting a license. You have to take a first aid course, then a theory course (pass the test), then practical

driving lessons (pass the test), then pass an eye-test and a road test. The whole process cost me over 2,500DM.

After the Opel House, I quickly found another job at the Central Exchange Photo Finishing plant in Grünstadt. I started work on 1 June 1954 by processing film and worked there until 23 February 1957. By 1957 I had progressed to being a foreman in a photo finishing plant. I left this job in February 1957 to emigrate to the USA.

Right after I started my new job in June 1954, my sister, Inni married her longtime boyfriend, Gunter Wolf on 4 June 1954. Finally. Inni thought she was pregnant. But she did not give birth to her first son, Peter, until 1957. Gunter and Inni already had a photography studio. A major source of their income was advertising photos for magazines. Often, they would pay me to model the product. I modeled sweaters, cigarettes, beer, and many other products.

Also, in 1954, I made friends with Manfred Zanger. I would call him by his nickname 'Bye-Bye'. He became a life-time friend, and we still got together in our 80's. Bye-Bye was a refugee from East Berlin. He used to work for a railroad company in the years after the war. For some reason in 1953, he was going to be accused of putting sugar in the grease used in the brakes for locomotive wheels. A friend came to his house late at night, to tell him, that the authorities were looking for him. He got up, and left East Berlin and somehow made it to West Berlin and could seek asylum. Bye-Bye never provided details, but he would say that his escape involved the cloths on his back, a bottle of whiskey, and a train. He boarded a train in East Berlin whose route included a station in West Berlin. Once boarded, he sprinkled whiskey onto his coat, and sat as if he was a passed-out drunk. East-Berliner's were supposed to get off the train at the station before West Berlin. But the conductor let Bye-Bye stay because he thought Bye-Bye was sleeping off a drunken stupor. Bye-Bye instead, avoid the conductor, got off the train at the West Berlin station, walked into the asylum office that was right there in the station for just this occasion. He received his nickname because he just up and left without saying bye-bye to any of this family and friends.

We are the same age and in the next years we had lots of adventures together, especially involving girls. Bye-Bye found worked for American Express as a travel agent. When we were not having adventures together, we could find odd jobs. I still rented a room with the Hobachs (or Hubachs) family. Herr Hubachs owned other homes, and one was in ruins. He hired us to clean the bricks so that he could rebuild the house. Even though it was 10 years since the end of the war,

many bombed homes were still being rebuild. The first task was to remove the old mortar from the bricks. Then each piece of wood was searched for nails. The nails were removed and straightened. Nothing was left to waste. This was a good day job for young healthy men, and we would earn extra money. If Herr Hubachs did not need our help, we could just walk through town and find another rebuild site. The rebuilding of Germany was now in full swing and creating lots of temporary day jobs.

I was doing well in my new job at the Central Exchange Photo Finishing plant. Soon I accumulate enough finances to buy a motorcycle again. It was not very big, just bigger than a moppet. With this moppet, I traveled throughout Europe. Mostly though I could take my girlfriend of the month into the countryside to a vineyard, or party in the park, and Karnevals (festival fairs). The moppet was a girl magnet.

In early 1955, I was offered a job in Australia and then Columbia, but I was not 21 until October 26th. I first tried to go to Australia, "That offered to go to Australia. They will pay. The passage should offer jobs. Had to stay two years and then they had to give you an opportunity to go back at that time. I would have needed the permission of my father to leave Germany. I wasn't 21. He didn't give me permission. And had a job offer in Colombia, Bogota, Colombia. To work for as a photographer and my father again wouldn't give me his permission." I was slowly becoming disgruntle with the future of Germany and felt that I had better opportunities in another country. There were large communities of Germans in Australia and Colombia, and they were recruiting young professionals. The seed of emigration had been planted.

In the summer of 1955, I decided to take a trip to the west coast of Italy and tour the Tuscany region. Before I could leave Germany, I had to apply for a Passport. If we moved within Germany, we had to register with the local police. Which I did when I moved from Wiesbaden to Grünstadt. If we traveled for several days within Germany, we also had to register with the police along the way. But to leave Germany and cross the border into another Country, I needed a passport. I received my passport and was good to travel. But Bye-Bye could not yet apply for a passport. His passport was back in East Berlin, in his old apartment. He was in West Germany under asylum, and he had applied to have his citizenship transferred, but it was taking some time. It was too risky for Bye-Bye to leave the West Germany.

I rode this moppet/motorcycle with a group of other friends from Wiesbaden Germany through the Alps into Italy and down the west coast to Viareggio Beach. To get there we traveled through the southern part of West Germany, crossed into Switzerland at Basel and crossed the Alps by going through Airolo, Locarno, and Bellinzona, then we entered Italy at Como, went to Milano, and from there went to Genoa on the west coast, then traveled down the coast to Viareggio.

At the Viareggio beach, I made an instant girlfriend, Ruth. After I returned to Germany, I received a letter from Ruth. Basically, she thanked me for a wonderful vacation, but now that she back home, she is returning to her old boyfriend. I know how to catch them, but how to keep them.

On 23 July 1955, Vati remarried. His third wife was “Vera” Veronika Oehmichen (Age 42) born 10 Nov 1913. Vati was 54 years old. They would later on 16 November 1957 have a son, Alexander. This marriage did not last either. Vera took her son and moved to Italy in 1959. They did not divorce. I rarely visited my Vati, I was too busy with my career and friendships. I never did really learn how Vati met Vera, nor why they married. Their marriage was a quite civil service with no church or family involved. They basically eloped in place. Luckily, Ria never left Vati and continued to care for Heise and Michael, and later Alexander. Years later, Alexander told me he thought his mother, Vera, had met Vati at the casino in Wiesbaden. She was one of the dealers. She believed Vati had received lots of money for his lost estate Alt Raudten (he received 300,000DM in 1952) and that because of this money and his name (nobility) that he was rich. It took Vera a couple of years to realize that Vati had gambled away most of the money and lost the rest to poor investments. Vera then left because she realized that she might have to be Vati’s caregiver without the monetary means to hire help. She would rather leave Vati with Ria.

In the summer of 1955, Bye-Bye and I spend many of a warm summer afternoon at the Grünstadt city pool. The pool was huge and the green lawn was even bigger. We would stretch out our blanket on the lawn, lay down with only our swim trunks on, and wait for the ‘babes’ to arrive. We were never disappointed. I do not know how it happened, but we both were talked into joining the Grünstadt Swim Team. We both already knew how to swim, more for entertainment and safety. The Swim Team was serious work and required dedication. I was growing muscles (finally) everywhere but Bye-Bye was scrawny. After a couple of months with the Swim Team, I had broad shoulders with muscles, and Bye-Bye was still scrawny. Since we were developing into different types of ‘man’, it actually helped solidify our

friendship. The 'babes' were attracted to different types of men. My 'babes' were attracted to the strong, brawny and confident male. Bye-Bye attracted the 'babes' who wanted an attentive, delicate and dependent male.

I found other ways to supplement my day job. When not hanging out with friends I would take my camera to local festivals and carnivals. Now that the currency was stable people could find jobs again, and the economy was booming; people were relaxed enough to have some fun. I created my own company and had business cards printed. In my one bedroom, I set up a darkroom for processing negatives and print photos. The bedroom still had the 'blackout' curtains from war time, and they now came in handy. The curtains worked really well and the only light I needed was the red light used in darkrooms. I took lots of photos but convincing people to buy a photo before they see the result was difficult and hard work. The conversion rate was not very profitable. So, I branched out into photographing weddings, ceremonies, and portraits. These groups did buy more of the photos, so the conversion rate was higher. Still, there had to be a more successful way to make a living taking photographs.

I thought of a new business model after spending four days photographing at the October Wine Fest in Grünstadt Nueleiningen. I had a permit to be one of the many photographers roaming the festival. But there were a lot of photographers roaming. The Festival was spread out over several different Vineyards around Grünstadt. I had made my way to one of the biggest vineyards, and at some point, I was talking with the family. I praised them on how beautiful the vine fields looked, and how colorful the area around the main house looked with all the blooming flowers. I talked them into letting me wander further out on their property and take some photos that they might be able to use in future advertising, especially in the new color magazines. I might have mentioned that my sister had a photography studio business with her husband and that they had contacts in these magazines. The family agreed, and later they bought quite a few of my photos.

While I was wandering around their property looking for good vantage points, I noticed that there were gliders in the air. As a result of the war, German civilians were not allowed to fly Aircrafts over a certain power (and Germany could not have an Aircraft building factory). The Allies considered the possibility of Germany having another Luftwaffe a threat. But for some reason, the Allies did not consider gliders a threat. Strange, since the Allies had used gliders during the war in many operations with great success. So, German pilots took to the sky's in gliders and small propeller planes. Somewhere within this Wine Festival was a glider airport, and a group of pilots were giving rides to the public, so that they

could see the countryside from high above. My idea was: photographing the vineyard or anybody's property from high up in a glider. I did not know of any photographer that was already doing this, so it might be a new idea. I knew the Allied Military was using Aerial photography, because I developed the film at my prior job at the Army base.

Now I just had to convert my idea into a business.

1955 Refugee Part 12: Wiesbaden: Photographer Oct1955-Aug1956

Since March of 1952, I was Professional Photographer in Wiesbaden/Frankfurt metro area of Germany. I had various jobs over the years. Currently I worked at the Central Exchange Photo Finishing plant in Grünstadt. I started work on 1 June 1954 by processing film and worked there until 23 February 1957. By 1957 I had progressed to being a foreman in a photo finishing plant. I left this job in February 1957 to emigrate to the USA.

After spending four days photographing at the October Wine Fest in Grünstadt Nueleiningen, I had a idea for a business: photographing the vineyard or anybody's property from high up in a glider. I did not know of any photographer that was already doing this, so it might be a new idea. I knew the Allied Military was using Aerial photography, because I developed the film at my prior job at the Army base.

Now I just had to convert my idea into a business. I talked with Inni and Gunter; they agreed with my plan. They also offered that I could use their darkroom and printing equipment, since they believed that my new business will quickly outgrow my little darkroom in the bedroom. I went to the glider airport near the Wine Fest and talked with some glider pilots. They also agreed that it was a good business plan, but that I had to pay them upfront for my ride on the glider. I did pay one glider pilot for a ride. I also had to pay the pilot of one of the small airplanes to tow the glider up into the air. Then the tow line was released (the tow airplane would roll up the line so that it could be used for the next glider) and we glided over the country side. Now that we were not being pulled, the noise level reduced greatly, but did not go away completely because the glider that I was in was open cockpit. I chose this one, so I could hold the camera out over the side and take photos. No glass canopy cover in the way. When I was back in my bedroom, I developed the film and made a few prints. Okay, the idea worked. Now I just needed to find clients and some investment capital.

As I was returning to my rented room, I decided to celebrate by buying some Liver Dumplings. Anything with meat is expensive. In my room I put the Liver Dumplings in boiling water. I laid down on the bed, waiting for my supper to finish cooking. Suddenly pieces of hot dumplings were raining down on me. I had fallen asleep and the water had boiled off. The dumplings exploded all over my room. I cleaned up but the smell of liver would not go away. After a couple of days of cleaning, I finally had to replace my blanket, 4.5 square meters of carpet and the table cloth. It cost me over 40 DM. I was making about 150-200DM a month.

I decided to first try and find capital for my new business. I approached my bank, Nassauischen Landesbank (later became Hessische Landesbank Girozentrale) in Wiesbaden. The Loan Office was an older gentleman, and seemed to be very knowledgeable, and was very nice, but no they could not lend me money for a new business enterprise. Why? Because I belonged to nobility and the federal bank was not allowed to give loans to nobility. I explained that nobility had been abolished in Germany back in 1919 (part of the Treaty of Versailles) and that we were supposed to be treated like any other individual. His retort was 'why did nobility start WWII then? Fuhrer Hitler had been surrounded by nobility, and the war just would not end. Why didn't the nobility end the war?' I wanted to tell him that our family (Henning von Tresckow, operation Valkyrie) had tried and been convicted of trying to assassinate Hitler multiple times, and that our family (Victor von Schweinitz) had surrendered to the Allies well before the official end of the war on 8 May 1945. But I did not. Central European history is full of wars that were caused by clashes between nobility and royalty. Farmers and businessmen were caught in the middle, and suffered. The Loan Officer's attitude was actually very common, and discrimination is not affected by facts or laws.

Next, I tried family. I knew that Vati and my sister Inni did not have money to help. Vati had already lost all the compensation he had received for losing Alt Raudten. He would not tell me how, but Inni said that he lost a lot of money in a bad investment. Oma Gabe was very ill and would not take visitors. Uncle Curt had died. Uncle Erlich was even more poor than Vati. That only left Aunt Dora, younger sister of Oma Gabe. She had shunned us when we first arrived in Wiesbaden in 1946, but maybe she will have a change of heart. I was no longer a dirty refugee, but a Professional Photographer. I wrote her a letter, and she replied with an invitation for afternoon coffee. I scrubbed and dress in my best. She invited me into her villa and we had just sat down around the coffee table, when she noticed my fingernails. How could I come into her house with such dirty finger nails? Such a disgrace. Get out immediately. I tried to explain, that my

fingernails were discolored because they had been ripped out by the Doctor after the bombing in Dresden back in February 1945. She would not stop screeching long enough to listen. I found my self outside the villa. So much for family support.

I never gave up on my new idea for a photography business. I just had to put it aside and rethink. In the meantime, I continued to work hard during the day, socialize in the evenings, and go on trips with friends on the weekend. We often went out into the countryside and spent the night at a youth-hostel. I had a “Jugendhostelpass”, a Wanderers Passport, and it was quickly filling up with stamps from the different youth-hostels. Bye-Bye and I continued with the Grünstadt Swim Team. The team was so good, that we were invited to a Sports and Turn (Gymnastics) Fest to be held in Leipzig in August 1956. Leipzig was part of the Deutsch Democratic Republic, DDR or East Germany and was under Soviet control. Ironically, Bye-Bye’s transfer of citizenship from East Germany to West Germany had been approved and he had his new West German Passport. Now his first foreign trip was to go back into the country he had fled.

In early August 1956, Bye-Bye and I went with the team on a bus to Gotha to cross the border into East Germany. Then we traveled by train to Markkleeberg, and then another bus to Leipzig. Everything was very controlled. The team spent days exploring Leipzig. There were parades and of course the competition. The USSR and DDR was trying to showcase to all the young people, that communism was not evil but an alternative to the chaos of the Democratic Bundes Republic Deutschland of West Germany. The Sports Festival was from 1 to 4 August 1956. I did swim in my meet, but in the end, I only received a medal for participating in the festival and several souvenirs. I am not going to tell anyone how I did in swim meet.

What happened next strange, I actually meet my future wife.

1956 August: Auerbachs Keller in Leipzig



There were many young unattached women at this sport festival, and both Bye-Bye and I were still chick magnets. For at least one evening we both went to the famous Auerbachs Keller in Leipzig. This bar/restaurant is famous because of Goethe's play Faust



This photo is of Hans-Ludwig with a woman, that is not Helga Pörtner.

This is where my and my future wife (Helga Pörtner) life story goes strange. It turns out that Helga was also in Leipzig at the same time. Helga had been invited by the East German government in a student outreach program, where they invited students educated in Literature to come to East Germany and experience the culture under Communism. The same night that I was in Auerbachs Keller, Helga was also there.

Rat des Kreises 315502 am 26. Juni 1956
Stadtbezirk 5

Aufenthaltsgenehmigung

K. Pörtner Helga
(Name) (Varnach)

geb. am 9.3.37 (Name) geb. in Herford

wohnhaft in Herford, Fürstenastr. 10

ist berechtigt, sich in der Zeit vom 25.7. bis 15.8.1956
in Leipzig C l., K.-Liebknecht-Str. 30/32 aufzuhalten.

Die Einreise erfolgt mit der Reichsbahn
Am Aufbruch haben Sie sich entsprechend der Meldeordnung binnen 24 Stunden bei der
zuständigen Meldestelle der Volkspolizei anzumelden und vor Abreise abzumelden.

Stellvertreter des Vorsitzenden
des Rates des Stadtbezirks 5
der Stadt Leipzig

I do not remember actually meeting Helga. I am quite certain that Helga hung out with the intellectual students and I was a sports jock. But everybody was constantly switching tables. And I know that I asked several 'babes' to dance with me. Among us there were bunch of CIA and KGB operatives listening to every word that was spoken. We just did not know who was an operative and who was a student.

Years later after we were married, and I was applying for a Top Secret Clearance in the USA Air Force, the CIA questioned us both. Why were we in Auerbachs

Keller at the same time? The CIA had proof that we were at the same table, but with many other students, did we talk? Had we been indoctrinated as double spies while in Leipzig? And many more questions? Eventually I did get my clearance.



Helga Pörtner's entry ticket to Soccer game at SportFest.

1956 Refugee Part 13: Wiesbaden: Photographer Aug1956-Mar1957

Since March of 1952, I was Professional Photographer in Wiesbaden/Frankfurt metro area of Germany. I had various jobs over the years. Currently I worked at the Central Exchange Photo Finishing plant in Grünstadt. I started work on 1 June 1954 by processing film and worked there until 23 February 1957, when left to emigrate to the USA.

I never gave up on my new idea for a photography business. I just had to put it aside and rethink. In 1956, I did apply and received a "Wandergewerbeschein" (Traveling trade license) for my photography business. With this license, I could travel throughout West Germany, into any other state, and practice my profession. My next idea was, that with this license, I could attend events such as festivals and carnivals, talk with people, and possibly get a client that would not mind paying a deposit upfront and writing me a reference afterwards about the aerial photos I had taken.

Actually, before going to the Sports Festival in August, in June 1956, I was no longer considered a Refugee. The program had ended. The only benefit that I had received was my "Leaving Certificate" from the Volksschule in 1949. My Vati received some compensation for losing the estate, Alt Raudten. Vati then promptly lost most of the money on a bad investment and the rest by gambling in the Wiesbaden casino. There was nothing in this program to help a refugee start their own business.

In September 1956, another friend and I went to Koserow on Usedom Insel, East Germany. Usedom Insel, in 1956 was on the border of East Germany and Poland. It was part of the Deutsch Democratic Republic DDR. The border with East Germany was just as easy to cross as the border between France and West Germany, have passport, can cross. We took a train to Usedom Insel. On the way to Usedom Insel, we stopped at Leipzig in East Germany to attend an opera. On 11 September 1956 we watched the Opera, Madame Favort at the Leipziger Theater. Then we continued to Osedom Insel and arrived in Koserow on 14 September. We stayed in Koserow at Meta Schwank on Vineta Straße 26. I spent plenty of time on the beach. I quickly collected several girls. I took them on a sailing boat trip, and we also went to the Salzhütten (Salt production village). Koserow is in the northern half of Usedom where the Germans had been forced to live by the Soviet Union. The German in the southern half to move were forced to move north, and replaced them with displaced Polish refugees.

On 26 October 1956, I had my 22nd Birthday. When I took stock of my life, I was not satisfied with my life. Sure, I had a profession. I had tried to begin my own photography business, but family members nearby would not help with financing. They believed that it was best that I should shoulder the responsibility of a business on my own. When I tried to go to a bank and ask for financing, I was rejected. Because of the remains of the class system in Germany, the banks believed that anybody born into the privilege class automatically had access to money and did not need a loan. Hans-Ludwig said later in an interview, "With my name I was expected to be a high school student, which I wasn't; I was expected to have a certain amount of wealth, which I didn't have." The ability of returning to Alt Raudten while maybe possible in the future, it was not anytime soon. "There was always hope that we might be able to go back. I went back many times. When it was under Polish control and the Russian and the communist control before the Iron Curtain came down with all the hope always hope. To go back. We were disowned. We always hoped." In 1955, before I was officially 21 years old, I had tried to emigrate to Australia or Columbia but could not get my Vati's permission.

I felt stuck. "My income was insufficient to provide a home or to support a wife and children at a level I considered acceptable. My greatest desire was to start a family and to have a home. The income was very low. I could barely afford a moped or bicycle. The future did not look very good in Germany. I had 48 hour work week. The future didn't look.,"

1956 December Hamburg

In December 1956, I took a trip to Hamburg that changed my life. I took a train to Hamburg to see the floor show "Bikini" at Jungmühle Galopp Diele. While in the city, I explored the city and walked down to the port.



Once I had looked over the ships in the port, I had a renewed desire to take a ship - somewhere.

Then I had heard that the Lutheran Federation was taking applications from German citizens who had trades and wanted to go to America for a better future. The Lutheran Federation found sponsors in America for immigrants who had

trades and these sponsors would have jobs available for them once they arrived. I contacted the Lutheran Foundation and received a list of possible reasons to emigrate to USA. So, I collected all the address of relatives and friends in the USA. With this approach I asked my Vati again and Vati gave me support for emigrating to the USA. Since I was over 21 years old, I no longer needed his Vati's permission, but having his support was good for moral.

To emigrate to the USA, I had to prepare. You had to proof that you had no debt and no police record. You had to be registered where you lived. You also had to have a trade. You had to sign a form with a list of behaviors that were not allowed (being a communist, rebel, activist, criminal etc). Then you had to have a sponsor in USA. The Lutheran Federation found a sponsor for me in Chicago Illinois to work in the area of photography and my visa arrived in early 1957. "The United States looked very promising. Offered a lot of opportunities for people who are willing to work hard. I decided to increase my opportunities by immigrating to the USA."

I left Germany in March 1957.

1957 Documents required to Emigrate to USA

Image of List of People not Acceptable

GEOHEREN SIE ZUR ZEIT ODER GEOHERTEN SIE JEMALS EINER DER FOLGENDEN
PERSONENGRUPPEN AN:

(1) Personen, die einmal oder oeffter einen Anfall von Geisteskrankheit erlitten haben; (2) Personen, die rauschgiftsuechtig oder chronische Alkoholiker sind; (3) Personen, die an Tuberkulose in allen Erscheinungsformen, an Lepra oder einer anderen gefaehrlichen und ansteckenden Krankheit leiden; (4) Personen, die sonstwie leidend sind, koerperliche Fehler oder Koerperbehinderungen solcher Art aufweisen, dass dadurch moeglicherweise ihre Erwerbsfaehigkeit vermindert ist; (5) Almosenempfaenger, berufsmaessige Bettler oder Landstreicher; (6) Personen, die einer besonders gemeinen Straftat ueberfuehrt worden sind, (ausgenommen ein rein politisches Vergehen) oder solche, die sich zu einer derartigen Straftat bzw. zu einer Handlung bekennen, die die wesentlichen Tatbestandsmerkmale einer solchen Straftat erfuehlen; (7) Personen, denen zwei oder mehr Vergehen (ausgenommen rein politische) nachgewiesen wurden und die zu einer Freiheitsstrafe von insgesamt 5 Jahren und darueber verurteilt wurden; (8) Polygamisten oder solche, die fuer Polygamie eintreten; (9) Prostituierte, oder solche, die es waren, oder Personen, die in die Vereinigten Staaten einwandern wollen, um sich ausschliesslich, hauptsaechlich oder gelegentlich der Prostitution zu ergeben; Personen, die sich direkt oder indirekt als Vermittler von Prostituierten betaeetigen oder den Versuch hierzu unternehmen oder solche, die frueher als Vermittler taetig waren oder versucht haben, Prostituierte oder Personen zum Zwecke der Prostitution oder zu anderen sittenwidrigen Zwecken zu vermitteln oder in die Vereinigten Staaten einzuschleusen; Personen, die ganz oder teilweise den Erloes aus der gewerbsmaessigen Unzucht erhalten oder erhielten oder zu deren Unterhalt der Erloes ganz oder teilweise verwendet wurde; Personen, die in die Vereinigten Staaten einreisen, um irgendein anderes gesetzwidriges Laster gewerbsmaessig zu betreiben, ob es nun der Prostitution verwandt ist oder nicht; (10) Personen, die in die Vereinigten Staaten einwandern wollen, um Sittlichkeitsverbrechen zu begehen; (11) Personen, die moeglicherweise der Allgemeinheit zur Last fallen; (12) Personen, die bereits einmal von den Vereinigten Staaten ausgewiesen und deportiert oder nach Inhaftierung deportiert worden waren; Personen, die in Not geraten waren und kraft des Gesetzes ausgewiesen wurden oder als feindliche Auslaender ihre Ausweisung erfuehren; Ferner Personen, die auf Staatskosten ausgewiesen, jedoch nicht deportiert wurden; (13) Blinde Passagiere; (14) Personen, die auf betruergerische Weise oder unter absichtlicher Angabe falscher Tatsachen den Versuch unternehmen oder unternehmen, sich ein Visum oder sonstigen Ausweis zu verschaffen oder sich verschafft haben oder auf die gleiche betruergerische Weise versuchen, in die Vereinigten Staaten einzureisen; (15) Personen, die nicht im Besitze eines gueltigen, noch nicht abgelaufenen Passes, eines anderen geeigneten Reiseausweises, eines Personalausweises oder Ausweises ueber ihre Staatsangehoerigkeit oder anderer beglaubigter Unterlagen sind, aus denen hervorgeht, dass sie in ihr Herkunftsland oder in das Land, in dem sie ihren jetzigen Wohnsitz haben oder ein Visum erhalten, zurueckkehren koennen; (16) Personen, die fuer die amerikanische Staatsbuergerschaft nicht in Betracht kommen oder solche, die aus den Vereinigten Staaten ausgereist sind oder sich ausserhalb der Vereinigten Staaten aufgehalten haben, um der militaerischen Ausbildung bzw. dem Wehrdienst in Kriegszeiten oder waehrend der Dauer eines vom Praesidenten verkuendeten Ausnahmezustandes zu entgehen;

(17) Personen, die nachweislich Gesetzen und Bestimmungen ueber den Handel mit Rauschgiften oder mit Gesetzen und Bestimmungen im Sinne des Paragraphen 212(a) (23) des Immigration and Nationality Act von 1952 in Konflikt geraten waren;

(18) Personen, die innerhalb von zwei Jahren seit ihrer Ankunft dort, aus Nachbargebieten oder von angrenzenden Inseln aus in die Vereinigten Staaten unter Benutzung eines nicht anerkannten Verkehrsmittels oder -weges, wie in Paragraph 238(a) des Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, einreisen wollen;

(19) Personen, vom 16. Lebensjahr ab, die, obwohl physisch in der Lage zu lesen, weder irgendeine Sprache noch einen Dialekt lesen oder verstehen koennen;

(20) Personen, die in der Absicht nach den Vereinigten Staaten zu kommen suchen, um sich dort ausschliesslich, hauptsaechlich oder gelegentlich in einer Weise zu betaeetigen, die den Interessen des Staates abtraeglich waeren oder das Wohl und die Sicherheit der Vereinigten Staaten gefaehrden;

(21) Personen, die Anarchisten sind oder jemals waren, die zur Bekaeempfung eines geordneten Staatswesens aufrufen oder eine solche befuerworten; Personen, die Mitglieder der kommunistischen oder einer anderen totalitaeren Partei oder Organisation sind oder waren bzw. Verbindung zu ihnen unterhalten oder unterhielten oder sonstige verbotene Beschaeftigungen, wie in Paragraph 212(a)(28) des Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 aufgefuehrt, ausueben oder ausuebten;

(22) Personen, die in die Vereinigten Staaten einzureisen versuchen, um sich (a) in einer Richtung zu betaeetigen, die nach den Gesetzen der Vereinigten Staaten betreffend Spionage, Sabotage, oeffentliche Unruhen oder andere umstuerzlerische Betaetigungen zum Schaden der Sicherheit des Volkes, verboten ist, (b) in einer Weise zu betaeetigen, die darauf abzielt, den Widerstand gegen die US Regierung zu entfachen oder sie zu stuerzen und die Macht an sich zu reiessen, sei es durch Gewalt oder mit anderen verfassungswidrigen Mitteln oder (c) Organisationen, die nach Paragraph 7 des Gesetzes ueber die Bekaeempfung umstuerzlerischer Betaetigungen vom Jahre 1950 anmeldepflichtig sind oder registriert werden muessen, beizutreten, zu ihnen Beziehungen aufzunehmen oder in ihrem Sinne taetig zu werden;

(23) Personen, die zu irgendeinem Zeitpunkt wissentlich und gegen Entgelt einen anderen Auslaender ermuntert oder veranlasst haben, illegal in die Vereinigten Staaten einzureisen oder den Versuch dazu unternehmen bzw. ihn dabei zu unterstuetzen oder zu beguenstigen.

JA _____ NEIN nein _____

Falls "JA", geben Sie Einzelheiten an _____

Wiestaden, den 25. 2 1957 Hans-Ludwig
Unterschrift

German Transcript

GEHOEREN SIE ZUR ZEIT ODER GEHOERTEN SIE JEMALS EINER DER FOLGENDEN PERSONENGRUPPEN AN:

- (1) Personen, die einmal oder oeffter einen Anfall von Geisteskrankheit erlitten haben;
- (2) Personen, die rauschgiftsuechtig oder chronische Alkoholiker sind;
- (3) Personen, die an Tuberkulose in allen Erscheinungsformen, an Lepra oder einer anderen gefaehrlichen und ansteckenden Krankheit leiden;

- (4) Personen, die sonstwie leidend sind, koerperliche Fehler oder Kœrperbe-
hinderungen solcher Art aufweisen, dass dadurch moeglicherweise ihre
Erwerbsfaehigkeit vermindert ist;
- (5) Almosenempfaenger, berufsmaessige Bettler oder Landstreicher;
- (6) Personen, die einer besonders gemeinen Straftat ueberfuehrt worden
sind,(ausgenommen ein rein pulitisches Vergehen) oder solche, die sich zu einer
derartigen Straftat bezw. zu einer Handlung bekennen, die die wesentlichen
Tatbestandsmerkmale einer solchen Straftat erfuellen;
- (7) Personen, denen zwei oder mehr Vergehen (ausgenommen rein politische)
nachgewiesen wurden und die zu einer Freiheitsstrafe von insgesamt 5 Jahren und
darueber verurteilt wurden;
- (8) Polygamisten oder-solche, die fuer Polygamie eintreten;
- (9) Prostituierte, oder solche, die es waren, oder Personen, die in die Vereinigten
Staaten einwandern wollen, um sich ausschliesslich, hauptsaechlich oder
gelegentlich der Prostitution zu ergeben; Personen, die sich direkt oder indirekt als
Vermittler von Prostituierten betaetigen oder den Versuch hierzu unternehmen
oder solche, die frueher als Vermittler taetig waren oder versucht haben,
Prostituierte oder Personen zum Zwecke der Prostitution oder zu anderen
sittenwidrigen Zwecken zu vermitteln oder in die Vereinigten Staaten
einzuschleusen; Personen, die ganz oder teilweise den Erloes aus der gewerbs-
maessigen Unzucht erhalten oder erhielten oder zu deren Unterhalt der Erloes
ganz oder teilweise verwendet wurde; Personen, die in die Vereinigten Staaten
einreisen, um irgendein anderes gesetzwidriges Laster gewerbmaessig zu
betreiben, ob es nun der Prostitution verwand ist oder nicht;
- (10) Personen, die in die Vereinigten Staaten einwandern wollen, um
Sittlichkeitsverbrechen zu begehen;
- (11) Personen, die moeglicherweise der Allgemeinheit zur Last fallen;
- (12) Personen, die bereits einmal von den Vereinigten5Staaten ausgewiesen und
deportiert oder nach Inhaftierung deportiert worden waren; Personen, die in Not
geraten waren und kraft des Gesetzes ausgewiesen wurden oder als feindliche
Auslaender ihre Ausweisung erfuhren; Ferner Personen, die auf Staatskosten
ausgewiesen, jedoch nicht deportiert wurden;

(13) Blinde Passagiere;

(14) Personen, die auf betruergerische Weise oder unter absichtlicher Angabe falscher Tatsachen den Versuch unternehmen oder unternahmen, sich ein Visum oder sonstigen Ausweis zu verschaffen oder“sich verschafft haben oder auf die gleiche betruergerische Weise versuchen, in die Vereinigten Staaten einzureisen;

(15) Personen, die nicht im Besitze eines gueltigen, noch nicht abgelaufenen Passes, eines anderen geeigneten Reiseausweises, eines Personalausweises oder Ausweises ueber ihre Staatsangehoerigkeit oder anderer beglaubigter Unterlagen sind, aus denen hervorgeht, dass sie in ihr Herkunftsland oder in das Land, in dem sie ihren jetzigen Wohnsitz haben oder ein Visum erhalten, zurueckkehren koennen;

(16) Personen, die fuer die amerikanische Staatsbuergerschaft nicht in Betracht kommen oder solche, die aus den Vereinigten Staaten ausgereist sind oder sich ausserhalb der Vereinigten Staaten aufgehalten haben, um der militaerischen Ausbildung bzw. dem Wehrdienst in Kriegszeiten oder waehrend der Dauer eines vom Praesidenten verkuendeten Ausnahmezustandes zu entgehen;

(17) Personen, die nachweislich Gesetzen und Bestimmungen ueber den Handel mit Rauechgiften oder mit Gesetzen und Bestimmungen im Sinne des Paragraphen 212(a) (23) des Immigration and Nationality Act von 1952 in Konflikt geraten waren;

(18) Personen, die innerhalb von zwei Jahren seit ihrer Ankunft dort aus Nachbargebieten oder von angrenzeden Inseln aus in die Vereinigten Staaten unter Benutzung eines nicht anerkannten Verkehrsmittels oder-weges, wie in Paragraph 238(a) des Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, einreisen wollen;

(19) Personen, vom 16. Lebensjahr ab, die, obwohl physisch in der Lage zu lesen, weder irgendeine Sprache noch ein Dialekt lesen oder verstehen koennen;

(20) Personen, die in der Absicht nach den Vereinigten Staaten zu kommen suchen um sich dort ausschliesslich, hauptsaechlich oder gelegentlich in einer Weise zu betaeltigen, die den Interessen des Staates abtraeglich waeren oder das Wohl und die Sicherheit der Vereinigten Staaten gefaehrden;

(21) Personen, die Anarchisten sind oder jemals waren, die zur Bekaempfung eines geordneten glieder der kommunistischen oder einer anderen totalitaeren Partei oder Organisation sind oder waren bzw. Verbindung zu ihnen unterhalten oder unterhielten oder sonstige verbotene Beschaeftigungen, wie in Paragraph 212(a)(28) des Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 aufgefuehrt, ausueben oder ausuebten;

(22) Personen, die in die Vereinigten Staaten ein zureisen versuchen, um sich (a) in einer Richtung zu betaetigen, die nach den Gesetzen der Vereinigten Staaten betreffend Spionage Sabotage, oeffentliche Unruhen oder andere umstuerzlerische Betaetigungen zum Schaden der Sicherheit des Volkes, verboten ist, (b) in einer Weise zu betaetigen,, die darauf abzielt, den Widerstand gegen die US Regierung zu entfachen oder sie zu stuerzen und die Macht an sich zu reissen, sei es durch Gewalt oder mit anderen verfassungswidrigen Mitteln oder (c) Organisationen, die nach Paragraph 7 des Gesetzes ueber die Bekaempfun umstuerzlerischer Betaetigungen vom Jahre 1950 anmeldepflichtig sind oder registriert werden muessen, beizutreten, zu ihnen Beziehungen.anfzunehmen oder in ihrem Sinne taetig zu werden;

(23) Personen, die zu irgendeinem Zeitpunkt wissentlich und gegen Entgelt einen anderen Auslaender ermuntert oder veranlasst haben, illegal in die Vereinigten Staaten einzureisen oder den Versuch dazu unternehmen bzw. ihn dabei zu unterstuetzen oder zu beguenstigen.

Ja Nein

Falls "JA", geben Sie Einzelheiten an

Wiesbaden den 25.2.1957 Hans L von Schweinitz

English Translation

DO YOU CURRENTLY BE, OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN, TO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING GROUPS OF PEOPLE?

(1)persons who have had one or more attacks of insanity;

(2) persons who are addicted to drugs or chronic alcoholics;

(3) Persons suffering from tuberculosis in all manifestations, leprosy or any other dangerous and contagious disease;

- (4) Persons who are otherwise suffering, have physical defects or disabilities of such a nature that their earning capacity may be reduced;
- (5) Alms-beggars, professional beggars or vagrants;
- (6) Persons who have been convicted of a particularly common crime (other than a purely politic offense) or who confess to such a crime or to an act that meets the essential elements of such a crime;
- (7) Persons who have been convicted of two or more offenses (excluding purely political ones) and who have been sentenced to a total term of imprisonment of five years or more;
- (8) Polygamists or those who advocate polygamy;
- (9) Prostitutes, or those who were prostitutes, or persons seeking to immigrate to the United States to engage exclusively, primarily, or occasionally in prostitution; persons who are or attempt to engage, directly or indirectly, in procuring prostitutes, or who formerly engaged in procuring or attempting to procure prostitutes or persons for the purpose of prostitution or other immoral purposes; persons who receive or received, in whole or in part, the proceeds of commercial prostitution, or for whose support the proceeds were used, in whole or in part; persons who enter the United States to engage in any other unlawful vice as a business, whether related to prostitution or not.
- (10) Persons seeking to immigrate to the United States to commit sex crimes;
- (11) Persons who may be a burden to the public;
- (12) Persons who had previously been expelled and deported by the United States, or who had been deported after being imprisoned; persons who were in distress and were expelled by law or were expelled as enemy aliens; and persons who were expelled at government expense but not deported.
- (13) Stowaways
- (14) Persons who are attempting or have attempted to obtain or have obtained a visa or other identification document by fraudulent means or by knowingly

misrepresenting facts, or who are attempting to enter the United States by the same fraudulent means;

(15) Persons who do not have a valid, unexpired passport, other suitable travel document, identity card or proof of nationality or other certified documents proving their eligibility to return to their country of origin or to the country of their current residence or visa;

(16) Persons who are ineligible for U.S. citizenship or who have left the United States or remained outside the United States to avoid military training or service in time of war or during a presidentially declared state of emergency;

(17) Persons who have been found to have been in conflict with laws and regulations relating to the trafficking of narcotics or with laws and regulations within the meaning of Section 212(a) (23) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952;

(18) Persons seeking to enter the United States from neighboring territories or from adjacent islands within two years of their arrival therein by means of an unrecognized means or route as defined in Section 238(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952;

(19) Persons aged 16 years and over who, although physically able to read, cannot read or understand any language or dialect;

(20) Persons seeking to come to the United States with the intent to engage solely, principally, or occasionally in any activity prejudicial to the interests of the State or dangerous to the welfare and security of the United States;

(21) Persons who are or have ever been anarchists, who are or have been, or have had ties to, any member of a communist or other totalitarian party or organization, or who are or have been engaged in any other prohibited activity as set forth in Section 212(a)(28) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952;

(22) Persons attempting to enter the United States to (a) engage in any activity prohibited by the laws of the United States concerning espionage, sabotage, public disorder, or other subversive activities detrimental to the security of the people, (b) engage in any activity designed to incite opposition to, overthrow, and usurp power in the United States Government, whether by force or other unconstitutional means, or (c) join, have relations with, or act on behalf of any organization

required to be registered or filed under Section 7 of the Subversive Activities Control Act of 1950;

(23) Persons who at any time knowingly and for compensation have encouraged or induced another alien to enter or attempt to enter the United States illegally, or have assisted or abetted such an alien in doing so.

Yes No

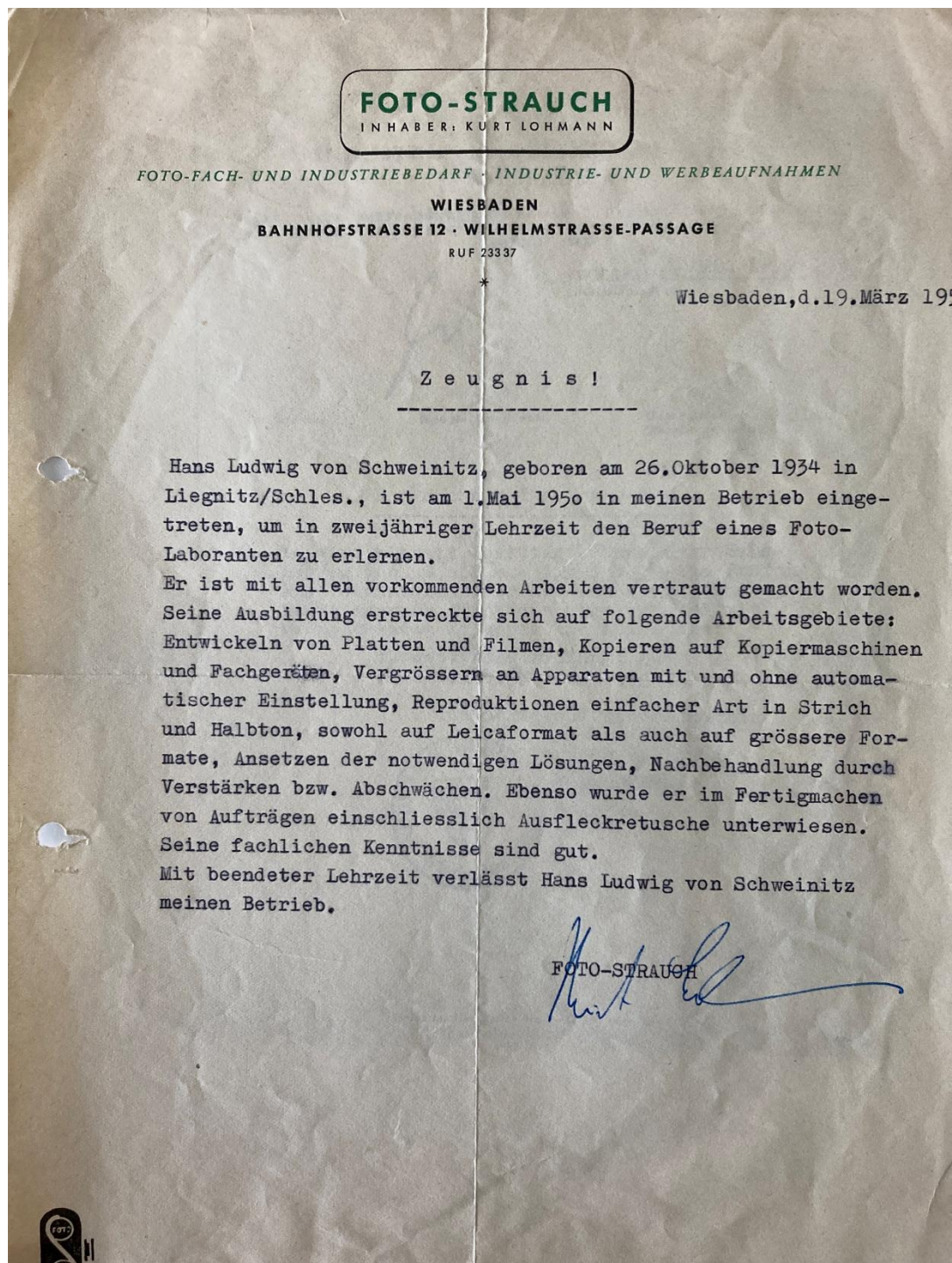
If “Yes” provide details

Hans marked No on 25 Feb 1957.

Hans' List of Contacts 1957

H.H. Beisner, 120 Wall Street, New York 5N-Y
 Wood Stock, Tel. NY 2254 durch Dr. Kuhlmei
 Ray Simac, Rayline Incorporated, 8717-19 West Cermac
 Riverside Ill. Tel. Riverside 7-7778 Road
 Frau Metger, Delegation of German Federal Republik
 1716 New Hampshire Avenue, Washington 7De Ulrici
 M.R. Flow ers R.R. 2 Box 211, Gastonia N.C.
 Tel. Lowell 4-3387, Spencer Mountain
 Gueydan Verret, 610 Evergreen Dr. Gretna, la
 Across the River from New Orleans LA Tel . Davis
 Verret France
 H.R. Godfrey, Ashville Penns. Harry
 Sponser: Mathew Bastian, 1218 N. Bosworth Ave. Chicago
 22 Ill. (Bürge)
 Für Rückzahlungen: Dr. Cordelia Cox, 235 Fourth Ave.
 New York 3 N.Y.
 Anni Scholl, Freinsheim Pfalz Wahlstr. 18 Tel. 53131
 Hans Wahl Grünstadt Pfalz Kellergasse 8
 Günther Braun, Eppelheim ü. Heidelberg Wasserturmstr. 2
 25
 Andre' Biehlmann, EMP 3 e, Autuy (Südwest Loire)
 Ursula Sterz, Leipzig W. 43, Hubertusstrasse 97
 Tel. 45581
 ✓ Ruth Zumstein c/o Vita, Zürich 2 Schweiz, Mythenkai 10
 Bouscarle Jeaut, Quartier Mascaron, Morieres les Aix
~~Aix~~ Avignon, Vaucluse France
 ✓ Vidrich Veriano, Piazza- Taddeo Gaddi Nr. 4 Italien
 Tel. 2970-48 Florenz
 Frauke Hagenjost, Frankenthal, Westlicheringstrasse 8
 Te. 2631
 ✓ H.W. v. Schweinitz, Wiesbaden Schumannstrasse 16
 Tel. 21302 Vater.
 Sten Gustafsson, Karlbergsgatan 5, Avesta, Schweden
 Gunnar Ericsson Sagtonp 568 Avesta, Schweden
 Jan Reenwrik, Irandbyhsingel 7 Woenden Hoiland
 Jimmy Stephonson 32, Gloucester Road Ipswich
 Feffolk England
 ✓ Manfred Zanger Parkweg 22 Grünstadt
 Ehrengard v. Oertzen Osnabrück Obermartinistrasse 18
 Wagenfeil, Wiesbaden, Kirchgasse 11 (Klarner)
 ✓ Zander Heyden Hamburg Ulenborgs Torweg 30
 Ulenborgs.
 bei Schulz.
 Schulz.

Letter of Character and Reference



Zeugnis!

Hans Ludwig von Schweinitz, geboren am 26 Oktober 1934 in Liegnitz/Schles., ist am 1 Mai 1950 in meinen Betrieb eingetreten, um in zweijähriger Lehrzeit den Beruf eines Foto-Laboranten zu erlernen.

Er ist mit allen vorkommenden Arbeiten vertraut gemacht worden. Seine Ausbildung erstreckte sich auf folgende Arbeitsgebiete: Entwickeln von Platten und Filmen, Kopieren auf Kopiermaschinen und Fachgeräten, Vergrößern an Apparaten mit und ohne automatische Einstellung, Reproduktionen einfacher Art in Strich und Halbton sowohl auf Leicaformat als auch auf größere Formate, Ansetzen der notwendigen Lösungen, Nachbehandlung durch Verstärken bzw. Abschwächen. Ebenso wurde er im Fertigmachen von Aufträgen einschließlich Ausfleckretusche unterwiesen. Seine fachlichen Kenntnisse sind gut.

Mit beendeter Lehrzeit verlässt Hans Ludwig von Schweinitz meinen Betrieb.

Foto-Strauch

English Translation
Testimony!

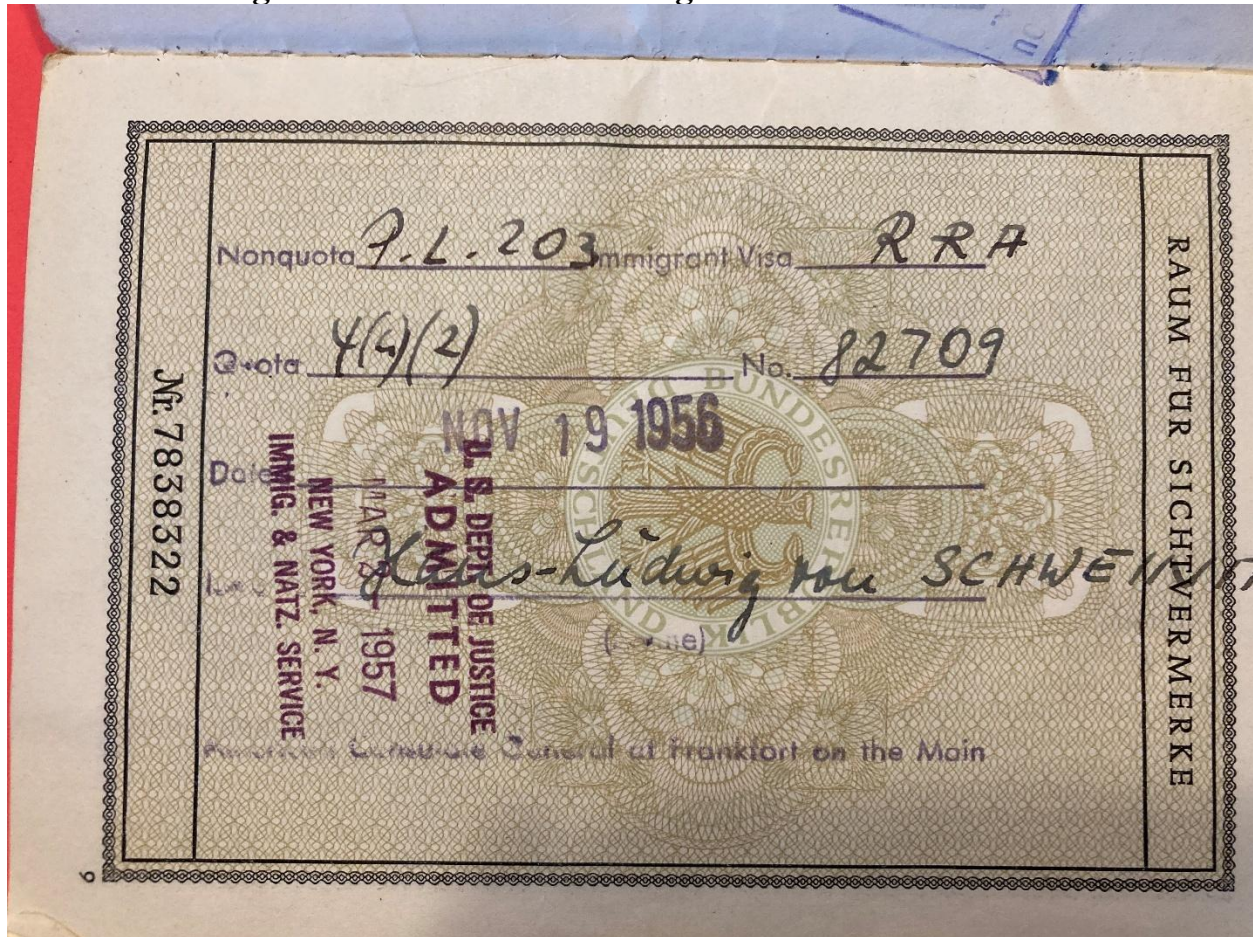
Hans Ludwig von Schweinitz, born on October 26, 1934, in Liegnitz, Schlesien, joined my company on May 1, 1950, to complete a two-year apprenticeship as a photo laboratory technician.

He has been familiarized with all types of work. His training covered the following areas: developing plates and films, copying on photocopiers and specialized equipment, enlarging on machines with and without automatic adjustment, simple line and halftone reproductions both on Leica format and larger formats, preparing the necessary solutions, and post-processing by amplifying or attenuating. He was also instructed in the finishing of orders, including spot retouching. His technical knowledge is sound.

Han Ludwig von Schweinitz is leaving my company upon completion of his apprenticeship.

Photo-Strauch

1956 Nov Immigration VISA Hans-Ludwig: Admitted 2 March 1957



1957 Emigrating Part 1: Germany to Chicago USA Mar1957-Oct1957

Summarize below:

Currently I worked at the Central Exchange Photo Finishing plant in Grünstadt. I started work on 1 June 1954 by processing film and worked there until 23 February 1957, when left to emigrate to the USA.

On 26 October 1956, I had my 22nd Birthday. When I took stock of my life, I was not satisfied with my life. Sure, I had a profession. "My income was insufficient to provide a home or to support a wife and children at a level I considered acceptable. My greatest desire was to start a family and to have a home. The income was very low. I could barely afford a moped or bicycle. The future did not

look very good in Germany.” In December 1956, I took a trip to Humburg that changed my life. I found out that the Lutheran Federation was taking applications from German citizens who had trades and wanted to go to America for a better future. The Lutheran Federation found a sponsor for me in Chicago Illinois to work in the area of photography and my visa arrived in early 1957. “The United States looked very promising. Offered a lot of opportunities for people who are willing to work hard. I decided to increase my opportunities by immigrating to the USA.”

I left Germany in end of February 1957 for New York City in United States. I went by TWA plane, landing in Iceland for refueling, and finally landing in the USA in New York on 1 March 1957. “Flew here 3 days. We didn't have jets at that time. It took two days, three days, almost three days to get here. I went from Germany, went to Ireland, from Ireland to Iceland. From Iceland you went to uh. Somewhere on some island of Canada (Newfoundland). And from there flew down to New York. And was it the same group of people from start to finish. They were mostly migrants.”

I brought with me a book in Germany that had 500 words with flash cards in the English language and \$50.00 to \$100.00. The first thing I did in New York was “I went up to the Empire State Building and. I was very much impressed.”

On 2 March 1957, I traveled via train to Chicago. My sponsor was Mr Mathew Bastian, of Chicago Illinois. “I was offered, supposedly had a job as a photographer there. But it was a very corrupt organization, American aid society, a very corrupt organization they had. Bribe sponsors who got money for it. And my sponsor was supposed to pick me up at the railway station. Never picked me up. Have a place to stay in the place to work and didn't show up, so I just walked the street till I found somebody that spoke German because I didn't speak English. And, then made some contact with some Germans in Chicago.”

“Because this guy went, I went to him (Mr Mathew Bastian). He told me that I should be glad that he sponsored me, but I should find work. Then went out and looked for a job by myself. Since I was not a member of the union, I couldn't get a job. Because in order to join the Union here to have a job for two years, the catch 22.”

“So I just wondered. Found a German family with a boarding house (run by Mr & Mrs Schott). And then went out and joined the church immediately and found a job through the church. Worked in a scientific library as a photostat operator.”

First employed by John Crerar Library, Chicago, Illinois. Photostat operator. Reason for leaving: personal betterment. "12 to 16 hours a day because there was the work backlog. And they just tried to beat the hell out of me because I was working hard on their backlog. And I worked there for three or four months. Then I got this higher paid job. I was being paid \$1.35 an hour, and that salary was decent for that era and that helped quite a bit since my rent at the boarding house was \$25.00 a month while doubling up in the room with another couple. I left for another job making blueprint paper."

Second job was with Huey Company Chicago Illinois. Coating photographic emulsions. Reason for leaving: financial betterment and difficult working conditions. "And so, I got the job making a blueprint paper. You know what that is? Coating the emulsions, of course, that was. These huge rolls, which had to be cut and the drying rooms the motion had to be. My income had risen to about \$200 a week."

Third job was with Keuffler Eusser, Chicago Illinois. Precision photo copying. Reason for leaving: no opportunity of advancement.

By April 1957, I received a temporary Driver's License, bought a used car, and began to travel around Tennessee and Pennsylvania. I did not know English, so I "Every study, every free minute I had. Everywhere I was, I used to have flash cards one side German ones that English. Then went to night school."

What I did not know, was that the draft office was looking for me. Immigrants had to obtain green cards when they came into America and also had to let the government know if you moved. That made it easy for the authorities to track me. I had just left a war, and had no interest in joining anything related to war. "My landlady's sister offered me, said. Why don't you come with me? To Florida drive down there and help me. Around the house. Drive the car. All of it. So I went to Daytona Beach, drove her down there. Took care of some of her household matters". I drove Mr and Mrs Westkamp and their son down to Daytona Florida. I became their chauffer, babysitter, and general helper, while I learned English. "I was happy at Daytona Beach, you know where they had the race. And the girl friends there anyway, was happy. Happy there but, Police start showing up." "Told me that they would deport me if I wouldn't accept the draft. Would have to join the army. I left after about two months and 1/2 in Florida. I went back to Chicago."

When I returned to Chicago in September 1957 and again stayed with Mr & Mrs Schott. "I got another job at Williams Meyer Company Chicago Illinois. Advertising and Industrial Photography. Reason for leaving: drafted into the Armed Forces. "I didn't tell them they didn't know that I was an immigrant and that I came under the draft law. Got a well-paid job at that time. About 3.50 dollars an hour. I was doing precision reproductions. To scale precision. Reproductions of maps. Two scale exactly. Of plans and stuff like that."

"Then of course they got a hold of me again. I said I don't want to go in. I don't want the army. So, I went ahead and took the high school equivalency test. You needed to have a high school equivalency get into the Air Force. I passed it. Every Bimbo could go into the drafted into the army and the Air Force offered much better training and better career fields. One thing the law said at that time. If an immigrant comes with an immigration visa and has a green card to work, he is subject to the draft. But he cannot become an officer."

I was accepted by the US Air Force and my basic training began in October 1957.

1957 US Air Force Part 1: Oct1957-Dec1958

1957 Oct-Nov Basic Training

After I returned to Chicago in September 1957, I was working at Williams Meyer Company Chicago Illinois which did Advertising and Industrial Photography. I could not avoid the draft anymore. So I took and passed the GED so that I could enter the US Air Force. I was accepted and my basic training began in October 1957.

In October 1957, I joined a group of draftees that were taking the train from Chicago to San Antonio Texas. "When I got down there, I had everybody's money." We had spent the whole train trip playing Poker. When I was a Photographer Apprentice, I had learned to play poker and I was very good.

On 18 October 1957, my basic training in the Air Force began at Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas. My military number was 16589642 and I was in Squadron 375, Flight 1309. One of the big changes in my life came with joining the US Air Force. In Germany I actually went by my middle name "Ludwig" because almost all the males in my family had the first name "Hans", so we went by our middle names. In the US Air Force, your first name is what is used, so I became "Hans" in the military and with new Friends, and "Ludwig" with my family.

I found basic training easy because of my upbringing. I was used to caring for my clothes and shoes, and keeping my bed and personal items clean and neat. I also used my black-market skills by running a candy store out of my mattress because the other kids could not do without their chocolate. I was also careful with my own money and would loan others \$5 and have them pay me \$6 back. The course work was easy because "I have a good memory and I was acing almost every test."

While I was in basic training, his second step mother, Vera, had a son, Alexander, born 16 November 1957 in Wiesbaden.

After basic training, I was assigned to Mitchell Field Wisconsin.

1958 January to 1958 November Wisconsin

From January 1958 to November 1958, I was stationed in General Mitchell Air National Guard Base, Milwaukee Wisconsin. to the 128th Air Refueling Wing, 2373D ARFC Squadron. "I wound up driving petroleum, oil and lubricants tank trucks. I received this assignment because they found out that I had a truck driver's license. I had in Germany, had paid for my own truck driver's license. I could drive everything which had more than one wheel."

"I was stationed in Milwaukee and our pay was very low. And I lived in the YMCA. We didn't have barracks. In the military, we would go out in uniform. The city was very friendly towards the military, so if we went out in the uniform on the weekend, and you went to a bar, immediately somebody would invite you for a beer or drink or something like that. Also, the churches were putting on get togethers with soldiers in uniform. Went there and you got Kool-Aid and cookies."

In late March 1958, the girls at the Milwaukee YWCA decided to put on a dance to attract eligible bachelors. They wore their tightest sweaters.

"Helga Pörtner was living at the YWCA and there the girls they were putting on dances. On the weekend, also with Kool-Aid and cookies and invited the military there to dance with them because we had a steady income. I danced with her and she recognized that I could dance the dance, as most Americans couldn't dance like the waltz or slow waltzes. And then we got into talking and notice that I was German, that she was German."

Helga had immigrated in November 1957, to Milwaukee Wisconsin from Herford Germany. At first she lived with her Aunts and Uncles. But by January 1958, she had moved into the Milwaukee YWCA on 633 4th str. Helga lived there from 24Jan58 until 27May58

“At the time of the YWCA dance, I still had a girlfriend in Chicago. I was traveling to Chicago all the time. But within a week I asked Helga, why do we live separately? Why don't we rent an apartment? So we were cohabitating. In other words, we were renters. We found the place furnished. And rented it. It was at 518 North 19th Street, Milwaukee Wisconsin. And we lived there from 17May1958 until 18Nov1958. The landlady thought we were married since it was illegal and if I was in the military and I would be cohabitating, I would go to jail. One night we were raided, you know, the police came, somebody had turned us in. They talked to the Landlady, she said to go next door and of course next door there were also people living in sin. Our Landlady really believed that we were married. We were planning to marry, but it took so long to get the paperwork done in the Air Force and security”. The apartment was at 518 North 19th Street, Milwaukee Wisconsin.

On 24 April 1958, I bought a used Pontiac. Helga and I, together, began to explore the open road. In one trip in October 1948, we went to Niagara Falls and Montreal Canada. My long time friend, Bye-Bye was married and living in Montreal Canada.

In September 1958, I received notification that his Vati had a heart attack at age 57. “And I got a compassionate reassignment to Germany. So I was stationed in Frankfurt, Germany, and then Helga joined me a month later.” We immediately announced that we were getting married on 1 November 1958. I was to be in Germany by 21 November and Helga was to follow in December. The doctors determined that the heart attack was due to the effects of the Dresden bombing, and because of this diagnosis, Vati started to receive disability pay, very similar to the USA Social Security for the disabled.

To be married, we had to get a blood test to confirm that we were not cousins. And we also had to get a Marriage Certificate at the Milwaukee County Clerk office. I always told the tale that on 30 September 1958, I went to the Milwaukee County Clerk, with the intent of registering for a wedding. I was either so embarrassed or my English was still so inadequate, that I registered for a Small

Game Hunting License instead. But Helga's tale is that we both went to the Clerk's office and were amazed that you could buy a Marriage license and fishing license at the same office.

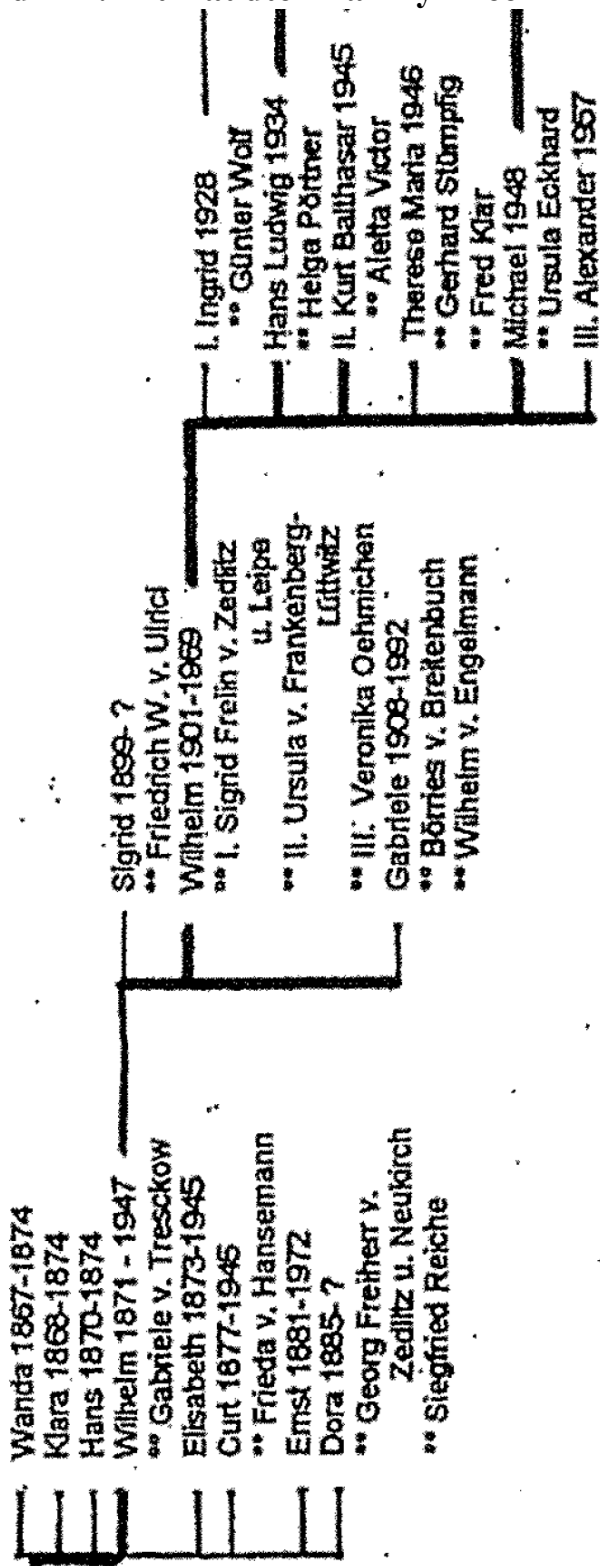
When our Landlady received her invitation to the marriage on 1 November 1958, she was shocked, we were not married and living under her roof in sin and against the law? But she attended our wedding and had a wonderful time.

I was assigned to Rheine Main AFB Germany, in Wiesbaden West Germany again as an Aviation Fuels Specialist. The base was very close to where my Vati lived in Wiesbaden. Helga followed a few months later.

The rest of our story is in another Biography compendium, the albums, or other specialized compendiums.

Appendix A: Alt Raudten Family Tree

Klein Krichen : Alt-Raudten



Appendix B: Characters in Biography

Oma V.	Gabriela v. Schweinitz geb. Treskow 4/3/1876 Pöritz Wism.
Opa V.	Wilhelm " geb. 17/3/1870 Bielwiese T 22/6/47 Wism.
2. & Oma M.	Elmar Frein v. Kiedlitz u. Eupie (Böttcher) T 8/1/87 Eichich
Opa M.	Franz Benjamin Freier v. " T 29/3/44 Mollthal.
Vater	Hans-Wilhelm v. Schweinitz geb. 21/12/1901 Schumannst. 16 Wism.
Mutter	Sigrid Ingeborg " Frein v. Kiedlitz u. Eupie 12/1/02 T 3/9/42
2 "	Hersula, Edit v. Frankenberg Kiedlitz geb. 26/3/1924 Braesche
3 "	Therinka Schermann geb. Demichen geb. 20/11/1913
Schwester	Ingrid v. Schweinitz Wolf geb. 3/4/28 Sonnenbergst. 11 Wism.
1/2 "	Theres Maria " geb. 15/12/1946 Wism.
1/2 Bruder	Hurt Ballmann " " 3/12/1945 Wintkuck Südwest Africa
1/2 "	Michael " 27/2/1948 Wism.
Stief Schwester	Marielle Brigitte Tiffel geb. 8/10/1944
" Bruder	Franz Joachim " v. 18/1/1939

On 1934 October 26, Hans-Ludwig von Schweinitz was born into this world of privilege and upper class social standing of Alt Raudten. He lived with his family in a Manor house big enough to be considered a castle (Schloss), it even had a moat and drawbridge. When Hans-Ludwig was born, his Vater (Father) "Hans" was 33 years old and his Mutti (Mother) "Sigrid" was 32 years old. Hans-Ludwig's only sibling was his sister "Ingrid" who was already 6 years old.

Since the Manor house was multi-generational, there were plenty of other family members in residence.

Aunt (Sister of his Vater) Sigrid Melitta

Aunt (Sister of his Vater) Gabriele Annie Sophie Helene

Oma (Mother of his Vater) Gabriele "Gabi" von Treschow

Opa (Father of his Vater) Hans Hermann Heinrich "Wilhelm" von Schweinitz

From the Vater's von Schweinitz family tree

Hans-Ludwig: Hans Ludwig von Schweinitz Born 1934 Died 2019. Also known as Hanelü or Hannelu or Ludwig

Vater Hans (sometimes Hans-Wilhelm): Hans Wilhelm Herman Egon Losso von Schweinitz Born 1901 Died 1969[Father]

Mutti: Sigrid (Sigrid, Muckchen) Ingebor Freiin von Zedlitz und von Leipe Born 1902 died 1942[Mother]

Ini: Ingrid von Schweinitz Born 1928 Died xx [older sister of Hans-Ludwig]

Günter Wolf: husband of Ini

Oma Gabi: Gabriele Laura Theresa von Tresckow Born 1875 died 1962 [Mother of Vati. Grandmother to Hans-Ludwig]

Opa Wilhelm: Hans Hermann Heinrich Wilhelm von Schweinitz Born 1871 Died 1947 [Father of Vati. Grandfather to Hans-Ludwig]

Onkel Breitenbuch: Börries von Breitenbuch [First husband of Tante Gabi]

Onkel Curt: Curt (Kurt) von Schweinitz born 1877 died 1945 [younger brother Opa Hans-Wilhelm]

Onkel Engelmann: Wilhelm „Willy“ von Engelmann born xx died xx [Second husband of Tante Gabi]

Onkel Ernst: Ernst von Schweinitz born 1881 died 1972, married Tante Lotte [younger brother of Opa Hans-Wilhelm]

Onkel Hans-Georg: Hans-Georg Freiherr von Zedlitz und von Neukirch born xx died xx [first husband of Tante Dora]

Onkel Siegfried: Siegfried Reiche born xx died xx [second husband of Tante Dora]

Tante Biene: Gabriele von Breitenbuch/von Engelmann nee von Schweinitz Born 1908 Died 1992, married Onkel Engelmann [younger sister of Vati]

Tante Ditta: Sigrid Militta von Ulrici nee von Schweinitz Born 1899 died xx, married Onkel Ulrici [older sister of Vati]

Tante Dora: Dora von Zedlitz von Neukirch, Reiche, nee von Schweinitz born 1885 died xx [younger sister of Opa Hans-Wilhelm]

Tante Elisabeth: Elisabeth von Schweinitz Born 1873 Died 1945 [younger sister of Opa Hans Wilhelm]

Tante Frieda: Frieda von Schweinitz nee von Hanseemann born xx died xx [wife of Curt]

Tante Lotte: Wife of Onkel Ernst.

Ulla: Ursula von Frankenberg-Lüttwitz. Born xx Died xx [Former Governess of Hans-Ludwig then step-mother when she married Vati Hans, Hans-Ludwig's Vati.]

Vera

Cousin Anne: Anne von Tresckow [niece of Oma Gabi]

Cousin Pfiffer: Pfiffer von Schweinitz, from German South African colony.

Hemmi

Heizi or Heise

Michael or Mischi

Alex

Mutti's family tree

Opa von Zedlitz

Oma von Zedlitz geb Böttcher

Onkel Ulrici (sometimes Uli): Friedrich (or Friedhelm) Wilhelm von Ulrici Born
xx fallen 9 September 1944 [son of Onkel Ulrici/Gerd]

Onkel Ulrici (sometimes Gerd): Friedrich Wilhelm von Ulrici Born xx died
[husband of Vati's older sister Sigrid]

Onkel Fritz

Onkel Paul

Tante Lucie

Tante Hemans

Others – may be

Armin Gutscher

Biche

Biene

Bimlem

Dorothee Unruh

E deSchweinitz

Englischen

Esch

Esther

Freidhalen

Hildegard von Braichitichn

Helga Pörtner: of Hans Ludwig von Schweinitz

Raindi

Tante Lotte

Cousin Anne

Cousin Pfiffer

Hildegard von Braichitichn

Victor von Schweinitz

Major General Henning von Tresckow

Adam von Trott zu Solz

Lucjan Sobera

Ria

Kurt Lohmann

Bye-Bye

Her Hubachs

Ruth

Mr Mathew Bastian

Mr and Mrs Schott

Mr and Mrs Westkamp

Schools 1941-1957

	Jan 75 bis	2319 Village St Austin TX
	Schulen	
1.	Mai 1940 bis Jan. 1945	Volkschule Altraudtten Schlesien
2.	23/2/45 " 30/3/45 "	Wichersdorf Thür.
3.	Aug. 45 " Mai/46 "	Niedersellon/Bayern
4.	Mai/46 " Jul/46 "	Hindelang/Schwaben
4.	Jul/46 " Sep/48	Real Gymnasium Wiesbaden
4.	Sep/48 " MARZ 1949	Volkschule Solmsheim Thuringen
5.	Mai/50 " Mai/52	Berufsschule Wiesbaden

Places lived pre 1958

SWITZERLAND, ITALY	JUN 56	JUL 56	TOURIST
SCHLESINGER ST. 28 GÜNSTADT, WEST GERMANY	JUN 54	FEB 57	RESIDENT
FISCHZUCHT	JUL 46	SEP 48	RESIDENT
WIESBADEN WEST GERMANY	APR 49	JUN 54	RESIDENT
DIACONISSEN HEIM SOBERN HEIM, WEST GERMANY	SEP 48	APR 49	RESIDENT
UNKNOWN WEST-GERMANY, AUSTRIA	SALZBURG JAN 45	JUL 46	NO PERMANENT RESIDENT DUE TO AFTER WWII II CONDITION IN GERMANY
SCHLOSS ALTRAUDTEN GERMANY (POLISH OCCUPIED) NOW	BIRTH - JAN 45 26 OCT 34		RESIDENT

Wiedom Gwinity

Places worked pre 1957

(1953 to 1957)	<u>Location:</u> Gruenstadt, Germany
	<u>Position:</u> Custom Printer and Copier, later in Full Charge of Film Processing
(1952 to 1953)	<u>Location:</u> Agfa Color, Wiesbaden, Germany
	<u>Position:</u> Custom Color Printer
(1950 to 1952)	<u>Location:</u> Wiesbaden, Germany
	<u>Position:</u> Apprentice, Still Photographer and Darkroom Man

1950
to
1957

Civilian Experience

1957 to Oct 1957	<u>Location:</u> William Meyer Co., Chicago, Ill.
	<u>Position:</u> Advertising/Industrial Photographer and Processor
1957	<u>Location:</u> Keuffler and Esser, Chicago Ill.
	<u>Position:</u> Precision Photo Copier
1953 to 1957	<u>Location:</u> Gruenstadt, Germany
	<u>Position:</u> Custom Printer and Copier, later in full Charge of Film Processing
1952 to 1953	<u>Location :</u> Agfa Color, Wiesbaden, Germany
	<u>Position:</u> Custom Color Printer
1950 to 1952	<u>Location:</u> Wiesbaden, Germany
	<u>Position:</u> Apprentice, Still Photographer and Darkroom Man

Appendix C: Family Dates

- 1871: Hans' Opa Hans „Hermann“ Heinrich Wilhelm von Schweinitz born 1871 died 1947 Wiesbaden
- 1875: Hans' Oma Gabriele von Tresckow born 1875 died 1962 Wiesbaden
- 1899: Hans Aunt (Sister of his Vati) Sigrid Melitta born 19 September 1899 in Alt Raudten, died 10 October 1975 in Wiesbaden
- 1901: Hans' Vati Hans “Wilhelm” Hermann Egon Tassilo von Schweinitz Born 21dec1901 died 18jan1969 in Wiesbaden
- 1902: Hans' Mutti Sigrid Freiin von Zedlitz und Leipe born 2dec1902, died 3sep1942. Buried in park on the so-called “temple mount”.
- 1908: Hans' aunt (Sister of his Vati) Gabriele Annie Sophie Helene born 25 April 1908 at Alt Raudten. Died 1992
- 1927: Hans' Vater married Sigrid on 7 July 1927 in Könitz.. Wilhelm Hans von Schweinitz (Opa) Married to Sigrid Freiin von Zedlitz und Leipe
- 1928: Hans' sister Ingrid Sigrid von Schweinitz born 3April1928 died 2018
- 1942: Hans' Mutti Sigrid Freiin von Zedlitz und Leipe born 2dec1902, died 3sep1942. Buried in park on the so-called “temple mount”.
- 1944: Hans' Vati (age 43) married Ursula von Frankenberg-Luttwitz (age 20) on 15 October 1944. They divorced in 1950. Ursula was born 26 March 1924.
- 1945: Hans' brother (Hemmi) Kurt Balthasar born 31 July 1945 to Ursula in München
- 1946: Hans' sister Therese Maria (Heise) born 15 December 1946 Wiesbaden to Ursula
- 1947: Hans' Opa Hans „Hermann“ Heinrich Wilhelm died in Wiesbaden 22 June 1947
- 1948: Hans' Brother Michael born to Ursula on 27Feb1948 in Wiesbaden
- 1950: Hans' Vati married Ursula von Frankenberg-Luttwitz on 15 October 1944. They divorced in 1950. Ursula was born 26 March 1924.
- 1955 Hans' Vati married Veronika (Vera) Oehmichen in Wiesbaden on 23 July 1955, age 42. Vera Born 10 November 1913, Died 31 July 1995.
- 1956: Hans' Sister Theresa Maria (Heise) born to Vera on 15Dec1956 in Wiesbaden
- 1957: Hans' Brother Alexander born to Veronika 16Nov1957 Wiesbaden

The End

