Hilde Frank and her Children

a Holocaust account in letters

by Christian Brückner

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Introduction

In a time of newly resurging antisemitism and an accompanying denial of the Holocaust, every testimony that authentically documents the persecution of Jews in National Socialist Germany is important. This document provides information about the difficult fate of Hilde Frank, born Feldberg (1894-1945), and her children Anita Frank (1921-1945) and Reinhard Frank (1928-2010) during that period. The core of the account are letters written by Anita and Reinhard from Berlin to her mother in Switzerland. Reinhard Frank inherited them from his mother and kept them during his lifetime. On his deathbed he entrusted them to the editor, expressing his wish to make them publicly accessible in a suitable form. The editor has annotated the letters and described the historical context in which they were written. The letters and annotations are available in their original German language in the illustrated book *"Spreche morgen Rolf" - Ein jüdisches Familienschicksal zwischen Berlin und Basel 1933 bis 1945* (Basel, Christoph Merian Verlag, 2025).

In 1920 Hilde married the Leipzig textile entrepreneur Hermann Frank. He died in September 1932. In spring 1933 Hilde moved with her two children to Berlin into the home of the widowed Jewish biochemist Prof. Carl Neuberg, whom she had known for some time and with whom she began a love relationship. Neuberg was an internationally renowned scientist. After Hitler's seizure of power, Neuberg hoped to come to an arrangement with the regime and to be able to remain in Germany.

Hilde probably shared this hope.

While most Jews with contacts abroad emigrated together with their families soon after Hitler's seizure of power, Hilde and Carl only began to actively pursue emigration after the pogrom of November 1938 ("Reichskristallnacht"). Their hesitation may have been partly due to the fact that until September 1941, the publicly recognizable goal of National Socialist policy was the *expulsion* of Jews from Germany; their *extermination* was systematically pursued in Germany only from October 1941 onwards. This change of policy was kept secret by the state, but its outlines became perceptible to German Jews already in the following weeks, while most other Germans became aware of it only later, if at all.

After the Pogromnacht, Hilde's and Carl's paths separated. Neuberg left Germany in August 1939 and, after a circuitous journey, reached New York in 1941. A job offer from a university had allowed him to immigrate to the USA.

Hilde, who had not learned a profession and therefore could not hope for job offers from abroad, saw no way to escape together with her family and planned therefore to temporarily send her children to England. She herself intended to save herself by an arranged marriage to a Swiss citizen, acquire thereby Swiss citizenship, and have the children join her later. But the plan to send the children from Germany failed, as the transport of children scheduled for September 3, 1939, was canceled due to the outbreak of the war two days earlier. Hilde remained in Berlin near her children for another year. On September 15, 1940, she moved to Basel to join her new husband.

Due to Switzerland's defensive attitude toward Jewish immigrants, she had to leave the children in Berlin with foster parents.

After finishing school, Anita became an apprentice as a nurse at the Jewish Hospital in Berlin in May 1940.

Reinhard had to end his schooling prematurely at the end of June 1942 because all Jewish schools in Germany were closed at that time and Jews were no longer admitted to other schools. After leaving school, he worked as an apprentice locksmith also at the Jewish Hospital.

When the Swiss authorities finally granted entry permits for Anita and Reinhard on October 24, 1941, Germany had closed its frontiers to Jews the day before. This was a measure accompanying the beginning *"Final Solution" ("Endlösung")*, i.e. the *"extermination of the Jewish race"*. Anita and Reinhard were deported from the Jewish Hospital, where they both had been living since March 1943, to the Theresienstadt concentration camp in June 1943 and from there to Auschwitz at the end of 1944. Reinhard was taken further to the Gleiwitz III subcamp, Anita to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where she perished in the raging typhus epidemic in mid-April 1945, a few days

after the camp was taken over by British troops. Reinhard was able to escape when the Russians arrived in January 1945.

After the closure of the German frontier in October 1941, Hilde saw from Switzerland her children falling into growing mortal danger and finally disappearing in concentration camps. Even though Hilde's plans for rescuing her family had been guided by good intentions, she was likely later tormented by the self-reproach of having delayed the family's emigration for too long, ultimately abandoning her children and saving only herself. The emotional pain and a physical ailment led to her death in the summer of 1945, while 17-year-old Reinhard, having just escaped the camps and still unaware of her death, wrote in his last letter to his mother of his hope for a happy reunion.

Since Switzerland remained hostile towards Jewish immigrants even after the war, Reinhard got his entry visa only after a long delay and with the condition that he leave Switzerland after three months. On March 25, 1946, he arrived in Basel, where he found his mothers grave and part of her estate. Soon afterwards he moved on to London to the family of university professor Wilhelm Feldberg, his mother's cousin. There he got an education at an English high school, later at a college. Then he worked for some years as an electrical engineer in England and in California. Finally he settled in Massachusetts/USA, where he died in 2010.

Biographies of personalities mentioned in the book and the family trees of the Feldberg and Frank families can be found in the appendix at the end of the file.

The letters contained in this file do not deal with the atrocities of the Nazis, committed on Jews during the Holocaust, but they tell stories about support, love, and bravery in the daily lives of German Jews who, since 1933, under the pressure of unspeakable anti-Jewish state measures and exclusion from the non-jewish German society, and from October 1941 also under the daily threat of deportation to concentration camps, were able to to preserve their human dignity.

Anita's day-to-day reports from the Jewish Hospital from May 1940 to June 1943 give an impression of the joys and sorrows of daily work life from a nursing perspective.

The letters reveal a young woman who, after a carefree childhood, was drawn from the sheltered environment of a self-sufficient *jeunesse dorée* into the tragedy of the Holocaust. As far as we can follow her, she walked her path to the very end with unflagging helpfulness and self-sacrifice, with open eyes and without complaint. Amid terror and fear, she matured into a personality of almost superhuman strength and fortitude. *"This is how one is hardened and forged like a block of iron, which is struck again and again with ever more powerful blows until it has the right shape!"*, she wrote to her mother in Basel on December 15, 1942, after a mass deportation from the hospital. Her greatest joy became *"being able to truly help so many desperate people! (- For the joy that we give returns to our own heart! -)"* (March 5, 1943). Free from the self-dramatization and -justification that sometimes characterizes memoirs written in hindsight, Anita communicates to her mother in simple words the everyday's hospital life and the terrible things to which she was a witness.

She had to encode the terrible things to avoid provoking the censors, and she avoided any dramatization so as not to frighten her mother unnecessarily. Her farewell message, *"Will speak to Rolf tomorrow,"* sent from Theresienstadt to her mother in Basel the day before her onward deportation to Auschwitz, was the code with which she announced her final journey to her beloved, who had been deported two years earlier and who she believed was no longer alive. The message to her mother concluded with the words *"Stay brave! - Yours affectionately, Anita."*

Historical Background

Antisemitism in Europe

With the spread of Christianity in the territory of the Roman Empire, i.e., from about 300 AD, a religiously based antisemitism developed in Europe. From a Christian perspective, the Jews had not believed in Jesus but had crucified him. The blessing promised to God's chosen people was henceforth God's gift to the Christians. God had turned away from the Jews.

The religiously motivated rejection of the Jews was coupled with a rejection of their otherness, as expressed in Jewish customs and traditions.

In the Middle Ages, antisemitism manifested itself, among other things, in the fact that Jews had no civil rights in most countries, i.e., they were excluded from citizenship, had to bear Hebrew names and live in segregated districts ("ghettos"), and were not allowed to exercise civil trades and professions. Jews were sometimes blamed as guilty of natural disasters and epidemics and were violently persecuted and killed in localized actions ("pogroms").

Through the French Revolution of 1789 and the spread of the revolutionary ideal of legal equality in Napoleonic-occupied Europe, Jews were granted admission to citizenship, access to local names, and entry into civil professions; and, after setbacks in the decades after 1815, their legal equality was definitively recognized everywhere by about 1870. The Jews, strengthened by their centuries-long struggle for survival, took advantage of the new opportunities, bringing large parts of economic life under their control with entrepreneurial drive and occupying many leadership positions in science and culture. For example, in 1900, 1.8 million people lived in Vienna, of whom about 150,000 (8 percent) were Jews; but 71 percent of Viennese financiers were Jews, 65 percent of lawyers, 59 percent of medical doctors, and half of Viennese journalists (cf. Wikipedia, "Demographics of Vienna"; Edmund de Waal, The Hare with Amber Eyes, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 4th edition 2014, p. 120). In Berlin in 1933, more than two-thirds of practicing lawyers were Jews.

The extremely successful entry of Jews into civil society aroused jealousy and hatred in some non-Jews - feelings that were added to the religious prejudices that had been shaped over centuries.

In addition to religious rejection and social envy, antisemitism received a third impulse from the biological racism that emerged in the 19th century. The division of humans into races - specifically into a superior white, a less superior yellow, and an inferior black race - had already been proposed in the 18th century in order to legitimize colonialism and Negro slavery as prerogatives of the white *"master race"*.

Added to this in the 19th century was Charles Darwin's theory, according to which the evolution of life leads to ever higher stages through mutation of the genetic material and selection of the most viable variants, whereby the fitter species in the plant and animal kingdoms constantly displaced and annihilated the less fit ones in a natural competitive struggle.

Darwin's theory was applied to the human races postulated at the time. Antisemitic publicists spread the pseudoscientific theory that there was a Jewish race engaged in a natural racial struggle with the "Aryan" race. "Aryans" were understood to be white-skinned non-Jews. This theory was advocated with particular widespread impact by Houston Stewart Chamberlain in his 1899 book "The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century," in which he propagated the thesis of the culture-creating Aryan and the culture-destroying Jewish race and established racial antisemitism. Sold by the hundreds of thousands, the book made hatred of Jews socially acceptable among the German middle class.

From the beginning of the 20th century, a fictional antisemitic pamphlet circulated under the title *"The Protocols of the Elders of Zion"*, which found worldwide distribution, particularly in the 1905 book by Sergei Hilus, *"The Great in the Small, or the Coming of the Antichrist and the Approaching Reign of the Devil on Earth"*. The pamphlet purported to prove a Jewish world conspiracy aimed at Jewish world domination and the enslavement of the rest of mankind. Despite repeated counter-evidence, prominent people like the automobile manufacturer Henry Ford, Adolf Hitler, and others were convinced of the "Protocols'" authenticity.

On this intellectual breeding ground, the so-called stab-in-the-back myth found widespread approval in Germany at the end of the First World War. It was the claim, spread by the German High Command, that the workers' strikes of 1917 and 1918 were the true cause of Germany's military defeat. It was a conspiracy theory according to which the national catastrophe was caused not by errors of the civil and military leadership of the country, but by a plot of socialists and Jews - just as

in the *Nibelungenlied* the devilish Hagen had brought down the hero Siegfried with a stab in the back.

National Socialist racial antisemitism found equally broad approval, although it was easily recognizable nonsense. It could be summarized in two core theses: that all Jews were born as pests to the Aryan race through genetic inheritance, and that the Aryan national body had to be cleansed of all Jewish elements. These theses corresponded to the designation of Jews as "vermin" used in National Socialist propaganda, their marking and exclusion like carriers of a contagious disease, and the classification of marriages between "Aryans" and Jews as punishable *"racial defilement"*. The term "Aryans" had, since Chamberlain's book, been restricted to the non-jewish German-speaking population of Europe.

German policy towards the Jews from 1933 to September 1941 can be interpreted as the effort to cleanse the German "national body" by expelling the approximately 500,000 German Jews abroad, particularly through their resettlement in Palestine (which had been actively promoted by Germany until 1936, but met with increased Arab resistance from 1936 and was stopped by the British Mandate authority in 1939, so that from then on only illegal Jewish immigration to Palestine was possible).

In the course of the German occupation of countries with much larger Jewish populations, the aim of Jewish policy changed, as has already been described. The concentration of Jews in ghettos and concentration camps, and from October 1941 their extermination throughout the entire German-controlled territory, now became the political program. Only the pathological obsession with the idea that the Jews were destroying the "Aryan race" can explain that Hitler and his entourage even gave the extermination of the Jews priority over military needs, by killing able-bodied Jews en masse instead of having them work in the armaments industry, and by tying up resources and personnel that could have been used militarily with the extermination of the Jews, continuing it until the very last day of the war. Out of pathological delusions, the extermination of the Jews had developed into the central state purpose of Hitler's Germany.

Added to the racial-biological delusion in Hitler's worldview was the historico-religious fallacy of the *doctrine of the three empires*.

A. Moeller van den Bruck had turned this doctrine into a political slogan with his book *"Das Dritte Reich"* ("The Third Empire"), published in 1923. In this book, he prophesied, after the Holy Roman Empire, which fell in 1806 ("First Empire"), and the Wilhelmine Bismarckian Empire, which lasted from 1870 to 1918 ("Second Empire"), a third German empire born from the "spirit of the racial soul." The National Socialists used this terminology to discredit the Weimar Republic and to legitimize Hitler's state.

A religious meaning flowed into the German myth of the three empires. According to Christian ideas of the Middle Ages, the Third Empire signified the post-apocalyptic reign of the Holy Spirit (Revelation of John, Chapter 20, Verses 1-10), which was to follow the first two empires of the Father and the Son. After the end of the thousand-year third empire, the devil and his spawn were to be destroyed by heavenly forces in an apocalyptic final battle and banished to the pit of hell for all eternity. According to Saul Friedländer's interpretation, Hitler was obsessed with the idea of the apocalyptic final battle, in which he, Hitler, led the forces of salvation, namely the "Aryan" people, against the Jews as the forces of hell. - If Friedländer's thesis is correct, however, it should be noted that Hitler's ideas were confused. For the apocalyptic final battle takes place after the 1000 years, whereas Hitler saw the final battle at the beginning of his "Thousand-Year Reich."

Only a messianic sense of mission can then make understandable Goebbels' statement from late April 1944, quoted in SAUL FRIEDLÄNDER/ORNA KENAN, Das Dritte Reich und die Juden 1933-1945, abridged edition, Munich 2010, (hereafter quoted as FRIEDLÄNDER/KENAN), p. 11, when Goebbels noted after a long conversation with Hitler, *"that a long-term policy in this war is only possible if one starts from the Jewish question"*. The highest exponents of the Nazi regime thus still seriously believed in a "long-term policy" at that time, while the Russian front was already approaching Hungary and the Allies advancing from the south were near Rome.

Hitler's loss of reality becomes clear from his order of the day of April 15, 1945, two weeks before his suicide, when the Russians were a few kilometers east of Berlin:

> *"If in these coming days and weeks every soldier on the Eastern Front does his duty, the final onslaught of Asia will be broken, just as, in the end, the incursion of our enemies in the West will also fail despite everything. [..] In the moment that fate has taken the greatest war criminal of all time, Franklin D. Roosevelt, from this earth, the turning point of the war will be reached."*

The American President Roosevelt had died on April 12, 1945.

Hitler's Biography

Hitler's biography is well-researched today. The following is a summary of some key points:

Adolf Hitler was born on April 22, 1889, in the Austrian village of Braunau near the Czech border. His paternal grandmother was Maria Anna Schicklgruber (1795-1847). As an unmarried woman, she gave birth in 1837 to an illegitimate son, Alois Schicklgruber. Alois was brought up in the family of Johann Nepomuk Hüttler (1807-1888), who later on bequeathed him a considerable part of his estate. In 1843, Maria Anna Schicklgruber married Johann Georg Hiedler (1792-1857), the elder brother of Johann Nepomuk Hüttler (the brothers used different spellings of their common surname). By marrying Maria Anna Schicklgruber, Johann Georg Hiedler became the stepfather of the illegitimately born Alois Schicklgruber. But Johann Georg denied to be the father of Alois and left him to be educated by his younger Brother Johann Nepomuk. Johann Georg did neither recognize Alois as his legitimate son nor adopt him. A rumor circulated that Johann Nepomuk Hüttler had fathered Alois. Johann Nepomuk's care for Alois and Johann Georg's refusal to recognize Alois as his son are strong indications that the rumor was true.

In 1876, Alois Schicklgruber was registered in the babtismal register of the Braunau church as Johann Georg Hiedler's legitimate son. Alois took the surname with the spelling "Hitler" instead of "Hüttler" or "Hiedler". The registration was 29 years after the death of his mother Anna Maria born Schicklgruber and 19 years after the death of his stepfather Johann Georg Hiedler, i.e. without the knowledge and consent of mother and stepfather.

In 1885, Alois Hitler married Klara Pölzl (1860-1907). She was the granddaughter of Johann Nepomuk Hüttler.

Alois and Klara had six children among whom, in 1889, the son Adolf, the future dictator. If the rumor was true that Johann Nepomuk Hüttler was the biological father of Alois, then Klara was a half-niece of her husband and Adolf Hitler was the offspring of parents united in an incestuous relationship.

Hitler later tried to suppress his unclear ancestry. It was tainted by the triple stigma of obscurity, his father's illegitimacy, and the suspicion of parental incest. Hitler may have had therefore lifelong feelings of inferiority that fueled his aggressiveness. In 1937 he proclaimed that his father Alois was the legitimate son of Johann Georg Hiedler. This remained the official version of Hitler's ancestry during the National Socialist period.

Hitler wanted to become a professional painter but was rejected for study by the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts in 1907. Until 1913, he eked out a meager existence by living off his mother's inheritance, a small orphan's pension, and the sale of his paintings. He sometimes lived in a homeless shelter. These circumstances may also have given rise to feelings of inferiority.

In his adolescence and as a young adult, Hitler was enthusiastic about Wagner's music and Germanic hero myths. He became saturated with anti-Semitic ideology.

At the outbreak of the First World War he volunteered for military service in the German army. This required a special permission since he was an Austrian. His war experiences brutalized him and instilled in him the military doctrine that the "enemy" must be destroyed.

Germany's defeat in 1918 traumatized him. He believed in the stab-in-the-back myth and in the guilt of "world Jewry" for the war's outcome.

From then on, he was consumed by the delusion that "world Jewry" wanted to annihilate the Aryan race. To preempt this, Germany had to arm itself and, among other things, crush Jewish Bolshevism, i.e., occupy the western part of Russia and annihilate the Jewish race worldwide. The subjugation of the Western powers, France and England, was the necessary preparation to secure Germany's rear for the fight against Russia.

When Hitler's great talent as a public orator and political agitator was discovered in the post-war turmoil around 1920, he quickly became the figurehead and spokesman for folkish-nationalist and anti-Semitic circles. From 1921, he was chairman of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP).

In November 1923, he and his like-minded comrades attempted a coup in Munich, which was nipped in the bud by the police. He and his followers were held in custody at the Landsberg Fortress, where they resided in comfortably furnished single rooms, dined together, and received visitors and mail without restriction. The trial against the putschists lasted from February to April 1924. The People's Court, which was politically sympathetic to the putschists, sentenced them to the lightest possible penalties. Hitler was released on parole in December 1924, after thirteen months of fortress confinement. During his imprisonment, he had read political literature and written the greater part of his two-volume book *"Mein Kampf" ("My battle").*

The German population was deeply disappointed and embittered by the outcome of the First World War. The humiliating terms of the Treaty of Versailles, which forced Germany to formally accept war guilt and commit to almost unaffordable reparation payments to the victorious powers, intensified the feelings of bitterness. The democratic form of government which was imposed on the Germans was alien to the populace, who had been accustomed to monarchical rule for centuries. The parliament's inability to act, perceived as a "talking shop," the weakness of the government and the associated disorder in the country, where coup attempts followed one another and uniformed gangs of left- and right-wing extremists terrorized the cities, and finally the inflation and impoverishment of the population that began around 1923, awakened in many Germans the hope for a "strong man" who would set things right again.

Hitler knew how to present himself as this "strong man." In 1933, he was appointed Reich Chancellor. In the same year, he declared himself *Führer* (leader) of the German people and the supreme authority in the state. From the day he took power, he suppressed all opposition with brutal force.

The burning question of war guilt, which had preoccupied all Germans since the end of the war and was accentuated by the attribution of blame in the Treaty of Versailles as well as the political disorder and impoverishment of the people in the post-war period, encouraged an irrational, blanket attribution of blame to the Jews. In the conviction of Germans that neither they themselves nor their legitimate pre-war and wartime monarchs and generals, but rather "the Jew" had caused their misfortune, many Germans found relief for their deep frustration.

In the first months of his rule, Hitler restored order in the country. He achieved full employment through state investment programs. He brazenly and unilaterally cancelled reparation payments to foreign countries without being punished for it. Through these measures, he secured the ecstatic approval and allegiance of the overwhelming majority of the population. He was perceived as a political genius with supernatural abilities. With the blitzkriegs against Poland and France in 1939 and 1940, he also presented himself as a military genius. Nothing like these victories had ever been seen in past history.

Most Germans were blind to the madness of Hitler's long-term political goals, which included the annihilation of the "Jewish race," and to his narcissistic self-aggrandizement. Many of them remained blind until the end of the war and beyond. Even if the removal of Jews from society did not make sense to many Germans, the ordinary citizen did not feel called upon to question the insights of the genius Hitler. The average German was deferential to authority. Hitler was the authority.

Hitler's "Redemption Antisemitism"

The Jewish historian Saul Friedländer, already cited several times, has put forward the credible thesis in his book *The Third Reich and the Jews 1933-1945* (cited here from Saul Friedländer/Orna Kenan, The Third Reich and the Jews 1933-1945, abridged German edition 2010) that Hitler was obsessed not only with a biological-racial antisemitism but also with a "redemption antisemitism," seeing himself as a messianic figure destined by Providence to redeem humanity from Judaism. Corresponding statements by Hitler in his writings and conversations from the 1920s also indicate that he was determined to annihilate the "Jewish race" in the event of a world war. By the time of Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union, the precondition of a world war had been met. National Socialist propaganda had already been trying to prepare the German public for the annihilation of the Jews since 1933.

However, since actual German policy from 1933 onwards was clearly aimed only at the *expulsion* of the Jews from Germany, and since this goal stood in clear contradiction to a plan of annihilation, the later extermination of the Jews was not yet a prospect that had to be anticipated in 1933. The turning point, as mentioned above, only came with the start of the Russian campaign in 1941, when the Wehrmacht overran countries with several million Jews whose expulsion to neutral foreign countries was unthinkable. A plan conceived in May 1940 to take the island of Madagascar from defeated France and resettle 5 million European Jews there had already become illusory by November 1940, after Britain had withstood the German air attacks and confirmed its naval supremacy.

Friedländer's concept of "redemption antisemitism" plausibly explains the German perseverance until the total collapse. Without the assumption of a metahistorical sense of mission among many Germans, this perseverance would have been incomprehensible. It is rational human behavior in hopeless situations to limit the damage and to give up the fight as soon as its continuation only brings destruction and benefits no one. This would have been the rational course of action for Germany from mid-1944 at the latest.

But the National Socialist sense of mission, the need to free all of humanity from the Jews, remained effective into the final days of the war and explains why Jews were arrested and transported to extermination camps until the very end, even though the transport resources were urgently needed for military defense. It also explains the death marches on which the inmates of the concentration camps were driven westwards as the Russian army approached: to release the prisoners would have been a betrayal of the National Socialist mission; to kill them one by one would have gone against the primal instinct of the guards not to murder with their own hands defenseless human beings. The death marches were neither one nor the other, but were intended to lead to the "natural" death of the victims from cold, hunger, and exhaustion.

The idea of last-minute mass killings was, however, no fantasy. That camp inmates feared such things is evident from the report by Hedwig Ems, Richard Frank's daughter, inserted below, about her final weeks in Theresienstadt: *"Three gas ovens had been built, which were completed a little too late, because none of us was supposed to leave Th. alive."*

The Feldberg and Frank Families

Hilde Frank's Origin and Youth

Hilde's great-grandfather, the Jew Joseph Alexander zu Bütow, had the surname "Feldberg" conferred upon him in 1814, after the withdrawal of the Napoleonic occupiers, in the Pomeranian town of Bütow. His son Alexander (II), born in 1817, received the rights of citizenship of Bütow in 1840. He married Minna born Freundlich (cf. Feldberg family tree, at the end of this file).

Alexander and Minna Feldberg were the parents of Seelig Feldberg (called Sally, 1857-1920) and Emil Daniel Feldberg (called Daniel, 1859-1914).

The elder son, Sally, married Clara Löwenstein in 1890.

Their marriage produced three children: Carl (1893-1936), Hilde (1894-1945), and Alice (1901-1993).

Daniel Feldberg's marriage to Amalie Lazarus produced Eleonore (Lore, 1895-1966), Alexander Max (1899-1978), and Wilhelm (1900-1993).

Sally and his brother Daniel Feldberg were among those Jews who used the newly achieved legal equality in the 19th century to integrate into non-Jewish society, to build new businesses through diligence and initiative, to create jobs, to acquire property and wealth, and to occupy leading positions in business and society. As simple craftsmen, they had immigrated from Pomerania to the economically booming city of Hamburg in 1888 and founded the company *"Feldberg Brothers (Ladies' Ready-to-Wear)"* here. The business was successful and grew.

The founders also acted as real estate investors. In 1911, on the recently created Mönckebergstrasse, i.e., in Hamburg's best commercial location, they acquired the Hanse property and, not far from there, the properties at Neuer Wall No. 59 and Pelzerstrasse No. 4. On the Hanse property, they had a large commercial building (Mönckebergstrasse 15, 17, 19 / Speersort 8) erected by a first-rate architect. The building was completed in 1912 and is still standing today.

Sally and Daniel Feldberg did not operate their fashion business in the commercial building they had built themselves because they did not want to pay their own high rents. It was not until September 6, 1928, long after the death of both founders, that the company moved into premises at Mönckebergstrasse 15/17.

Daniel Feldberg died in 1914, Sally in 1920. While the real estate was passed down within the family according to the testamentary wishes of the deceased, the business was continued as a limited partnership under the name "Feldberg Brothers, Specialty Shop for Ladies' Coats, Suits, and Furs".

Hilde Feldberg grew up with her siblings Carl and Alice as the daughter of an upper-middle-class family. She learned to play the piano and other things with which daughters from wealthy families occupied themselves at the time, but not a profession to earn a living.

Engagement and Marriage

On February 20, 1919, Hilde became engaged to the Leipzig textile industrialist Hermann Frank, who was almost twenty years her senior. He had been born in Leipzig on August 9, 1875. His parents were Wilhelm Frank (1842-1910) and Auguste Frank (1846-1911), and his siblings were Alfred (1874-1949), Toni (Antonia, 1877-1954, later married to Gustav Plaut), and Emma ("Emmy", 1884-1961, later married to Ernst Rubensohn) (cf. the Frank family tree at the end of the file).

The wedding, celebrated in Leipzig on June 10, 1920, was overshadowed by the political unrest of the early post-war period, the bitterness of large parts of the population, the intensified resurgence of antisemitism, and finally by the death of the bride's father, Sally Feldberg, who had passed away on February 2, 1920.

Hermann Frank and his cousin Richard Frank were each half-heirs and owners of the company *"Gebrüder Frank Strick- und Wirkwarenfabrik"* (Frank Brothers Knitting and Hosiery Factory) in Leipzig, founded in 1865 by their fathers, Wilhelm and Selmar Frank. This was a company that, in its heyday, employed many hundreds of workers. Hermann's three siblings had no shares in the company.

Hilde's marriage to Hermann Frank produced a daughter, Anita Frank (1921-1945), and a son, Reinhard Frank (1928-2010). Both were born in Leipzig. The family initially lived there at Funkenburgstrasse 20, and from the end of 1926 in a larger house at Karl Tauchnitz-Strasse 10.

Hilde Frank as a Young Widow

From Leipzig to Berlin

When Hilde's husband Hermann Frank died in September 1932, Hilde was 38 years old.

Four months later, on January 30, 1933, Hitler seized power. From then on, antisemitism determined state policy. The bad news came heavy and fast. On February 27, 1933, the Reichstag building was set on fire. The mass arrests, which began that same night, suggested state-sponsored arson.

This was followed by the "boycott of Jews" on April 1, 1933, and on April 7, 1933, the "Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service," which led to the dismissal of all "non-Aryan" civil servants.

Under these circumstances, which were frightening for Jews, Hilde and her children moved in the spring of 1933 into the house of the famous researcher and university lecturer Carl Neuberg at Hittorfstrasse 18 in Berlin-Dahlem. She likely hoped to receive more protection and support from him than she could expect from her late husband's family in Leipzig or her own relatives in Hamburg. Hilde's presence in Berlin-Dahlem is first documented by Anita's vaccination certificate of May 9, 1933.

Arrest of Hilde's Brother-in-Law Alfred Frank, July 7 to 11, 1933

Jews increasingly became victims of terror. This included arbitrary arrests with shorter and longer prison stays (intimidation arrests). It was necessary to avoid certain streets and squares to evade insults and physical assaults. The *"Kampfbund für den gewerblichen Mittelstand"* (Combat League for the Commercial Middle Class) and the *"Nationalsozialistische Betriebszellenorganisation" (NSBO)* (National Socialist Factory Cell Organization) organized the boycott of Jewish businesses. A first wave of Jews began to flee out of Germany.

Hilde's brother-in-law Alfred Frank was the victim of an (intimidation) arrest from July 7 to 11, 1933, along with about 60 other Jewish doctors in Berlin (cf. on this event DAGMAR HARTUNG-VON DOETINCHEM und ROLF WINAU (Hg.), Zerstörte Fortschritte - Das Jüdische Krankenhaus in Berlin 1756 - 1861 - 1914 - 1989, Berlin 1989, hereafter quoted HARTUNG- VON DOETINCHEM/WINAU, S. 149 f.). The ostensible reason was his involvement in an advisory center that, with official approval, arranged new employment opportunities in Germany and abroad for Jewish colleagues who had become unemployed. In his memoirs, which he wrote in England in 1939, Alfred Frank described the incident.

From the memoirs of Alfred Frank

... On July 7, 1933, in the early morning hours, about 60 doctors were arrested in their homes by the Secret State Police (Gestapo) and taken away. - My own experiences, which I am writing down from memory after 6 years, are as follows: Around 6:30 in the morning, our old, loyal housekeeper woke us and said that 3 gentlemen from the Gestapo were there to conduct a house search. Since many such actions were still being carried out illegally at that time, we first notified the local green police, who confirmed the authorization of those demanding entry. They conducted a rather superficial inspection of the desks, bookcases, etc. and then told me I was under arrest. The following items were confiscated from me: my passport, an attendance list from the Advisory Center (Beratungsstelle), an issue of the Central Association newspaper "German Citizens of the Jewish Faith," a membership list of the Charlottenburg Medical Association, of which I was the 2nd chairman, my revolver with ammunition, which I had carried in both the Balkan War of 1912/13 and the World War of 1914/18, and for which I had a police permit. I did not get it back after my release from prison, nor later, whereas the other "incriminating" documents were returned to me. The arresting officers were a gentleman from the Gestapo, a doctor unknown to me (!), who also did not identify himself as such (!), and a lower-ranking police officer, who told us he had liked much more to work in the criminal police department before than in the political department now.

During the house search, the police officer showed his colleagues our 42-volume anniversary edition of Goethe with the astonished remark: "Nothing but Joethes."
I was given about 1 hour to get dressed and pack the most necessary things in a handbag; for the rest, my wife and I were left in the dark as to why the arrest was taking place and where I would be taken. We ended up at the exhibition park (Ulap) at the Lehrter railway station, where a Schutzstaffel (SA) unit was stationed at the time and accommodation for prisoners had been set up under the arches of the city railway. The unit number of the SA as well as the name of its "commander" have escaped my memory; for understandable reasons, I did not take any notes in Germany.
I was taken to a small room, my personal details were recorded, and it was explained to me in a harsh tone that I was allowed to smoke, but speaking was forbidden.
Then it was led back to the accommodation room under the city railway arch.
On the way I saw how a young man (Kantorowicz) - not a doctor -, "guarded" by SA men with rubber truncheons, was being driven around in a circle like a horse on a lunge line, until he finally collapsed and was brought into the accommodation room. In there, I met a large number of doctors I knew, some of them very prestigious ones. The general mood was not very somber at first, as most of the arrestees assumed that it was not an action against individuals, and because regarding the Advisory Center, every one of us had a completely clear conscience. Later - as a result of the treatment and the uncertainty about our future fate - the mood dropped considerably.
Upon entry, I was searched for weapons by a doctor - Dr. Villain - and the ban on speaking was most emphatically impressed upon me. ...
Not much happened in the first few hours. The SA men would occasionally shout "Shut up!" during more lively conversations, but otherwise there was no significant alarm. A robust, stocky canteen manager provided lunch and cigars for a hefty fee; telephone calls to relatives could be made through the SA men.
This "idyll" changed suddenly when, in the afternoon, the command came: "Men, form up in 3 ranks, take off your jackets!" A brutal, fat Sturmführer appeared on the scene, first ordering the 3 arrested women who were watching to take the cigarettes out of their "snouts," and declared that we all really ought to be shot. Then the "drilling" began! "Left face! Right face! Get down! Up! March, march! Down again!" etc. The majority of the detainees were, after all, old soldiers with war decorations; the barrack-square drills were less difficult for them. But there were also people over 70 and sick people among the arrested, and those who had no military training. If the exercises were not performed precisely or quickly enough, they were repeated, and SA men helped things along with swinging rubber truncheons. For weeks afterward, some of us could not use a public bathhouse, because we would otherwise have been punished for "spreading atrocity stories"!! A doctor from Neukölln - Dr. Kaufmann -, who had been struck from behind, turned around and made a defensive gesture: he then received a blow to the face with a rubber truncheon, causing him to bleed. Furthermore, he was told that he had intended to attack the SA men.
This "military drill" lasted about an hour; in stages, first those over 60, then those over 50 were dismissed, and finally the few young men - with the sarcastic remark, "now you can go on working at the Advisory Center." Exhausted and humiliated, we returned to the accommodation rooms.
Around 7 p.m., Dr. Villain appeared, had us bring in mattresses and straw pallets, and asked if anyone had any complaints. Dr. Kaufmann stepped forward and said he had been mistreated. "Nobody is mistreated here," shouted Dr. Villain. Kaufmann was led away for interrogation - and did not complain again!

Towards evening, an SA guard took up quarters in the accommodation room; a pockmarked guard kept a strict regimen and constantly bragged about his marksmanship at so-and-so many 100 meters! The "interrogations" began in the evening and lasted until around 2 a.m. Individuals from our group were called out - they returned pale, exhausted, and completely broken, threw themselves onto the straw pallets - and did not speak a word (Löwy-Hattendorf, Glaser, et al.). Each of us waited to be fetched, resolved not to confess or sign anything under duress, and was only unsure how long he would be physically able to stick to the truth under the known interrogation methods. For most of us, sleep was out of the question, especially since loud screams, and now and then the sound of a gunshot, constantly penetrated our accommodation room from outside. I particularly remember the case of an SA man who, apparently brought in for embezzlement, was tormented by his comrades with a "cat-o'-nine-tails" and a rubber truncheon. He screamed heartbreakingly and was then brought into our accommodation room with a severely injured eye, where a Jewish ophthalmologist applied a first-aid dressing.
A Dr. Haustein (?) from Schöneberg was brought to our group. Allegedly he was a Communist and a homosexual. He was taken away and we did not see him again until the next day in the Spandau prison, where he had been conducted in a separate car. He could not stand any more on his feet and was put in solitary confinement. During a later arrest, he is said to have poisoned himself with cyanide.
The night passed, for most without sleep. I was not interrogated.
The next morning, we were allowed to walk individually in the rotunda of the exhibition park. It was astonishing how approachable and sociable the lower-ranking SA men were as soon as none of their superiors were in sight. They told us that we would be sentenced for "high treason" and would probably be taken to a concentration camp! The common SA men did not know that our situation had improved due to other factors, and that our imminent release from the hands of the SA was attributable to the tireless efforts of our relatives and the Jewish Community (Heinrich Stahl).
Our arrest had caused a great stir in Berlin, all the more so as it soon leaked out that the Gestapo and the Public Prosecutor's Office had no files whatsoever on our "offenses"; rather, the whole affair was actually to be seen as an initiative of the National Socialist Doctors' League. As I later heard, there was also great indignation about this procedure in the Christian medical community. Many colleagues made themselves available to us as courageous witnesses, while of course others, with whom we had worked for years, showed a great lack of civil courage. ...
On the morning of the second day, our relatives were permitted to bring us suitcases with necessary linen, etc. A young SA man carried the suitcase for my wife, who arrived very early, and she was allowed to speak with me in his presence.
Later - when superiors appeared on the scene - the contents of the suitcases were inspected, torn apart, and their carriers insulted (the spouse of Geheimrat Prof. Strauss). "Carry your Palestine suitcase yourself" was shouted at the Aryan wife of a half-Aryan.
There were no more drills. Two large trucks from the protection police (Schutzpolizei) appeared, and it was clear that we were going to be transported away. Where to, that was the big question. ...
After a drive through the busy streets of Western Berlin, the heavy prison gates of Spandau opened for us.
To say it right away, the treatment by the director and the old Prussian officials was thoroughly correct, and I do not believe that any of us had anything to complain about. Certainly, prison bars and "doors without handles" are no pleasure, and the uncertainty of our future,

the possibility of further nightly "interrogations" by the Gestapo, hung over our heads like a sword of Damocles - but, all in all: we were treated humanely in Spandau. In the prison yard, the director first greeted one of our people who had been a prison doctor in Spandau; another recognized a wartime comrade in him - then we were divided into groups of 6, had to get our linen and the famous tin bowl, and were taken to the blocks with individual cells. In each of them there were already about 25 purely political prisoners, among them former police officers, former members of the Reichstag, and also many young Communists who, released from the bunkers of the police headquarters, were awaiting their sentences. Some of the latter were in very bad shape, psychologically and physically.

We were not put to work; once a day we were "exercised" in the prison yard. The hygienic conditions were good, except for the toilets. We shared a washroom and shower room with 2 other cell blocks. The food was mediocre; we could supplement it somewhat with our own provisions.

The first night in Spandau we slept a deep, deep sleep; through the open, barred windows, only the steady tread of the guards and, now and then, the barking of their accompanying dogs penetrated the summer night's silence.

On the 3rd day after our arrest only, we became aware of our true situation; and, although letters from our relatives reached us, informing us that everything possible was being done for our release, we were nevertheless quite depressed. Some also began to suffer from a veritable prison psychosis. We tried to divert ourselves as best we could by reading, playing games, and talking with the other prisoners, with whom we naturally maintained an understandable reserve in discussing political matters due to the danger of informants.

On the 5th day, in the afternoon, the order suddenly came to get "ready." The possibility of being transferred elsewhere existed, but our hope of release was soon fulfilled. - We were (graciously) not placed under police surveillance but were sent home with a warning to maintain good conduct in the future.

Our joy and that of our relatives was great. But for a long time, the memory of that difficult period of baseless, senseless accusations and brutal treatment was kept alive within us. It weighed on us like a terrible nightmare, and in many the wise decision matured to turn their backs on a country where human dignity was trampled underfoot. ...

Our awakening in 1933 was abrupt. Disenfranchised, humiliated, and largely deprived of our work, we withdrew from public life into our homes, considering it beneath our dignity to visit restaurants and cafés, as well as theaters and concerts. A feeling of defensiveness and isolation had taken hold of us.

Life Under the "Nuremberg Race Laws"

After the shock that Alfred Frank's arrest represented also for Hilde and her children, Hilde, together with her older brother Carl Feldberg, tried to arrange for emigration to Palestine. However, their efforts were ultimately unsuccessful. The plot of land Hilde had purchased near Tel Aviv was confiscated, and Hilde abandoned the plan to emigrate. Carl Feldberg, who had traveled to Palestine several times to prepare for his and Hilde's resettlement, was killed in Palestine during the Arab revolt in May 1936.

With the tightening of the "Gesetz über das Berufsbeamtentum" (Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service) in 1934, Carl Neuberg lost his state university professorships. He remained employed at the semi-private Kaiser Wilhelm Institute until his successor was found on September 30, 1936.

Despite these humiliations and the loss of his academic influence, he remained in Berlin, presumably because of his bond with Hilde and because he still believed himself to be safe due to high-ranking connections.

At the Nuremberg Rally of the NSDAP on September 15, 1935, three laws were passed and immediately published, which have gone down in history as the "Nuremberg Race Laws" or "Nuremberg Laws" for short. These included the "Reich Citizenship Law," which stripped Jews of their "Reich citizenship rights," that is, their political rights at the national level, but left them with German nationality, and the "Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour," which defined the terms "Jew" and "Mischling" as well as several subcategories and forbade marriages between Jews and "Aryans."

The "Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour" defined the term Jew primarily by biological descent, not by religious affiliation. People with four or three Jewish grandparents were considered "Jews" or "full Jews." People with two Jewish grandparents were considered "Mischlinge of the first degree" or "half-Jews," and people with one Jewish grandparent as "Mischlinge of the second degree" or "quarter-Jews."

The state extermination program starting in October 1941 targeted "full Jews," and in the conquered eastern territories, also "half-Jews."

"Full Jews" were not allowed to marry "Aryan" partners. Such marriages and extramarital intercourse between Jews and "Aryans" were punishable as "racial defilement" or "racial treason." The man in such relationships was always the one prosecuted, whether a Jew or an "Aryan", as Hitler believed women had no will of their own in sexual matters.

"Half-" and "quarter-Jews" were allowed to marry "Aryan" or "quarter-Jewish" partners, provided they had an official permit to do so.

From 1942 onwards, no more such permits were issued.

From 1935, "half-" and "quarter-Jews" were still allowed to attend secondary and high schools. They could take the school-leaving examination, but this did not grant them unrestricted admission to university studies. From 1937, they were barred from studying pharmacy and medicine. They did not have to pay the Jewish property levy imposed after the pogrom night of November 9, 1938, nor wear the Jewish star ordered in September 1941.

The Nuremberg legislation of 1935 also took religious affiliation into account: "half-Jews" who belonged to a Jewish religious community or were married to a Jewish partner were considered Jews and were designated as "Geltungsjuden". Legally, they were treated the same as "full Jews."

Despite these oppressive events, the Jews who remained in Germany tried to continue living as normal a life as possible, though restricted to interacting with other Jews. Anita reported on this in a letter to her mother from 1937.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin-Dahlem, February 14, 1937

My dear Mutti!
So, I've happily survived the ball and everything went very well. I'll now try to describe everything to you in detail.
... I really wasn't nervous at all. I was more nervous before the dance lessons than before the ball. Shortly after 8:30, after checking in with the supervisor, Miss Ina, I took the U-Bahn to Wittenbergplatz. The train was full of people in evening gowns, masks, and other bric-a-brac. You can imagine how I felt among them!! There were already an awful lot of people at the Brüder-Vereinshaus (House of the Brethren's Association). Outside, they were queuing for the last tickets! So I got myself ready and proudly walked with my ticket to the table: "Saturday 8 p.m. Dance Class." I was greeted with hellos and immediately felt right at home. Our table was right by the Fabian band in the main hall. By the way, I had to think of you as I strutted up the many stairs in my long dress. At first, I kept accidentally skipping two steps at

a time, but then I caught myself and ascended the stairs slowly with measured steps. But to continue, no sooner had I arrived than I was already hitting the dance floor.
But you didn't really dance, you just tried to stay more or less in time while dodging the many feet, shoves, and bumps.
Soon it got noticeably better. When the waiter came to our table, I had to order something. So, since they mostly had wine, I ordered a "Schorle-Marle" without knowing what it was. But it tasted quite good afterward. Around 10 o'clock, our group was more or less complete. I saw a whole bunch from the Savin Club, Eva and Paul Grantz. The latter were in the red hall, however, so we didn't see much of each other. The ladies and girls were fantastically dressed (or rather, they had barely anything on and were unfortunately, for the most part, heavily painted). Now we danced one dance after another. Sometimes here, sometimes there, sometimes with a gentleman from our dance class, sometimes with a stranger.
I danced almost exclusively with Hans Boschwitz, Mr. Besser, Werner Glass, and Walter Jialodjinski. Sometimes with others, too. We were nicely in the swing of things. When we took a break from dancing, which was sometimes very necessary, we sat at our table or walked around a bit. Once our "fatty" behaved so badly, that I couldn't help but put him in his place.
Since then, funnily enough, he has been behaving noticeably more modestly. Maybe it helped! Mr. Lewin was there too, but I only managed to see him a couple of times. Our new gentleman is, as far as I know him, so-so, nothing special.
Since the bread rolls were outrageously expensive, I bought myself a banana around 2 a.m. Around that time, I felt quite strange. I think I was a little tipsy. I kept having that feeling you get just before you faint, but it soon passed. The dancing was non-stop; you'd barely sat down when someone would come up again, "May I have this dance"? Well, what can you do? You just get up, nod politely, and dance the umpteenth round. But our beds were at home for resting, so into the fun we went! When at 3:15 the band didn't know, couldn't, and wouldn't play any more dance styles, the last dance was announced. A pity! Once you were downstairs and had become the happy owner of your own coat again, you met up and moved away from the thumping music and all that was beautiful. I went with Mr. Besser, Werner Glass, and Klaus Fränkel to the 176, the only one still running, where we soon took off for Halensee station. There, Fränkel and I had to take a taxi, and we rode together as far as Roseneck, and then I continued home. I arrived safely at 4:15 a.m. I got into bed and soon fell asleep. Today I'm cheerful again and my feet are perfectly ready for more dancing. (It was incredible practice.) Maybe Hans Boschwitz will come along again on Feb. 20th, then it's off to Bordeaux!! I got a 2 in French!! (Only 1 mistake).
A big kiss and lots of love from your ball-daughter Anita

The "Brüder-Vereinshaus" (House of the Brethren's Association) at Kurfürstenstrasse 115/116 in Berlin-Schöneberg, where the ball took place, was a building constructed between 1908 and 1910 that initially housed the Jewish "Brüderverein zur gegenseitigen Unterstützung" (Brethren's Association for Mutual Support). In 1939, the "Central Office for Jewish Emigration in Berlin" was established there, which administratively controlled the forced emigration of Berlin's Jews. From January 1940, the so-called "Judenreferat IV B 4 des Reichssicherheitshauptamtes" (Jewish Affairs Department IV B 4 of the Reich Security Main Office), under the direction of Adolf Eichmann, was located at Kurfürstenstrasse 116.

Anita's account gives the impression of unclouded festive joy. From this, one should not conclude that Jews in Germany were still living in a state of civic normality in 1937. Unmentioned in Anita's report is the psychological burden on the attendees as members of the ostracized Jewish minority, surrounded by a predominantly anti-Semitic majority population from which they had to hermetically isolate themselves for such festivities and keep their distance in public whenever possible.

In the years since 1933, Jews and non-Jews had grown accustomed to the exclusion and adapted their behavior toward one another, so that the National Socialist policy on Jews hardly aroused emotion anymore. In Hilde's personal papers, there are no letters that indicate indignation or disgust at this policy. Fear was the only feeling that was expressed again and again.

Forced Sales of Carl Neuberg's Villa in Berlin and of the "Gebr. Feldberg" Company in Hamburg

In 1938, Carl Neuberg sold his villa to non-Jews. According to the contract, he had to vacate it by the end of September. With that, his and Hilde's paths separated. Hilde moved with her children into a rented apartment at Auguste-Viktoria-Strasse 33 in Berlin-Grunewald. Nothing is known of Neuberg's whereabouts from October 1938 until his departure for Holland at the end of August 1939.

In the same year 1938, the Feldberg family had to sell their business in Hamburg to the non-Jewish "Eichmeyer & Co.". The business, founded in 1888 by Hilde's father Sally Feldberg and his brother Daniel Feldberg, had been run as a limited partnership since the founders' deaths. Hilde's mother Clara Feldberg-Löwenstein and Hilde had been co-owners as limited partners. Hilde's cousin Alexander Feldberg, the last managing director of the "Gebrüder Feldberg Damenkonfektion," liquidated the company after the forced sale of its assets. It was canceled in the commercial register on August 15, 1938.

Alexander and his his family emigrated to Montevideo, Uruguay, in October 1938, and thus did not experience the Night of the Pogrom in Germany.

The real estate at Mönckebergstrasse 15, 17, and 19, which had housed the fashion store, was sold to the same buyers under a separate contract in the first half of 1939.

Hilde's Rescue Plans for Herself, Anita, and Reinhard

Shortly after Hilde and Neuberg separated, on the night of November 9-10, 1938, the most violent acts of terror against Jews since Hitler's seizure of power occurred. They were instigated by the NSDAP and raged throughout the Reich until November 11, 1938, and from November 10, 1938, also in annexed Austria. The pretext was that a 17-year-old Polish Jew had - after his parents' deportation - shot an official at the German embassy in Paris. For this act, the National Socialist leadership held "the Jews" collectively responsible and incited the non-Jewish German population to acts of revenge.

Because of the many smashed windowpanes and shards of glass, the event was mockingly titled "Reichskristallnacht" (cristal night of the Reich). According to an article published by the Jewish Museum Berlin in 2021, approximately 400 Jews were then murdered or driven to suicide. Over 1,400 synagogues and prayer rooms, as well as about 7,500 Jewish shops and homes, were destroyed, and Jewish cemeteries and other community facilities were devastated. In the days that followed, the Gestapo arrested about 30,000 Jewish men and deported them to concentration camps. Hundreds were murdered there or died. Most surviving prisoners were released after a few weeks or months.

From mid-November 1938, new anti-Jewish laws and decrees were enacted in rapid succession. Jews with private assets over 5,000 RM had to pay a "Jewish wealth tax" ("atonement payment") of 20 percent of their property; Jewish businesses had to be sold to "Aryans" or liquidated; and Jewish-owned real estate also had to be sold to "Aryans." Jewish students were expelled from all state schools and universities. Jews were banned from cinemas, theaters, operas, and concerts; the only exception to the ban were events of the Jewish Cultural Association ("Jüdischer Kulturbund").

In Berlin, Jews were forbidden to enter certain parts of the city.

Further harassment followed in 1939. From January, it was mandatory for Jews to add the names "Israel" and "Sara" to their existing first names; from April, tenancy protection for Jews was abolished, and many were forced to move into smaller apartments or take other Jews into their homes; from July, it became compulsory for Jews to join the state-created and state-controlled "Reichsver-

einigung der Juden" (Association of the Jews) and they were forbidden to be on the streets after 8 p.m. (9 p.m. in summer); from October, a large letter "J" ("Jew stamp") was entered into their passports and the Jewish "atonement payment" of November 1938 was increased from 20 to 25 percent, meaning a supplementary payment of 5 percent of their property at the end of 1939.

The November pogroms of 1938 and the subsequent laws and measures were the ultimate reason for Jews in Germany to emigrate - provided they could find a host country that would accept them.

Hilde, too, now began to seriously plan her family's escape, namely by sending the children to England on a British children transport and by her own emigration to Switzerland. She hoped to obtain the necessary Swiss citizenship by marrying a Swiss citizen and then to be able to reunite the family in Switzerland.

In the spring of 1939, Hilde made contact with the 62-year-old non-Jewish Swiss citizen Ernst Kindler, who had placed a newspaper ad in Germany seeking a well-off Jewish woman willing to marry. After overcoming significant administrative hurdles - marriages between Jewish women and "Aryans" were punishable under the Nuremberg Laws - Hilde married her second husband on July 20, 1939, before the German registrar of Berlin-Schmargendorf. She took the surname Kindler. On the same day, she introduced her new husband to the children, Anita and Reinhard, as their new father. The children called him "daddy."

After the transport of Hilde's children to England, scheduled for September 3, 1939, was canceled due to the outbreak of war, Hilde placed Reinhard with the foster family of Edith and Max Koppel at Badensche Str. 6 in Berlin-Schöneberg starting in October 1939. This shortened Reinhard's new route to school at the Private High School of the Jewish Community of Berlin at Wilsnackerstrasse 3.

Anita continued to live with her mother on Auguste-Viktoria-Strasse. When she began working at the Jewish Hospital, Anita also moved in with a foster family in May 1940.

Forced Sale of the "Gebr. Frank" Company in Leipzig

In Leipzig, Berthold Levy, Hilde's partner in the limited partnership *"Gebrüder Frank Strick- und Wirkwarenfabrik" (Frank Brothers Knitting and Hosiery Factory)* was arrested in front of the factory gate at Berliner Strasse 65 during the November pogroms of November 9/10, 1938. He was mistreated in police custody. On April 23, 1939, he died at the age of 40.

The subsequent forced sale of the business assets of the "Gebrüder Frank" company in Leipzig shows the viciousness with which the National Socialist state de facto expropriated businesses built up by Jews over decades and let them go to "Aryans" for a pittance: The forced sale of the "Gebrüder Frank" company was initiated when the three owners - Hilde Frank, Richard Frank, and Berthold Levy - were served with official letters in January 1939. These letters, citing an alleged suspicion of capital flight, suspended their authority over the company and its bank accounts and transferred ownership rights to a trustee, the Leipzig lawyer and notary Oscar Zimmermann. He sold the company's business assets, including the real estate with the business premises, for a price of approx. 400,000 RM (Reichsmark) to an "Aryan" group of buyers led by senior employees of the company. The previous owners had no influence on the sales negotiations and the pricing. The trustee, Zimmermann, collected the proceeds of the sale and kept them under his own authority. Due to the alleged suspicion of capital flight, the money was not paid out to Hilde and the other two beneficiaries or their heirs for a long time.

After Hilde married in July 1939, her status as sole heir to the estate of her first husband, Hermann Frank, became void according to a mutual will from 1930. Instead, Anita and Reinhard became heirs to three-eighths each of their father's estate. This made it necessary that a settlement of the paternal inheritance in Leipzig had to be carried out between Hilde and the children. The responsible guardianship court appointed the retired Regional Court Director Dr. Albert Heucke in Stettin as representative of Anita, and the legal guardian Dr. Max Israel Metz in Berlin-

Charlottenburg as representative of Reinhard in the negotiation with Hilde. Hilde appointed Dr. Hans Gumpert to be her representative.

While Dr. Metz hardly interfered in the matter, Heucke did everything imaginable to make life difficult for Hilde and Anita. He had quickly realized that Hilde, as a Swiss citizen, was entitled to transfer her share of the inheritance to Switzerland, whereas the children, as German nationals, did not have this right even if they followed their mother to Switzerland. In the interest of the German state, not the children, Heucke therefore tried to enforce that the "Jewish wealth tax" ("atonement payment") of 20 percent (25 percent from the end of 1939) be paid in full from the mother's share of the inheritance. Hilde was able to prevent this when her legal representative, Dr. Hans Gumpert, argued on her behalf that she had become engaged to Ernst Kindler on October 1, 1938, with the consequence that Anita and Reinhard had then become the owners of the paternal inheritance according to Hermann Frank's 1930 will and would have to pay the "Jewish wealth tax", decreed on November 12, 1938, from their own shares. (The will had specified the surviving parent's *re-engagement*, not re-marriage, as the time at which the inheritance would pass to the children).

Heucke also did not agree to using the full income from the children's assets for their living expenses in Berlin. He invoked Hilde's parental duty of care and demanded a larger contribution from Hilde. Furthermore, he did not pay the monthly allowance directly to 19-year-old Anita, alleging the fact that she was still a minor, but instead he wanted to transfer the monthly allowance to Anita's foster father, for which he demanded a power of attorney signed by Ernst Kindler.

When the trustee Zimmermann demanded an exorbitant fee for his services and Hilde's legal representative Gumpert asked him to justify the amount of the fee and to reduce it if possible, Zimmermann let it be known that he would not respond. If the client was dissatisfied, she should turn to the court. In essence, this meant that Zimmermann would not deign to discuss his fees with Jews.

Finally, Gumpert asked Heucke to charge the trustee Zimmermann's fee proportionally against Hilde's and the children's shares of the inheritance. Heucke had it confirmed by the Charlottenburg District Court that Hilde alone was liable for the costs. The court's reasoning, in its decision of July 23, 1940, was: *"However, these costs do not fall upon the children, but upon those who, through their suspicious behavior, gave cause for the security order."*

Thus, one humiliating event followed another.

Separation of the Family

Hilde's Relocation to Switzerland

After the failure of Hilde's plan to send the children to England she remained in Berlin for another year. Only on September 15, 1940, more than a year after her marriage to Ernst Kindler, she moved her residence to Switzerland. Both children and their foster mothers accompanied Hilde to the train station. They were never to see each other again. Contact was maintained through an active correspondence between Hilde, her children, and their foster parents. Hilde carefully preserved the letters she received from Berlin. They form the core of this book. Hilde's own letters to her children in Berlin are lost.

When Hilde entered Switzerland in September 1940, she came to a country where public opinion was dominated by an existential fear of a German invasion, a corresponding general aversion to Germans and and widespread antisemitism. While Hilde could not deny her German accent, she tried to conceal her Jewishness. When possible, she mentioned the children's Jewishness as the heritage of their father. She left her own Jewishness unmentioned.

Encrypting the Letters Due to Censorship

The privacy of mail and correspondence had been suspended by the *"Reichstagsbrandverordnung" (Decree for the Protection of People and State, of February 28, 1933)*. However, systematic monitoring of all - not just Jewish - correspondence with foreign countries was only introduced at the

start of the war in September 1939. From then on, the letter writers' precautions included not using full personal names, but rather abbreviations, first names only, or circumlocutions, and not using the same circumlocution multiple times in the same letter, but instead referring, for example, to Hilde first as "Alice's sister," and then as "Clara's daughter." Anita sometimes disguised herself by writing about "Hermann's daughter" in the third person. She enciphered her brother Reinhard with words like "the little one", "Stöpke", "Reini", or "Reiny."

It was not possible to write openly about deportations, harassment, hopes, and fears. The writers had to find circumlocutions that could be deciphered by the recipients based on shared life experience, without arousing suspicion of the censors of a hidden message. The editor of this book has endeavored to decode the encryptions contained in the letters, although in some cases different interpretations may be possible.

Anita Starts Working at the Jewish Hospital, 1940

In May 1940, Anita began her training as a nurse at the Jewish Hospital on Iranische Strasse in Berlin. To shorten her commute to work, she moved from Berlin-Dahlem to the foster family of Regina and Fritz Weiss at Zingster Strasse 9 in the north of Berlin.

At this time, Hitler was celebrating his greatest military successes, which were drilled into the German people daily by state propaganda. For the Jews, they represented a growing threat. In the spring, the Wehrmacht occupied Norway, and from May to June, Belgium, Holland, and France. The armistice with France was signed on June 22, 1940. It amounted to a capitulation by France. The southeastern part of France, particularly the Alpine region, was only gradually occupied by the Germans over the following two years and until then remained the "Free Zone" ("zone libre"). Hitler concluded the French campaign with great propagandistic fanfare. On June 25, 1940, he issued a proclamation to the German people: *"Your soldiers have, in just under six weeks, after a heroic struggle, ended the war in the West against a brave opponent. Their deeds will go down in history as the most glorious victory of all time. In humility, we thank the Lord God for His blessing. I order the Reich to be flagged for ten, and the bells to be rung for seven days."*

Hitler's popularity was at its peak. The German people devotedly followed their mystified Führer and, for the most part, shared his ideological delusions, which included the hatred of the Jews that the Führer exemplified for his people.

For the Jews in Germany, there were new harassments in addition to the existing ones: From February, they no longer received clothing ration cards. From July 1940, they were only allowed to buy groceries from 5 to 6 p.m., that is, at a time when the shelves were mostly empty. All private telephones were confiscated. Letters abroad had to be delivered in person to a post office; the senders had to identify themselves there with an identity document (from October 1941, delivery by authorized representatives with identification was permitted).

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, October 12, 1940

My dear Mutti!
dear daddy!
... I've had an incredibly hard time lately, as almost the only apprentice nurse under a tyrant of a supervisor! Almost always on the late shift and constantly subjected to her biting remarks. Well, I'll get through this too. Unfortunately, the courses are now also scheduled for late in the evening, so one hardly gets home any earlier. But the main thing is, after all, that one is healthy, has a place to live, and learns what one can pick up. - No money has come from H. to this day; in the meantime, I went to the K.'s, who gave me the necessary money for the moment; the rest is supposed to be at the D. office, Mr. K. will see to it. I will probably send a reminder from the home to Dr. H.; perhaps that will help. ... I often speak with

Mrs. Pro. on the phone; she wrote me a delightful card yesterday! I sometimes still went to Stöpke in the evening after my shift, but I probably won't be able to do that anymore because I often get home so terribly late, and in the long run, that's becoming too exhausting for me. ... A heartfelt kiss and many loving greetings from your Anita

"H." or "Dr. H." refers to the retired Regional Court Director Dr. Albert Heucke in Stettin, Anita's guardian.
"K.'s" is the abbreviation for Reinhard's foster parents, Edith and Max Koppel.
"D. office" (Devisenstelle) means Foreign Exchange Office.
Gertrud Prochownik (1884-1982), referred to as "Mrs. Pro.", was secretary of the Jewish Community in Berlin and, in this capacity, an important contact person and helper for Anita and other Berlin Jews. Since the confiscation of telephones in July 1940 only affected the private phones of Jews, Anita and Gertrud Prochownik could continue to telephone each other using the official phones of the Jewish Hospital and the Jewish Community.

Edith Koppel to Hilde
Berlin-Schöneberg, October 13, 1940

My dear Mrs. Kindler!
Thank you very much for your long, lovely letter. - Anita visits us often, she is so dear & affectionate with me; I am happy that she feels "at home" with us. She is a complete person, Anita knows exactly what she is doing or wants. ... We plan to visit Mrs. Pro*[chownik]* & Dr. G. during the holidays. Both have invited us very nicely. Aunt Emmy was here today; Reinhard is visiting her on Sunday, as she & her husband are traveling to Shanghai. ... Many kind regards, hoping you are quite well, also to your dear husband, Your Mrs. Edith Koppel.

The "Aunt" mentioned in the letter was Emmy Rubensohn, born Frank, a sister of Hermann Frank. She and her husband Ernst Rubensohn left Berlin on October 28, 1940, to emigrate to Shanghai.
"Dr. G." refers to Dr. Hans Gumpert.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, November 1, 1940

My dear Mutti!
Today is Friday again, i.e., I have my day off. ... In the evenings, I sit for just a little while with my delightful vice-parents and their child in the cozily heated living room and unburden my overflowing heart by recounting all the good, not-so-good, and interesting things of the day. You should be there for one of these short evenings; it's so nice, the four of us get along splendidly. And if anything comes up, Mutti W. always knows what to do! On other days, when I can finish at 7 p.m. sharp, I quickly get on the number 3 bus in my work clothes, on the upper deck, ride to Rolf, pick him up, and then we quickly walk or ride the 2 stops down to Stöpke. Even though it often only lasts 2-3 hours, we can still see each other more often this way. I then leave there at 9 p.m. at the latest and am then home again by - 10 at the latest. - On Monday, Anna and I took Emmy and Ernst to the train at 9:30 p.m. via Königsberg etc. . . . The farewell went very calmly, as far as that was possible. - Moving on, today I'm going right back to Miss Grü, who has made me 2 hats and has invited me again! Nice, isn't it? Then I'll pick Rolf up from the factory for the last time, because from Nov. 16th he's starting somewhere else! So now him too! I just hope that he gets ahead somehow and doesn't have to work somewhere outside in the cold! His mother is working again now, too; she is so sweet to me! Afterwards, we're going to Stöpke. On Sunday, there's a big engagement party for Uta there!! Wedding in two months! I can't even really imagine it with that girl! But they are afraid of being separated by something (like Wolfratshausen) and probably want to prevent that! Well, that's their business. ... I saw 4 new operations again, and things are also much better for me on the ward now! ... Lots and lots of love to you and daddy. A kiss from your Anita.

"Mutti W." refers to Anita's foster mother, Regine Weiss.
"Rolf" Schulmeister was Anita's boyfriend. The relationship lasted from 1940 until Rolf's deportation in July 1942. In the hours they spent together, especially on weekend outings, the two experienced an intimate, chaste, blissful love. This letter indicates that Rolf had to perform forced labor starting on November 16, 1940, and therefore had to involuntarily give up his previous job. (The general forced labor obligation for Jews up to the age of 60 was not introduced until March 1941.)
"Miss Grü," that is Emmy Grünbaum, was a seamstress who made clothes for Anita.
Edith Koppel's daughter from her second marriage, "Uta" Koppel, was a work colleague of Anita at the Jewish Hospital. She married Hans Black despite her young age, in the hope cherished by many young Jews at the time that they could stay together as a married couple in the event of any coercive measures.
Anita's codeword for the raid-like closure of a Jewish institution by the Gestapo, meaning a process that could befall the Jewish Hospital at any time, was "Wolfratshausen." - Wolfratshausen is a town in Upper Bavaria. There existed, since 1917, a Jewish school for young women. The predominantly anti-Semitic population and the mayor of the town, a party member, had initiated a raid of the Gestapo in November 1938, a few days after the Pogromnacht, by which the school was closed immediately and all residents had to leave the building within two hours. They were taken by train to Munich under police escort, received there by Gestapo officials, and later released. The event must have left a deep impression on Anita and her mother, whereas non-Jewish censors in 1940 would not have perceived what Anita meant by "Wolfratshausen."

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, November 9, 1940

My dearest!
... Yesterday we had an "etiquette course" with the head nurse, I died laughing! "Whistling and singing in bathtubs is forbidden, male visitors only under the head nurse's supervision in the rooms she provides for that purpose, etc. . . ." Well, that doesn't concern me.
It's much easier for me on the ward now, I'm getting more involved in everything, have been in on operations again, assisted with an anesthetic, gave injections, etc. In the next course, I have to give a lecture on venereal diseases, so I still have a lot to study today. ... So, take care, Mommy, a thousand greetings and kisses from your Anita.

Edith Koppel to Hilde
Berlin-Schöneberg, November 10, 1940

Dear Mrs. Kindler!
... Unfortunately, Reinhard has had no school for 8 days, as they are waiting for spare parts for the heating system. It's a good thing he has private lessons & is making progress. - Reinhard already wrote to you that my daughter has gotten engaged. Hans, my future son-in-law, has such an especially decent character that I gave my consent. Of course, there's plenty of excitement now. They want to marry soon for a specific reason, to stay together. The head nurse rightly says, "my" apprentice nurses don't marry, they must become fully qualified nurses first. Now, with Prof. B.'s intercession, they are going directly to Dr. Lustig. Well, we'll just have to wait and see. Ruth must finish her apprenticeship so that she has a profession that will help her later on! I insist on that. Until July 21, she needs my signature at the registry office - - . Rolf & Anita are very sensible, especially Anita's views & ways of thinking are well-considered, so you can be quite reassured. - Many warm regards, also to your husband, from your Edith Koppel

"Prof. B." likely referred to Professor Abraham Buschke, who worked at the polyclinic of the Jewish Hospital from 1934 until his deportation in November 1942. He perished in Theresienstadt in 1943.
"Dr. [Walter] Lustig" was a senior staff member and, from October 1942, director of the Jewish Hospital (cf. regarding both individuals HARTUNG- VON DOETINCHEM/WINAU, p. 152 and p. 221 ff.; RIVKA ELKIN, *Das Jüdische Krankenhaus in Berlin zwischen 1938 und 1945*, German translation from the Hebrew by Andrea Schatz, Berlin 1993 (hereafter quoted "ELKIN"), p. 102 and 106; DANIEL B. SILVER, *Refuge in Hell - How Berlin's Jewish Hospital Outlasted the Nazis*, Boston/New York 2003 (quoted "SILVER"), p. 87 and p. 98 ff.).

The reassurance regarding Rolf and Anita likely concerned Hilde's worry that the two might become intimate too quickly.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, November 22, 1940

My dear, good Mother!
... What you write about Uta is, as far as I can judge, not entirely justified. - As for me, you really don't need to worry one little bit about this! Completely unnecessary! I will confess to you that on the occasion of Uta's engagement, I myself was also asked whether . . . ! But I believe and hope you know your daughter and know that I do not act hastily and without thinking. My firm plan is to first become something, to first be fully developed myself and to be completely clear with myself, before I make such final decisions. If at all possible, I definitely want to take my exam here, in order to at least have something in hand about which I can say, "Here you can really do something, and here you can also earn something." Because starting over again and again is not nice either; one must first have a profession, as you now know as well. I have only one fear, that things here will go as they did at the women's school, hopefully not.
And, - to come back to the previous topic, it would be completely out of the question for the time being to set up a household, or even just a 2-room apartment. Well, and in any case, for now, despite all the love and friendship, I am still in a wait-and-see position; we both need to mature further and more completely to be able to see whether it is all really possible. There is only one reason why I would rather marry today than tomorrow, - the children!! I would like to still be a young woman myself when my children are 13 and 14 years old. I know exactly how you're scolding now, - I'm not doing it, of course, - I'm just saying! But as I already said, the priority is my training and the exam! ?
By the way, I forgot to write to you that Rolf has been placed in a factory at Hallesches Tor, where he seems to be doing very well. Unfortunately, he earns less, but in return he is learning new things again, which is quite important for him. If it's possible for you, perhaps enclose a few congratulatory notes for Mutti Schulm[eister] for December 8th; it's her birthday! She is always so sweet to me that she would certainly be very happy about it. Speaking of being happy: yesterday a patient gave me a pair of wonderful silk stockings, isn't that nice? Fine gauge, sturdy quality (Rogo) and a covering color, I was incredibly happy! The lady is an old, refined, unfortunately blind Hungarian actress. - I must also proudly tell you that yesterday, for the first time, I was the sole nurse present for a dressing change, and I did my first dressing on an amputated leg stump. Last night I saw blood flowing in streams from a head wound, and it didn't bother me so much anymore! All your upbringing! - Take care! Give daddy many, many greetings from me! For you, a loving kiss from your Anita

At the end of 1940, Anita still believed she was in no serious danger in Germany. Completing her training, not fleeing abroad, was therefore her next goal. She only feared that the Jewish Hospital could be closed from one day to the next, thereby interrupting her training. She coded this by mentioning the "women's school" - what she meant was "Wolfratshausen."
Since Jews had been unable to buy clothes since February 1940, "a pair of wonderful silk stockings" were treasures.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, November 28, 1940

My dear Musch!
... Rolf is very happy in the new factory, he even earns a little more and has opportunities for advancement - you never know what something is good for! With Rolf I visited Stöpke on

Sunday; it's so sweet how the two boys dote on the "big boy." Rolf has to read to them at their bedside, say good night, and when Mutti K[oppel]'s brother opens the door and announces: "Anita and Rolf are here!", a real triumphant roar erupts from the boys' room every time. - There is still an enormous amount to do here! This morning alone, another 3 operations for our ward, along with various leg fractures! Among others, I now have a very, very nice 73-year-old French woman here (though she has lived here for many years), who lived in Switzerland for a long time and also has her daughter in Lausanne. I speak French with her a lot and gladly, and was pleasantly surprised that it still goes quite well; she even praised my pronunciation. For me, it's good practice; it brings me a lot of joy. Otherwise, I unfortunately don't get to do anything like that anymore; duty, studying, sleeping, writing, visiting, and running errands, that's all I can do, there's no time for more. ... So, a thousand greetings to you and daddy and all the best!!! Your Anita
I must quickly tell you that last night I was present for 2 major operations and was even allowed to assist a little; I'm very proud, it was highly interesting. Yesterday we only had 5 operations in total!

By "the two boys," Anita meant her brother Reinhard and Edith Koppel's other foster son, Hans Jacobsohn.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, December 14, 1940

My dear good Mutti!
... Uta is getting married on Dec. 28th! - Tomorrow I'm invited to my ward sister's for dinner, or rather, after dinner, but I was truly so happy about this honor, as otherwise only older nurses with and without their husbands are there. Things are going splendidly for me now! I'm allowed to give all the injections and get to do everything! Today I was even called in to see Privy Councillor Strauss, who wrote my report for the internal medicine ward; my head nurse told me I could be very proud of the report, and I am pleased, too. The work is truly a joy, even when I'm tired enough to fall down. On Sunday I'm going to the K[oppel]s' for a birthday; I'm giving a very elegant pocket comb, flowers, and something else from Rosenhain, possibly a flashlight or something like that. For Reinhard, I don't know for sure yet. The concert last Sunday was wonderful. I wish for you and Daddy that you will find something very soon!! An extra kiss for you from your Anita.

The letter documents, alongside Anita's joy at the recognition she receives at work, an almost normal private daily life with a birthday party and a concert visit.

Clara to Hilde
Hamburg, December 18, 1940

My dear good one,
Since your card of the 5th, I have heard nothing from you, so there is hardly anything to answer. Hopefully there is no particular reason for your silence and you are both well. - I would have liked to wait for another letter from you before this one, but I am afraid you otherwise won't receive these lines in time for the holiday. At the post offices there is the standing in line, and even worse, the demand for a waiting slip. I go or travel from Stephansplatz to Jungfernstieg to Mönckebergstrasse just to still get to one. ...
Now, may the holidays be somewhat pleasant for you, just don't think I'll be glad when they are over. ...
That's all for now, just wishing you improvement in all areas, with loving kisses from your old one.

Clara Feldberg, Hilde's mother in Hamburg, complained about queuing at the post office counters. Since September 1940, Jews were no longer allowed to drop their letters for abroad into mailboxes, but had to hand them in personally at post offices.
The censorship documented its activity with three stamped numbers in rectangular boxes, which likely identified the persons who sorted, forwarded, and returned the document to the post office. The pencil-written numbers 501- and 2419 at the bottom of the address field presumably identified the reader of the content (right number) and her superior (left number; this number always ends with a hyphen here and elsewhere). The superiors were members of the Wehrmacht. Conscripted literate civilians, predominantly women (the men were at war), worked as readers and had to perform their work under supervision.
Letters with suspicious content had to be reported to the superior (cf. von Maltzan, p. 128). Given the sheer volume of mostly handwritten texts, the military, police, and Party could hardly have managed to read them with their own personnel. This explains the apparent unprofessionalism of the female censors or, to put it positively, their benevolent leniency, as can be observed in some of the letters in this book.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, December 19, 1940

My dear good Mutti!
Now this is the first Christmas that I can give you nothing but a little fir twig full of the scent of home, fully laden with a thousand invisible wishes for you, for daddy, for all of us! I have tried in all sorts of places to get permission to send you something, but in vain. So on this Christmas Eve, which we are spending apart, we must especially let our feelings come to the fore, and send and convey the wishes and thoughts we carry within us in our letters. May you find a little peace on Christmas Eve and when you light candles there, think of us here, we will do the same! ...
On Saturday, I was invited for a particularly cozy evening at my head nurse's home, along with the head nurse from the operating room and her very nice husband (by the way, he knows Prof. [Neuberg] well, is a chemist himself, now a male nurse here). The conversations were really interesting and we were together until after 12 o'clock! I was really proud of this invitation. If it's permitted, I will probably be transferred to the operating room starting Monday, that would be incredible!
But I think the senior class has priority. In any case, I'm doing really well on the ward now, I get access to everything and everyone is delightful to me. I now have a patient from Leipzig named Schloss, who knew Lotte, Martha, Berthold etc. well - strange, isn't it? On Wednesday, there's a nice Christmas party for the nurses on our ward; if I can, I'll go too. On Jan. 4th, the staff, nurses, etc. are putting on a little cabaret show. - For our course, we have an enormous amount of studying to do in all subjects now! But I've already gotten a "good" on two papers again. This afternoon, for the first time in years, I'm going to a wedding. A Hebrew nurse is marrying one of our cooks! There's a real epidemic of marrying, getting engaged, and giving birth here right now, but don't worry, you don't need to be concerned that I'll do something foolish, we two are far too sensible.
We've even cancelled our Wednesdays and Saturdays in view of the great efforts and work on both our parts, so, sensible - right?! -
To you both, a very peaceful and content Christmas Eve, and to you yourself, a heartfelt greeting and kiss from your, always thinking of you, Anita.

Hilde's Bitter Fate in Switzerland

From the beginning, Hilde found her life in Switzerland agonizing and humiliating. The expectations that she and her new husband had for the marriage soon gave way to bitter mutual disappointment. She had to realize that Kindler had deceived her about his circumstances: he was not the owner of a leased hotel, as he had claimed to be, but an unemployed and destitute man who had lost

a hotel he formerly operated, along with his innkeeper's license, through bankruptcy, and had since been supported by his former business partner, the widow Frieda Jehle-von Au. Kindler proved to be short-tempered and, when he became enraged, prone to violence.

Kindler's expectations were also disappointed, because due to transfer difficulties, it was impossible to finance a comfortable life in Switzerland with Hilde's German assets.

Both spouses must have suffered a culture shock at the beginning of their life together, which they blamed entirely or in part on the other: Hilde entered a partially antisemitic environment of Swiss craftsmen and small farmers, into which she could not integrate and where, as a German who did not speak the Swiss dialect, and as a Jew, she met with double rejection. Her standards of life-style and manners were likely perceived by Ernst Kindler and his circle as upper-class arrogance. Hilde also did not integrate into the Basel Jewish Community, but instead maintained her previous relationships through intensive correspondence. In the divorce files, one finds Kindler's accusation that Hilde all the time was writing letters to her folks and had no time for him.

While Hilde portrayed her second husband as a monster in her letter to Irm Behrendt of December 19, 1940, there are indications that Kindler wrote friendly and substantive letters to Anita and also received such letters from her, and that he also made efforts to have Hilde's children join them in Switzerland.

Anita's hope of being adopted by Kindler in order to flee Germany suggests Kindler's willingness to do so, as does his trip to Berlin for a meeting with Dr. Hans Gumpert, which Anita alludes to in her letter of April 18, 1942 ("Dr. Gu. had a visit from Ernst K.").

The divorce files show that when Hilde moved into Kindler's apartment at Kleinhüningerstrasse 140 in Basel, she was horrified to discover that Kindler was living there with Frieda Jehle-von Au, whom he declared to be his housekeeper. Insinuations in the later divorce proceedings suggest that Kindler was also intimate with Frieda Jehle.

Hilde had to accept this *ménage à trois*. For fear of her marriage being annulled as a ficticious marriage, she could not let it come to a break with Kindler, but had to feign a married life based on love. The Swiss Immigration Police was actively trying to uncover ficticious marriages involving immigrant German Jewish women, have them annulled, and return the women to the German border. It was not until 1943 that Hilde dared to divorce Kindler.

Since Kindler was penniless and the transfer of Hilde's assets to Switzerland had stalled, the couple initially lived off the proceeds from the sale of Hilde's jewelry in Basel and from the interest on her German assets. The interest was the only thing that Hilde's asset manager in Berlin, Max Sünder, could transfer to Basel in a complicated foreign exchange procedure, amounting to about 100 Reichsmark per month which corresponded to a present-day value of approx. 400 euros.

Hilde initially intended to earn extra money by working as a charwoman. But Kindler demanded that she instead obtain a innkeeper's license in order to run a business of which he himself would have become the boss.

Kindler was, as Hilde wrote in a letter dated July 26, 1939, to Irm Behrendt in London, "a huge, heavy man who can lift me up like a small package." The divorce files show that he ruthlessly demanded his rights as a husband. When he flew into a rage, he would beat Hilde, who was of a small stature, and insult her as a "filthy Prussian" and "dirty Jewess," even in the presence of employees.

Hilde to Irm and Max Behrendt in London
Basel, December 19, 1940

My dear Irm and Max!!!
It's a long time already that I want to get in touch with you. - Here I am spending a lot of time with Alice's sister, whom you know very well, and I want to tell you all about her because I know how interested you will be.
I am not certain that you know that in summer '39, after some hesitation, she remarried to a man of this country, somewhat younger than her late husband. She hoped to find peace,

tranquility, and warmth in this marriage and wasn't bothered by the differences in education and lifestyle, because he was intelligent and good-natured. In these days such things aren't so important, considering the hard life so many others must live. He is a hotelier, an Aryan. At first, all was well, but the picture changed horribly the moment she arrived, which was nearly a year later ...

Not only did the woman have to make the discovery that his previous statements regarding wealth, income, etc., were simply untrue, since in fact he doesn't have a penny (check his situation beforehand was not possible) and, what was even worse, on a personal level the entire veneer of decency vanished, leaving a primitive man, without the most basic concepts of cleanliness, who boasts of his ill-mannered nature, reads nothing but magazine serials and the newspaper, and although he lets his wife and an old female employee support him, he spends the whole day ordering them around, bullying them, is brutal, overly excitable, with daily tantrums that are terrible, that cannot be deflected, because they erupt over nothing and for no reason. If he is coddled, he is content and good-natured, otherwise he is unbearable. After looking well-groomed at first, he now walks around in a state that is simply indescribable in its filthiness, both physically and in his clothing! And the slightest suggestion of improvement brings on sheer fits of rage.

A fine state of affairs! Zille [Hilde] is ultra-refined by comparison. And she lives with this man in one room with a kitchen, but what a state! Second-hand junk. No bathroom, toilet outside, everything freezing cold. The woman first sold some jewelry to cover the most urgent things. Now, at the man's insistence, they are looking for a business to lease. She is being cautious and will not invest anything once she has her capital - and it's not even clear if she will get it at all or has to leave it in the former place. For the moment she is covering living expenses, because they have to eat and sleep. She could support herself, but this would require to leave him alone, and that is not possible at the moment. Separation is not possible in the interest of the children and because otherwise everything up to now would have been for nothing.

Without this constraint she would not endure this life. What the woman has been through in the short time here is indescribable. Recently, during one of his tantrums, he locked her in, so that she, who had to get out (severe bladder infection), finally, after announcing her intention, smashed the window pane to get out.

You know this woman, how controlled and gentle she used to be. This stress of the nerves is almost unbearable. And yet, one must endure. - The woman endures this martyrdom only for the sake of her children. They don't know any details, neither does her mother [Clara Feldberg].

Now I want to tell you about my children and other things. My girl is still in Berlin, is a nurse at the large hospital and is blissfully happy in her profession, for which she is particularly suited, as I foresaw. The boy is with foster parents who are touchingly good to him, so that I can be as reassured as it is possible today. A[nita] is 19, a splendid person, character-wise, looks radiant; the boy, just like his father but dark-haired, a sweet, wild rascal, 12 years old. Both have many interests, both are cheerful natures and always grateful. A joy and a comfort in these times. My sorrow now is that I don't have them here yet. Since they are not Swiss, like me, they were denied entry because of the war. Only if I can give evidence of sufficient savings, income, etc., and most importantly, the possibility for the children to move on later, only then I would get a residence permit for them. I hope to place A. at one of the hospitals as a apprentice nurse without pay; for the boy, I wish that he gets an offer of a boarding school. The funds for their education have been approved for transfer. But to be able to do that, proof must be given that a possibility for later onward migration exists, be-

cause Switzerland, due to overpopulation, unemployment, and to many immigrants, as a matter of principle does not grant residence permits to non-Swiss. I do not dare to submit a new application after 2 rejections if I cannot provide the required documents. The hardest part is the possibility of onward migration.
... I am in constant contact with Marianne Prochownik's mother; she is a wonderful woman and suffers so much knowing her girl is so far away, she receives no news. Tell that to Berger. Marianne's address: London NW3, 51 Buckland Cr. And please, please, try to get me the confirmation. Too much depends on it for our whole lives.
Warmest regards to you all. Your Hilde.

According to Hilde's understanding, a Swiss entry permit for Anita and Reinhard was obtainable only for a limited time and only under the twofold condition that their mother could finance the children's support during their stay in Switzerland and that the children possessed entry visas for another country, which would enable their departure after the Swiss residence permit expired. This second condition, as Hilde writes, was particularly difficult to fulfill. With her last two sentences, she implored Irm and Max Behrendt in London to obtain English entry visas for Anita and Reinhard.

Clara to Hilde
Hamburg, December 21, 1940

My dear good one,
Since our letters crossed, I want to write to you again to respond a bit to your dear letter. I also always have the feeling, when I write to you as I am now, after supper, in such an uncanny quiet as it is here in the house, that I am a little closer to you, my dear. You asked if I think your children will ever appreciate what you are doing for them. I am firmly convinced of Anita; she experiences everything so intensely, you may well get a lot from her someday. She is such a warm-hearted, sensitive person and only wants to bring joy, then she is happy
... I had a delightful letter from Anita, in which she writes, among other things, that a real engagement- and marriage epidemic is raging among her colleagues, which she finds too silly, because one must first have knowledge and skills to be able to feed children that might arrive!
I must advise you again not to make use of the extension until April; there have been bad experiences here. - Have you already told the Prof. that you are over there, quite openly? - The night was restless but harmless; your children had a visitor.
Now I kiss you dearly with 1000 best wishes, Your old friend.

The extension until April concerned the German exit permit.
In Clara's opinion, Hilde should have the children follow her to Switzerland even before the deadline expired. The question of whether the "Prof." had already received a report shows Clara's hope that Carl Neuberg could help from abroad.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, December 28, 1940

My dear good Mutti
... On the 24th, we first had a particularly nice celebration for the surgical ward, which was held in the anesthesia room in front of the operating room. The table was delightfully set, homemade cakes and cookies were served with punch, and one doctor even provided liqueur. The head nurse and her husband, who had delightfully written and recited poems for everyone present, the doctors, and we nurses were all there. Everyone received a nice little gift. I got a book about Michelangelo and - as the biggest surprise - from my head nurse, a handwritten, pasted, and painted book about various things a nurse needs to know, e.g., what to prepare for an abdominal surgery or a plaster cast or . . . , how it's done, what you

need, in short, all the things that are hardly found in textbooks but are always required. It is fabulously made! It's a shame you can't see it!! Several people already want to copy it.
It might even be printed. There was a very nice dedication in the front, and it was presented to me with a nice little poem. You can imagine my joy and pride!! She worked on it evening after evening during her vacation, and her husband was already quite jealous of me, she said! Isn't that lovely? I also received many gifts from the patients: soap, eau de cologne, sweets, even a large bag of treats with sweets and fruit, as well as a bag of candy for Stöpke, nice, isn't it? After the ward party, I moved with bag and baggage to Rolf, where we had a truly delightful gift exchange under a beautiful Christmas tree. - I also had very dear mail from Grandma and Mrs. von Knyp, whose son-in-law has now died in air combat. She writes to me so touchingly and sends you her regards. ...
Please accept once again many fond New Year's wishes for you all, and greetings and kisses from your Anita.

Dorothea (Thea) Freiherrin von Knyphausen (1891-1981), referred to here as "Mrs. von Knyp", was a childhood friend of Hilde's. As a non-Jew, she had full freedom of movement in Germany during the period of Jewish persecution. She supported Hilde's family to the best of her ability.

New Harassments, 1941

The new anti-Jewish measures of 1941 included, from March, the obligation for all adult Jews up to age 60 to perform forced labor in factories; from September 19, the requirement to wear in public a palm-sized yellow star ("Jew's star") sewn onto their outer clothing; the closure of the national borders on October 23 as a measure flanking the commencing "Final Solution"; from November, the ban on using public telephone booths, as well as the expatriation of all Jews abroad and the confiscation of their German property. Jews who had been deported to concentration camps outside of Germany were also expatriated. (This later also affected Anita and Reinhard, who became stateless and without property due to their deportation to Theresienstadt.) From November, all electrical and optical devices, bicycles, typewriters, and records had to be surrendered. Of all the ordinances and laws against the Jews, the wearing of the star was felt as the most severe psychological burden (cf. witness testimony in HARTUNG-VON DOETINCHEM/WINAU, p. 178).

Anita attributed the fact that she was spared from forced labor to her indispensability at the Jewish Hospital. The hospital management decided which employees were to release for it. In a letter dated June 21, 1941, Anita wrote that "my head nurse said that she will resist if they were to replace me." Reinhard was not assigned to forced labor due to his young age.

The general political situation also grew bleak. On June 22, 1941, the German campaign in Russia began. On December 7, Japan opened the war against the USA with the attack on the American fleet in Pearl Harbor, which resulted in the USA's declaration of war on Japan on December 8 and Hitler's declaration of war on the USA on December 11.

For Switzerland, where Hilde had found safety and where Anita and Reinhard hoped to follow, these events pushed the danger of a German occupation into the far future. It was to be assumed that after a victory over the Soviet Union, Hitler would not continue to tolerate Switzerland as a blank spot on his map of Europe. But the outcome of Hitler's Russian campaign was uncertain.

However, Anita also told her mother about pleasant experiences at the Jewish Hospital.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, January 25, 1941

My dear Mommy!
This week, T.G. [Thank God], there is not much special to report. I feel like I'm in paradise on the new ward! After my illness, I was moved to the ward for patients with minor illnesses, all young and slightly older men who enjoy taking as much work as possible off the nurses'

hands. From setting the table to cleaning cannulas, they take care of everything themselves, which makes our lives much easier. - Something cute happened today: A young 19-year-old patient who had an appendectomy woke up from the anesthesia and shouted: Annemarie, Annemarie, I love you, just you and me, etc.! He could not be calmed until I came to his bed and soothed him. It was too cute.
Well, anesthesia can often be one's downfall!
I heard from Miss Berliner that the old family friend has landed in N. Y. - Uta and her husband are doing splendidly. The wedding was wonderfully done. Reinhard was sweet! For today, many thousands of greetings from your Anita.

Anita was addressed as "Sister Annemarie" at the Jewish Hospital, as another nurse named Anita was already working there when she started.
The "old family friend" refers to Carl Neuberg.

From neutral Switzerland, Hilde relayed messages between people in opposing warring countries that could not be exchanged directly.

Among Hilde's clients were Berthold and Regina Marcuse in Berlin, who, after the November pogroms, had brought their son Peter to a French camp for Jewish refugee children run by the "Organisation de secours aux enfants" (OSE).

The organization endeavored to move the children it had taken in to the USA or other destinations outside the Nazi sphere of danger. Peter Marcuse was initially housed in Varennes-en-Argonne in northern France near Verdun. After the German occupation of northern France, the children were moved to various locations in the Free Zone. From January 1941, Peter Marcuse lived in the Château de Chabannes children's home in the Creuse department in the Massif Central.

In January 1941, Regina Marcuse was the victim of an intimidation arrest.

Berthold Marcuse to Hilde
Steglitz, 27 January 1941

Dear Mrs. Kindler!
... Just imagine, Mrs. Kindler, I am having such terrible misfortune with my poor wife, she has been arr. since 10.1. and is now in Moabit, because of an Ar. friend in Silesia, I am quite sick with grief, it is terrible.
I am very grateful to you for your great kindness and will make everything right with your dear boy.
Many greetings also to your dear husband, Your Berthold Marcuse.
Please do not write to our boy about my wife D. O.

Regina Marcuse, as the letter shows, had been arrested on January 10, 1941, and was in the Berlin-Moabit prison. Berthold Marcuse indicates that the arrest had been triggered by an Aryan friend. It is astonishing that this letter could be transmitted to Switzerland unhindered by the censors.

Hans Gumpert to Hilde
Berlin-Charlottenburg, February 1, 1941

Dear Mrs. Kindler,
... If we had the passage fees together, we would probably get the visa now. Unfortunately, the Quakers, who are responsible for my wife and child, are not in a position to provide the missing approx. 200 dollars. We are completely desperate, as we see no way out of this dilemma. After something new always came up so often, it could work now if it weren't for this difficulty. It will probably come to nothing now. ...
All the best, then, and very warm greetings from my wife as well! Yours sincerely, Hans Israel Gumpert

Dr. Hans Gumpert, Hilde's lawyer in Berlin, was trying to emigrate to the USA with his family. The attempt failed because the American sponsors could not or would not raise the missing amount of 200 dollars for "show money" or a guarantee. Due to transfer restrictions, Gumpert could not send this money from Germany to the USA. Nor could help be provided from Switzerland.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, February 5, 1941

My dear, dear Mommy!
... I am sitting in the now completely cleared-out bedroom of the W. family, who have sold it, the large stove keeps the room tolerably warm, in contrast to mine, where the flower water is a block of ice - and it's snowing outside! As you will have guessed, today is my day off again, which I desperately need this week. Due to two particularly tragic accidents on our ward, we were especially worn out, both mentally and physically; in the last few days, I often wasn't home before 10 p.m., sometimes with only a less-than-an-hour break from 7 a.m. onward. I spent the other evenings at the dentist's after my shift, which was also quite a rush and not exactly relaxing. I am particularly pleased with the dentist; he works quickly, conscientiously, and carefully, has a very nice, refined manner, and above all takes me outside of his office hours, like the other day at 9 p.m. On one upper molar, the nerve unfortunately had to be killed, so a crown is being put on it, which I am paying for myself; he is doing the other 4 teeth on my health insurance, but just as conscientiously. I had simply delayed too long. I will also go there with Reinhard for a check-up next week. Yesterday, my actual head nurse gave me an extra afternoon off for "special diligence"; I was incredibly happy. - You ask what kind of exam I'm taking!? - Goodness, the full nursing exam, of course! Then I'll finally start earning money and be a fully qualified nurse, whereas until then I'm only considered an auxiliary or apprentice nurse. Well, time flies, I'll have been at the hospital for almost a year soon! If only nothing gets in the way, I'm so afraid! I don't think I need to be afraid of the exam itself, because without boasting I can say that I'm quite well-regarded. We have very interesting courses again, starting in March even daily, as we'll be in the advanced course then. On the ward, I have some particularly nice younger patients now.
One of them, a 30-year-old, particularly fine and decent fellow, is a trained painter who knows Lore E. from Hbg. and has often been there, who has been and studied in Paris, Brussels, I don't know where else, and knows a great deal about art and enjoys it in every respect, i.e., also literature and music. It gives me great pleasure to talk with such a person. He recently painted a delightful little picture for me, which I will hang up. But of course I can't talk with him too much, because firstly, it would lead to stupid gossip again, and I hardly have time for it. Another young patient, who is a carpenter, is now going to make a nice nightstand for my room according to my specifications, isn't that great?. ...
Give daddy lots of love from me. All the very best to you!!
A kiss from your Anita ...

Regine and Fritz Weiss, referred to here only as the "W. family," were Anita's foster parents from October 1940 to February 1943. Reinhard also lived with the Weiss family from August 21, 1942, to February 1943. Likely in anticipation of a possible arrest at any time and the subsequent looting of the apartment by Gestapo agents, Regine and Fritz Weiss had sold the main part of their furniture, so that Anita found herself in an empty apartment. By "Lore E.," Anita meant Leonore Eber-Feldberg, a cousin of Hilde's who had emigrated to London.

At the end of February, Anita visited her grandmother Clara Feldberg in Hamburg. There, she was introduced to the family lawyer Dr. Walter Rudolphi and to Clara's family doctor Dr. Hermann Bohm.

Clara to Hilde
Hamburg, March 3, 1941

My dear good one,
first about our beloved Anita. I can only say that for me, and I believe for her too, they were "sunny days" in the truest sense of the word. She is so radiant and has a kindness like you. We spent an hour with Dr. R. for wine and pastries, and I am copying out his letter to me for you, so that you too can take pleasure in his judgment, which, by the way, I heard in all tones of praise from Lieger-Agnes, Hanna, and above all my doctor, who showed her the hospital. So, a copy of my doctor's letter:
"May I once again assure you of my thanks for having arranged the acquaintance with your granddaughter, this lovable, energetic, and serious-beyond-her-years child will make her way; one need not worry about her. In these times, it does one good, among all the old, broken fellow human beings one has to care for, to finally have so much fresh youth before one; she is a reliable guarantor of a better future!"
I would have given her the moon and the stars and gave her what you can't imagine; I only asked her what she was missing. The yellow cover she once made me for a round table is to be transformed into a summer dress. - It has been quiet for weeks. - Now I have nothing more to write to you. Hope you are well and kiss you dearly Your old one ...

"Dr. R.," i.e. Dr. Walter Rudolphi (1880-1944), was Clara Feldberg's and Hilde's lawyer in Hamburg and later one of the two executors of Clara Feldberg's will. On July 15, 1942, he was deported to Theresienstadt and on October 23, 1944, from there to Auschwitz, where he was murdered by gas on October 30, 1944.
Clara's family doctor, Dr. Hermann Bohm, who is only called "my doctor" here, was deported to Theresienstadt with his wife on July 19, 1942. He survived and emigrated to the US.
Since Jews no longer received clothing ration cards from February 1940 onwards, a tablecloth was to be "transformed into a summer dress", that is, used for making a summer dress from it.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, March 15, 1941

My dear good one!
... The first week back at work was again especially difficult, as I am working on the men's surgical ward for the seriously ill, where there are now an incredible number of tragic accidents and operations. Some days you don't even get to have lunch; recently I even had to miss my course because it was simply impossible to manage time-wise. As I probably already wrote to you, I have, T.G., a particularly capable ward sister with many years of experience, who shows me an immense amount of new and important things as well as speed tricks and other knacks, so that one feels quite small and like a beginner again.
I have really always been lucky in that regard so far! - This evening I'm also going to the Home, where three doctors are putting on a chamber music evening: violin, cello, piano, Schubert, Beethoven, Haydn! Lovely, isn't it? I'm already looking forward to it very much. Next Friday I have a very nice invitation to Hedwig E., whom I visited recently and who sends her regards. - Now, continue to do well, I'm keeping all my fingers crossed for you!
Give my best regards to daddy again.
An extra kiss and greeting for you from your Anita.

The nurses' home (Schwesternheim) of the Jewish Hospital at Iranische Strasse 2-4 was referred to by Anita simply as the "Home".
"Hedwig E." refers to Hedwig Ems, born Frank (1869-1958), a cousin of Anita's father, Hermann Frank. She was called "Aunt Hedwig" by Anita and was an important figure in her life.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, March 27, 1941

My dear Mommy!
... The big graduation party was on Saturday; everything was really nicely done, but when it later got too boisterous, my mood swung the other way. I just can't be like that, as I was quite quiet anyway. I had a few really good dances with our Dr. A. from the maternity ward; otherwise, I just chatted quietly.
... Today was also my sweet little 3-year-old patient's birthday; I was in the children's room, where there is another 3-year-old, for almost 2 hours. It was so adorable! Last night after my shift ended, I was also there for over an hour.
Hopefully I can take the pediatric exam someday! ...
Now I'm sitting comfortably at the Schulm[eister]'s since another arrangement fell through. Rolf won't be here until around 8, as he can now work almost 2 hours more daily at his boss's offer. We are of course very happy about that. Otherwise, too, he is doing splendidly at the new place and can be quite satisfied. - On Good Friday, if I get the day off, we're going to the St. Matthew Passion; I'm terribly looking forward to it. - On the ward, it is equally nice and strenuous. Keep doing well, don't wear yourself out too much, or you'll be flat on your face again!!!!! ...
Lots of love to you and daddy, an extra kiss for you from your Anita.

Who "Dr. A." was, is not apparent from the documents.
Through additional work, Rolf was able to earn more money. The forced labor was, in his case, paid work.
The "St. Matthew Passion," which Anita wanted to attend on Good Friday, must have been a concert performance by the Jewish Cultural Association; attending other concerts had been forbidden for Jews since November 1938. Anita's "tremendous" anticipation shows her enthusiasm for the music of J.S. Bach - an enthusiasm she shared with Rolf Schulmeister (see his letter to Hilde of October 6, 1941, below).

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, April 5, 1941

My dear, good Mutti!
... Last night at 9:30 p.m., your daughter assisted for the first time at a childbirth! For your information, I've been on the maternity ward since April 1st; you can probably imagine my bliss! When the head nurse told me about the transfer, I nearly threw my arms around her neck. So, I'm here with another particularly nice, 20-year-old, newly married nurse, responsible for 11 patients, whom we two have to care for all by ourselves, all post-operative cases. In addition, we are with the new mothers (they are also cared for by other nurses!), who are partly in the ward, partly in patient rooms.
It's so lovely when they all lie there at feeding time, each with her little bundle of humanity! - Such crowing, smacking, and squawking, simply sweet. We also had a pair of twins yesterday, a boy and a girl; then, the nursery, where all these tiny little creatures lie in their cute white cots with their identification tags around their necks, one even in an incubator! Well, and then the childbirth last night, unfortunately a stillbirth, but for me it was interesting and exciting. The case was even particularly difficult. I was allowed to support the whole time, then give injections, hand over towels, bowls, etc., assist with the anesthesia at the end, as there was still stitching to be done, etc. . . . ! I was proud as a peacock. I was there from 7 p.m. to 10:45 p.m.! I had everything explained to me, I can't write it all down for you, but in practice, having children is a good deal harder than in theory! But don't get afraid, I won't even start with anything less than twins, right? And this morning I saw an operation here, very interesting. The doctors and nurses are almost all very nice and capable. Well, you get to see and hear a lot here!! Before this, I also had it particularly good on Men's Surgical; my

supervising ward sister was ill, and so I was allowed to take over the ward as a substitute; everything went really well and it was wonderful, of course. - In the meantime, we've had courses again with our best doctors; we are now in the advanced course! If only it were September already; I'm always afraid something will interfere. Otherwise, there's nothing new, except that I'm dead tired as always and hardly get around to the most necessary chores at home anymore. Everything is still going well with Dr. H[eucke].
I'm writing now in an unoccupied 2nd-class room, where it's wonderfully quiet and bright and pleasant; in general, this ward is particularly clean and quiet, T.G. - Wishing you all the very best!
Give my love to daddy. A loving kiss from your Anita.

Anita's fear that "something will interfere" expresses her concern that the advanced course examination might not take place due to a sudden closure of the Jewish Hospital.

Gertrud Prochownik to Hilde
Berlin-Charlottenburg, April 7, 1941

My dear Hilde,
It has been ages since we heard from each other. - Otherwise, you will have been informed by Anita in broad strokes about our worries; she was with me on her last afternoon off, and now she has once again disappeared into the depths of her workload, as with the great reduction everywhere, everyone has to take on much more. ...
Anna, who had been silent for a long time, informed me upon inquiry that Ellen is requesting her, and that she is seriously considering the move. Hopefully, it will succeed. ...
I think of you with much love, Your Gertrud Prochownik [Postscript:] By the way, no one here has news from C.N.

The "great reduction," due to which "everywhere, everyone has to take on much more," refers to the conscription of Jews for forced labor, not to deportations. These did not begin until October 1941.
"Anna" Salomon was the sister of Carl Neuberg and the mother of "Ellen", who was living abroad and unsuccessfully tried to have her mother join her. According to the Memorial Book of the Federal Archives (cf. Gedenkbuch 2006), Anna Salomon was deported to the Warsaw Ghetto on March 31, 1942. During the liquidation of the Ghetto, she was probably deported further to the Treblinka extermination camp in July 1942 and murdered there, as there has been no news of her since that time. Her daughter Ellen Salomon lived in Montevideo, Uruguay after the war (cf. HINDERK CONRADS AND BRIGITTE LOHFF, *Carl Neuberg - Biochemie, Politik, Geschichte - Lebenswege und Werk eines fast verdrängten Forschers*, Stuttgart 2006, hereafter quoted CONRADS/LOHFF, p. 136).

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, April 24, 1941

My dear Mommy!
... Last week we had a lot of work, as the entire ward had to be disinfected due to infectious diseases; it was grueling work. The evening before last, I was in surgery where I saw a leg amputation on a man. It was moving to see how, after the tourniquet was released, the remaining stump of the leg began to live and pulsate again. - Otherwise, everything is the same. The day before yesterday, some girls from Wolfratshausen visited me. Greetings to Daddy.
Many loving greetings and kisses to you, Your Anita

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, May 2, 1941

My dear, good Mommy!

... We are on very strenuous duty again, i.e., suddenly there are waves of childbirths and operations, the latter being especially difficult and often quite sad cases. Our maternity ward is fully occupied, and it's a great joy to work here; all patients very sensible and clean, currently between 18 and 32 years old. Most are between 19 and 21. It's so lovely to see these young mommies and daddies in their happiness, but the older ones among them are also dear and cheerful to me, so the work brings much joy despite its demands. I am almost always alone in the ward, sometimes with one other nurse. It requires one's whole presence, all my strength, and my personal needs have to be disregarded completely. And then there are daily classes; sometimes the head nurse listens in now, phew -, but I believe if I keep learning, I won't have to be afraid. - Unfortunately, I see Rolf only rarely now, and when we do, we both just yawn at each other from exhaustion, because it's usually late in the evening, as he doesn't get off duty until 8:30 ... and neither do I! But - that doesn't diminish our love; for me, he is the same dear friend as before, and despite all the tiredness, we still discuss everything with each other like in the old days in the dining room in Grunewald, only the topics have become more serious and difficult, and we have grown older. I am so thankful to have him here, because otherwise, despite all the other dear people, I would feel quite lonely. Rolf is everything to me: father, mother, girlfriend, and boyfriend, and that's a good thing. Unfortunately, I never get a Sunday off here, and on weekdays he works and I have classes, so we never manage to go for an outing, but that will surely be possible at some point. ...
May 8. - Dear Mommy! I must quickly tell you that last night I was allowed for the first time to observe a first Caesarean section. The operation was at 10 p.m.; it was quite exciting and moving for me. The chief physician even had a tall ladder set up for me so I could see everything from above, and he explained everything to me in great detail; it was fabulous. - Much love again! Your Anita.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, May 23, 1941

My dear, dear Mommy!
Now you can truly envy me, because for the first time this year I am sitting in the nurses' garden in a deck chair in the first warm, almost hot sun, and I am delighting in everything around me - the magnificent green and blooming trees, the fresh green grass, the first butterfly just fluttering by, the daisies, and the clear blue sky - and that I have been here for a whole year now, am healthy, am able to study, and am doing so well!!! Oh Mommy, it is so beautiful here. One forgets all the hardships, one forgets the cold, ugly winter - and so much more; one only knows that now is a time for rest - and - sunshine!!
And do you know what else I'm looking forward to? - I have Sunday off for the first time this week, and if the weather is nice, we will also go on an outing for the first time!
Everything outside is supposed to be blooming magnificently now: the anemones, cuckoo flowers, marsh marigolds, and so much more!
Do you remember when the three of us were in Finkenkrug last year, do you still remember the sunny birch path, wasn't it magnificent?! Our boy will surely be able to go swimming soon. - - I've spoken with Bine on the phone a few times now. She continues to do well. Her father is already in Lisbon on his way to A. - - Next to me now is a large pile of books and notebooks, law books, anatomy books, rough notebooks, etc., and all of that has to be in my head by the end of August, beginning of September, phew!! I now get together about 3-4 times a week in the evenings with two particularly nice, older nurses from my course to study, sometimes in their room, which is very close to mine, sometimes at my place. We give presentations to each other, quiz one another chapter by chapter, and are making quite

good progress that way. Anything that doesn't stick is repeated immediately - like practicing the piano! One nurse is 34 years old but seems much younger; the other is a bit older, a doctor's wife whose husband lives near Irmi. I get along with both of them very well, and so one really has valuable people around. Otherwise, everything is the same as always. My 3 families continue to be dear people to me, and I feel right at home everywhere. Mrs. W[eiss] is just too good to me!. ...
A loving kiss and greetings to Daddy. Your Anita.

"Bine" was Sabine Klein, Anita's friend. As she was half-Jewish, she had been able to keep her private telephone line, so Anita could call her from the Jewish Hospital.
Sabine's Jewish father had divorced her non-Jewish mother to protect the family and was in the process of emigrating to America via Lisbon.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, May 28, 1941

My dear, good Mommy!
... This last week I had a wonderful day off, on Sunday. Despite the gray sky and light rain, Rolf picked me up at 8 a.m. with his rucksack, and we went, as we so often have before, toward Finkenkrug. The air was heavenly, clear, full of forest blossoms and the scent of rain. Hardly a soul to be seen. In the forest, the meadows were dotted with anemones, dog violets, speedwell, and even bushes of liliesy, marsh marigolds, delicate white blossoms, cuckooflower, colorful nettles, and much, much more. It was an indescribable sight! We strolled through the forest paths, still heavy with rain, and breathed deeply the clear, good air. In between were green meadows strewn with bright yellow dandelions, flowering catkin bushes, and fruit trees, with fresh, light-green beeches and deep, dark-green pines in the background. You would certainly have taken joy in it all; it was a heavenly experience for me, as I hardly ever get out anymore. Soon our persistence was rewarded, as the weather turned fine and bright, the sun came out in full force, and the day became a warm, sunny summer day.
On our way, we saw a pair of snakes, woodpeckers at their work, mice slipping out of their burrows, a young buck, two mares with their nursing foals, cows, young gray geese, and even deer in the back of the meadow, though they soon took flight. We delighted in everything and forgot all that usually weighs one down. Toward noon, it became so warm that we made a camp for ourselves with blankets and raincoats on the ground, which by then was completely dry, and set up our resting spot on a magnificent hill, between the woods and meadows next to a small stream. I even got a slight sunburn on my face and looked quite burnt. And after our "princely dinner", we lay down in the grass - and both slept soundly for 2 hours. When I awoke, I was as refreshed as if I had slept soundly for a whole long night. Then we ate cake from Mother Schulmeister, and after a short break, we continued on our way homeward. We picked wonderful bouquets of wildflowers, one of which still stands on the windowsill in my little room today, standing out beautifully in all its colorful splendor against the black blackout paper. From Brieselang, we then took the little local train home. I was back on Zingster Strasse at 8 p.m., where soured milk and rhubarb were already waiting for me in my little room, now fitted with fresh windows and curtains. ...
A loving kiss and all the very best! Your Anita.

Hilde as an Innkeeper in the Village of Bettingen

After strenuous preparations, Hilde opened a restaurant on April 1, 1941, in Bettingen, a village north of Basel. She and Ernst Kindler moved into the cramped innkeeper's apartment in the same

building. The eatery was located where the "Kaffeehalle Bettingen" had previously been. It had been closed for over a year, so Hilde had to attract a new clientele. She named her establishment "Café, Tea Room, Non-alcoholic Restaurant Bettingen." (The present-day address of the house is Hauptstrasse No. 88; the high windows on the first upper floor show where the coffee hall and later Hilde's restaurant were once located.)

Bettingen at that time was a small farming village. Hilde's business could not survive solely as a regular spot for the village population but was dependent on day-trippers who came from nearby Basel on public holidays. The bad weather in the summer of 1941 and the economic difficulties brought on by the war on the population were bad for Hilde's business.

The Last Months Before the Beginning of Deportations

Hilde tried to hide the humiliating circumstances of her second marriage from the children and their foster families, as well as the business failure in Bettingen.

Thus, the relatives in Berlin did not need to worry in this regard. This made the burdens that Anita had to bear at the Jewish Hospital all the heavier.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, June 5, 1941

My dear good Mommy!
... On Friday evening I was with the boy, where everything is still the same. - - So, and now for something else, do you know whose childbirth I recently attended? - The wife of Wolfgang Gerecht from the lab! Do you still remember him? He has a delightful 24-year-old capable wife, who gave birth to a little girl; - isn't that a funny coincidence? I have her in the ward now, which by the way I have all to myself, as 40 of my colleagues were transferred and will be working with Rolf and his colleagues starting next week. 4 others and I myself were not transferred; I think I will continue to work on this ward. Uta is among those transferred, by the way, how nice it would be if she could work with Rolf, she would certainly have it good and would learn many new things. Most of them are of course sad about the transfer, as they had settled in quite well on the old wards, but there's nothing to be done about it. - Otherwise, everything is the same, I am really doing well health-wise. I send you and daddy many dear greetings and for you an extra sweet kiss from your Anita, who is always thinking of you.

The "transfer" of 40 nurses, who would henceforth "work with Rolf and his colleagues," meant their conscription for forced labor in factories. The nurses who remained behind consequently had an excessive amount of work to manage.

Clara to Hilde
Hamburg, June 7, 1941

My dear good one,
Your dear letter just arrived, and I want to answer it right away. - Don't worry so much about me.
If only the children could finally start their journey. But another solution or improvement in this area is probably unthinkable. I hardly believe I will be so lucky again. ...
Herbert's sister-in-law's sacrifice was, despite everything, not too great for what was achieved! Only her emotional suffering must not be. - We get no rest at all, constant fear of ??
Siegfr. was away for 3 weeks at the place where Alfred once was, for an insignificant illness; he has now recovered. - A d[ear] letter from Anita just arrived. Worth mentioning, at her

workplace 40 have been drafted for labor service, which includes Uta, and my granddaughter is staying. Hopefully she can just complete her training. - I kiss you, and may everything go more according to your wishes and hopes. Your Old One.

The letter is heavily coded due to censorship. With the sentence "I hardly believe I will be so lucky again," Clara meant to say that she herself would probably not be able to emigrate.
"Herbert's sister-in-law's sacrifice" refers to Hilde, who was the sister-in-law of Herbert Lasch-Feldberg, and to the sacrifice of her unhappy marriage to Ernst Kindler. Clara still believed that Anita's and Reinhard's emigration to Switzerland was only a matter of time.
The question marks in "constant fear of ??" perhaps stand for bombing and police raids. What Clara was afraid of, she could not say because of the censorship; that she was constantly afraid seems to have been a permissible statement.
The aforementioned Siegfried had been arrested and was "where Alfred once was," that is: in the prison in Berlin-Spandau, where Alfred Frank had been incarcerated in 1933. Who "Siegfried" was is not apparent from the documents.
The "insignificant illness" probably meant that it was an arbitrary arrest for intimidation, and the recovery that had occurred, that he had since been released again.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, June 21, 1941

My dear good Mutti!
... I am still doing just as well, except that I now suffer from chronic fatigue and exhaustion, which will probably never go away for the rest of my life. I have an enormous amount of work now, late shifts every day, hardly any lunch breaks, and often, when there are births, I don't get off the ward before 10:30 p.m.! On my day off, I usually lie in bed completely exhausted and yet don't sleep any longer than usual. Well, I am nevertheless grateful that I can continue to work here, and that my work here is valued and respected. If it didn't sound so silly, I could tell you many things that would make you really proud, but as I said, one can't tell such things about oneself, let alone write them. But in any case, I can tell you without "stinking self-praise" that my head nurse said she would protest if they try to replace me and that she hardly gives me time off because things don't run properly otherwise, i.e., regarding the actual work on the ward, not the work distribution, etc. I am only writing this to you so that you can be happy and see that I am truly fulfilling this difficult profession, and that all the work is truly useful and recognized. Well, and in 10 weeks the worst will be over, then, God willing and if nothing gets in the way, I will finally have my exam, and have something I can build on, something with which I will be needed throughout the world. It is also bitterly necessary, because in 14 days I will already be 20 years old and until now have always been a "wandering apprentice"! Now, seeing all the pregnant women and hopeful mothers, I so often have to think about how you, my dear good Mutti, must have felt 20 years ago, what you might have thought and hoped for, and what pain I might have caused you then! - You know, when you think about this whole cycle of dying and becoming, you gradually start to believe in miracles, and there is only one word for all of this - a wonder of nature!
... When I think that it was only - and yet already 20 years ago that I was still living in a dark, warm womb, that I was nourished by this mother, breathed with her - and that I am now already such a young woman myself who could just as well give birth to a child, who in turn, in 20, oh so short and yet so eventful years, could write this very same letter to me - my dear good Mutti, isn't that a grand nature?! -- I am so grateful that I, of all my colleagues, was allowed to work on the maternity ward, because this is how you get to know all these problems and questions in practice, see all the joys, worries, and fears up close, - and - I must confess to you, - even though I have experienced stillbirths, women close to madness with pain, worried fathers, and everything else, despite all this I wish for nothing more ardently -

than such a tiny little thing! You don't need to worry about me doing anything foolish, because we have learned to wait and are still so young, but I still look forward to it with every breath! Rolf, by the way, now earns almost double as a skilled worker compared to all the others, but he also toils from 6:30 in the morning until 8 in the evening! We only see each other 1-2 times, dead tired for 1-2 hours in the evening, otherwise it's hardly possible anymore. Despite everything, I tell you again, my dear, don't worry, we are sensible and will wait, first we'll see what the next 1-2 years bring! And what did you always tell me? - - Anticipation is the greatest joy, and if everything goes wrong, at least you've had the anticipation, - haven't you?! That's how I think about it too. ...
By the way, I had a very, very dear letter from Uncle Alfred and Aunt Else, which of course made me very happy! They wrote that they heard good things from Dorothea and also from the Laschs as well as from Prof. [Neuberg], isn't that lovely? ... To you, my dear one, I send - a thousand loving greetings and wishes! Always -- Your daughter Anita

One day after Anita wrote this letter, on June 22, 1941, the German campaign against Russia began. For the Jews remaining in Germany, this was a cause for additional existential fear. In his Reichstag speech of January 30, 1939, Hitler had announced that the result of a new world war would be "the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe."

Clara to Hilde
Hamburg, June 26, 1941

My dear one,
Your dear card pleased me. But you shouldn't torment yourself with writing to me given the little time you have. ...
After driving around for 2 days in all areas in the dreadful heat, I finally managed to get a small cardboard suitcase; I had given everything to Lies etc. for the time being, and now I wanted to pack it every evening with the necessities ... Yesterday evening Hanna had a very nice dinner with me, came at 7 and had to leave by 8:30. Of course, she cannot travel now. The Prof.'s sister from Pyr. will now probably not come here for the same reason, as she had intended. - Now, this should also be for you today a wholehearted congratulation for Anita's birthday. She truly brings us joy, such a splendid girl! Looking at the latest little pictures with the babies, over which she bends her radiant face, one can only conclude that she will one day make a man very happy, and she will be so herself. Hopefully she will get someone worthy of her!! I would like to send her so many beautiful things, but unfortunately so little is possible.
... How many things I would like to chat with you about if it were possible.
Will we ever be able to reunite? I wouldn't know how; that will probably remain a dream. - Right now I'm sitting on the balcony at 8:30 in the evening, but what is all this? Certainly much more than many have, and yet so oppressive when thinking of you all and my future? Almost daily I have huge tasks concerning Raeder's affairs, and that's not even the worst of it; I still fear other things even more. I discuss everything with Dr. R[udolphi], who advises me extensively, but the daily fear. If only more joys would come to you soon, I will be grateful and content. Now good night, dearest Hilde, be kissed fondly by your old one.

The nightly packing of a "small cardboard suitcase" was likely a preparation for air-raid alarms.
"Lies" referred to Hilde's younger sister Alice Feldberg.
The friend Hanna (Johanna Fränkel) had to leave "by 8:30" every evening due to the curfew for Jews (from 9 p.m.) that had been in effect since September 1939.
"Prof.'s sister from Pyr." was Anna Salomon, the sister of Carl Neuberg, who was staying in Bad Pyrmont at the time. The fact that she and Hanna Fränkel "of course, cannot travel now" was likely due to the start of the Russian campaign.

"Raeder's domain" referred to legal matters. Max Raeder was the executor of the will of Clara's deceased husband, Sally Feldberg, and Clara's tax advisor.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, June 27, 1941

My dear, good Mommy
... Peter's mother has returned from her trip, thank God. ...
Give my love to Daddy. A kiss for you from your Anita.

Regina Marcuse had been released from police custody at Moabit prison.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, July 24, 1941

My beloved, good Mommy!
... As I already wrote, I'm now working on the ear, nose, throat, skin, eye, and venereal diseases ward. You can hardly imagine how much I can learn here; I'm so happy about it! I've already been allowed to do the eye treatments by myself a few times. I've also been brought in for many new types of injections; I really have it good here. I'm learning a lot now, but I'm always quite tired. Otherwise, everything is the same. Much love and a kiss from your Anita. On Sunday, I went hiking with Rolf all day. It was wonderful. From 7 in the morning to 9 at night!

Peter Marcuse to Hilde
Château de Chabannes (Creuse Department, France), August 2, 1941

Dear Friends
... Today a transport of 25 children left from here for the U.S.A., including 4 children from Quincy. - In fourteen days, another one is leaving; Jochen Jacob and Arno Mark will be on it, and probably me too. - Please write all of this to my family, by airmail if possible. ...
Many greetings for now, Peter

Since January 1941, Peter Marcuse had been in the Home for Refugee Jewish children at the Château de Chabannes, run by the *"Organisation de secours aux enfants"* (OSE). As mail service between enemy states was suspended, Hilde was not allowed to forward Peter Marcuse's letters from France on to Germany.
Instead, she had to encode the news and present it as her own message from Switzerland to the Marcuse parents. Peter Marcuse's letter remained with Hilde. Her letter sent to Berlin has been lost.
"Quincy" likely meant Berlin.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, August 18, 1941

Dear good Musch!
Until the exam, in 3 weeks, you will probably have to make do with postcards from me for reasons of practicality and to save time, as I can't manage otherwise. My shift now starts at 6 a.m. already, but only lasts until 5 p.m., though without a break, and then courses on top of that! - I hardly see Rolf anymore, he works from 10 a.m. until 11 p.m. He manages an entire shift on his own! He is now moving into his own room, the Schulm[eister] parents are moving in next door, the subtenants are moving out, isn't that nice? If possible, please write Rolf a card for Sept. 2nd, it's his birthday. I'm only in touch with Reinhard by letter at the moment, as I can't go over in the evenings and am on duty during the day. I'm not sleeping well again, am very tired. Otherwise everything is fine. Mrs. W[eiss] is so very kind to me, always, I am so happy here. Lots of love! Your Anita.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, September 12, 1941

My beloved good Mommy!
The exam is over now! I passed with a 1!
As of today, I have been engaged by the Hospital as a full nurse. I am so happy.
I passed all subjects, practical and theoretical, with "very good"!
... Tomorrow evening is the graduation party! More again soon!
Only good things!! Your Anita.

From September 4 to 7, 1941, Anita took her final exam at the Jewish Hospital, passing with top marks, and henceforth held the professional title of "Jewish Nurse."

Anita from Hamburg to Hilde
Hamburg, September 17, 1941

My beloved darling!
As you will see from the return address, I have after all gone to Grandma's for another 2 ½ days. I'm being treated like a real princess here! - Our graduation party was wonderful! Although at the beginning I was a bit lowminded, I enjoyed myself, against all expectations, like never before! - I see Rolf so rarely now, I do miss him very much! - Otherwise, I'm doing quite well, I am content and confident and am bravely holding on despite everything! I must close! As always, all my love! Always your Anita.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, September 25, 1941

Dear, good darling!
... I now only go out in full nurse's uniform with the veil, etc. The work makes me content and happy! - Hopefully more again soon. Greetings to Daddy. Only love and good things! Your Anita.

The work uniform of the hospital nurses at the Jewish Hospital, with its cap and the veil falling over the neck, probably mitigated the shame of the Jewish star, which had to be worn from September 19, 1941.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, October 6, 1941

My dear, dear, good Mommy!
Now October 11th is here again, your birthday! You know that all my thoughts are with you, and you also know that I am not allowed to send you anything adequate, so for now please accept by letter many, many thousands of dear birthday greetings and wishes from your "little daughter." - I owe it all to you that, despite all the new hardships, I have remained, or rather become, a cheerful, conscious, and calm person. You should know this, even if I am only allowed to write so very little in such brevity: I have consciously fought my way through to life and am proud and happy to be able to live my life, whatever it may be!! And even if I were to lose everything, what is inside me no one can take away as long as I keep my wits, and - I will certainly never be bored, and - we all must die one day, but for now I am still living, and consciously experience all the beauty around me and love you, my Mommy, and Reinhard and Rolf, and am grateful to all the many people who do so much good for me and am grateful to you, my dear one, that you gave me life, just as it is, through agony! I will try to prove myself a worthy daughter to you and to bring you joy ... Outside now is a pale blue,

clear autumn sky, the sun is radiant, the trees are swaying in the autumn wind, and the autumn foliage stands out - colorful, green, and yellow - against the clear autumn sky.
Isn't that wonderful, can one not take deep joy in that?
Clouds will come again, autumn, snow, winter, thunderstorms and rain, - but, - everything has its good side! - Yesterday afternoon I was with Rolf and other very nice, educated young people at Uta's and her husband's, where we spent a truly interesting and lovely afternoon! In this circle, there is much music-making, reading, philosophizing, and discussion of art. They are all especially fine and clever people there and we are making progress! - - On Sept. 30th, I lit a beautiful candle during my night watch; I had much to think about! - Take a heartfelt kiss from your daughter Anita!

"Sept. 30th" was the anniversary of the death of Anita's father, Hermann Frank. Following Jewish custom, Anita observed this day by lighting a candle.

Julius, Edith, and Rolf Schulmeister to Hilde
Berlin, October 6, 1941

My dear Mrs. Kindler,
We send you our warmest wishes for your birthday, and also for Anita's brilliantly passed exam. It was to be expected, as she was truly very diligent. ...
Reinhard also visits us quite often. He looks very well & has completely overcome his shyness. He is very attached to Anita. - She is also truly wonderful with him.
So you see, dear Mrs. Kindler, you can be truly pleased with your two. And so we wish for you that it may always remain so.
Very warm regards & wishing you all the best, Your Julius & Edith Schulmeister. Kind regards to your husband, though we have not met. ...
[Postscript from Rolf Schulmeister:] Dear Mrs. Kindler!
May you see your children again soon . . . I cannot really think beyond that for you. ...
And above all I must thank you for something you surely haven't thought about at the moment, - for introducing me to the realm of music. You cannot imagine what an infinite comfort Bach has become for me. Simply indispensable; ever-present. - A comfort in times of greatest spiritual distress - and one finds the courage to continue working and to endure. I am still young, but I always have death before my eyes when I listen to Bach, but then I do not fear it; instead, I feel secure . . .
Let this be my gift to you, Mrs. Kindler: the knowledge that you have helped a person in this way in these times.
Good fortune on your path.
Your Rolf Schulmeister

Acute Existential Fear from October 1941

Perception of the Deportations from a Jewish Perspective

Whether a psychological connection existed, as Saul Friedländer suspects (cf. FRIEDLÄNDER/KENAN, p. 294), or whether it was merely a coincidence in time, is uncertain; the fact is that simultaneously with the military setback of Hitler's troops before Moscow, in October 1941, began the genozide on the German Jews, which Hitler had announced in his Reichstag speech of January 30, 1939, as the "extermination of the Jewish race in Europe", and which was referred to within the party leadership by the codename "Endlösung der Judenfrage" ("Final Solution to the Jewish Question"). This included the deportations of Jewish families from Germany. (In the occupied eastern territories, deportations and mass murders had already begun in the autumn of 1939.)

The deportations were usually carried out by sending individuals or families a written order a few days in advance to appear at an assembly point at a prescribed time with little luggage. There they had to wait for several hours or days until the number of people was reached which was required to fill the designated train, and were then taken on foot or in trucks from the assembly point to the boarding station. This usually happened at night or in the early morning to hide the process from the population (cf. HARTUNG-VON DOETINCHEM/WINAU, p. 179).

Thus, for the first time, the contours of Hitler's "Final Solution" became apparent to the German Jews. News of the deportations must have spread among them like wildfire. They soon learned to distinguish between the destination "Theresienstadt", which was usually communicated to the victims, and those deportations for which an unclear destination ("Poland", "resettlement to the East") or no destination was named. Those who were not deported to Theresienstadt usually disappeared without a trace, which naturally raised the fear that the deportation had led to death. Where commemorative literature speaks of deportations "to Auschwitz", this is historical knowledge inserted in hindsight. In the correspondence left by Hilde, the word "Auschwitz" appears for the first time in July 1945, at that time still merely as the place name of one concentration camp among others, not as the symbol for that black hole in the history of human civilization that the word became after 1960.

In addition to the deportations, there continued to be police arrests followed by intimidatory or investigative detention. In these cases, the grounds for suspicion, the names of denouncers, and the whereabouts of the prisoners were sometimes also communicated, which enabled relatives to visit them in a police prison and bring them food and necessities. In her letters, Anita used to distinguish between deportations, which she referred to as "trips" and "vacations", and police custody, for which she used the keywords "sudden illness" and "hospital stay".

Whereas police arrests could result from tips from denouncers, the deportations were presented as resettlements for which neither denunciations nor grounds for suspicion were needed.

On October 2, 1941, the day before the attack on Moscow, Hitler issued an "Appeal to the Soldiers on the Eastern Front," which contained the following passage: *"In a country* [meaning Russia] *that could feed the whole world with its vastness and fertility, there reigns a poverty unimaginable for us Germans. This is the result of what is now almost 25 years of Jewish rule, which, as Bolshevism, is at its core merely the most vulgar form of capitalism. But the bearers of this system are in both cases the same: Jews and only Jews."*

On the following day, in his Sportpalast speech for the opening of the Winter Relief Campaign, Hitler labeled the Jews "the world enemy." From then on, his tirades against the Jews poured out like a torrent. Day after day, in private conversations and public statements, he expressed sheer anti-Semitic rage (cf. FRIEDLÄNDER/KENAN, p. 291).

Hitler's enemy image - "Jews and only Jews" - was a delusion detached from reality, but it met with widespread approval in Germany.

Independently of one another, but almost simultaneously, Edith Koppel, Clara Feldberg, and Anita, in their letters of October 20, 21, and 23, 1941, urged Hilde to press ahead with the utmost urgency for the children to join her in Switzerland (Koppel: "just do everything possible quickly"; Clara: "The children's journey must absolutely be expedited"; Anita: "Do everything as quickly as possible"). From this, it can be concluded that the Jews in Berlin and Hamburg had realized around October 20, 1941, what the commencing deportations meant: the beginning of the systematic murder of the Jews still living in Germany.

Ban on Emigration in Germany, Entry Permit from Switzerland

After Hilde realized that her children were threatened with deportation to the East, she turned with a desperate plea for help to Basel's Police Minister, Councillor Fritz Brechbühl.

Hilde to Cantonal Councillor Brechbühl
Basel-Bettingen 41, October 6, 1941

Dear Mr. Councillor,
Referring to my visit with you on October 3, 1941, and with reference to the aforementioned meeting at the Federal Palace in Bern, I take the liberty of most politely asking for your help and support in the following matter: I am the wife of Ernst Kindler, a Swiss citizen, with place of origin in Lyssach, Bern.
In the summer of 1939, we wanted to establish our permanent residence in Basel with my minor children from my first marriage (I was a widow), Anita and Reinhard Frank. Our relocation was postponed ... because ... the entry permit for the children was denied due to the difficult situation caused by the war. I refer to our request for reconsideration and appeal of December 20, 1939. Thus, I was forced to leave my children behind alone for the time being.
...
Now, to our terrible horror, we are receiving news almost daily and from various sources that both children are in absolute danger and that we must do everything possible to get them away from there and to us as quickly as humanly possible, because we must expect the worst at any hour!! In my family, as I was informed 2 days ago, there have been 7 deaths in the last week due to the events there!!! (Documents available.) Finding other accommodation for the children is completely impossible. I believe, esteemed Mr. Councillor, I need not add anything to what I have just described.
From this, you will be able to empathize with the dreadful fear and worry we feel for the children, whom we had to leave behind alone and unprotected. We implore you to do everything in your power so that we may receive the entry and residence permit for both children as quickly as possible, so that they can live here with us in safety and receive their education here. ...
Out of this terrible worry, we place this matter trustingly in your hands, esteemed Mr. Councillor, with the request to do everything possible so that we can bring these minor children here, to us, to safety and to their education.
We extend our sincerest thanks to you in advance for your efforts and look forward to your reply.
With highest regards Hilde Kindler

Thanks to the efforts of Cantonal Councillor Brechbühl, Hilde finally received the Swiss entry permits for Anita and Reinhard on October 24, 1941! She reported this by telegram to Anita and Reinhard in Berlin.

Hilde to Anita and Reinhard
October 24, 1941

24 X 41 18 34 FRANK WEISS ZINGSTERSTR. 9 BERLIN
= CHILDREN ENTRY PERMITTED IMMEDIATELY PICK UP DESIRED PERMIT FROM LEGATION WIRE VIA LEGATION ARRIVAL TIME AND BORDER STATION = DEAREST MOM KINDLER++

The Swiss entry permit arrived too late. The day before, on October 23, 1941, the German borders had been closed to Jews wishing to emigrate. This had happened due to a secret official order. Hilde had once again been overtaken by events, after the plan to send the children to England in September 1939 had already failed because of the war that had broken out two days earlier.

The secrecy surrounding the border closure sought by the Nazi regime meant that in her efforts to obtain an exit permit, Anita received only rejections but no explanation as to why or for how long she had to wait.

Clara Feldberg's Suicide, October 22 to 25, 1941

Since 1936, Clara Feldberg had lived with her non-Jewish housekeeper, Erna Juhnke, in the spacious four-room apartment at Rondeel 41 in Hamburg. Erna Juhnke had entered Clara's service in 1923, three years after the death of Clara's husband Seelig (Sally) Feldberg, and over time had also become her lady companion.

When news of the deportations began to spread, Clara, on the evening of Wednesday, October 22, 1941, took the medication she had already long kept in store. On the morning of Thursday, October 23, 1941, Erna Juhnke found her unconscious lying in her bed.

The empty medication packages on the nightstand and the farewell letter to Erna Juhnke made it clear that this was a suicide attempt. The family doctor who was called, Dr. Hermann Bohm, decided against resuscitation. In doing so, he took a legal risk that he was prepared to assume out of solidarity with his patient. Clara died on Saturday, October 25, 1941, at 4 a.m. (cf. Stolpersteine-Hamburg.de, biography of Clara Feldberg by Björn Eggert, 2012). Clara's last letters were addressed to Hilde and to Erna Juhnke.

Clara to Hilde
Hamburg, October 21, 1941

My dear one.
... The children's journey must absolutely be expedited and is my only hope. Anita is enormously capable and inspired in her profession and self-sacrificing! The doctors she spoke to here would have loved to have her at the hospital here! Otherwise, for me, there is only fear of what is to come. I hear so many dreadful things from the city where Father constantly had business, and so many are traveling near Aunt Bertha. I just hope that Reinhard's mommy will have something left of his grandma -. Now I must close, my dear one, affectionately, Your Old One. Warmest regards to Ernst.

The "city where Father constantly had business" refers to Hamburg.
Clara's younger sister Bertha Löwenstein, "Aunt Bertha," had already been deported to Theresienstadt.

Clara to Erna Juhnke

Dear Erna.
Please be absolutely certain of my heartfelt thanks for your loyalty. I can no longer withstand what is to come. To put my mind at ease, please fulfill your promise and stand by my grandchildren and Mrs. Kindler as much as possible. A final, heartfelt farewell. Yours, Mrs. Feldberg.

The letter is undated. It is not part of Hilde's estate (cf. Stolpersteine-Hamburg.de, biography of Clara Feldberg, 2012).

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, October 26, 1941

My beloved, good Mother!
I want to take you in my arms, I want to press your hand, - but I cannot yet.
My dear one! As Dr. R[udolphi] probably informed you yesterday, our dear, good Grandma passed away peacefully yesterday morning, October 25. - Mother, my dear, good Mother! We must not despair; she is better off this way. She has been spared from all that which inevitably lies ahead for her and for us.
She has been spared much sorrow, misery, and tears.
She is at peace! My Mother, it's alright to cry, but do not cry bitter tears, only tears of love. - I know everything, everything. ...

Your entry permit and the telegram from Dr. R. arrived at almost the same time - a twist of fate! Mother, just keep telling yourself it was for the best! She is no longer suffering.
I wanted to go to her at once but got no travel permit; I am still fighting for it, - if only I succeed! The funeral will be Wednesday or Thursday - I am with you! I must leave everything to Dr. R., as I cannot be away long. I will do everything to the best of my ability! - I must also return here immediately, for not an hour can be wasted for us here; it is a fight, fight, fight! If only there is a victorious end! ...
You mustn't worry about me. - We have separated. ... I can't tell you everything, but despite it all, this was also very, very hard for me, - it had to be this way! I bear all this hardship with the thought of seeing you soon! Let's hope! Beloved, good Mommy! I must close for today, daily life demands its due!
Keep your head up and look forward! A heartfelt kiss from your Anita.

"We have separated" alludes to the interruption in Anita's love relationship with Rolf Schulmeister. In October 1941, Rolf turned to another woman during his forced labor at the factory. This was the nurse Gabriele from the Jewish Hospital, who was also assigned to factory work - one of Anita's superiors. (She can be seen in two group photos in HARTUNG-VON DOETINCHEM/WINAU, p. 177.)

Hilde to Councillor Fritz Brechbühl
Basel-Bettingen, 3 November 1941

Dear Mr. Councillor!
I feel the need to express my sincerest thanks for your efforts and intercession on behalf of my children. In Bern, I also received the permit immediately; a telegram was sent to the legation. Unfortunately, and to my greatest horror, I was informed that at present no emigration from Germany is possible at all, everything is blocked! So I remain in great worry, mitigated only by the fact that perhaps the issued visa, or rather the entry permit, is a certain protection. ...
Once again expressing my and my husband's sincerest thanks, I remain, with the highest esteem, Hilde Kindler

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, 4 November 1941

My beloved, good, dear Musch!
Be brave! Listen! We must be sensible, I have again tried everything everywhere! At the moment everything is blocked, for the little one too! We are not getting any papers. Dr. Gu[mpert] has also tried, wait! Try again urgently to at least adopt the little one. If he is registered in your book he can surely leave at once. He won't get a book here. Everything is obstructed. Mrs. Pro is also doing what she can.
... Stay healthy! I'm on night duty. Greet daddy! A kiss from your Anita.

Panic speaks from the postcard. Anita now saw acquiring Swiss citizenship as the only way to be saved. She hoped to save at least the still-underage Reinhard through adoption by the Swiss citizen Ernst Kindler. She may have believed that, as a legal adult, she was too old to be adopted.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, 14 November 1941

My dear good Mutti!
How are you?? We are healthy and that is the most important.
I have lost weight recently, you see, it works without a diet and often faster than you think! Mutti, be good, be sensible. There is still nothing to be done! Wait, wait! Mrs. Pro[chownik],

Dr. Gu[mpert] and everyone else are helping, we can do nothing from here. Thanks for your last card. Dear Mutti! The Weisses are leaving today!! I am moving into the nurses' home immediately, I hope I get the permit.
Reinhard is healthy. I must go on! So I'll stop. I am still doing night duty. I don't get to sleep during the day, it is very exhausting. - Don't be angry about the shortness, I can't write more. Be brave! A kiss from your Anita.

Anita's foster parents, Regine and Fritz Weiss, had been ordered to appear at an assembly point for deportation. For an unknown reason, they were not deported but were sent back after a week, so that Anita could return to them. In the meantime, Anita lived in the nurses' home of the Jewish Hospital.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, 22 November 1941

My dear good Mutti!
Just this card in great haste as a loving greeting. Mutti! I thank dear God, because the Weisses are back here! We are so thankful to be together again, even if still without all our things. They lost everything in the incident! For now, you can write to me at the Zingster address again. I have been through a lot, but despite everything, I am glad that we are all together again and healthy. Reinhard is healthy. Today I went to an office again; everything is impossible for us!!
I want to submit a special request now. May God help us! I'll soon be at my wit's end! Be brave, little Mutti, we are too. The main thing is our health. Is there a German legation where you are? Mrs. Pro[chownik] and Bine are dear.
A kiss from your Anita.

While the Weiss couple waited at the assembly point for their deportation, their household belongings were stolen. The practice of theft by Gestapo officers is described in the report by Hedwig Ems (see below): After deportations, individual Gestapo officers would return to the sealed apartments, break the seals, carry away what they could use for themselves, and then seal the doors again.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, 25 November 1941

My dear good Mommy!
... Guess what, I recently ran into Herrmann's daughter after a long time. She has grown so much, she's 20 years old now.
Time flies incredibly fast. She told me that she's engaged now. Her fiancé is from the same town as Ernst K., isn't that nice? Yes, sometimes I would like that too, one is quite alone. Well, my turn will come, it just has to be the right one. You would have to pick him out, then he would certainly be to my taste. That's all for today. A kiss from your An.

"Herrmann's daughter": Anita's father spelled his name Hermann, not Herrmann. The spelling mistake was probably not an accident, but served as camouflage. In code, Anita was asking her mother to find a Swiss husband for her to marry, to enable her to get Swiss citizenshipt and to escape to Switzerland. She became more explicit in the next letter.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, 13 December 1941

My dear good Mommy!
... By the way, Emmy's niece would like to get engaged, it would be better for her, she would be with her parents sooner then. Reinhard is visiting me on Sunday. Warmest greetings and kisses for today!
Your An.

By "Emmy's niece", Anita is referring to herself, the niece of Emmy Rubensohn, born Frank.

At the secret "Wannsee Conference" on January 20, 1942, the "Final Solution to the European Jewish Question" was administratively put under way.

Daily life for the German civilian population was made more difficult by the increasingly frequent and heavy bombing raids, the air-raid alarms and nights to be spent in air-raid shelters, the scarcity of food and other essential goods, the absence of men on military service, and the death notices from the fronts.

For the Jews in Germany and elsewhere, alwo in Switzerland, it remained a question of survival whether the National Socialist state, whose goals since October 1941 included the "extermination of the Jewish race," would be victorious or be defeated in the World War.

The year 1942 brought no answer to this. The events of the war had shifted to Russia, the Far East, and North Africa. The fortunes of war seemed to favor alternately one, then the other side. The only clear developments were the stalemate on the German fronts before Leningrad and Moscow and the continued successful German advance in southern Russia as far as Stalingrad.

The Jews in Palestine and their relatives in Europe experienced a shock with the sudden German advance in North Africa, when General Rommel succeeded in pushing the British back over 500 kilometers eastward from the Libyan city of Tobruk to El Alamein in Egypt within ten days.

Had the German troops crossed the Nile Delta with the same momentum and carried the attack on to Palestine, the annihilation of the entire Jewish population there would have been probable, as had previously occurred in the occupied Eastern European countries. An SS Einsatzgruppe with the corresponding order was on standby in North Africa from June 20, 1942.

This was not to be, as the British halted the German advance at El Alamein on June 30, 1942. After a major battle on October 24, 1942, the British General Montgomery threw the Germans back 850 kilometers westward to Benghazi within 16 days, which marked the beginning of the end for the German Africa campaign. The surrender of the last German units in North Africa took place on May 13, 1943.

The new state-sanctioned reprisals against Jews in Germany introduced in 1942 included obligations and prohibitions. It was now the duty of all Jews to mark their apartments outside with a visible star at the entrance, and to surrender all dispensable clothing as well as all woolen and fur items; it was forbidden for them to buy milk, eggs, and meat, tobacco products, books, newspapers, and magazines, to keep pets, and to visit hairdressers.

From May 1942, Jews were forbidden to use public transport. In exceptional cases, a special permit could be granted if the way to work was longer than seven kilometers; Anita managed to obtain such permits for herself and Reinhard (see Anita's letter of July 30, 1942, below).

At the end of June 1942, all Jewish schools were closed, including the private high school of the Jewish Cultural Association in Berlin, which Reinhard had last attended. His schooling thus ended prematurely after seven and a half years.

Anita and Reinhard at the Jewish Hospital

For Anita and Reinhard, the Jewish Hospital, where Anita had worked since May 1940 and Reinhard since July 1942, and where they were also housed from March 1943, was a place of relative security where they found employment and recognition.

But even here they lived in constant fear. Not of intimidating arrests or individual deportation, as happened to Jews outside the hospital, but since 1940 Anita had faced the risk of being assigned to forced labor in a factory. Furthermore, from 1942 onwards, parts of the hospital staff were repeatedly deported - a fate that could befall Anita and Reinhard at any time. There was also the constant fear of the hospital's complete dissolution, which from 1942 would presumably have resulted in the deportation of all employees and patients. Anita encrypted this threatening scenario with the word "Wolfratshausen." As the Reich capital was to be made "judenfrei" (free of Jews) with particular urgency according to Hitler's will, "Wolfratshausen" became more likely with each passing day.

As early as the 19th century, the hospital, which was run by the Jewish Community of Berlin, enjoyed a reputation as an outstanding clinic with doctors of international renown. Its Jewish character was emphasized by a synagogue, a kosher kitchen, and supervision by the Jewish Community. The hospital was also open to non-Jewish patients. This changed in the autumn of 1938: from October onwards, only Jews were allowed to be treated there.

With the integration of the Jewish Community of Berlin into the "Reichsvereinigung der Juden" (Association of the Jews) the hospital's connection with the community ended in 1938.

The hospital was placed under the authority of the Division IV B 4 of the "Reichssicherheitshauptamt" (RSHA) (Reich Security Main Office). Thus, the hospital became an institution run by Jews for Jews under state control. In the early years, this control was exercised indirectly via the "Reichsvereinigung der Juden" (Association of the Jews), but from October 1942 there was direct state control with the appointment of SS man Fritz Wöhrn as supervisor of the hospital. Wöhrn was an officer in the Eichmann department. He was described as an antisemitic fanatic. At the same time, Dr. Walter Lustig was promoted to director; since 1939 he had been head of the health administration of the Berlin Jewish Community and since 1940 or 1941 also head of the health department of the "Reichsvereinigung der Juden" (Association of the Jews). His career path identifies him as a Jew who hoped to ensure his own survival by collaborating with the National Socialist state.

After a first wave of deportations from the hospital in April 1942, the burning question for the staff was who decided who was to be deported and according to what criteria. It was obvious that the director played the crucial role in this, by virtue of his responsibility for the hospital's functioning. Gradually, it leaked out that it was he who drew up the lists of staff members to be deported, while Fritz Wöhrn and other Gestapo members made the selection of the patients (cf. ELKIN, p. 57; SILVER, p. 224). Rumors also circulated that Lustig was influenced by a nurse who was considered one of his mistresses (cf. Silver, p. 97).

From the staff's perspective, Lustig thus became the master of life and death, a circumstance that fundamentally changed the atmosphere in the hospital. The director was increasingly isolated, feared anc courted by all. Whoever saw an opportunity to win his favor seized it, without being choosy about the means: it was a matter of survival. Anita ensured that she and Reinhard were known to the director by name (which was not a matter of course, considering the high turnover of staff) and that Anita and Reinhard were held in high regard by the director. Furthermore, she sought additional security through money payments, which were financed by Hilde and possibly went to the director (see below).

The companionship among the hospital's doctors and nurses, which Anita last described on the occasion of the graduation ceremony on September 17, 1941, probably shrank over the course of 1942. A competition for survival now prevailed, with the director as the arbiter, in which the rescue of some (through escape or going into hiding) dramatically increased the risk for others. Testimonies from individual survivors, according to which Lustig was allegedly antisemitic, vain, arrogant, unapproachable, and sexually abusive, should be interpreted with caution. Silver recounts in detail statements from former female employees about the director's sexual assaults (pp. 26 ff.), but also quotes eyewitnesses who remember Lustig with respect. In the works of HARTUNG-VON DOETINCHEM/WINAU, ELKIN, and in Anita's letters, no such allusions are found.

Lustig's position was difficult, as his efforts to ensure the hospital's existence, and thus his own survival, were inseparable from his participation in the deportations, that is, from aiding and abetting mass murder. In June 1945, Lustig was arrested in Berlin by the Soviet occupiers and killed at the end of 1945 (cf. HARTUNG-VON DOETINCHEM/WINAU, p. 226; ELKIN, p. 106; SILVER, pp. 209 ff.).

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, February 20, 1942

My beloved good, good Musch!

Finally, after more than 6 weeks, you are to receive a first greeting from me from home! I hope you have already received my first two cards, sent while I was still in the hospital. Well, I was discharged a few days ago and granted a 14-day rest period! Great, isn't it fine? My last few days there were wonderful, as always, especially with the children! I was simply in 7th heaven with joy. ...
Otherwise, it was of course a bit strange to return from a paradise to this all-too-harsh reality, but I am grateful, despite everything, because all the others have not had such a wonderful time, so I must have three times the courage and strength, right?! And besides everything else, I need this strength especially, because, my dear big silly boy, "my" Rolf will probably soon get engaged to, or rather, marry my superior, Nurse Gabriele!
You will feel what that means for me! Since I have written you only a little about the two of us in recent months, you can hardly judge the whole situation correctly from the distance! But I am being brave, and hope only for the most beautiful and best things for my "big" rascal here too! I just fear he is taking this step much too soon, but more on that some other time. The two of us remain very good friends despite everything, and that means a lot. Reinhard has grown incredibly, he is everyone's darling, I am so in love with him, he brings only joy and is doing really well! - And you, my dear, I know and feel everything! Be thankful for us!, believe and hope and stay healthy for us!
A sweet kiss from your Anita. Forgive the handwriting, I am still in bed!

In January 1942, Anita fell ill with scarlet fever. After a few days of home care with the Weiss family, she was a patient at the Jewish Hospital for about three weeks. She was discharged in mid-February 1942.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, 23 February 1942

My beloved good Mommy!
... My Rolf is now engaged; he marries in April! Through difficult, trying days I have fought my way to a beautiful farewell, one that is final and complete. We are left with the memory and find each other again in music, just as we first found each other. - We have taken a beautiful, mature, and complete farewell in writing, so this pure, great youthful friendship, if I may call it that, had an ending just as noble and dear, though bittersweet, as its character always was. We helped and gave each other so much! God will know why it had to be, and I trust Him, fate, and the strength in me! I still have to comfort his mother a great deal; she loved me like her own child and is thus in despair, but I have comfort, strength, and joy for many souls within me, I can help!
If only I could first stand by you, my dear, with love and help, for I see that as my task! Have courage and patience! ... Your Anita
The son of Thea v.K. has been killed in action! Write to her!

Regarding Thea v.K. (Dorothea von Knyphausen), see the notes on Anita's letter of December 28, 1940, above; at that time, Anita had reported the death of Knyphausen's son-in-law.

Anita to Ernst Kindler
Berlin, March 17, 1942

Dear daddy!
Thank you so much for your two detailed letters to the boy and me. - Unfortunately, Rolf fell very ill 1 day before his engagement; he was taken to a hospital by car. The one where Uncle Alfred once had to stay so long unexpectedly. None of us can speak to him, not even his mother, it's surely contagious! We heard from the doctor in charge that he is doing a little

better, but he will probably have to stay for a long time! - For today, many warm greetings! All the best! Anita.

Rolf had been arrested and taken to the Spandau Prison, where Alfred Frank had been detained in September 1933. After the arrest, nurse Gabriele lost interest in Rolf. Anita resumed contact with Rolf, visited him in prison as soon as it was possible, and supplied him with food.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, March 24, 1942

My dear, good Mom!
... Unfortunately, still no good news from Rolf; he is not doing any better. His mother will be allowed to see him this week. Otherwise, thank God, everything here is alright so far. I have courage and rejoice with every ray of sunshine! You stay brave, too! Much love! Your Anita.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, March 31, 1942

Dear, good Mom!
... It has been a little too much again these last few days!
Despite everything, I am grateful from the ground of my heart to know the boy is, for now until April 30th, lovingly and well cared for by the dear Sch[ulmeister] family! It was the last and only possible lifeline in these suddenly difficult hours.
I now also have all the necessary permits for him with the help of Dr. Gu[mpert]. From the K[oppel]s, we unfortunately have no new address at all yet; hopefully they are doing well. ... Many dear greetings and a kiss from your Anita. Thank you for the last two cards

"... we unfortunately have no new address at all yet" meant, when deciphered, that Reinhard's foster parents, Max and Edith Koppel, had been taken into police custody, so Reinhard could not stay in their apartment; Anita had therefore placed him without official permission with Edith and Julius Schulmeister, the parents of the imprisoned Rolf.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, April 9, 1942

My beloved, brave little Mommy!
... I had very difficult night shifts and a lot of running around during the day, but I was able to get a lot of good things done with the help of Mrs. Pro[chownik] etc., especially for our little 17-year-old lodger. We are all so grateful; he didn't have his parents here either. We are still looking for a room for our 2nd lodger so that we can then take in Reinhard with all the permits. The boy is blissful and perfectly at home with the Sch[ulmeister]s. I was with him at Easter, and also every other free hour. Recently I tried on the summer clothes with him, everything is much too small!! I will have the tailor alter them as much as possible. - - Rolf's case probably won't come up before June; he is not doing any better.
I myself am enjoying the spring and am happy and strong! For today, take a kiss and a thousand greetings. Your Anita.

In their apartment at Zingster Strasse 9, the Weiss family housed two other youths in addition to Anita. One of them was 17-year-old Werner, who later died of sepsis in the Jewish Hospital and was cared for there by Anita (see Anita's letters of November 17 and 22, 1942, below).
Since Jews could not buy clothes since February 1940, existing textiles had to be altered again and again.
A decision about Rolf's further fate was not to be expected before June.

Anita and Edith Schulmeister to Hilde
Berlin, April 11, 1942

My dear, good Mommy!
... Yesterday, Mrs. Sch[ulmeister] visited Rolf. He is doing a little better but will have to stay there for a long time yet. Otherwise, everything is all right so far. For today, just many dear greetings and much love! In haste, Your Anita ...

[Postscript from Edith Schulmeister:] My dear Mrs. Kindler!
I hope you are happy with our arrangement! Reinhard brings us much joy; he is a true elixir of youth for my husband! They both romp around like 2 wild boys! We haven't laughed for a long time, now we are learning how to laugh again! All the best to you, sincerely, Mrs. Schulmeister

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, April 14, 1942

My beloved, good Mommy!
I'm currently sitting at the dentist's in my free time and waiting - swollen cheek, periodontitis. But the pain is already subsiding a little. Otherwise, we are grateful for the sun and the spring and for every kind word. Every evening I enjoy my little room and my little bed. How good I still have it! - If you should hear nothing from Herrmann's daughter, please don't worry; she has sent word that she is doing well. Kitty Gump. always knows about her, you can then safely write to her. Bine is still at Lake Constance. I can't write any more today. Don't worry so much, we are healthy and have courage, strength, and hope! Be brave, little Mommy, whatever may come.
A heartfelt kiss from your Anita.

Anita now expected her deportation at any moment. She instructed her mother to inquire, if necessary, with Dr. Hans Gumpert's non-Jewish wife, Kitty Gumpert.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, April 22, 1942

My beloved, good Mommy!
Just having a wonderful time at Bine's on my day off! Everything is so beautiful here! Music, good food, books, pictures, art. So I feel as if I'm in a fairytale. But I'm not sad; I also have peace and sun, just deeper, in my heart. I have courage and strength and find much inner joy in nature and life, despite all hardship and deprivation. As long as the boy and I are healthy and together, there are no truly great worries. One slowly gets over everything, and the sun in the sky brings new comfort every day! Bine's father also wrote contentedly. - Rolf wrote - no possibility of an operation before July!
I don't know yet what will happen with the boy; it still depends on permits! Just love and courage! Your Anita.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, April 24, 1942

My dear little Musch!
... Very many of my colleagues were sent to other work; I was allowed to stay, thank God, and am very grateful! - For today, just many thousands of greetings, also to daddy. A sweet [drawn circle] to you from your Anita.

That "very many of my colleagues were sent to other work" refers to being detailed for forced labor, not to a police raid.

Hans Seutemann to Hilde
Bad Pyrmont, April 25, 1942

Dear Madam,
Mrs. Anna Salomon can be reached at the following address: Welfare Committee for Refugees Warsaw Gartenstr. 27 Mrs. Anna Salomon from Bad Pyrmont. Please notify her brother and daughter. Shipments of all kinds very welcome.
Respectfully yours, Hans Seutemann

Anna Salomon, Carl Neuberg's sister, was deported to the Warsaw Ghetto on March 31, 1942. Behind the innocuous-sounding address Gartenstrasse 27 was a assembly camp inside the ghetto, where captives were held until their further deportation. This is consistent with Anna Salomon's complaint about life in the barracks in a postcard to Hilde, the contents of which Hilde relayed to Carl Neuberg on June 15, 1942.
In the Warsaw Ghetto, which had been completely walled in and sealed off from the outside world since the end of 1940, 450,000 Jews - most from Warsaw, but also deportees from the rest of Poland, Germany, and other countries - were crammed together and from there deported to extermination camps, primarily Treblinka. The clearing of the ghetto of its inhabitants was accelerated from July 1942, so that by the time of the ghetto uprising in April/May 1943, only about 40,000 people were still living there. The number of ghetto inhabitants who survived the World War is small.
As in Theresienstadt, the Warsaw Ghetto had a Jewish self-administration controlled by the Gestapo and cultural activities, as well as the possibility of its inhabitats of receiving letters, food, and everyday items from relatives. In contrast to Theresienstadt, however, the Jews imprisoned in the Warsaw Ghetto and in most other ghettos in the occupied eastern territories were destined for extermination from the very beginning. From the perspective of the planners of the Holocaust, the Eastern European ghettos were mere transit places on the path to annihilation.

Gertrud Prochownik to Hilde
Berlin-Charlottenburg, April 26, 1942

My dear Hilde K.
I have not been in touch with you for a long time... and yet you have been in my thoughts so often. I hope you are well and that the spring with its warmth and sun is giving you new strength; you certainly do not lack courage and energy. - Anita often came to my office - that will stop now too. - Anita has had an unusually difficult time - but she has a maturity and inner breadth that means one can rely on her decisions. I am just glad that we can speak on the phone, as we are connected through work - and so I can at least support her a little. I hope it works out now for the boy to move in with her; in the current situation - please take "current" as temporally limited as the word implies - that is probably for the best. Otherwise, you are probably informed about our general condition - the demands of the day are so harsh that they absorb all our thoughts and actions. But I am healthy and am doing my best to remain so in every respect. You asked me for Anna's address: Warsaw Gartenstr. 27. She would be very happy to hear from you, and if you write with prepaid reply, she can answer. If you happen to speak with Carl, please give him my regards; I know he takes a keen interest in everything. ...
Hildchen, I promise to be better about writing and send my warmest regards, Yours, Gertrud Pro.

Due to the great distance Anita's visits to Gertrud Prochownik at Badenallee 1 in Charlottenburg had to cease from May 1, 1942, when Jews were forbidden to use public transportation.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, April 30, 1942

My beloved good Mother!

... I'm going to see the boy again today for an hour, then I have the night watch. In the future, we'll meet every 14 days at Dr. Gu[mpert]'s; so he doesn't have to walk so long; otherwise, the way is too far. I was at Gu[mpert]'s again yesterday. He is so kind, like a father; I am so grateful to him. The boy is sensible and dear. Whether and how I will move, I don't know yet; I'd prefer not to at all, we will wait and see. In my little room, I now have a small pot of azaleas, which brings me so much joy! News from Rolf again, we must be thankful.
See you soon! Give my love to Daddy, stay brave and take a heartfelt kiss from your Anita.

April 30, 1942, was the last day on which Anita was allowed to use public transportation to visit her brother.

Swiss Federal Political Department to Hilde
Bern, May 7, 1942

[No salutation]
With reference to our letter of October 22 of last year concerning your children Anita and Reinhard Frank, we inform you, based on a report from the Swiss Legation in Berlin, that it was not in a position to undertake anything for them in view of your children's German nationality. Moreover, an approach to the German authorities to facilitate their departure would have been pointless, because on the German side, exit permits for German non-Aryans are refused as a matter of principle.
Yours faithfully, Section for Legal Affairs and Private Financial Interests Abroad i. V. Hofer

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, May 10, 1942

My dear, good Mommy!
I'm sitting right now in a wonderfully pretty, small, clean, white nurse's room on the mixed infectious diseases ward. It's after 3 a.m., and I've suddenly been assigned to cover the night watch for a short time for a nurse who fell ill.
I've just changed my little ones' diapers and put them on the potty!
Six little children with measles, each one cuter than the othe; we've already become great friends. Otherwise, there are also several adults here with other infectious diseases and a nice girl who is almost well again. You wouldn't believe how lovely this ward is! Everything is newly furnished, clean, and sunny! A children's room with six beds, otherwise small rooms, even one with a balcony! All nice patients.
At night I have hardly anything to do; I was even able to lie down for a little while. Otherwise, after my work was done, I mended and read, more than I have in a long time. In the evening, the day nurses even saved me a wonderful and plentiful meal for the night, something very special; nothing is lacking for my happiness! It is so beautifully quiet; everyone is sleeping. I am enjoying the silence. During the day - tomorrow is Sunday - I will treat myself to a nice bath at the home and then lie in the sun on the roof garden! Am I not doing well?! I am so thankful for all these beautiful things!
Outside, nature is heavenly; everything is blooming and green. How beautiful God's world is! I take such joy in everything!
Otherwise, thank God, everything is the same as always! We are healthy. For today, a thousand loving greetings and kisses from your Anita.
Please give my love to Daddy. Entry permit has been extended to June 30! Dr. Rud[olphi] sends his regards

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, May 16, 1942

My dear good Musch!
... I don't know Max and Edith's address; I think they live near Mrs. Pro[chownik]. I haven't heard from them in a long time; the old mother is now alone at home. - It has not yet been decided when or if I have to move into the Home. If so, the boy will take my little room, although it is very difficult to get the permit for him, as a child he is not allowed his own room but would have to go into a home, but I will manage it - we'll wait and see.
... For today, heartfelt greetings and a kiss from your Anita.
Give Daddy my special regards!!

Since Anita and Hilde knew exactly the Koppel couple's home address, Anita's comment about the unknown address signals that the couple had been arrested. This is confirmed by the statement that the old mother was now alone.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, May 24, 1942

My beloved good Mother!
I am sitting in the nurses' station of the maternity ward, it is 12 o'clock, I am on night watch again. First of all, I want to write to you again that Reinhard and I, as well as our foster parents, are healthy, as that is the main thing! - A very large number of my former colleagues are now working with Dad, Uncle Carl and Clara Feldb[erg] in the same place; they were placed through acquaintances of Thea [von] K[nyphausen]. I believe they spoke with Rolf Schu[lmeister] before their new jobs began.
Well, a change of work often happens quickly! I am so thankful that I can continue to work here for the time being; the work truly brings me joy and is a good distraction from all the sad and difficult things! - I am thinking of Rolf a lot now! Warmest greetings for today, don't worry too much about the two of us! Most affectionately, your Anita.
Kitty Gu[mpert] always knows about us!

Anita's message that a very large number of her "former colleagues" were now "working with Dad, Uncle Carl and Clara Feldb[erg] in the same place" clearly meant that large parts of the staff had since been deported and, in Anita's conviction, were dead (her father had died in 1932, Carl Feldberg in 1936, and Clara Feldberg in 1941). Anita reports to her mother about deportations from the hospital with such clarity only this one time. The addendum "I believe they spoke - with Rolf Schu." expressed that the employees deported from the hospital were possibly being held in Spandau prison before further deportation, where Rolf was still incarcerated at the time.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, June 2, 1942

My dear good Mommy!
I am currently on night watch in the maternity ward together with the babies. - We have regained our composure. Please inquire once more whether we would really have protection if we were adopted! Would adoption perhaps still be possible after all? What steps would we have to take? I am dead tired now and therefore I will close for today. Say hello to daddy! Much love for today!
Your Anita

Anita's hope that she and Reinhard could acquire Swiss citizenship through an adoption by Ernst Kindler was aimed both at the protection from deportation and at the improved chances of getting out of Germany.
Bold - or careless - was the open mention of adoption in this letter. Apparently, the censorship office did not react. The topic of adoption disappeared from Anita's letters after Hilde found out that under Swiss law at the time,

only persons who had no legitimate offspring of their own could adopt someone. Ernst Kindler had a daughter from his third marriage.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, June 3, 1942

My dear, good Mommy!
... Max and Edith didn't want to go on vacation, so they preferred to stay in Bln., I haven't spoken to them since. Edith's brother is on vacation now, so the old mother is all alone in the apartment. I will probably have to change apartments with the W[eiss]es from July 1; we are getting a new one, if possible with room for the boy too! I definitely want to go with them, they have become so dear to me. Rolf will be back in Aug., hopefully he won't have a relapse by then!! ...
For today, just love and courage!! A kiss from your Anita.

Decoded, these lines mean that Max and Edith Koppel were not deported but are in some Berlin prison; Anita cannot get to them yet. Edith Koppel's brother, on the other hand, has been deported. Rolf will be released from prison in August; hopefully it stays that way.

Reinhard Frank and Edith Schulmeister to Hilde
Berlin, June 8, 1942

My dear, good Mommy!
Thank you so much for the card. I was very happy to receive it.
I am doing well. - According to the head physician, Rolf's treatment will last until the end of November. ...
Many thousands of greetings and kisses to you and Daddy. Your Reinhard.
Hopefully, no further complications will arise with Rolf. We just have to accept it now! It's a blessing for us that Reinhard is here. - Many greetings, The Schulmeisters.

Reinhard adopts Anita's code by presenting Rolf's imprisonment as a medically prescribed treatment. Rolf's hoped-for release is postponed once again, now "until the end of November."

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, June 15, 1942

My dear, dear, good Mommy
... Rolf will probably leave the hospital in 14 days, almost healed, and then travel for his recovery! We don't know where yet. He prefers to go away instead of continuing his treatment here in the hospital. We hope the head physician will allow it. At first his mother wanted to accompany him, but she can't leave her husband alone for so long. He will only take very little with him so as not to be so burdened.
We will hardly be able to speak to him before then. I find it very difficult myself, but it is probably better this way. I still miss him so very much, and for the time being I cannot enter in a relationship to anyone else, nor do I want to!
I wish with all my heart that he will now truly get well soon and be able to work again as he did before! - ...
For today, take a heartfelt kiss and many, many fond greetings from your Anita.

The sentences about Rolf, especially "He will only take very little with him" and "We will hardly be able to speak to him before then", indicate the now certain deportation in 14 days.

Reinhard Frank and Edith Schulmeister to Hilde
Berlin, June 27, 1942

My dear, good Mommy!
... On the 1st, I am moving in with Anita. I would have preferred to stay in the area where my friends live. I got a four on the last Latin paper. On Monday we get our school reports and vacation begins. The vacation will last until further notice. I won't be able to continue with French. - Many greetings and kisses, your Reinhard.

My dear Mrs. Kindler!
Many thanks for your kind greetings & congratulations! Anita & the boy made the birthday so lovely for us, we were truly touched! They both have a fabulous knack for it; if Rolf had still been here, it would have been as beautiful as one could possibly imagine! - Please don't be upset about the handwriting & brevity, I have a bad finger.
Warmest greetings and all the best, Your Schulmeisters

Anna Salomon to Hilde
Warsaw, July 3, 1942

My dear Mrs. Kindler,
Many heartfelt thanks for your lines of June 13 and for your great kindness in wanting to send me a package. I am already looking forward to it very much & hope that it arrives safely. Regarding your kind inquiry about the items of clothing, I can of course make good use of anything here. A coat or a suit would be best, but of course I can also make very good use of a dress or shoes & stockings & must leave it to you what you can best spare. I have no interest in the other items mentioned. It is terribly embarrassing for me to accept anything at all, but I know how gladly you do it & how generously you offered everything yourself, yet I would by no means want you to burden yourself financially in any way. Hopefully you continue to have good news from your children. I will also write to Carl soon. Mrs. Emmy & I are living in the same room. I continue to wish you all the best & am, with renewed thanks & many greetings, Your Anna Salomon

The undated postcard bears the return address Warsaw L 109, Gartenstr. 27, Room 73 and the postmark of July 3, 1942. In Hilde's estate, the card is the last record of Carl Neuberg's sister Anna Salomon. Since no further contact is documented, it is to be assumed that Anna Salomon was deported to Treblinka during the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto, which began on July 22, 1942, and that she was murdered there.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, July 7, 1942

My dear, good Mommy!
I'm on substitute night watch again and so I want to send you an extra-special greeting. The boy introduced himself to our director today; hopefully everything will work out with him soon. When and how we will finally move, I unfortunately don't know yet today; in any case, we have to be out of the apartment by July 15. Rolf wrote his farewell letter today! - May God stand by him and let him return in good health!! I cannot and dare not imagine yet that he is now truly gone and that I will surely never see him again! You will understand what he was to me! But I am being brave here, too.
Poor mother of Rolf!!
How are you?? For today, I send you and Daddy thousands of greetings and an extra kiss for you from your Anita.

Anita had no illusions about the outcome of Rolf's deportation.

As can sometimes be observed in diaries from the period of persecution, certain knowledge of death and hopes or plans for the time after the war exist here side by side (cf. AHLRICH MEYER, Das Wissen um Auschwitz, Paderborn 2010, hereafter quotet MEYER, pp. 164-168). Rolf's fate weighed heavily on Anita. From August 1942, she used the code phrase "to Rolf" for deportations not going to Theresienstadt. The longing memory of her beloved accompanied her to the very end.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, July 13, 1942

My dear, good Mommy!
... Today, on the 13th, I still don't know where I'll be sleeping on the 15th!
There are also still difficulties with Reinhard because of the long commute to work. - The new address is: Dircksenstr. 45 v. I! Please write to the Nurses' Home for the time being!
Reinhard is also still staying with the Sch.'s until the apartment is available!
So, for today, much love and all the best! Greetings to Daddy
Always your Anita

As already indicated in the letter of July 7, Anita and Reinhard had to leave their room in the nurses' home of the Jewish Hospital and therefore needed a special permit to use public transportation for their commute.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, July 30, 1942

My dear, good Mommy!
... Yesterday I was in the new apartment for the first time, where there is still an enormous amount of cleaning to do. We wiped and scrubbed from morning till night. Reinhard thoroughly did all the floors and windows, as well as some of the doorbell and electrical wiring, with the greatest skill. He is so diligent and good, a real sunshine!
We both have permits for public transportation now, thank God! - We had detailed news from Rolf from Tegel. ...
All my love! Your Anita.
Greetings to Daddy!

"Tegel" referred to the prison there (today's Tegel correctional facility).

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, 4 August 1942

My beloved, good Mommy!
... Tomorrow I'll speak with Edith again for the first time in a long while! We're meeting at Uta's. We have so much to tell each other, especially about the boy. He is supposed to visit her sometime! - On 9 August my thoughts will be with you and our Daddy! How good God's providence was for him!!
A heartfelt kiss from your Anita.

Anita's meeting with Edith Koppel indicates that the Koppel couple, imprisoned since early June 1942, had been released and subsequently gone into hiding. While Edith Koppel still met with acquaintances, her husband Fritz seems to have avoided all contact.
According to the entry in the Memorial Book of the Federal Archives, Edith Koppel was deported to Auschwitz on 4 August 1943 and murdered there.
Fritz Koppel survived the war (according to a letter from Edith Koppel's daughter-in-law Rita Unger to the editor, dated 28 August 2011).
9 August was the birthday of Hermann Frank, who died in 1932.
Because of his death, he was spared the atrocities of National Socialism.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, 9 August 1942

My dear, good Mother!
... On my last day off, I was with Edith. If Herrmann's little boy cannot go to Thea's for a holiday, Edith tells me she would take him and, if possible, visit the mother with him sometime. - For today, many thousands of loving greetings and kisses from your Anita.
Greetings to Daddy.

Anita still hoped that Reinhard could go into hiding with Hilde's childhood friend Thea von Knyphausen at her country estate in Geiglitz. Otherwise, Edith Koppel considered hiding Reinhard in her own hideout or taking him with her on a possible escape to Switzerland.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, 13 August 1942

My beloved, good Mother!
I am sitting at the open window on my day off, the first day in the new apartment, and want to send you a thousand heartfelt greetings! In front of me, the S-Bahn train rolls back and forth every 2 minutes, below me, from morning till night, the wagons are loaded with the most wonderful fruits and vegetables from the Central Market Hall, but unfortunately none for us! - In between, the long-distance trains whistle and roll by ceaselessly. Down below, the motors groan, the horses neigh, the wheels squeak, the merchants shout! But despite it all, one soon learns to tune out the noise and the rushing and rolling of the trains. Many, many thoughts accompany the long-distance trains as they speed by; I wish I were allowed to sit in one of those carriages with our boy and travel to you.
But let's not lose hope and take these difficult months as an instructive and blessed sowing for the fruits of life in the years to come! - Since the day before yesterday, our little locksmith's apprentice has been working in the hospital and is quite skilled, and everyone has immediately grown fond of him!
Especially with my so beloved Head Sister Alice, he too always finds help, advice, and joy, and often a little something to snack on! He is being properly fed here, for which I am especially grateful, as I still have his meat ration cards etc. at home. Today Rolf wrote a long letter again from Tegel. He has become very mature. Thea wrote as well. I will see Edith next week.
Miss Grü[nberg] sends her regards! All my love for today!
Always your Anita.

Peter Marcuse to Hilde
Château de Chabannes (Dept. Creuse, France), 30 August 1942

Dear Friends, I have not received any news from you for a long time now, so I am writing to you today. ...
Wolfi, along with a few others, was taken by Grandma to Uncle Siegmund on 27.8. - There is still a possibility for us to go there as well. - We just received the news that everyone has already departed. ...
Otherwise, everything is the same. I am still working in the garden + bathe in the afternoons. - Wolfi + the others could not "teilachen".
My warmest greetings to all, Your Pitt

Almost all of the refugee Jewish children who, like Peter, were housed in the home run by the "Organisation de secours aux enfants" (OSE) at the Château de Chabannes were saved. An exception is the raid of August 26, 1942 (by Peter Marcuse erroneously dated August 27). On this day, there was a mass arrest in the French Free

Zone, in which 6,584 Jews were arrested, handed over to the Germans, and later almost all murdered in Auschwitz. Presumably to feign a resettlement for work assignments, the operation was limited to Jews between the ages of 16 and 45. The number of at least 10,000 Jews to be "delivered," which had been agreed upon between the French and German authorities, was not reached. It was the only such operation worldwide in which Jews from non-German-occupied territories were handed over to the German extermination machine. What happened at the château described in a 2021 article on the Yad Vashem web portal: *"Late in the evening on 26 August 1942, French gendarmes invaded the Château de Chabannes, seeking to arrest some of the older boys. In the end, they arrested five young boys and one of the staff, and send them to the Nexon concentration camp near Limoges. One of the teachers, Ernst Jablonski, was arrested too, but thanks to some of the boys, who surrounded him and distracted the gendarmes, he was able to escape to the nearby forest. Of the six arrested that night, only two survived."* (https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/childrens-homes/chabannes/index.asp, accessed on 30.8.2024). At the time, the Jews in France did not know that this operation remained the only such and was not repeated. The later letters of Peter Marcuse and his companions give evidence of their constant fear of further arrests.
It is not clear from the documents who "Wolfi" was. The code phrase "to Uncle Siegmund" stands here and in the letter from Berthold Marcuse of October 11, 1942, for a deportation to the East, "Grandma" for police officers; "teilachen" is Yiddish for "to scram."

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, September 1, 1942

My beloved, good, brave Mutti!
... I spoke a lot with Mrs. Pro[chownik] in the last few days; she has an incredibly sad and difficult duty. I ran into L.L. on the street again the other day - He was supposed to come to Carl N[euberg]'s sister's place several times, but had never managed to get there so far.
I spoke very briefly once more with Rolf, who has been away since Friday; it was of course very difficult for me after such a long time, and it was also very difficult to get permission to visit him in the infectious diseases ward! The nurses on duty there were nice to me, however, and even allowed me to give him some food and fresh laundry, because he was still on a special diet and was only allowed to eat very little! You can hardly believe how great the joy was over the first sandwiches! He looked quite pale and thin, which is no wonder when you consider that he has been seriously ill since March! He was in a room with our little lodger from Zingster Str. and I knew other patients there well too! Horrible, how these contagious diseases always spread so quickly! I had plenty of provisions delivered to him for the journey, since I couldn't get there myself anymore; he will be happy! He is leaving with his parents; the mother is blissful to have her boy with her again, the father would of course have preferred to stay home! After all, he had his job here; - but a holiday trip is also quite good for a change.
On Friday, they had to get the tickets, pack, and sort everything out at home in one hour, because otherwise they would not have come along on the same train. I of course helped them in this enormous rush!
... I thought a lot about Wolfratshausen! - They will greet the Prof.'s sister, they promised me. The other day, after a long time, I spoke with the Schulm[eister] family again; these people look very miserable, they have lost almost everything! Just imagine! They hardly know where to get the bare necessities.
Poor people! But there are so many poor people in the world!
Hopefully I can help them a little! ...
Sept. 4, '42. Now this letter has remained here for another three days; forgive me, but I haven't had a single free minute in the last few days and came home at 9 p.m. dead tired only to get up again the next morning at 5:30 a.m. I never got to sleep before half past eleven! Today is my day off! Until now, and it's already noon, I have sorted through Rolf's things, organized my cupboards, sewn, written and - bathed! That was the best part! To even halfway get through everything, I would need at least a 2-week holiday! But there's no such thing! ...

Now for today, a thousand lovely greetings and a heartfelt kiss from your little daughter Anita ...

Sept. 5. Beloved Mutti!

Finally, this letter is going to the post today; I didn't manage it yesterday! Unfortunately, Herrmann's son is not coming to Thea's after all; there is no suitable place for him there, and besides, it's not relaxing. Thea was recently in Bln. ...

You probably know that Dr. Rud[olphi] from Hbg. is gone. - Keep being brave!

Once again, all my love from your Anita.

Behind Anita's harmless-sounding report lie terrible developments. Three days after the date of the second postscript, Edith and Julius Schulmeister were murdered in Riga. "L.L." (Leo Lewy) had received several announcements of deportation - to "Carl N[euberg]'s sister", meaning to the East, not to Theresienstadt - but was still in Berlin. Rolf Schulmeister and his parents were now indeed deported. Since the date of Anita's letter (September 1, 1942) was a Tuesday, the Schulmeister family must have been arrested on August 28, 1942, the "Friday" mentioned. Anita's hints suggest that the Schulmeister parents were picked up for deportation by the Gestapo without prior notice (codeword "Wolfratshausen"). Apparently, the couple was allowed to summon Anita and have her help them pack and clear out the apartment. This was probably followed by the usual sealing of the apartment for the confiscation of their property, during which Anita may have had the opportunity to take some of Rolf's personal belongings, which she cryptically described in the postscript of September 4: "I have sorted through Rolf's things."

Regarding the subsequent fate of the Schulmeister family, the Memorial Book of the Federal Archives contains the following information: "Schulmeister, Edith, born Rosenau, born on December 8, 1890, in Berlin/City of Berlin, resident in Berlin (Schöneberg), deportation from Berlin September 5, 1942, Riga; date of death September 8, 1942; place of death Riga"; "Schulmeister, Julius, born on June 20, 1882, in Berlin/City of Berlin, resident in Berlin (Schöneberg), deportation from Berlin September 5, 1942, Riga; date of death September 8, 1942; place of death Riga." - "Schulmeister, Rolf, born on September 2, 1919, in Berlin/City of Berlin, resident in Berlin (Schöneberg), deportation from Berlin September 5, 1942, Riga; October 1, 1944, Stutthof, concentration camp; date of death January 5, 1945; place of death Stutthof, concentration camp."

Accordingly, Rolf Schulmeister and his parents left Berlin on the same transport to Riga on September 5, 1942. The discrepancy between the date of arrest in Anita's letter and the deportation date in the Federal Archives' Memorial Book indicates that there was a waiting period of several days at the assembly point in Berlin.

Edith and Julius Schulmeister were murdered shortly after their arrival in Riga. Rolf, as an able-bodied young man, was transported on to the Stutthof camp near Danzig, where he perished shortly before the end of the war.

Regarding the postscript of September 5: In the farm of Thea von Knyphausen there was definitively no hiding place for Reinhard. Clara Feldberg's former lawyer in Hamburg, Dr. Walter Rudolphi, was deported.

Hedwig Ems - called "Aunt Hedwig" by Anita - wrote a report in 1947 containing her "Memories of the Nazi Era" in the form of a letter to her niece Charlotte Levy (see Appendix, Frank family tree, and the short biography of Hedwig Ems). The report was digitalized by Marianne Wintgen, Berlin (cf. stolpersteine-berlin.de). The sections about the year 1942 follow here. Further excerpts from the report are reproduced below.

Hedwig Ems to Lotte Levy
(from the 1947 report)

... We had to leave our room; why, I no longer know myself, and we didn't know where to go. Everyone we turned to was afraid to take us, and we were seriously considering suicide when, at the last minute, a relative of Mrs. Hahn told us about an apartment, or rather a room, that we could rent, and so we moved in, in February 1942, in the bitter cold. In the process, Mrs. Hahn caught a cold again, so she had to go straight to bed. Our landlords were not very accommodating. - We had hardly moved in when Mrs. Hahn was registered. That was the beginning of the evacuation. But since her files were probably misplaced, her evacuation was delayed until August. Since our landlady disliked seeing us in her kitchen, we ate lunch at a soup kitchen for the sake of peace, and I brought Mrs. Hahn her food as long as she was ill. But since caring for her at home was too strenuous for me - I had to get up so many times during the night - Mrs. Hahn then went to a clinic. Every time the bell rang, one

would startle and tremble, because we always feared the Gestapo was coming, or someone who was registering people. Fear, both during the last period in Berlin and the entire time in Theresienstadt, was our constant companion, which never left us for a moment. In the house of Dr. Jungmann - that was our landlords' name - there also lived a lady with her adult son. One day he came home and said that he had had a dispute with his superior. The next evening - it was a Friday, and since the people were devout, the mother had made a nicer supper - she waited and waited, and we with her, of course, but the son did not come, not the next day either, until late that evening a colleague came and said that he had been arrested. A few days later, he was shot along with 250 other young people who had committed very minor offenses, perhaps not crossing the street correctly or something similar, which was communicated to the mother in a few brief words by the Jewish Community. (The wives of these executed men, with their small children, were then transported to Theresienstadt, being told that they would find their husbands there. When they arrived, they all had to assemble in the courtyard of the Kavalierkaserne, and they were then informed very briefly that their husbands had been shot.)
In June, Mrs. Pick, the lady who was still living with us, was then registered, and soon after, Dr. and Mrs. Jungmann as well.
Mrs. Dr. J. had a crying fit. For there was no doubt that our days in Berlin were numbered. I had been spared so far. In the first days of August, Mrs. Pick then received notice that she would be picked up in the next few days, as would Mrs. Hahn, so that I remained alone in the apartment with the Dr. J's. On September 4, 1942, the bell rang at noon - we were all taking a nap - and the Gestapo was there to pick up the Dr. J's. At that time, there was a major operation against doctors, who were simply picked up, as were my landlords, who had received no notification and had to be ready for transport within half an hour. I was left behind alone. - But now back to September 4, 1942, when I was left alone in the sealed apartment. Only my room and the kitchen had not been sealed. I would have had a good opportunity to commit suicide then, because no one in the house would have missed me for weeks. But Ri., with whom I had corresponded about my intention to do so, had asked me not to, because he would urgently need my help for himself and his boy after the war.
That is why it did not happen. Had I known how everything turned out, I would have done it, although I do not regret having spared Ri. this pain. The thought that I still had a task to fulfill in my life sustained me through all those years and let me endure everything.
And now everything has turned out so completely different. ...
In those years, it was not a problem and not a difficult decision to take one's own life, given the nameless fear of the uncertain future that almost everyone had. Many did so. If you met an acquaintance, you could be sure that the first question would be: "Are you going to take your life or let yourself be evacuated?" That was when the farewells began, which then unfortunately continued constantly through all the years. First with those who were emigrating, then with all the others.
In 1942, the following members of our immediate family took their own lives (I will not name friends and acquaintances, although parting with some of them affected me deeply, for example, Frieda Cohn-Glück):
Rudolf, Georg; Hermann, Else; Klara Ems
Oskar; Martha; Hans; Paula; Lucie; Elise; Gretchen Salomon
The sister Franziska was resuscitated and died in Theresienstadt in 1944.

So I was alone in the apartment, and I would get a fright whenever the bell rang. One morning, 4 or 5 Gestapo men appeared, but they had no interest in me; instead, they broke the seals on the rooms and probably took everything they liked from them. I only saw that they

took a pigskin suitcase with them. What was in their briefcases, I could not see, of course. But I paid no attention to it and was glad that they had left me unscathed. The rooms were sealed again with new seals, as if nothing had happened. Stupidly, they had forgotten to re-seal one room, so that when I was picked up, I almost had extra trouble. But they could hardly do anything worse than take me to a concentration camp. One evening - I had a visit from Vera's mother, we were just having supper - the bell rang after 8 p.m. Mrs. Johannw. of course immediately fled via the back stairs, as she was not supposed to be found at my place, when two gentlemen from the Gestapo appeared again to look at Dr. Jungmanns' bedroom. One of them said, "The bigwigs have probably already taken all the good stuff, haven't they?" One of them told me that he wanted to get married and was looking for a nice bedroom with modern, low furniture. When I told him that the beds were high and very old-fashioned (which was also the truth), he lost all interest, and both of them took their leave politely. But what a scare we had! So the weeks passed without anything significant happening.

"Evacuation" was a Nazi euphemism for the deportation and expropriation of Jews.
"Ri." refers to Richard Ems, Hedwig's son.
"Had I known how everything would turn out" alludes to the fact that Richard Ems and his son would perish.
The identities of the persons who committed suicide are not known. The documents also do not reveal who were "Vera's mother" and "Mrs. Johannw."

Ida Cohn to Hilde
Leipzig, September 7, 1942

My very dear Mrs. Kindler,
although I have not heard directly from you for a very long time, you who always interested me and for whom I - I can admit it from this distance - have always had a great fondness, I have nevertheless very often inquired about you with my relatives the Plauts and Richard Frank. The former have long since joined their sons, and I hope that they are all doing well. But before I speak of other things, I would like to know from you how you are doing. You have surely settled in well in beautiful Switzerland - I am thinking of my stay in Arosa, where I often met you - and are in good health. Did you meet your husband in Arosa?
Do you have a nice circle of acquaintances there? Well, I readily assume the latter, as you have a knack for gathering people around you who enjoy your company.
Are you still in contact with the Dr. Plauts? Or do you hear nothing from them at all? My cousin Erich Kaufmann now lives in Sao Paolo. So I am here without any relatives. My brother is still living in Oslo, my sister in England, from whom I can hear nothing at the moment. - -
As I will be relocating my residence to Theresienstadt on the 19th of this month, I would be very happy if you - I hope you still remember me a little, despite my smallness and my disappearance from your circle - would not forget me completely and would write to me at my new address (I have Leipzig Transport No. 61). I truly would be very, very grateful. Any connection with old acquaintances is of value to someone who is alone. I would be delighted if you could write to me before my departure; that would be very kind of you.
May I extend my compliments to your husband - without knowing him personally - and send you my warmest regards.
Sincerely, Ida Cohn

The undated letter bears the postmark of September 7, 1942. Ida Cohn was the niece of Gustav Plaut, a brother-in-law of Hermann Frank. The letter shows that some Jews were notified of their deportation a considerable time in advance. The 60-year-old Ida Cohn was among the deportees to Theresienstadt who were forced to sign a "home purchase contract" (cf. ELLEN BERTRAM, Leipziger Opfer der Shoah - Ein Gedenkbuch, Leipzig 2015, p. 211). The practice of "home purchase contracts" was introduced after the Wannsee Conference on January 20, 1942. It was a cynical cover for expropriation. Elderly Jews who had to sign these "contracts" before their depor-

tation to the "Theresienstadt retirement ghetto" were promised lifelong free accommodation, board, and medical care in return for the transfer of their assets to the State.
The contract reserved the right for alternative accommodation in case of overcrowding in Theresienstadt. Ida Cohn had to learn what this meant in October 1944. In the Memorial Book of the Federal Archives, she is recorded as follows: "Cohn, Ida, born on December 19, 1882 in Leipzig/Saxony, resident in Leipzig, deportation from Weimar - Halle - Leipzig September 20, 1942, Theresienstadt, ghetto; death October 9, 1944, Auschwitz, concentration and extermination camp."

On September 12, 1942, a few days after receiving Ida Cohn's letter, Hilde received mail from Geneva from Elsa Freudenberg, the wife of Pastor Adolf Freudenberg, who was caring for Jewish refugees in Switzerland. Hilde had been in contact with the Freudenbergs for some time. Elsa Freudenberg had received a letter from Gertrud Prochownik in Berlin via a private courier, in which Prochownik wrote openly about Anita and Reinhard. The letter described the favorable circumstances that had to be united and the courage required of the helpers for hiding Jews in Germany.

Elsa Freudenberg to Hilde
Geneva, September 12, 1942

Dear Mrs. Kindler,
After a long time, we have again had a letter brought to us from our friend. She writes: "My main charges continue to be Anita and her brother. I have also found a dear young person from the Community for Anita, so that she can also be with young people. I have now gotten in touch with Baroness K., a friend of Mrs. Kindler's, who has an estate in Pomerania, regarding the possibility of the children going into hiding. Anita wants to, but does not yet realize the insurmountable difficulties involved. It is almost impossible to find suitable households where the landlord, head of household, domestic help, porter, and no children in the Hitler Youth all favorably unite. Then, feeding them without ration cards is almost impossible. The Baroness, a most excellent woman, cannot do it either; i.e., she cannot hide the children once their names are on the deportation lists, which has not been the case so far. Her estate manager is a Nazi spy, who would notice immediately, which would mean the immediate ruin of everyone. - Couldn't Mr. Kindler adopt the children? - It is truly desolate that we can do absolutely nothing from here for these brave children."
I hope you are personally doing well.
With best regards, also from my husband, who has a great deal of work right now with the refugees from France.
Elsa Freudenberg

Protection Money Payments from September 1942

In the letter of June 13, 1943 (see below), Hilde reports that her children had been "bypassed" through the efforts of a "Dr. St[einer] in Zurich," but that "anything further than this could not yet be achieved." Steiner was a Zurich lawyer with connections to German authorities, who apparently intervened in Germany on Hilde's behalf in favor of Anita and Reinhard. "Bypassed" could only have meant the children being spared from deportation, and the "further" that had not yet been achieved could only mean getting their exit permit. Hilde had therefore engaged Steiner and undoubtedly also made payments to save her children from deportation from the Jewish Hospital and bring them to Switzerland.

The head of the hospital, Dr. Lustig, was the responsible authority for the deportation lists.

Presumably in this context, Anita turned to a non-Jewish acquaintance from earlier years of about the same age, Martha Bachthaler, who served as a nurse in the Wehrmacht and, in her Wehrmacht uniform, could gain relatively unsuspicious access to the hospital management. The matter was risky. In legal terms it was bribery.

From the end of September 1942, Hilde had 200 Reichsmarks paid out monthly to Martha Bachthaler by Max Sünder, her asset manager at the bank "Merck, Finck & Co." in Berlin. The amount corresponded to the value of about 900 euros in 2025. Whether and what portion of the money was to remain with the courier as compensation is not apparent from the letters. The events are alluded to in the following letters.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, September 14 and 24, 1942

My dear, good Mommy!
... I didn't write to you in the last few days, as besides all the difficult duty, I also had many small preparations for Reinhard's birthday ...

Berlin, Sept. 24.
Beloved Mommy! And the letter was still in my bag, because firstly, due to sudden night watches, I had no chance to get to the post office, but more importantly, I had a sudden visit from my dear old colleague Martha, whom I haven't seen or spoken to in so long! How happy we were to see each other! There was so much to chat and tell! About home, about all our trips we had taken together, we didn't even know what to talk about first! She hasn't changed much, the curly blonde locks suit her famously, although I preferred her with plain hair. - Martha has also already visited Sü[nder], but he is away until Oct. 1st, so we'll go there together then. By the way, she was so sweet; she gave the little one and me all sorts of surprises for a belated birthday! How touching of her to remember!
She wanted to bring much more, but is also saving something for us for Christmas, as she promised. ...
Now a thousand heartfelt, loving greetings and thoughts from your ever-so-loving Anita.

Max Sünder to Hilde
Berlin, September 29, 1942

Dear Madam!
I had a meeting yesterday with Miss Martha and Anita. They send their warmest regards. ...
You will receive a bank statement under separate cover. Please confirm by return post that you agree to the remuneration being paid monthly until further notice, with the approval of the foreign exchange office. I ask for an immediate reply so that I know where things stand.
Nothing more for today, Yours, M. Sünder

Sr. Martha Bachthaler to Hilde
Nuremberg, October 1, 1942

My dear!
Everything is fine. My colleague is well, and we are working well together again, until the victory palm waves for us. I hope you are also doing well and that we will see each other again soon.
With love, Sister Marta.
Letter to follow soon.

The postcard presumably was meant as a report of implementation. The "colleague" was Anita. The "victory palm" was supposedly for camouflage, as Martha Bachthaler was illegally involved in supporting Jewish interests. The clumsy language and the incorrect spelling of her own first name ("Marta" instead of "Martha") suggest the author's lack of writing practice.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, October 2, 1942

Dearest good Mutti!
... Do write and tell me your opinion of Martha! Last week I read the book *Quo Vadis?* again; how very true to life it is written! Quo vadis? I would like to tell you so much, but I must close for today. Stay brave! A big kiss from your very loving Anita.

Already a few days after the first money transfer, Anita became suspicious of the arrangement with Sister Martha.

The twofold mention of the novel "Quo vadis?" (Where are you going?), written by the Polish writer Henryk Sienkiewicz, was certainly not a message about Anita's reading. What coded message was contained within it? - The following six letters give clear indications that Anita was considering her and Reinhard's escape across the green border into Switzerland. On October 10, she speaks of her hope for a "change of air near Hilde Feldb.". On October 23, she repeats the question "Quo vadis". On October 28, she hopes for a holiday trip "to Herrmann's wife" (meaning, to Hilde in Switzerland) and suggests that Hilde could "meet her halfway". On November 3, she insists that "Sister Annemarie" (herself, see commentary on Anita's letter of January 25, 1941, above) "would so much like to come to you on holiday, please be a little helpful and write to her about the best way to get to you".

On November 22, she continues insistently: "Should I get a holiday, the little one will get one too, of course!!!" On November 24: "If only I could relax and take a holiday! But I wouldn't really know where to go." And on December 15, she invents an entire story to make it clear to her mother that she and Reinhard would now take any risk, physical hardship and danger to get out of Germany: "I also spoke to Annemarie recently. She is like a weasel. She climbed over high fences with and without barbed wire, ran and jumped like a boy. Her little brother is just the same. I saw them playing hide-and-seek during the blackout, great fun for the two of them. The children have found every hole in the fence and run and dash -".

It cannot be determined from the letters how Hilde reacted to these urgent appeals. After December 15, 1942, Anita drops the subject of escaping to Switzerland.

Berthold and Regina Marcuse to Hilde
Berlin-Steglitz, October 11, 1942

Dearest friends!
We heard from Arno's mommy that you are well, which made us very happy; we hope it stays that way. - As we will probably be traveling to Uncle Siegmund in the next few days, your mail will no longer reach us in time, so you will receive the reply to your letter from Arno's mommy, who will be mothering Pitt. She will write to him & Arno regularly. You know how grateful we are to you, my dears, for all your love, and we ask you to give Jens our warmest regards & to continue to support him like a mother.
We send you our heartfelt greetings, wishing you better health & all the best imaginable, and remain your ever-grateful Bert & Regina.
[Postscript from Berthold:] Dear friends!
I also want to write to you in great haste. You have already heard from dear Regina.
On Friday evening I was at your dear Anita's domicile, but unfortunately she wasn't there and I could not wait any longer. Reinhard was quite happy that he has a good job in the electrical department at Anita's workplace.
He can already do small repairs. You can be happy about both children, who are hardworking and on the right track.

Their landlady, Mrs. Weiss, is also nice and, in my conviction, does everything imaginable for the children. Anita was, as I heard, visiting Dr. Gumpert.
We will now no longer hear from each other, and I have this one request: to please kindly continue to stand by our dear Pitt.
Heartfelt thanks for all the love shown to our child and for all the joy you have always given us.
A heartfelt farewell and sincere regards, Your Berthold.
As a last joy for Pitt, today's beautiful stamps. The one above.

It was a erroneous farewell. Apparently, Regina and Berthold Marcuse had received the deportation notice, but then they were deferred. They continued to write to Hilde from Berlin and to look after Anita and Reinhard. The documents do not reveal who "Arno" was.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, October 12 and 19, 1942

My beloved, good mother!
... Yesterday, on your birthday, we lit two little candles in your honor in the evening. Your little picture stood among flowers!
Hopefully you had at least a little peace on that day! ...
I was so happy that Carl N. wrote. I had no mail from Rolf and his parents, and I don't believe I will receive any more.

Berlin, Oct. 19, 42.
... Martha wrote from Bayreuth, - I think the same as you on this point. - Hans and Uta are now also with Edith! Edith is living privately. Lisa is traveling next week to the vicinity of Hilde Feldb.; she wants to look into things there for her sister Annemarie. The change of air might do her some good; the doctor recommended it. - My dentist is now with Rolf. - Now for today, as always, heartfelt greetings and wishes, and despite all worries, keep your head up with the thought of our healthy reunion! For, my good, brave one - not every bullet hits its mark!
Yours devotedly, Anita.

Hilde and Anita were apparently both unsure whether it was right to entrust Martha Bachthaler with the delivery of protection money.
"Edith is living privately" meant that Edith Koppel was in hiding; Anita probably did not know her whereabouts. That Hans (Black) and Uta were "also with Edith" meant, first and foremost, that they were also in hiding, perhaps at the same address. Who was meant by "Lisa" is not clear from the documents. She was to make inquiries in Hilde's vicinity, that is, near the Swiss border, for Anita ("sister Annemarie") about a possible escape to Switzerland ("change of air"). "My dentist is now with Rolf": For the first time since Rolf's disappearance, Anita uses his name as a codeword for deportations to the East.

Anita also sought help elsewhere, so from her former schoolmate Sibylle von Sell. She supposedly hoped to be able to go into hiding at the von Sell family's home or with their help. Sell later describes Anita's visit as follows (cf. SIBYLLE NIEMOELLER-VON SELL, "Furchtbar einfach, wird gemacht!", Berlin 1994, pp. 295 ff.): *"Anita Frank from my class, a full Jew in Hitler's language, was still in Berlin, together with her little brother. The mother had made it to Switzerland. - A few years later, she would appear at our door. She had removed the star. No one believed it of her anyway, because beneath her tousled brown hair laughed the blue eyes and thick red cheeks of a Pomeranian country girl. We could do no more for her than give her a package of food. At that time, the Gestapo was a fairly regular and always unannounced guest in our house."*

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, October 23, 1942

My dearest good Mommy!
How happy I am to be able to write to you again this week!! The little one and I are, thank God, healthy! I have gone through many hardships this past week. Today is my day off and I have many important things to do. Rolf will be meeting many of my colleagues next week! - How is your heart, my good, brave one?!
Reinhard and I are now on a strict diet. Unfortunately, I also have to watch my diabetes very carefully again, so everything is without sugar etc. again, how annoying! Will you please apply for an extension again?!
Today I had another very dear visit from Thea's friends. I am still reading "Quo vadis"; it is tragically and captivatingly written! Pro[chownik], Miss Grü[nbaum], Dr. Gu[mpert], the Weissens and L[eo] L[ewy] send you their regards!
For today, heartfelt kisses! Have faith! Always your Anita.

Anita reports in code about the Gestapo's "Community Action" of October 20, 1942. The operation targeted the employees of the Jewish Community of Berlin, whose numbers were to be drastically reduced.
The Jewish Hospital was also among the affected Berlin institutions. The ciphers "diet" and "diabetes" mean that the siblings were suffering from hunger. The "extension" that Hilde is supposed to take care of refers to the Swiss entry permits for Anita and Reinhard. With the "visit from Thea's friends," Anita was possibly alluding to another police action at the Jewish Hospital.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, October 28, 1942

My beloved good Mom!
... The weather here is heavenly now, a real, sunny, golden-brown autumn! It's such a shame I can't go on vacation; I would have gone to Hermann's wife. It's a pity she couldn't meet me halfway; we had already planned such a lovely autumn hiking tour together on foot. Martha also did the tour recently, she was thrilled! She just thought it would still be too strenuous for the child; he would need to be stronger. Maybe I'll get a vacation after all, possibly at Christmas. Lisa wants to go ahead and look for overnight accommodations, as everything will of course be very crowded, but I'm in desperate need of a rest! How are things with you now? Are you expecting snow soon? - Heartfelt kisses to you from your An.

Furthermore, the escape to Switzerland remained a priority for Anita.
She had apparently spoken with Martha Bachthaler and "Lisa," who was already mentioned in the letter of October 12, 1942, about the possibilities.
Bachthaler, however, seems to have meant that Anita should attempt the escape without Reinhard. Anita's regretful "It's a pity she [Hermann's wife] couldn't meet me halfway" seems to be a call for Hilde to travel toward her children in Germany and guide them across the border into Switzerland via a suitable route. The following letter of November 3 also corresponds to this.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, November 3, 1942

My beloved good Musch!
... The boy is also on a diet, it was prescribed by the doctor, [he] but still looks quite good and full and rosy-cheeked, a sturdy fellow. Sister Annemarie [Anita] from Ber. wrote to me that she would love to come to you for a vacation, please be a little helpful to her and write to her about the best way to get to you, she is so helpless, but otherwise really a dear poor soul. Does she travel via Lörrach or how, please write to her. - I'm already looking forward to

the vacation, I just don't know where to go yet! For today, only love and good wishes. Always your At.

Lörrach is the German border town immediately north of Basel.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, November 17, 1942

My beloved good Mother!
... I am completely overwhelmed at the moment, I have ward duty and am also voluntarily keeping a day and night watch over our 17-year-old subtenant Werner, who unfortunately is with us, a terminal case suffering the greatest agony, lung abscesses on both lungs! You wouldn't believe what I am going through with this poor boy, it is a horror! The parents are gone! May God soon grant this poor boy release! Forgive me, I cannot continue today. More soon. Stay brave. Heartfelt kisses!! Always your Anita.

The 17-year-old Werner, who had also lived with the Weiss foster family, is dying. The precision of the medical diagnosis rules out that Anita was trying to encode a message about an arrest. On the other hand, the parents' absence probably means their deportation.

Martha Bachthaler to Hilde
Bayreuth, November 20, 1942

My dear good Hilde!
I am finally getting around to writing to dear Hilde. You probably received my card from Berlin? I have been here in Bayreuth for some time in a Luftwaffe military hospital. I was sick for a long time and stayed with my relatives in Nuremberg. I am doing well. I have a lot of work. Next week I will visit my colleague and her brother. Her further training is very close to my heart.
I hope to be able to take care of everything satisfactorily! Everyone is healthy and well. Please excuse me for not having written for so long. I am always in contact with Dr. Sünder.
...
As I have heard, the wretched English have bombed at home again (those bastards.)
And so I wish us all the more the very best, my dear good Hilde. Write me a long letter about how you are doing, won't you. My thoughts are often with my dear homeland.
Very warm greetings and kisses sends you Your faithful sister Marta Bachthaler, Luftwaffe Military Hospital, Bajreuth

The letter is supposedly to be read as a demand for the continuation of the protection money payments.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, November 22, 1942, 11 p.m.

My beloved good Mommy!
Today, after a particularly tragic, sad day for me, your detailed last letter arrived; it was a very special joy and comfort for me! Unfortunately, our dear Werner died in my arms today at 12 o'clock from sepsis after 14 agonizing days of illness! - Now I have night duty again for 14 days. We have all experienced many tragic things in the last week! We are, thank God, healthy! Just my love for today! Your Anita Should I get leave, the little one will of course get some too!!!

If there was an escape opportunity to Switzerland for Anita (code word "leave"), then it was only together with Reinhard.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, November 24, 1942

My beloved, dear, good Mommy!
At 4:30 in the morning, just before I start my morning shift again after the night watch, I want to send you a thousand heartfelt greetings and thoughts! ...
Last week we received the news that Mrs. W[eiss]'s brother-in-law, a father of two, died suddenly of heart failure - that is, after being bedridden for 5 months - in Uncle Alfred's hospital, where Rolf also was. ... On duty, almost everything is the same. Many colleagues were transferred; I was not, thank God. Five colleagues are now living furnished like Edith K.; I find that very nice and practical, and I would love to move too, but it is quite difficult with the child. - - Rolf's fiancée has already found comfort with someone else, how bitter that is for me - I can never forget him! And the beautiful hours we spent together are always my comfort on difficult days.
With him I experienced the most beautiful, unrepeatable hours and I never regret those days, especially having so fully savored the days in the autumn of 1940 in Erkner! And should I too have to suddenly pass on, I am grateful from my heart to be able to say that I have taken the most beautiful things in life as well as the difficult ones in deep, conscious, full measure, having savored and taken them!
Who told you about my boss? - Martha is now in Bayreuth.
I have postponed correspondence for the time being. - - The first snow has fallen here now; I wish it were spring again already! If only I could relax for a bit to take a leave! But I wouldn't really know where to go. I have received no mail from the Schulm[eisters]. I must close for today now. Forgive the handwriting, but I am in a hurry. Take a thousand heartfelt greetings and kisses from your little daughter.

"Mrs. W[eiss]'s brother-in-law ... died suddenly" - he has been murdered in the Spandau prison after five months incarceration.
"Many colleagues were transferred" is the coded message that parts of the hospital staff were drafted for compulsory factory work.
From August 1942, Anita used the code "to Rolf" for deportations to the East.
The colleagues who were "now living furnished like Edith K." had gone into hiding. With her brother, Anita apparently considered this difficult to do. The mention of the boss, i.e. the hospital director, and, immediately after, Martha Bachthaler in Bayreuth, along with the postponement of further correspondence, shows that Anita was worried about Martha's doings with Dr. Lustig.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, December 8, 1942

My beloved good Mother!
Thank God I can write to you again today that everything is all right with us and we are healthy. I have just had 15 night shifts in a row and, since we no longer get any days off at all, I am back on day duty as of today. - We are now working without our uniforms. Martha is coming next week, I don't quite trust her; I'm being a bit reserved. - The boy is my greatest joy. Despite his boyish pranks, he is a really good fellow, works diligently, and is growing visibly.
Everyone loves him! You can be really proud of him! Hopefully he stays so good and well-behaved and doesn't let himself be influenced by all the bad things around him. I recently discussed a few things about him with Edith again. She is so helpful! I probably won't be able to take a vacation after all, although it is sorely needed!! We only get out a little, onto the street. I think a lot about the last days in Wolfratshausen. - Bine is especially dear to me, very caring!

I will close for today! Many loving kisses from your Anita

The fact that they now had to work without their nurse's uniform was another form of harassment. The uniform not only gave the nurses selfrespect and a sense of belonging, it also helped them spare their private clothing, which had become so precious. By mentioning the last days in Wolfratshausen, Anita expressed her increasing fear of the sudden closure of the Jewish Hospital.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, December 15, 1942

My dear, dear, good Mommy!
... What made me so sad last week regarding Werner and Rolf has long since been surpassed these days by far heavier burdens, making me realize how small that sorrow is compared to much greater fates. This is how one is hardened and forged, like a block of iron that is struck again and again with ever more powerful blows until it has the right shape! I will gladly let myself be beaten and shaped, if only I knew that I would one day be completely healthy again and could once more lead a normal life like other healthy people. Even though I keep telling myself that I am still so young, the great fear that my heart will suddenly stop, as I have so often seen and heard from other patients, always remains! ...
This week Rolf spoke with many of my friends. ...
Recently I also spoke with Annemarie. She is like a weasel. She climbed over high fences with and without barbed wire, ran and jumped like a boy. Her little brother is just the same. I saw them playing hide-and-seek during the blackout, a great source of fun for the two of them. The children know every hole in the fence and run and dart about; their mother can't watch them all that much. But they are dear little rascals!
Only when visitors come are they shy and hide.
Peculiar souls! Reinhard is healthy and dear. I believe I am now discovering the first signs of manhood in him! - He is serious but not desperate, thank God. His master is like a father to him, in an educational sense as well, and Mrs. W[eiss] is also touchingly kind to him. ...
Now I will close for this time and send you the warmest greetings and a thousand kisses! Always your little daughter.

Once again, a large number of Anita's friends - employees or patients of the Jewish Hospital - had been deported. Anita and Reinhard would therefore not have shrunken back from any risk or physical hardship (border fences, barbed wire) to escape to Switzerland.
The letter is a cry of despair. In subsequent letters, Anita does not return to the topic of escaping to Switzerland. Her mother or other advisors had possibly assured her that such a plan was hopeless.

After the Weiss family went into hiding, Anita and Reinhard moved into the Jewish Hospital. They lived there from March 1 until their deportation on June 16, 1943.

The Jewish Hospital in 1943

At the turn of 1942/1943, the Wehrmacht confiscated half of the Jewish Hospital, including the Nurses' Home, to set up a military hospital.

From then on, the Jewish hospital operations were continued on half of the previous space.

On February 27, 1943, the deportation of all remaining Jewish forced laborers from the factories, the so-called Factory Action, began, especially in Berlin and surrounding areas.

Employees of the Jewish Hospital were called upon to help set up the collection camps and to provide medical care for those arrested.

Three other dates can be considered milestones in the progressive destruction of the hospital's operations: In the days after March 10, 1943, half of the hospital staff was deported. This was the so-called Hospital Action. Anita alluded to the event in her letter of March 18, 1943.

On June 16, 1943, all somatically ill patients fit for transport were deported along with the doctors and nurses needed for their care, a total of two hundred people, including Anita and Reinhard Frank. The transport also included the employees of the "Reichsvereinigung der Juden" (Association of the Jews), which was dissolved on June 10, 1943, and of the Jewish Community of Berlin.

On November 21, all patients of the psychiatric ward were deported.

Thus, until the end of the war, a reduced hospital operation remained to care for sick Jews in police and Gestapo custody on their way to deportation, for Jews from so-called mixed marriages, and for some other patients. After bombings, non-Jewish injured people were now also treated (cf. HARTUNG-VON DOETINCHEM/WINAU, p. 200).

Increasingly, the hospital became a collection place for Jews destined for deportation, and a ghetto for other Jews who, for one reason or another, were exempt from deportation.

One might call it a miracle that the Jewish Hospital in Berlin, as the only Jewish institution in all of Germany, survived the National Socialist era. How this was possible has been investigated several times, with the finding that until 1943, clever maneuvering by the director Dr. Walter Lustig and jurisdictional conflicts within the state apparatus prevented its closure (cf. HARTUNG-VON DOETINCHEM/WINAU p. 224 ff.; ELKIN, p. 24, p. 28 f., p. 51, footnote 43; SILVER, p. 140 ff.). From 1944, the Jewish Hospital under its director Lustig served as a reception center for the remaining Jewish population left in Germany. Moreover, since the dissolution of the "Reichsvereinigung der Juden" (Association of the Jews) and the Jewish Community of Berlin in June 1943, Lustig had been promoted to head of a smaller new organization with the same name, "Reichsvereinigung der Juden" (Association of the Jews), and thus became the leader and administrator of those German Jews who were still living outside of concentration camps, prisons, and hiding places (cf. HARTUNG-VON DOETINCHEM/WINAU, p. 225). Thus, in the last two years of the war, Lustig and the hospital became crucial instruments of National Socialist Jewish policy. The state was no longer interested in the hospital's dissolution and closure.

Hilde's Divorce and Opening of a Guesthouse in Basel

Following the legal separation granted by the court in August 1942, Hilde had the divorce petition filed on March 30, 1943. The divorce was finalized on May 25, 1944.

Hilde's surname remained Kindler until she relinquished this name in February 1945 and from then on was again known as she was before her marriage to Ernst Kindler: Hilde Frank, born Feldberg.

Since the coffee house business in Bettingen had not generated a satisfactory profit, Hilde gave it up and instead, in the summer of 1943, rented rooms in Basel at Auberg 6 (the building no longer exists). Here, in July or August 1943, she opened a guesthouse for nine boarders, which proved to be more profitable.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, January 29, 1943

Dearest brave Mommy
A 5-minute break, - between moving, chaos, and screaming!
... Forgive me if my infrequent writing has made you anxious lately, but the new year brought so many new problems, decisions, and errands that I've hardly had a private moment to myself. On top of it all, our big move is underway, as half the hospital is becoming a military hospital. We have our hands so full! The boy and I will also be moving privately in about 14 days. Probably both of us into the Home, so there is still a lot to organize and to consider!

Martha was here at the beginning of the month. I don't trust her much! I find her extremely unpleasant!! Reiny and Annemarie are probably moving in with Edith next month. Otherwise, we are healthy, have enough to eat, and are grateful for warmth and rest.
Don't worry too much; whatever happens, we have courage!! Stay healthy! An extra kiss from your Anita.
The psychiatric service is very hard! But I am glad to be working ...

Anita was now firmly resolved to leave the Jewish Hospital and go into hiding together with Reinhard ("Reiny and Annemarie").

Gertrud Prochownik to Hilde
Berlin-Charlottenburg, January 29, 1943

My dear Hilde K.
... I had a few lines from Anita at the beginning of the year. It's a blessing that she is with the boy, and so well-liked in her work. Her strong sense of duty, her diligence, and her loving dedication to her work have already helped both children a great deal and will hopefully continue to do so.
I cannot report much about us. - I have heard nothing more from my siblings since their departure. It is a good thing that the ceaseless work leaves little time for thinking.
And so one pushes through the long chain of days, mostly tired, because one is so worn out. From my child I get a few dear words now and then; she has the same profession as Anita and writes very happily about her work. I have heard nothing more from Anna [Salomon]. ...
Write to me again soon - don't take such long breaks!!
Warmest regards, Your Gertrud Pro.

Gertrud Prochownik's siblings were deported to Auschwitz in 1942 and murdered there. The "child" was Prochownik's daughter Marianne, who had left Germany in 1938 and worked as a nurse in England.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, February 9, 1943

My beloved, good Mutti!
... I am already looking forward to our reunion! Be patient.
We are healthy and in good spirits! Always your An.
I just had to have my first canine tooth pulled; it has been festering incessantly since August!! If you write to Annemarie, send it only to Bine, she will pick up her mail there. Bine was so ecstatic with the little package! It brought her unspeakable joy!!!! Reiny is moving in with Edith next week! Regine and family are going to Max K[oppel]'s. I still have night duty. Sü[nder] is like a father! I have many dear people around me! Stay brave! Always your An.

Regine Weiss will go into hiding with her daughter Ellen; Hilde should therefore no longer send letters to Anita to the Weiss family, but to Anita's friend Sabine Klein. Reinhard will go into hiding with Edith Koppel.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, March 5, 1943

My beloved, good, brave Mummy!
From the bottom of my heart I hope and wish that you, my dear, are healthy, even if your strength often threatens to fail you because of all the hardship. Hold on, my dear, be sensible and trust in God and in fate, whatever may come! We humans can endure so much suffering and misery, and when we think we must collapse under the weight of it all, that is precisely when new strength grows in us and we can once again fight with life and will carry away many beautiful, albeit small, victories. Every evening and with every warm plate of

food, I thank God that we are still allowed to have it so good here! I take these years for the boy and myself as life's apprenticeship, and I believe there will rarely be people as happy and consciously content as we are. My greatest joy at the moment is being able to truly help so many desperate people! (- For the joy that we give returns to our own heart! -) My good Mummy, even if you may often have to wait for news from us now, do not be worried! We are healthy and sensible! God will surely stand by us! The boy and I are now living in the Hospital; we are glad about that! Regina and her family are with Edith.
Thomas and Emmy Grü[nbaum] are speaking with Rolf tomorrow. I must always think of how he called me Katrin, well, - Katrin Becomes a Soldier - do you know that book?
I visited L[eo] L[ewy]; he is crying a lot for his son! Since last week I have had incredibly strenuous field service, more welfare work than nursing. Our boy brings everyone nothing but joy, even right up to the Director. He is so sensible and is also progressing well in his electrical training. He has even already worked at an official site with his master and was especially praised there too! He is growing a lot and is always very hungry. Thank God, with the help of everyone here, I always get him plenty to eat. - ... Bine will now also start working. Do write to her! She also knows Annemarie and can give you news of her, as I don't know her address. ...
Hopefully you have a little peace and quiet in the hospital now! Use the time there and gather your strength, because you will still need it very much!
Do not worry about us; we are young and healthy and had a happy youth and have not had to suffer any hardship so far! We have strength and reserves. Have the courage, the heart, and the faith in God that every warrior's mother must have in these times, for your children are also in the fight. For now, take many thousands of heartfelt kisses, stay healthy my good Mummy, have patience. God is with you too.
If you should have to wait a long time for news from us again, don't be depressed; it's only travel and postal difficulties, we are healthy. Irma v.M. sends her regards! Stay brave.
Always your little daughter!
Spring is beginning here with a roar! How beautiful!

Anita's lines seem to be a reaction to a letter from her mother in which Hilde expressed her despair; Anita tries to lift her spirits.
The surprise international bestseller *"Die Katrin wird Soldat" ("Catherine Becomes a Soldier"* by Adrienne Thomas (pseudonym of Herta Strauch, 1897-1980), published in 1931 in Alsace in the magazine "Menorah. Jewish Family Journal for Science, Art, and Literature", describes the experiences of the Jewish Red Cross nurse Katrin in a Metz military hospital. In the First World War, having voluntarily entered service, she develops into a committed, militant pacifist after the death of her lover, who was killed at the front. Whether Anita, by mentioning the book, meant Rolf's fate, her own, or both, remains open. The book was banned in Germany after 1933. In this respect, its undisguised mention also demonstrates Anita's contempt for the censors, whom she did not credit with knowing the literature banned by the Nazis.
Who Irma v.M. was is not apparent from the documents.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, March 18, 1943

My beloved good Mummy
I just have a few free minutes between my work hours and want to send you, as always, a thousand lovely greetings. The boy and I are healthy. We have our little bed and enough to eat, and that is the main thing, after all. The boy has moved out of the children's shelter again and is now living in the Hospital with our cook in a tiny little room.
But we are grateful that it can be this way. We are happy, because outside spring is now arriving with force, green bushes and meadows, and above all, sun. I myself am currently also

quite worn out from all the heavy worries and agitations and from the difficult psychiatric ward.
How are you, my dear, health-wise? Stay brave, we want to see each other again soon in good health, God willing! L[eo] L[ewy] is also with Rolf. I often dream of Rolf and long for him. I wonder if I will ever see him again? I must close! Take a thousand heartfelt kisses from your little daughter.
Edith sends her regards.

This was Anita's first letter after the Gestapo's attempt on March 10, 1943, to close the Jewish Hospital, and the deportation of half the hospital staff in the days that followed ("Hospital Action").
Regarding Leo Lewy, Anita was mistaken. He was deported on November 15, 1943, to Theresienstadt, not "to Rolf" (see below).

End of the Protection Money Payments

In May 1943, Hilde, Anita, and Max Sünder agreed that Martha Bachthaler was not providing any useful service. They stopped the money payments that had been made since 1942.

Max Sünder to Hilde
Berlin, April 10, 1943

Dear Madam!
I am referring to your letter of the 4th of last month, from which I was sorry to see that you are not at all well. ...
Otherwise, we are all well; we are healthy and cheerful. Martha is a dud and just a show-off, and thinks no one notices.
Wishing you a speedy recovery, I remain, Yours, M. Sünder

How Sünder arrived at his negative assessment of Martha Bachthaler is not apparent from the documents. He may have been mistaken. Nor can it be determined whether the end of the protection money payments or the Gestapo's intensified efforts from May onward to make Berlin "free of Jews" was the reason that Anita and Reinhard were deported on June 16, 1943.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, April 15, 1943

My dear, dear Mommy!
... Toni's niece and nephew heard the St. Matthew Passion! Heavenly!
For today, a thousand loving kisses from your little daughter.

Anita and Reinhard were the niece and nephew of Antonia Frank, married name Plaut, sister of Hermann Frank.

Reinhard to Hilde
Berlin, April 16, 1943

My dear, good Mommy!
... The other day I met "Reini". He said that he and his sister had been to the "St. Matthew Passion". He enjoyed it very much! Do you also have such beautiful spring weather?
If only I were with you! - Many thousands of big hugs and kisses, Your Reinhard

Anita had reported openly about attending the St. Matthew Passion on Good Friday 1941. At that time, it had been an event of the Jewish Cultural Association, which was legal for her to attend. But the Jewish Cultural Association had been dissolved by the regime in September 1941. The siblings could therefore only listen to the St. Matthew Passion on Good Friday 1943 in a performance forbidden to Jews. This was only possible by violating another regulation, as the Jewish star of course had to disappear as soon as they approached the concert venue. With childlike thoughtlessness, Reinhard here puts the already insecure code name "Reini" in quotation marks.

This illegal concert attendance speaks to Anita's hunger for music, art, and culture, and at the same time shows her courage to defy the regime at a time when people from their immediate circle were being deported almost daily and Anita feared for her own and Reinhard's life more than ever. Their risky venture makes clear the years-long hermetic exclusion of Jews from the non-Jewish majority population. Among non-Jewish Germans in Berlin, the Frank siblings had become as certain of their anonymity as tourists from a distant land.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, May 4, 1943

My dear good Mutti!
I do hope these lines find you in good health. Forgive us for not writing last week, but we had so much work we couldn't get to the post office. We are both doing well. We'd be grateful if things could stay this way for us for a long time! Tomorrow, thank God, I have my day off again. As of yesterday, Reinhard is living alone, since his roommate went to Rolf. I myself am also alone in a nice little two-person room.
Last week I was all alone on the ward for two days without staff and nurses, but it went very well, and I enjoyed it a lot.
I heard from a friend of the boy that he is almost the only one from his class left here. Our entry permit was extended. The sunshine here is glorious. Many of the patients were discharged to Edith Schulm[eister].
What are you up to now, my dear? For today, take a thousand lovely greetings and kisses from your little daughter

Anita wrote the letter on May 4, 1943. Since Reinhard was living "alone as of yesterday," the deportation ("to Rolf") of his roommate occurred on May 3. The fact that Anita was now living in a two-person room also seems to contain a coded message. Was her previous roommate also deported? Furthermore, "last week" (i.e., between April 24 and May 1, 1943), all other ward staff and a large number of the patients had apparently been deported, because Anita was "all alone" on the ward, and the patients were "discharged to Edith Schulm[eister]," meaning deported to the East.
Possibly, Anita was temporarily spared due to her special professional commitment. Perhaps, however, her commitment was not the only or the decisive reason; it would also not explain why Reinhard was still at the Hospital as "almost the only one from his class." The siblings' connection to their mother in Switzerland and the protection money payments may have played a role too.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, May 11 and 13, 1943

My dear good Mutti
... Rolf had a visit from some of my colleagues these past few days. Trudel [Gertrud Prochownik] is with Edith; she is doing quite well. Unfortunately, Hilde's daughter is not getting any leave for the time being, what a shame! We're having a glorious spring here. What are you working on now?

<u>May 13, '43, evening.</u>

... During the day, I now have a scarlet fever police ward with 14 men all by myself, - a lot of work and a lot of joy for me, but very responsible!
For today, a thousand loving greetings and kisses from your little daughter!

Once again, nurses from the Jewish Hospital were deported ("Rolf had a visit ..."). Gertrud Prochownik had now also gone into hiding; Edith Koppel had been in hiding since 1942 (more on this see below).
The "scarlet fever police ward" referred to the scarlet fever department of the police station in the Jewish Hospital, where ill Jewish police prisoners were cared for. The windows were barred and the doors locked from the outside as in a prison, so that the nurses working there always had to carry a large bunch of keys with them (cf. HARTUNG-VON DOETINCHEM/WINAU, p. 164; Silver, p. 9).

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, May 21, 1943

My dear good Mutti!
Today we received your very dear, detailed letter, a thousand thanks for it! - I cannot write to you about how Edith is living. Max is living elsewhere. There is no Mrs. Kop[pel]; I don't know her. I will also let Sü[nder] know. I don't know where Trudel [Gertrud Prochownik] is. Always write to Bine, she is so happy about your letters. For now, a thousand greetings and kisses from your little daughter.

Anita indicated to her mother that she should no longer mention the name Koppel.
Edith and Max Koppel were in hiding in different places.
Hilde was also told not to ask about Gertrud Prochownik anymore. The fact that Hilde was supposed to send her letters not to Anita at the Jewish Hospital, but to Sabine Klein's private address, could mean that Anita feared her hospital mail was being monitored.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, May 24, 1943

My dear good Mutti!
I'm sitting at my desk on the ward and have a few minutes of free time, as my charges are being taken for a walk.
I am always so thankful when they are all back upstairs, healthy and accounted for! It is, after all, a huge responsibility on such a ward!
... I am grateful to have to work like this from morning till night, it makes one forget many things, I almost completely forget even Rolf now with all the turmoil and worries, because one now completely lacks the time for such quiet and beautiful thoughts as we had. May we have peace for a good long time yet! The boy looks good and healthy and is very well-liked everywhere. Since I work with scarlet fever, we are especially careful to guard against any infection; one must be so careful not to get infected! Take care, my little Musch! A thousand loving kisses from your little daughter

Anita's charges are the Jewish police prisoners. The mentioned precaution "against any infection" may be meant literally or could mean that in her dealings with the prisoners, Anita avoided anything that could trigger her own deportation.

Max Sünder to Hilde
Berlin, May 26, 1943

Dear Madam,
... I have stopped Martha; if she contacts you, I would simply not reply. Anita is doing really well and gives no cause for concern. We speak often. ...
Wishing you a speedy recovery, I remain with best regards, Your M. Sünder

Hilde to Max Eichenberger
Basel, June 13, 1943

Dear Dr. Eichenberger,
... In the meantime, I spoke briefly, too briefly, with Dr. St[einer] in Zurich ... He seemed much more positive this time; in any case, he had news that for now, nothing more could be achieved than what has already been done, and that indeed, as suspected, the children had been bypassed. ...

I hear from the children that the girl is currently in charge of a ward of 18 policemen with scarlet fever during the day (!!) and on night duty at night! So she is caring for Aryan people. It is said to be very unusual that the children are still there at all.
Apparently, they are no longer getting out of the hospital at all, I gather from the boy's messages. ...
This morning I pulled myself together and went through the meadows to the church in the next village, to find some comfort, support, and distance from human shortcomings again. ...
When I get home, I often don't even have the strength to eat!
Yours Hilde Kindler

Dr. Max Eichenberger was a lawyer in Bern. He advised Hilde regarding the subsequent immigration of the children and represented her before the federal authorities.
The Zurich lawyer Dr. Steiner had connections to Germany.
He had been looking after Hilde's children since 1941 and had also traveled to Munich and Berlin for this reason. His contacts with Max Sünder suggest that money was involved in Steiner's rescue efforts. They were unsuccessful.
Regarding the "policemen with scarlet fever," Hilde had misunderstood her daughter. What was meant was the scarlet fever ward for Jews in police custody.
Hilde had gone "this morning," that is, on Sunday morning, June 13, 1943, "through the meadows to the church in the next village" to find comfort. The next village was Riehen. One of the two Protestant parish pastors in Riehen was Gottlob Wieser, who was notable for his commitment to helping Jewish refugees from Germany. Hilde had come to trust him. Wieser also supported Hilde with administrative matters.

Theresienstadt, Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen

Transport I/96 of June 16, 1943

On June 16, 1943, Anita and Reinhard were deported to Theresienstadt on train transport I/96. According to the transport list (see below), a large number of the deportees came from the Jewish Hospital. It can therefore be assumed that Anita and Reinhard were victims of a major raid. The operation appears to have been carried out suddenly. Anita's postcard of June 16, 1943, reproduced below, shows signs of great tension and haste.

In Hilde's estate there was a dark red faux leather wallet with the gold embossing "Gerling Konzern," apparently a promotional gift from this company from earlier years. In this wallet Anita kept her important personal documents: vaccination certificates, her nursing diploma, the entry permits for Switzerland including the permit extensions, two small portrait photos of Reinhard, and a postcard of the main building of the Jewish Hospital on Iranische Strasse. The fact that Anita did not take the Gerling wallet with her to Theresienstadt, but left it behind at the Jewish Hospital and had it sent to Basel by Sabine Klein, shows that she was still hoping for a later entry into Switzerland. This hope was also expressed in the postcard of June 16, 1943, in which Anita asked her mother: "Have the entry permit extended."

Anita must have learned the destination of her deportation - Theresienstadt - while still in the Jewish Hospital. Otherwise, Sabine Klein, with whom Anita was able to speak on the phone, could not have reported to Hilde that Anita and Reinhard were being deported "to the Sudetenland" and "not to Rolf". "Sudetenland" was a codeword for Theresienstadt, where survival was possible, and "to Rolf" for those other destinations that led to death (see the commentary on the letter of July 7, 1942). Sabine was privy to Anita's code.

The Theresienstadt camp (Czech: Terezín) was designated a ghetto because it had a limited Jewish self-administration, which was under the control of the Gestapo. The inmates were prisoners. Anyone who tried to escape was shot or hanged.

The complex was a fortress north of Prague, built around 1780 by Joseph II of Habsburg, and was originally intended to house 5,000 soldiers. From 1941, over 40,000 prisoners were crammed together here.

Theresienstadt served the regime for propaganda purposes as a model camp, used to deceive the population in the Old Reich and observers abroad into believing it was a camp where those living there received care, were able to work, and were in contact with their relatives.

However, neither the willpower nor the resources were sufficient to create a genuine model camp in Theresienstadt. The camp command and their subordinates were indoctrinated and convinced that the "Jewish race" had to be exterminated. Deaths of the prisoners were promoted, not prevented.

The existing medical service and patient care also served propaganda purposes. Malnutrition and health-endangering harassment, as described by Hedwig Ems (see below), as well as arbitrary shootings for real or alleged faults, were current practice. If the influx of new prisoners required a reduction in the number of inmates to prevent overcrowding, prisoners were transferred to an extermination camp (from October 1942 mostly to Auschwitz).

For many inmates, Theresienstadt was a mere stopover on the way to their death. In total, from 1941 to 1945, around 140,000 people are said to have been held in Theresienstadt for shorter or longer periods, which means that about 40,000 people survived in Theresienstadt and 100,000 people either perished in Theresienstadt or were sent to their deaths from there.

Anita and Reinhard remained in Theresienstadt for fifteen months.

They were housed in separate locations, but were able to see and speak to each other now and then.

Anita to Hilde
Berlin, 16 June 1943

Dearest good one!
We are healthy! Stay brave! Write to Gu[mpert] and Bine.
We are confident and will be fine. Have the entry permit extended. Heartfelt kisses and greetings!
Your little daughter

With this postcard, written in great haste, Anita announced that her and Reinhard's deportation was imminent. "Write to Gu. and Bine" meant that they could no longer be reached at their previous address and that Hilde could ask Hans Gumpert and Sabine Klein for more information. The sentence "We are confident and will be fine" refers to Theresienstadt as the transport's destination.

Sabine Klein to Hilde
Ahrenshoop, June 25, 1943

My dear, good Mrs. Kindler!
Today I wanted to send you especially heartfelt greetings once again. Albeit with a heavy heart, as I have had some unwelcome news in recent days.
And yet, a sure feeling within me is strong in its confidence of a good outcome of everything that oppresses us and weighs on us during this difficult time. I live a very quiet life here, and the mail I receive from many old and young friends provides a diversion. All the more painful, then, was the news a few days ago that my dear friend from Dahlem has had to give up her profession after all due to her delicate health and of course does not know how she will now manage with the little one. But as she wrote to me, she has such strong faith in God and hopes that she will soon be able to work again. For now, the doctor has prescribed a convalescent trip, and she has traveled with the little one to the Sudetenland to stay with acquaintances. ...
My warmest regards, and keep your chin up; I firmly believe that we will all see each other again, happy and healthy. Your Bine.
~~Unexpectedly~~ Anita has not gone to Rolf.

Sabine Klein has encoded the destination Theresienstadt here as "Sudetenland" and clarified this with the postscript "not to Rolf." This also justified the hope of a reunion expressed in the letter. The striking out of the Word "unexpectedly" suggests that a deportation "to the East" had been expected, and that Sabine Klein, at second thoughts, did not want to burden Hilde with this information.

Sabine Klein to Hilde
Ahrenshoop, August 12, 1943

My dear Mrs. Kindler!
Please forgive me for replying to your kind letter so late. But the work here is relentless right now, and on top of that, I made a short trip to Berlin three days ago to retrieve some valuable items, which included things from the Hammer factory and the like. ...
With warmest regards ...

The knitting and hosiery factory of the "Frank Brothers" in Leipzig owned the "Hammer" brand as its most important trademark.
Three and a half week after Anita's deportation, Sabine Klein had gone to Berlin to collect the siblings' personal belongings left behind at the Jewish Hospital. She later sent them to Hilde in Basel, including Anita's Gerling wallet and a folder with Reinhard's school reports from the years 1935 to 1942.

The following letter from an old acquaintance of Hilde highlights the risks of an escape to Switzerland.

Genia Einzig to Hilde
La Rosiaz sur Lausanne, August 29, 1943

Dear Mrs. Kindler,
... I arrived here on July 5 with Miss Elisabeth Goldschmidt, unfortunately under very tragic circumstances. My husband and I, after an agonizing ordeal, had been living in hiding with a former employee of my husband since February 2 and were trying to get here. It would take too long to tell you everything; we managed it on July 3 and left Berlin together with Miss Goldschmidt. The journey went smoothly and a few minutes before Singen, just before our rescue, the terrible thing happened. I was in a different compartment due to lack of space and don't know the details; I only know that my husband was asked why he was going to Singen, to which he replied, to visit his son in the military hospital, which was all arranged beforehand, and afterwards I saw my husband being led away accompanied by an S.S. and a Gestapo man. We both had different papers, and I was so out of my mind that I let my companion do with me whatever she would. I could not endanger the others - besides Miss Goldschmidt, the lady who helped us escape was also with us. I secretly still hoped he would somehow talk his way out of it, but apparently that did not happen; I have heard nothing more from my husband since that time. In this terrible despair, in this dreadful uncertainty, I have been sitting here for 7 weeks now and know nothing about the fate of this poor fellow, who was completely broken mentally and physically and was the driving force behind our escape. My successful rescue seems like a bad joke to me, and if I didn't have the two children, I know what I would do. Is it worth it to fight so hard for such a life, for such a world? My two children are in England - thank God they are well. I telegraphed them and received a reply yesterday.
They are waiting for a letter and are beaming with joy - what can I, what should I write to them?! I can't possibly give them this news - and I am still waiting for a miracle!! In one of my most agonizing hours, I tried to give myself courage by thinking of the suffering of others and, on that occasion, told Miss Goldschmidt about your fate. In doing so, I learned that she has such good news for you, and I learned from Pastor Freudenberg what a magnificent person he is. I am so happy for you, now you know that you will see your children again!! I my-

self did not speak to Anita; the way was too far and one could not travel, but Mrs. Czarlinski from Dahlem often visited her husband in the hospital and always brought me greetings from Anita.
In times like these, one is happy to meet old acquaintances, acquaintances from our real, not yet uprooted life. Anita is said to have become a truly magnificent person; she was loved and admired everywhere. In my good, unfortunately rare, hours, I cling to a faint ray of hope that my husband has also been sent to Theresienstadt - on account of his age and because he was an officer and had decorations. How did you get in touch with your children?!! - Oh! Dearest Hilde Frank! When will this misery end? One can't even see a beginning yet - and if it takes too long, how many more people will perish?
... I am making terrible reproaches to myself for not holding my husband back from this journey; I left with such a heavy heart, as if I had foreseen it - this terrible misfortune. To be sure, life in hiding was dreadful, but with the necessary caution, we would have endured it. Sometimes I fear I am losing my mind - and it is so hard to bear all this among complete strangers. What does an individual fate mean today? Very few people today have any understanding for the sorrow I feel, apart from the fact that it has always been the case that people only like to have cheerful people around them. - How are you living in Basel?! Do you have a nice circle of friends? Do you feel comfortable? - I would be very happy to hear from you! Where has Prof. Neuberg ended up? and the girls? and what has become of your delightful home life? Did you manage to save much?
I send you my warm regards and ask for a reply ...
Yours, Genia Einzig

The "good news for you" meant that Anita and Reinhard had been deported to Theresienstadt. Genia Einzig mistakenly assumed that Hilde had already made contact with Anita and Reinhard there ("How did you get in touch with your children?!!").
In the memorial book of the Federal Archives, a Bernhard Einzig is recorded, who is presumably the deported husband of Genia Einzig: "Born on November 12, 1874, in Eperjes/Hungary, resident in Berlin (Charlottenburg), deportation from Berlin on August 4, 1943, to Theresienstadt. Date of death: December 8, 1943. Place of death: Theresienstadt."

Hedwig Ems to Lotte Levy on the conditions in Theresienstadt in 1943 (from the 1947 report)

I already wrote about bedbugs at the beginning; now lice were added to them in vast quantities, and this was more serious in that the people who had lice were taken away for delousing and often did not return for days. In the beginning, the conditions were appalling: women and men naked in the same room. Young boys from the SS shaved the women wherever they could find a single hair. If lice were present on the head, the hair was shorn completely bald, and the poor women were to be pitied, and were of course also very unhappy. To kill the lice, gassings were carried out, and even if the people apparently returned healthy, they soon began to fall ill, and I know only a few who did not die afterwards. Only when the mistress of a superior from our barracks was among them, who complained along with many others, was the situation of the naked women and men somewhat improved, and they were mainly treated at different times. It also happened that some gentlemen who had been deloused also died of gas poisoning the following night. Everyone was terrified of the delousing.
I never experienced this personally because I had the incomprehensible luck of never getting a louse, but the cause was not particular cleanliness, but really just luck. I don't think that many besides me, who were in Th. for almost 3 years, got away completely "without". In the later years it got better; then it was not to be considered a miracle if one had no lice. The

vermin had gotten so out of hand that, even though we carried all the beds out every week and then washed the wooden boards with Lysol, one could speak of thousands upon thousands of bedbugs that descended upon us at night. It became so bad that it was impossible to lie in the beds, and in October 1943 we were given permission to carry our beds into the courtyard and spend the night there. Of course, this was no ideal situation either, as the ground was already quite cold and even the mattresses we put underneath could not protect us from the cold. Then it happened that a torrential downpour would break out in the middle of the night and you were soaking wet by the time you had somewhat saved the beds. In addition, in the summer of 1943, a barrack for infectious diseases had been built in the middle of our courtyard, and all night long you could hear the sick, who sometimes also had their windows open (the barrack was on the ground floor), groaning, and to this day I can still hear how one sick person called for a nurse over and over again, but she did not bother with him. If you couldn't sleep, you went to the toilet, where the greatest conversations took place. In general, the toilets always served as conversation rooms, where people bartered, traded, and also shared "recipes." Yet, being there was in every respect to be described only as a punishment.

...

After a few months, at the end of 1943, we were also allowed to write a card every six weeks, but only to relatives.

We were very happy about it, but the cards reached the recipient in the rarest of cases. But what a joy it always was when the postman brought a message from our loved ones and possibly even a notification that one could pick up a parcel. Then everyone was excited together, and each person could hardly wait until they could collect their parcel. We had been receiving ghetto money for some time, and with that, one had to pay depending on the size, or rather the weight, of the parcel. In the beginning it was only 5 or 10 crowns, but later it increased greatly, and one had to pay 30, 40 or 50 crowns, and since we received on average only 75 a month, a loan sometimes had to be arranged to be able to collect the parcel.

The tins of sardines in oil that were sent to us were also wonderful, and I am still grateful to you today, dearest Lotte, that you made sure that I too received such lovely tins.

If I had not also frequently received parcels from Leipzig and also from the Gumperts, I would not have survived the time of hunger. Even if not too much was left over for me, because far too many were already waiting for it to be shared out, for everyone was hungry and possibly received no parcel of their own.

One day, the word was that the count was not correct. There were supposedly more people in the camp than stated in the papers, and we would have to undergo a census the next day, which was to take place outside the ghetto. There was great commotion about this, as it was generally believed that the SS would use the opportunity to finish us off. Some spoke of gassing, others of bombs, etc. A very oppressive atmosphere prevailed. We were called up in blocks of 100 and had to line up early in the morning, I believe around 6 o'clock, to be led on from there.

It was November 11, 1943, and already bitterly cold. We then proceeded at a snail's pace, because new groups were constantly joining from all the streets, preventing us from moving forward.

Meanwhile, one could hear incessant rapid gunfire, and there is probably no doubt that many were shot that morning in the "Small Fortress." We finally arrived at a very large area that must have previously been used for parades; it was called the "Bauschowitz Basin." We were lined up there in blocks of 100 each, men and women mixed. All around the place was a hilly elevation, an embankment, and on it, at a short distance, stood soldiers with their ri-

fles. It took hours, of course, until all the inmates of the camp had been transported there. A total of 38,000 people, women with small children who were still in prams and other very little ones. No one was allowed to remain behind in the ghetto, except for those with walking disabilities or the sick, who were locked in a room for the entire day. When everyone was assembled, the SS went around, a horsewhip in hand, and counted the individual blocks, and God have mercy if someone was missing, perhaps because someone had gone to relieve themselves, then the person responsible for the block was beaten. It happened near me that the count was not right. A man was called to beat the other. Then the SS man said: "You call that a slap in the face? I'll show you what a slap in the face is." And with that, he beat the poor man terribly. In a block opposite me, there were several very small children for whom standing still was of course torture, and a few were playing some kind of circle game. Suddenly an SS man came over and raged terribly; it was a miracle that he did not beat the children. So we stood for hour after hour on the cold ground, without food or drink; of course, we had brought some food from home, but no one had large supplies. Since there was also no opportunity to relieve oneself, in the end one didn't care about anything, and some ladies held up a cloth, and you sat down, regardless of whether men were nearby or not. Only the SS could not be near. But for example, in my block there was a gentleman who had a hernia, which protruded from standing so long on the same spot and caused the man terrible discomfort. First a doctor had to be found, and that didn't work, and then a board on which he could be laid so that he could be put right again. All of this was of course very upsetting. I had brought a small stool with me, but it collapsed immediately on the uneven ground. That, of course, had to be hidden when the SS marched by. Suddenly, at 4 p.m., all the SS had disappeared, and we waited for an order to go back. But nothing happened, and we stood there at a loss. As nothing happened, the masses started moving on their own between 5 and 6 p.m. and marched back, which was not easy on the unfamiliar, bumpy terrain. In the meantime, it had started to rain. When we came to the gate of the ghetto, it was locked and was not opened by the military on guard, and all the while in the rain. Our camp elder, Eckstein, then managed to get them to let him through, and he then negotiated for a full two hours at the commander's office until he received permission for the gate to be opened.
It is a glorious chapter in the history of the Jews that no panic broke out, no child was injured, and no pram was overturned. One must imagine that these were 38,000 people who, without any leadership, had set off on their own, naturally hungry and weakened, and eager to keep moving in the rain. I was standing quite near the front, as I had left immediately, while many had not yet found the courage to do so. However, there were repeated calls, with the request to pass them on: "Keep calm, negotiations are underway for us to return." And calm was indeed maintained. It did happen that someone felt unwell, but others helped. Finally, the gate was opened and we could go back. And as ridiculous as it may sound, we were happy, truly happy, when we saw each other all safe in our room again, something hardly any of us had dared to hope for. I returned as early as 10 p.m.; the last ones did not arrive until around 2 a.m. The SS had not anticipated the Jews' independent action and had intended to simply leave us outside. It is quite clear how few would have survived that, a November night on the cold ground without food, etc. Two days later, it was said that the count had still not been correct, and we had to line up for another count, where we had to pass by the SS at the commander's office with our identification cards. We had to assemble in a courtyard, ordered by letter, on the first day only up to "E." In the courtyard where we assembled, there was a nice-looking lady who asked if I would guide her, as she could not walk well on her own, which was fine with me. After we had walked a short distance, a gentleman who was walking behind me with his wife tapped me on the shoulder and said: "Are

you aware that the lady you are guiding is completely covered in lice?" My horror, dear Lotte, you can well imagine. Indeed, lice were crawling in droves all over her things. I then called the orderlies, who removed the lady, but I was itching in all sorts of places and was terrified that I had inherited something. Fortunately, that was not the case. The queuing had dragged on from early morning until 5 p.m., and it had exhausted me even more than the event in the Bauschowitz Basin. I was probably still weakened from it. Once at the commander's office, the identification card was checked, and if it was in order, that was it. In the following days, things were changed slightly so that people did not have to stand in line all day again. Officially, nothing resulted from the count; whether the later transports were related to it, I do not know.
Once, two children, a brother and sister aged 14 and 16, tried to escape. But they were caught and hanged. Terrible, the poor children!

The same "census" is described in H. G. ADLER, Theresienstadt 1941-1945, Das Antlitz einer Zwangsgemeinschaft (The Face of a Forced Community), Reprint of the 2nd Edition (1960)), Göttingen 2012, hereafter quoted ADLER, pp. 159-161. Adler, who had also personally experienced the event, reports a panic during the prisoners' return. The website ghetto-theresienstadt.de (accessed on 22.7.2024) speaks of mothers protecting their children from being crushed and of three hundred dead, whereas Hedwig Ems, in her 1947 report, emphasizes the prudence and calm of the camp inmates.

The year 1944 brought an ever-faster retreat of the Wehrmacht on all fronts. The advance of the Russians in the East prompted the German regime to preemptively blow up the gas chambers in Auschwitz in November to erase the traces of the mass murder. Prisoners from Polish and Czech camps, including Theresienstadt, were moved west as the Russian army approached, particularly to Bergen-Belsen.

Hilde's Attempt to get the Children's Release from Theresienstadt by a Payment of Money

In January and March 1944, Hilde gave a man in Zurich named Johann Schluchin "loans" of 2,000 and 1,200 francs. In reality, they were advance payments for an anticipated ransom of the children from Theresienstadt. Hilde must have heard of such ransoms; see YEHUDA BAUER, "Freikauf von Juden". Verhandlungen zwischen dem nationalsozialistischen Deutschland und jüdischen Repräsentanten von 1933 bis 1945, Frankfurt a. M. 1996 ("Ransoming Jews." Negotiations between National Socialist Germany and Jewish Representatives from 1933 to 1945). Schluchin had been recommended to Hilde by the aforementioned Zurich lawyer, Dr. Steiner, as a man with special connections in Germany. But Schluchin turned out to be a fraudster.

Months later, in mid-October, Hilde received a card from Anita from Theresienstadt, dated September 2, 1944. After that, she remained without further news from her children until her death on August 1, 1945. (The card is no longer present in Hilde's estate; it is mentioned in Hilde's letter to the Jewish Refugee Aid of St. Gallen dated February 18, 1945.)

Reinhard's and Anita's Separate Paths to Auschwitz and to Bergen-Belsen

On September 28, 1944, Reinhard, and on October 19, 1944, Anita were deported from Theresienstadt. The deportations were part of the then-commencing evacuation of the camp ahead of the advancing Russians. Anita's aunt, Hedwig Ems, who remained in Theresienstadt until the end of the war, described the events in her report.

Hedwig Ems to Lotte Levy on the transports in the fall of 1944 (from the 1947 report)

But this all began in September 1944, first with the removal of the urns. This was followed by the destruction of all papers. Day and night, the fire blazed in which all documents were being burned, and so on.
And then began the terrible tragedy of the unceasing transports. It was so dreadful that I can find no words to describe this tragedy. Everyone walked around filled with fear and deep sadness for all the many people from whom one now had to say goodbye again. (Approximately 28,000 people are said to have been taken away from Theresienstadt on these transports.) Between the summons, which almost invariably came in the middle of the night, and reporting to the assembly point (also a large barracks), there was only a very short span of time, so that hardly anyone was able to get a message to acquaintances. This is what happened to me, for example, with Ernst's mother, whom I had spoken to just the day before. When I came by the next afternoon just to see if everything was still unchanged, they were gone - Frieda Freundlich-Heyman and also Cousin Mary. It was the same for many. Mr. and Mrs. Rubin, with whom I had become good friends, Emmy Schönwald-Anschel (her husband had already died in Th., like most of the men, who all starved to death). I could list a long, long series of names. But I will refrain and will only keep a faithful memory of them in my mind. And we did not suspect that all these poor people were doomed to die, because it was said that everyone was going to another ghetto, "Birkenau," which was identical to Auschwitz, but no one knew that.
Once those concerned had received the summons, they had to report at a specific time to a designated barracks with their belongings (but only as much could be taken as each person could carry themselves). Locked in the barracks, the people then remained for hours, but often for several days, depending on what transport options were available. They were then let out through a rear gate, so that we could no longer see or even speak to them. It was strictly forbidden to enter the barracks if you were not among the unfortunate ones yourself. One day, a lady was among them whom I wanted to say goodbye to and also bring something for, so I slipped through when the SS man happened not to be looking. But when I wanted to leave the barracks again, it was no longer possible; it was locked, and anyone who wanted to get out had to go to an office and get a pass. I was firmly convinced that they would keep me there with them and hardly knew what lie to tell to explain my unauthorized presence. But inexplicably, they believed me, and I was able to leave again. Again and again I was lucky, only to experience in the end the unspeakable sorrow that Richard did not come back.
As if the heavens themselves had conspired against the poor, a downpour almost regularly occurred when they had to line up in the courtyard, so that they had to board the train soaking wet when they were finally loaded after standing around for hours. One transport followed another; it was absolutely terrible. I don't know exactly how many thousands were taken away then; the ghetto became really empty, and a somber mood prevailed, as everyone was mourning good friends.

ADLER writes on p. 282 about the deportations from Theresienstadt: "All the horror described is surpassed by the transports to the East, in which the terror of the "paradise ghetto" was consummated. From the first deportations in January 1942, this terror never left the camp until the liberation. Subjectively as well as objectively, not everyone was affected equally -, but the fear of transport spared no one."
"that Richard did not come back": This refers to Hedwig's son.

The two transports of September 28 and October 19, 1944, with which Reinhard and Anita left Theresienstadt, went to Auschwitz. From both transports, four-fifths of the prisoners were immedi-

ately driven into the gas chambers. One-fifth were "selected" for forced labor, among them both Frank siblings.

About four weeks after his arrival in Auschwitz, Reinhard was transferred to the Gleiwitz III subcamp and assigned to forced labor in a munitions factory. During the advance of the Red Army in Poland, he managed to escape in January 1945.

From Auschwitz, Anita was transported on to a labor camp near Breslau and from there, in January 1945, after a stay in the Gross-Rosen concentration camp, transferred westward to the Bergen-Belsen camp near Hanover.

She perished in the typhus epidemic that was raging there.

Anita to Hilde
Theresienstadt, October 17, 1944

Dearest Mother!
I am healthy - hope the same for you! Reinhard is working in his profession. - How is the boy?! - Did he write!? - Stay healthy and brave!
I expect to see Rolf soon. - Fondest kisses! ...
Your little daughter!

Sender: Eva Tauss, Theresienstadt/Protectorate, Berggasse 56/21

The postcard, a multiply coded piece of devastating news, arrived in Basel only after Hilde's death. From the various descriptions and contradictory statements concerning Anita's brother, Hilde should understand that Anita had lost sight of Reinhard. The code "Reinhard is working in his profession" may have been inspired by the term "Arbeitseinsatztransporte" (work assignment transports), which according to the official terminology in Theresienstadt was used for the deportations to the extermination camps (cf. ADLER, p. 150). The other message was that Anita was now certain she was designated for deportation but did not know yet the exact date: "I Expect to see Rolf soon".
"Eva Tauss" in the sender's address could have been a fellow camp inmate of Anita's, who brought the card to the post office and had to identify herself as the sender.

Anita to Hilde
Theresienstadt, October 18, 1944

Beloved Mutti!
I am healthy! - Hope the same! Reinhard is working. Write to Rudolphi Neuegasse 10. Did the little one write, how is he?!
- Seeing Rolf tomorrow! How is the boy? - Stay brave! -
Lovingly, Anita.

Sender: Eva Tauss, Theresienstadt/Protectorate, Berggasse 56/21

The postcard arrived in Basel only after Hilde's death. These were Anita's last words to her mother.
With the contradictory statements and questions about her brother, Anita again wanted to convey the message that she had lost track of Reinhard.
The Hamburg lawyer Dr. Walter Rudolphi, legal advisor and executor for Hilde's mother Clara Feldberg, had been deported to Theresienstadt in July 1942, a year before Anita and Reinhard, and was housed there at Neuegasse 10. Anita hinted to Hilde that she could ask him for more information; she did not know that less than a week later, on October 23, 1944, Rudolphi would be deported to Auschwitz and murdered there on October 30, 1944.

The End

Anita's Final Months and Death

The Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where Anita was held during the final months of her life, was surrendered without a fight by the Wehrmacht to the advancing British on April 15, 1945. The

prisoners in the camp were neither forced on death marches nor murdered en masse, but were left to their fate in the camp in their mostly pitiful condition - many of them terminally ill.

The only authentic testimony regarding the time of Anita's death is that of fellow inmate Hannelore Brüg, who in 1947 declared under oath during the legal proceedings for Anita's declaration of death: "Anita Frank then became very ill, she had sore feet and contracted typhus and, after being transferred to another block, died there in mid-April 1945." - Based on this statement, the District Court of Berlin-Wedding set the date of death as April 30, 1945, presumably adding a period of two weeks, as the witness was not present at Anita's death and had only estimated the date.

Hilde's Final Months and Death

In 1945, Hilde's health deteriorated.

After two consecutive operations for twisting of the intestine, she died at only 51 years of age on August 1, 1945, in the Basel Citizens' Hospital.

Reinhard's Path to Freedom

Reinhard was in the Gleiwitz III labor camp until January 19, 1945. On that day, the camp was evacuated due to the advance of the Russians. The prisoners were driven west on a death march through wintry, snow-covered Poland in their prison uniforms and wooden clogs in the biting cold. On the evening of the second day, January 21, 1945, they reached the Blechhammer concentration camp (Blachownia Slaska), the largest of the Auschwitz sub-camps about 30 kilometers west of Gleiwitz, whose inmates had been driven away shortly before. Here, those who had arrived from Gleiwitz were locked up overnight. Some of the completely exhausted - including Reinhard - stayed away from roll call the next morning and hid. The panic-stricken guards refrained from searching for them.

When he came out of his hiding place, Reinhard met comrades he knew from Gleiwitz. Under the leadership of a particularly energetic young man, Louis Lowy, a community of fate was formed by seven young Jews, all of whom had been imprisoned first in Theresienstadt and then in Gleiwitz.

At an age of 25, Louis was the oldest, and at 17, Reinhard was the second-youngest of the group. Over the coming months they sought their path to freedom together.

On September 14, 1945, Reinhard wrote his mother a letter in which he described his experiences since the liberation with astonishing accuracy, while also expressing his longing and hope to see his mother and sister again soon after the five-year separation. The "Joint", mentioned several times in the letter, was the *American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee*, a relief organization for persecuted Jews. The "D.P. Center of the UNRRA" was the *Displaced Persons Center of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration*. - Reinhard did not receive his entry visa for Switzerland until the spring of 1946. He arrived in Basel on March 25, 1946.

Reinhard to Hilde
Unterammergau, September 14, 1945

My beloved Mutti!
In the hope that this letter may reach you soon and in the best of health, I send you these greetings, dear Mutti.
I have already sent about 8 telegrams and letters to you, but so far I haven't received a single reply from you. I am so dearly waiting for a message from you!! I also had acquaintances write to you. Have you received any mail from Anita yet? As far as I have been able to find out, she is supposedly in Bergen-Belsen. Unfortunately, I haven't been able to establish any contact there yet. Hopefully, you have already heard from her. Please write and tell me.
How are you, dear Mutti, health-wise? I hope well!!

Since I don't know which letters you have received so far, I want to briefly write to you again about the experiences I've had with my six comrades, with whom I was together the whole time, since our liberation.
After we had hidden for five days between the front lines in a camp, we were liberated by the Russians on January 23rd. The camp was located about 60 km west of Gleiwitz. First, we decided to properly recover. We moved into a small house there and made ourselves at home inside. We had enough to eat from the storehouses that were there. About four weeks later, after we had somewhat recovered, we set off, because one could not stay in Poland. We then decided to go to Slovakia. We couldn't go west, of course, because the war was still there. Partly on foot, partly by freight trains, we then gradually came via Gleiwitz, Kattowitz, Krakow, Tarnow, etc., to Crebischow, a town in Slovakia. There we found a home for former concentration camp inmates. We stayed there for some time at first. We discussions among ourselves we decided to travel further south. Our next destination was Debrecen in Hungary. There we met a very nice family. They often invited us for a meal.
There, for the first time, we felt a bit at home again. In Debrecen, we were advised to go to Nagyvárad, Gross Vardein in German, a city on the Hungarian-Romanian border. There was a relief organization there for people who came from the concentration camps. In Nagyvárad, we spent our best time. We met very kind people there who were employed by this organization and helped us in a wonderful way. We were assigned an apartment there and we got our meals at a club restaurant.
We had everything we could wish for there. A large library, etc. In these areas, there was no sign of the war at all. Everything was available for purchase there. From there, we got the opportunity to travel to Bucharest for 2 weeks, where the Joint and foreign consulates were located. We had a wonderful journey on an express train, which was actually only intended for diplomats and high-ranking officers, across the Carpathians, which we crossed at sunrise. The journey took 24 hours. In Bucharest, we stayed with very kind families. We also met many kind acquaintances there. There we received clothing and money from the Joint. From there, I sent you a letter and a telegram via the Red Cross. Did you receive them? We spent wonderful days in Bucharest. We went to the cinema and the opera. We heard "Das Dreimäderlhaus," my first opera.
Bucharest is a very modern city with skyscrapers, etc.
Only very dirty!! Fortunately, one of the lads with us speaks perfect French, English, and Czech, which is very important down there. In Bucharest, we also experienced Germany's surrender. That was quite a scene there!!
Since we had learned that Theresienstadt was still inhabited and, moreover, some of our lads suspected their relatives were still there, we decided to travel to Theresienstadt as quickly as possible. We therefore left Bucharest and returned to Nagyvárad on May 10th. There we spent another nice week and then departed for Budapest. In Budapest, we stayed for two days. The city is badly destroyed. Especially Ofen. None of the beautiful bridges remain. There is hardly an undamaged house there. The Castle is completely burned out. Only the magnificent Parliament building is still standing. There we saw the American film "Marie Antoinette." It was the most beautiful film I have seen so far. After two days, we traveled on from Budapest to Bratislava. From Bratislava, we went straight on via Brno and Prague to Theresienstadt, where we arrived on June 1st. You can surely imagine what a feeling it was to walk through the familiar streets of Theresienstadt again. Three of our lads found their mothers there. Of the boys with whom I used to share a room in Th., I only met one again. There I also learned from a girl who was with Anita that she is healthy and in Bergen-Belsen. A transport was supposed to go from Theresienstadt to Switzerland at the end

of June. Unfortunately, it was canceled at the last minute. I sent a letter along with Dunan from the Red Cross at that time. Did you receive it?
In Th., I worked for a while in the provisions office.
At the end of July, we, a group of 750 people who want to emigrate, traveled to a UNRRA D.P. Center in Deggendorf, Bavaria, about 170 km from Munich. We are living there in the buildings of a former officers' school.
We young people now also have lessons every afternoon so that we get fundamental knowledge again in the most important subjects like English, mathematics, literature, German, etc. We have, without fault of our own, missed so many important subjects in these three years, so we have a lot to catch up now. In Deggendorf, we also have a great swimming pool. We go swimming every day.
Two weeks ago, my friend and I were in Munich for a week. The city is desolate. Completely destroyed. There, in the Prinzregententheater, we heard a magnificent concert conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. The overture to "Tannhäuser," Smetana's "The Moldau," and Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony were performed. It was one of the most beautiful concerts I have ever heard. From Deggendorf, we will probably soon move to hotels in the area around Garmisch for better accommodation.
At the moment, my friend and I have gone to Unterammergau for three weeks of recovery. Unterammergau is located in the mountains, about twenty kilometers from Garmisch. It is great here. We are staying with a family here. It is a magnificent area. We often go on short bike tours. The area is somewhat reminiscent of Arosa.
On Sept. 15th, I will be thinking of you a lot, dear Mutti. It will have been five years since we last saw each other.
Five long, hard years. But now that I have survived this time, I am glad to have gone through it. Because I tell myself that it was certainly a good lesson for my whole life. And things can never be worse for us than they have been. The main thing is that this peace will finally last and that people can finally find some rest.
I just hope to come back to you very soon and learn something useful. I will try everything to get to you as quickly as possible. But it is very difficult from here.
How are you otherwise? Do you still have the boarding house? By the way, in Theresienstadt I met a Mr. Cohn from Leipzig.
He sends you his best regards. About a week ago, I sent you a telegram via Pilsen. How I would love to be with you already and have a chat, but I firmly believe it won't be much longer.
Have you had mail from Peter and Michael? How are they doing? By the way, I recently found Uncle Richard in a directory of the Jews who are still in Leipzig. He is still living at the old address. How I would love to have news from Anita!
...
Here in Unterammergau we are recovering wonderfully. We do nothing all day but read, sunbathe, cycle, and eat.
By the way, I forgot to write that I bought myself a watch again in Hungary. Do you still have my bicycle - I am interested in everything you are doing and what is going on with you. So please write to me in great detail!! Above all, please try everything to arrange for my entry. I will celebrate my birthday here this year with my friend. It is the first birthday where I am all alone. Last year I was still with Anita in Theresienstadt. But we will definitely celebrate the next one together again. I will end this letter now and firmly hope that it may reach you soon. Also give my warmest regards to all our acquaintances. And now, dear Mutti, in the

hope of a soon reunion, a thousand heartfelt greetings and kisses from your loving Reinhard...

"Dunan from the Red Cross" refers to the delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Paul Dunant, who, on behalf of the Red Cross, had taken over the management of the Theresienstadt camp on May 5, 1945 (cf. ADLER, p. 212).
"Peter and Michael" refers to Peter and Michael Lasch, Reinhard's cousins, sons of Hilde's sister Alice Lasch, born Feldberg, who had emigrated to Chile (see Feldberg family tree, below). "Uncle Richard" means Richard Frank, 1870-1960, a cousin of Hermann Frank and brother of Hedwig Ems.
After the horrors of the concentration camps, Reinhard must have perceived the hardships of his odyssey through Eastern Europe as insignificant and felt his newfound freedom as a great blessing.

In Basel, Reinhard only found his mother's grave. He soon traveled on to England to his uncle Prof. Wilhelm Feldberg. Under his care, he trained as an engineer. Stateless since his deportation to Theresienstadt, he took on British citizenship. He later settled permanently in Cambridge in the US state of Massachusetts. He died in 2010, unmarried and without children. The main part of his fortune, which was considerable due to restitution payments received, he dedicated to the non-profit Reinhard Frank Foundation which he had established in Hamburg.

Graves and Memorial Sites

Hermann Frank was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Leipzig in 1932. His grave is still there today.

Hilde was buried in 1945 in Basel's municipal Wolfgottesacker cemetery. The grave no longer exists. Anita's mortal remains rest in a mass grave in Bergen-Belsen. Reinhard was buried in 2010 in Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, USA, according to Jewish rite. Anita and Reinhard are listed as former prisoners at the Theresienstadt Memorial Book, and Anita is also in the Book of Remembrance at Bergen-Belsen, right next to the famous Anne Frank (to whom there is no known family relationship). The names of Hilde, Anita, and Reinhard have been added to the Feldberg family grave monument in the Jewish cemetery of Hamburg-Ohlsdorf.

Appendix

Short Biographies

Brechbühl, Fritz

As a Basel-Stadt government councilor and police director, Fritz Brechbühl (1897-1963) supported Hilde's efforts in 1941 to obtain entry visas for Anita and Reinhard. He received Hilde personally. After getting the visas, Hilde thanked him in a letter dated November 3, 1941. The Swiss entry permit, however, came too late.

Fritz Brechbühl had been a judge at the civil court, a member of the city parliament, and from 1935 until his death in 1963, he was a member of the Basel government. As head of the police department, he advocated for a pro-Jewish refugee policy and at times disregarded instructions from the federal government in Bern which tried to prevent Jewish immigration from Nazi Germany.

Eber, Lore

See Feldberg, Eleonore

Ems, Hedwig

Hedwig Ems, born Frank (January 10, 1869 - June 5, 1958), was an important reference person in Anita's life. She was the sister of Richard Frank, the co-owner of the "Gebr. Frank" knitting and hosiery factory in Leipzig. She and her husband Otto Ems had two children, Richard and Gerhard Ems. Their son Richard was murdered in the Buchenwald concentration camp shortly before the end of the war.

In 1942, at the age of 73, Hedwig Ems was deported to Theresienstadt. After her liberation at the end of the war, she was taken in by the family of the lawyer Dr. Hans Gumpert in Berlin; she lived there until her death. In 1947, at the request of her niece Charlotte (Lotte) Frank, she wrote down her "Memories of the Nazi Era." Excerpts from this work are reproduced above.

Feldberg, Alexander

Alexander Max Feldberg (1899-1978) was Hilde's cousin. During their youth together in Hamburg, the two maintained family contact. From 1927, they also came into professional contact, as he was the managing director of both the "Grundstücksgesellschaft S. u. D. Feldberg Erben GbR" and the "Gebrüder Feldberg Damenkonfektion" company in Hamburg. After the forced sale of the business assets and the liquidation of the "Gebrüder Feldberg" company, he emigrated in October 1938 with his second wife, Margaretha Feldberg, born Lissner, and their two-year-old son to Montevideo, Uruguay. In 1939, he settled in Buenos Aires. He died there in 1978.

Feldberg, Alice

Alice Lasch, born Feldberg (December 12, 1901-1993), was Hilde's younger sister. In 1924, she married the merchant Herbert Lasch, who had worked at the German-South American Bank in Buenos Aires from 1912 to 1914. In February 1939, the couple emigrated to Chile with their two sons, Peter and Michael.

Feldberg, Carl

Carl Feldberg (August 28, 1893 - May 2, 1936) was Hilde's older brother, a lawyer with a doctorate and for a time managing director of the "Gebrüder Feldberg Damenkonfektion" company in Ham-

burg. He was married to the non-Jewish Dorothea (Thea) Kunow, with whom he had a daughter, Brigitte. From 1933, he prepared the emigration of his and Hilde's families to Palestine. There, he was killed during the Arab Revolt on May 2, 1936. His widow and daughter remained in Palestine, and later in Israel.

Feldberg, Clara

Clara Feldberg, born Löwenstein (September 4, 1870 - October 25, 1941), was the wife of Seelig (Sally) Feldberg, the mother of their three children Carl, Hilde, and Alice, and the grandmother of Anita and Reinhard Frank. She was born in 1870 in Witten on the Ruhr as one of seven children of the merchant and synagogue servant Ascher Löwenstein and his wife Mathilde Löwenstein, born Kohlberg.

Clara and Sally Feldberg lived with their children in Hamburg, from 1896 in the Rotherbaum district, from 1898 in Harvestehude, and from 1910 in the same neighbourhood in their own house at Frauenthal 11. When Sally died in 1920, Clara remained in the house. In 1923, the 19-year-old non-Jewish Erna Juhnke became her domestic employee; she subsequently also became Clara's lady companion. In October 1936, Clara moved into a spacious rented apartment at Rondeel 41 in the Winterhude district. She lived there with Erna Juhnke until her suicide in October 1941.

Feldberg, Eleonore

Eleonore Feldberg (May 4, 1895 - September 27, 1966), later Lore Eber, was a cousin of Hilde. She grew up in Hamburg with her siblings Alexander and Wilhelm Feldberg and became a well-known late-Impressionist painter in Germany.

In 1921, she married the merchant Moritz Eber and from then on called herself Feldberg-Eber. At the end of 1938, the couple emigrated to England. Eleonore Feldberg had to leave her artistic work behind in Germany; some of it was destroyed. In England, her husband was interned for three years. Lore earned a living by giving German language lessons. After the war, she began to paint again, but did not get the recognition in England that she had had in Germany. She died in London in 1966.

Feldberg, Emil Daniel (known as Daniel)

Daniel Feldberg (April 29, 1859 - February 13, 1914) was the younger brother of Seelig (Sally) Feldberg and thus Hilde's uncle. He married Amalie Lazarus, with whom he had three children: Eleonore (Lore), Alexander, and Wilhelm. For the joint business activities of the brothers Daniel and Seelig Feldberg, see Feldberg, Seelig.

Feldberg, Hilde

Hilde Feldberg (October 11, 1894 - August 1, 1945) grew up in Hamburg with her parents Seelig (Sally) and Clara Feldberg. In 1920, she married Hermann Frank from Leipzig and had the children Anita and Reinhard. The family lived in Leipzig, where Hermann was a partner with a half share in the "Gebr. Frank" company. After his death, Hilde moved to Berlin-Dahlem in 1933. There, she and the children lived until around September 1938 in the villa of the Jewish biochemist Prof. Carl Neuberg, with whom Hilde had a love relationship (see Neuberg, Carl).

As a co-heiress to her father's significant estate and the sole heiress of her wealthy husband, Hilde had considerable income from her inherited assets. From 1933, her situation deteriorated due to the anti-Jewish measures of the National Socialist state. When Carl Neuberg sold his villa to non-Jewish buyers and had to vacate the house at the end of September 1938, Hilde moved with Anita and Reinhard into a rented apartment at Auguste-Viktoria-Strasse 33 in Berlin-Grunewald. On July 20, 1939, she married the Swiss citizen Ernst Kindler in order to acquire Swiss citizenship and to be

able to emigrate to Switzerland. She hoped to be able to bring her children to Switzerland later. After the plan to send her children to England failed, she remained in Berlin for another year.

On September 15, 1940, she traveled to her second husband in Switzerland, Ernst Kindler. Initially, the couple lived in poverty, as the transfer of Hilde's German assets was only possible at a slow pace. Hilde obtained an innkeeper's license and, from April 1941, ran a non-alcoholic restaurant in the village of Bettingen near Basel. As the business did not generate a satisfactory profit, she rented rooms in downtown Basel and, from June 1943, ran a boarding house with nine guest rooms. The marriage with Kindler was marked by conflict. In August 1942, Hilde obtained a legal separation, followed by a divorce at the end of 1943.

In addition to marital conflicts, Hilde's life in Basel was burdened by the uncertain fate of her children, who could not join their mother due to Switzerland's rejectionist attitude against Jews and the escalating situation in Germany. From Berlin, the children were deported to Theresienstadt in June 1943 and further deported in September and October 1944. Hilde lost track of the children in September 1944 and died without knowing their whereabouts on August 1, 1945, in Basel's Citizens' Hospital following an operation.

Feldberg, Seelig

Seelig (Sally) Feldberg (April 15, 1857 - February 2, 1920) was Hilde's father and the brother of Daniel Feldberg. He was married to Clara Feldberg, born Löwenstein, with whom he had two other children besides Hilde: Hilde's older brother Carl and her younger sister Alice.

Both brothers, Seelig and Daniel Feldberg, were master tailors. In 1888, they moved from Stettin to Hamburg and founded the women's ready-to-wear clothing business "Feldberg Brothers." Together they acquired real estate in downtown Hamburg, including the property at Mönckebergstrasse 15, 17, 19. Under pressure from National Socialist legislation, the company had to sell its business in 1938 to the "Aryan" firm "Eichmeyer & Co." In the same year, the company was dissolved. The real estate was forcibly sold in 1939 and returned to the family after the war.

Feldberg, Wilhelm

Wilhelm Feldberg (19.11.1900 - 23.10.1993) was Hilde's cousin and the uncle of her children, Reinhard and Anita. During the years 1946-1954 Reinhard attended secondary school and a technical college in England under the care of Wilhelm Feldberg.

Wilhelm Feldberg grew up in Hamburg with his siblings, Eleonore and Alexander. He studied medicine in Heidelberg and Munich and got his doctorate in Berlin. His scientific focus became neurophysiology. Due to his research the theory of the chemical nature of neuronal information transmission via synapses gained general recognition.

In 1925, he married Katherine (Käthe) Scheffler. They had a son and a daughter. From 1927, he worked at the Physiological Institute in Berlin. Dismissed in 1933, he emigrated with his family first to England and then to Australia in 1935. From 1938, he worked again in England as a researcher and, until his retirement in 1965, as a university professor. After the death of his first wife in 1976, he married for a second time in 1977 to Kim O'Rourke, who was a research assistant at the time.

Like Carl Neuberg, Wilhelm Feldberg enjoyed the highest international reputation as a researcher. The final years of his life were overshadowed by allegations that he had conducted cruel animal experiments.

Frank, Alfred

Alfred Frank (29.7.1874 - 12.1.1949) was the brother of Hilde's first husband, Hermann Frank, and thus Anita and Reinhard's uncle. He grew up in Leipzig, became a doctor, and worked in Berlin until 1939. He participated as a volunteer in the Balkan War of 1913 and as an officer in the Imperi-

al German Army in the First World War. In recognition of his military bravery, he was honoured with the Knight's Cross and two Iron Crosses.

He was married twice. In 1906, he married Matilda (Tilly) Hanau from Johannesburg. From this marriage, he had a daughter, Dorothea. Her son, Klaus Berliner, born in 1931, was deported in January 1943 and perished in Auschwitz. Alfred Frank's second wife, whom he married in 1921, was Else Richter. She brought her 20-year-old son, Peter, into the marriage.

Alfred Frank left Germany in 1939 and went to England with his family. From 1940, the family lived in exile in Rio de Janeiro, where he died in 1949.

Excerpts from his unpublished memoirs, written between 1939 and 1945, are reproduced above.

Frank, Anita

Anita Frank (born 9 July 1921 in Leipzig, died in the Belsen-Bergen concentration camp, probably mid-April 1945; legally established date of death: 30 April 1945) was the first child of Hermann Frank and Hilde Frank, born Feldberg. She grew up in Leipzig until spring 1933, when after her father's death, she moved with her mother and brother Reinhard to Prof. Carl Neuberg's villa at Hittorfstrasse 18 in Berlin-Dahlem. Five years later, after the sale of Neuberg's villa, she moved with her mother and brother into a rented apartment at Auguste-Viktoria-Strasse 33 in Berlin-Grunewald in October 1938.

She presumably completed her high school diploma in spring 1940. From May 1940, she made an apprenticeship as a "Jewish nurse" at the Jewish Hospital in Berlin. After receiving her diploma in September 1941, she worked there as a nurse until her deportation. Due to the difficult circumstances for Jews, she lived at various addresses: from May 1940 with foster parents Regina and Fritz Weiss at Zingster Str. 9; during their detention in a deportation assembly point from 14 to 21 November 1941, she was in the Jewish Hospital's nurses' home, then back with her foster parents; from July 1941 to August 1942 in the nurses' home, then again with her foster parents at their new address at Dircksenstrasse 45; and finally, from March 1943, continuously at the hospital.

After her mother Hilde moved to Switzerland, Anita began a lively correspondence with her. Anita's letters to her mother form the core of this book. Anita matured into the role of the mentor for her mother, who was often ill in Switzerland, led a hard life, and had much to endure.

On 15 June 1943, by a Gestapo roundup against the Jewish Hospital, Anita was deported to Theresienstadt along with Reinhard. There, she was assigned to work as a nurse for a year and a half. On 19 October 1944, three weeks after Reinhard, she was deported to Auschwitz and from there on to Bergen-Belsen, where she perished shortly before the end of the war in the typhus epidemic raging there.

She was in a love relationship with Rolf Schulmeister from 1940 (see Schulmeister, Rolf). It lasted until Rolf's deportation in July 1942. Anita remained connected to Rolf in her thoughts for the rest of her life.

Frank, Antonia

Antonia (Toni) Frank (25 May 1877 - 1954) was the sister of Hilde's first husband, Hermann Frank. She married Gustav Plaut, with whom she had two daughters, Liselotte (Lilo) and Ilse (Ille). The family lived in Eschwege, where Anita sometimes visited them during the girls' school holidays. During the period of persecution, Toni Plaut emigrated to Palestine with her husband and daughters.

Frank, Emma

Emma (Emmy) Frank (26 June 1884 - 3 April 1961) (Anita and Reinhard's "Aunt Emmy") was the youngest sister of Hilde's first husband, Hermann Frank. In 1907, she married Ernst Rubensohn.

The marriage remained childless. Emmy and Ernst Rubensohn lived in Kassel until 1938. There, Ernst Rubensohn was the director and co-owner of a jute spinning mill. From the mid-1920s, Emmy Rubensohn-Frank was involved in the city's musical life as a patron of musical events and artists.

After the forced sale of the jute spinning mill, Ernst and Emmy Rubensohn lived in Berlin from 1938 to 1940. On 28 October 1940, they left Berlin for Shanghai, where they arrived in mid-November (cf. MATTHIAS HENKE, Curtain Up! - Emmy Rubensohn, Music Patron from Leipzig, Leipzig 2021, pp. 264-266). In 1949, the Rubensohns moved to New York. Ernst Rubensohn died at the end of May 1951, and Emmy Rubensohn in early March 1961. From 1956, Reinhard Frank established closer contact with Emmy and lived with her for a quarter of a year (cf. HENKE, p. 342).

Frank, Hermann

Hermann Frank (9 August 1875 - 30 September 1932) was Hilde's first husband and the father of Anita and Reinhard Frank. His siblings were Alfred, Toni (Antonia), and Emmy. Together with his cousin Richard Frank, he was the owner of the company "Gebr. Frank" in Leipzig. Both contributed to the company's growth. Its business declined from 1933 onwards.

In 1939, the factory had to be transferred to "Aryan" ownership for a low price.

As a soldier or officer in the Imperial German Army, Hermann Frank participated in the First World War. On 20 February 1919, he became engaged to Hilde and married her on 10 June 1920. He died at the age of 57 from the late effects of a war injury.

In his will, he appointed Hilde as his sole heir, but with the stipulation that three-quarters of the paternal inheritance should go to the children, Anita and Reinhard, if Hilde became engaged a second time.

Frank, Hilde

See Feldberg, Hilde

Frank, Reinhard

Reinhard Frank (born 16 September 1928 in Leipzig, died 12 December 2010 in Cambridge, Massachusetts/USA) was the second child of Hermann Frank and Hilde Frank, born Feldberg. He grew up in Leipzig until the spring of 1933. After his father's death in the autumn of 1932, he moved with his mother and sister Anita into the villa of Prof. Carl Neuberg at Hittorfstrasse 18 in Berlin-Dahlem and, five years later after, the sale of Neuberg's villa, in October 1938 with his mother and sister into a rented apartment at Auguste-Viktoria-Strasse 33 in Berlin-Grunewald. After the plan to send him to England had failed, he lived from October 1939 with foster parents Edith and Max Koppel at Badensche Strasse 6 in Berlin, after they went into hiding from March 1942 with foster parents Edith and Julius Schulmeister, Hohenstaufenstrasse 54, after their deportation in July 1942 then with Anita's former foster parents Regina and Fritz Weiss at Dircksenstrasse 45, and from March 1943 in the Jewish Hospital in Berlin.

With the closure of all Jewish schools in Germany, Reinhard's schooling ended prematurely in June 1942. Reinhard began an apprenticeship as a locksmith at the Jewish Hospital. Anita, who lived in the same place, looked after him like a mother.

On 15 June 1943, following a mass arrest of hospital staff, Reinhard was deported to Theresienstadt together with Anita. He later provided no details about his time in Theresienstadt. On 28 September 1944, he was deported to Auschwitz and from there on to the Gleiwitz III subcamp as a forced laborer.

As the Russian army approached, the prisoners of Gleiwitz III were forced on a death march to the west.

On 25 January 1945, Reinhard was able to escape the control of the guards. He made his way with many detours to Basel, arriving on 25 March 1946, seven months after his mother's death, where he took up his mother's inheritance.

Under the care of Wilhelm Feldberg, a cousin of his mother (see Feldberg, Wilhelm), Reinhard attended secondary school (Leys School, Cambridge) and a technical college (Loughborough College of Technology in Leicestershire) in England from 1946 to 1954. From 1954 to 1958, he worked as a development and project engineer in the X-Ray Division of Mullard Radio Valve Co. Ltd., a subsidiary of Philips. In 1959, he emigrated to the USA, where he worked as an engineer in Palo Alto, California. In 1961, he relocated to Cambridge, Massachusetts/USA. In 1962, he completed a program for management development at Harvard University. Subsequently, until his death, he was active as an administrator of his assets and in philanthropy. Based on a part-time study program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), he got the title of Master of Science (SM) in 1974.

In 2001, he founded the Reinhard Frank Foundation, Hamburg, to which he bequeathed the main part of his fortune. In 2009, the Technion University in Haifa, Israel, awarded him an honorary doctorate.

He died on 10 December 2010 in Cambridge, Mass.

Grünbaum, Emma

Emma (Emmy) Grünbaum (1898-1943) altered clothes for Anita.

Since the introduction of clothes rationing in October 1939, and even more so from 6 February 1940, when Jews were legally excluded from receiving the "Reich clothing card", sewing and altering clothes was a recurring theme in Anita's letters. - In her 1943 letters, Anita reported several times on Emmy Grünbaum's deportation to "Poland", most recently on 5 March.

In the German Federal Archives' Memorial Book, Emmy Grünbaum is recorded as follows: "Grünbaum, Emma, born on 2 December 1898 in Berlin/City of Berlin, resident in Berlin, deportation from Berlin 4 March 1943, Auschwitz, concentration and extermination camp".

Gumpert, Hans

The Berlin lawyer Dr. Hans Gumpert (10 July 1890 - 2 July 1962) was one of Hilde's German persons of trust in business matters, along with Max Sünder in Berlin and the lawyer Dr. Walter Rudolphi in Hamburg. In May 1940, Hilde commissioned Gumpert to legally represent her in the inheritance matter against the Nazi trustee Zimmermann in Leipzig and Anita's guardian Heucke in Stettin. As a Jew, Gumpert was not allowed to work as a lawyer since September 1938; he was only permitted to use the title "Konsulent" (consultant) and exclusively represent Jewish clients. Gumpert remained Hilde's German lawyer even after her move to Switzerland. He and his wife lovingly cared for Anita and Reinhard in Berlin as long as the siblings were still at liberty. After the war, Hans and Kitty Gumpert took Hedwig Ems into their family, after she had returned from Theresienstadt.

Hans Gumpert, who was married to the non-Jew Kitty Gumpert, was not deported. One of his two sons emigrated to Uruguay. The other was killed on a death march from the Buchenwald concentration camp.

The fact that Hans Gumpert, being a "full Jew", was not deported, while one of his "alf-Jewish" sons was, shows how arbitrarily the Nuremberg Laws were applied.

Kindler, Ernst

Ernst Kindler (16 September 1877 - 29 August 1945) was Hilde's second husband. The marriage took place on 20 July 1939 in Berlin-Schmargendorf and was divorced in Basel at the end of 1943 at Hilde's request. Before Hilde, Ernst Kindler had already had three other wives:

On 4 March 1902, he married Ida Gammeter, born on 21 April 1871.

The marriage was divorced after nine months on 20 December 1902.

From 9 April 1904, he was married for a second time to Emilie Bertha von Arx, who was twelve years his senior. She died on 24 October 1904, just six months after the wedding. According to his family certificate, Kindler had two legitimized children from this marriage, meaning his wife had brought them into the marriage.

On 31 January 1905, Kindler married Maria Adelheid Diez, a German national, born on 24 April 1866. He remained with her for 26 years, until her death on 26 February 1931. With Maria Adelheid, Ernst Kindler had a child of his own, Hedwig Klara, born on 11 February 1906.

She was the child who, in 1941, under the Swiss adoption law of the time (Art. 264 of the Swiss Civil Code in the version in force until 1966), prevented him from adopting Hilde's children, Anita and Reinhard, and thereby obtaining Swiss citizenship for them and enabling their immigration to Switzerland. After Maria Adelheid's death, Kindler, together with Frieda Jehle-von Au, to whom he was not married, ran a small hotel in Ticino, which went bankrupt after eight years. He then moved to Basel, where he continued to live with Frieda Jehle-von Au.

On 20 July 1939, he entered into his fourth marriage with Hilde Frank.

The marriage was not entered into for romantic reasons; rather, interests were at play on both sides. Through it, Hilde acquired Swiss citizenship, which enabled her to immigrate to Switzerland. As a Swiss citizen in Switzerland she hoped to be able to bring also her children to Switzerland. - Kindler's interests were different. He wanted to secure a comfortable retirement by marrying a wealthy Jewish woman. The marriage was a disappointment for both parties. Hilde had to accept that, at Kindler's request, Frieda Jehle-von Au remained in the marital home as a housekeeper. Kindler also proved to be short-tempered and prone to violence. The documents do, however, suggest that he advocated for Hilde's children to join her in Switzerland and would have been prepared to adopt them for this purpose, had the law permitted it. Hilde had him removed from the marital home by a court order in August 1942 and divorced him by a decree dated 31 December 1943. The decree became final on 25 May 1944.

Kindler, Hilde

See Feldberg, Hilde

Klein, Sabine

Sabine (Bine) Klein (1921-2014, "Bine") had been Anita's closest friend since 1933 and was her classmate from 1933 to 1935.

The friendship also endured when Anita had to switch to a Jewish school in 1935.

Sabine Klein had a Jewish father and a Christian mother. In order to save his assets, her father transferred them to her mother, then divorced her and emigrated to the USA in 1939. Her mother died the same year in Germany. Sabine remained in Germany throughout the war. She maintained contact with Anita until Anita's deportation to Theresienstadt. After Anita's deportation, Sabine Klein collected the personal belongings left behind by Anita and Reinhard in the Jewish Hospital and sent them to Hilde in Basel.

In 1947, Sabine Klein moved to the USA to join her father. She became an American citizen. In 1955, the two returned to Germany. After turning to Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy in the USA, Sabine completed training in anthroposophical education in Germany and subsequently taught handicrafts at a Waldorf school.

In her old age, she took up residence in the southern French village of St. André-Sorède. After Reinhard Frank's death, the editor sent her copies of all the letters she had written to Hilde in the years 1940-1943. He visited her in southern France on July 25, 2011, and interviewed her about her memories of Anita and Reinhard Frank. She died in 2014.

Koppel, Edith and Max

The married couple Edith (1900-1943) and Max Koppel (dates of life unknown) were Reinhard's foster parents in Berlin-Schöneberg from October 1939 to March 1942. Reinhard's stay with the Koppel family ended when his foster parents were temporarily arrested in 1942 and went into hiding in various places after their release. Max Koppel is not mentioned again in later letters. Anita, however, had contact with Edith Koppel at arranged meeting points until 1943, even after she went into hiding, though probably without knowing her whereabouts. The last mention of Edith Koppel is in Anita's coded letter to Hilde of May 21, 1943: "Max lives elsewhere. Mrs. Kop. does not exist, I don't know her."

According to a communication from Edith Koppel's daughter-in-law, Rita Unger, to the editor on July 14, 2011, Max Koppel survived the period of persecution, while Edith was deported and perished. The entry in the German Federal Archives' Memorial Book reads: "Koppel, Edith - born Böhm div. Unger, born on December 15, 1900 in Berlin/City of Berlin, resident in Berlin (Schöneberg), deportation from Berlin August 4, 1943, Auschwitz, concentration and extermination camp".

Lasch, Alice

See Feldberg, Alice

Lasch, Herbert

See Feldberg, Alice

Levy, Berthold

Berthold Levy (1899-1939) was Hilde's business partner and co-owner of the company "Gebr. Frank" in Leipzig from 1932 until the forced sale of the company in 1939.

He was the husband of Charlotte (Lotte) Frank.

The circumstances of his death were described as follows during a "Stolperstein" tour in Leipzig on June 9, 2011: "During the November pogroms of 1938, Berthold Levy was arrested in front of the gate of the knitwear and hosiery factory at Berliner Strasse 65 in Leipzig and locked up in a Leipzig police prison. On April 23, 1939, Berthold Levy died from his illness and the effects of the abuse he suffered while in prison. He was buried in the family grave at the Old Jewish Cemetery between Berliner Strasse and Theresienstrasse in Leipzig."

Lewy, Leo

Leo Lewy (1.8.1882-15.5.1944), a resident of Berlin-Schöneberg, was a composer, pianist, and music writer who, according to *akg-images.com* (visited on 16.2.2022), was active in the Jewish Cultural Association and organized private chamber music concerts at which he also played his own compositions. Anita and Reinhard attended many of his house concerts. Lewy also set poems by Rolf Schulmeister to music and performed them. In Anita's letters, he appears as "L.L.".

Leo Lewy was repeatedly ordered to report for deportation but was initially spared. Thus, in March 1943, Anita mistakenly believed he had been deported to the East, writing on March 18, 1943: "L.L. is also with Rolf." Leo Lewy later reappears in the letters. Anita last mentions him on April 7, 1943, before she herself was deported to Theresienstadt on June 16, 1943. The passage reads: "L.L. also sends his regards; he is crying for Thomas." This corresponds with Thomas Lewy's date of death in the Federal Archives' Memorial Book. The son, born in 1923, was deported to Auschwitz on March 3, 1943; the father, Leo Lewy, was not deported to Theresienstadt until November 1943.

The entries for father and son Lewy in the Federal Archives' Memorial Book read: "Lewy, Leo, born on August 1, 1882 in Berlin/City of Berlin, resident of Berlin (Schöneberg), deportation from Berlin November 15, 1943, Theresienstadt, ghetto, May 15, 1944, Auschwitz, concentration and extermination camp"; "Lewy, Thomas, born on December 9, 1923 in Berlin/City of Berlin, resident of Berlin (Schöneberg), deportation from Berlin 03.03.1943, Auschwitz, concentration and extermination camp".

Marcuse, Berthold and Regina

Berthold Marcuse (1890-1943) and his wife Regina (1892-1943) were Berlin Jews. After Hilde's emigration to Switzerland, they corresponded with her because Hilde secured the contact between the Marcuse parents and their son Peter Marcuse in France. From around 1939, Peter was housed in a French camp for Jewish refugee children and was largely safe there. In return for Hilde's services as an intermediary, Berthold and Regina Marcuse looked after Hilde's children, Anita and Reinhard, in Berlin, while Hilde was living in exile in Switzerland.

The entries in the Federal Archives' Memorial Book read: "Marcuse, Berthold, born on May 24, 1890, in Schönfliess Nm., Bad/Königsberg Nm./Brandenburg, resident of Berlin (Steglitz), deportation, from Berlin, January 12, 1943, Auschwitz, concentration and extermination camp, place of death, Auschwitz, extermination camp"; "Regina Marcuse born Rothgiesser, born on December 8, 1892 in Berlin, resident of Berlin; destination of deportation: from Berlin, January 12, 1943, Auschwitz, concentration and extermination camp, place of death, Auschwitz, extermination camp".

Marcuse, Peter

Peter Marcuse (b. ca. 1928) was the son of Berthold and Regina Marcuse. During his stay in a French home for Jewish refugee children, Hilde, from Switzerland, secured the exchange of messages between him and his parents.

Neuberg, Carl

Carl Neuberg (July 29, 1877 - May 30, 1956) was the landlord of Hilde's family in Berlin-Dahlem from the spring of 1933 until September 1938. His life and work have been researched and presented 2006 in the book of CONRADS/LOHFF. The following biographical information is based on this book.

Neuberg was born near Hanover to Jewish parents. He studied chemistry and then spent ten years researching and teaching at the Pathological Institute of the Charité in Berlin. He then took over as head of the Chemical Department at the Institute of Animal Physiology of the Royal Agricultural College in Berlin. His scientific focus was biochemistry. In 1906, he founded the "Biochemische Zeitschrift" (Biochemical Journal), published by Julius Springer, which he considered his essential life's work.

From 1907 to 1929, he was married to Helene Lewinski; she died in 1929, at only 45 years of age. The marriage produced two daughters. In 1913, Neuberg became head of the Chemical Department of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute (KWI) for Experimental Therapy.

The Agricultural University of Berlin promoted him to full professor in 1919; at the University of Berlin, he received an unpaid honorary professorship, both in addition to his work at the KWI. In 1925, his department at the KWI became an independent institute and was renamed the "KWI for Biochemistry." Neuberg became its director.

Due to National Socialist legislation, he lost his professorships at the two state universities in March 1934, and then his directorship at the KWI in September of the same year. Since the KWI was supported by a private association, Neuberg was allowed to continue his work there as acting director of the institute until a successor was found on September 30, 1936. Afterward, he dedicated himself to private laboratory research together with the non-Jewish pharmacologist Theodor Saba-

litschka. The location of the laboratory is unkonwn, equally what researched there was performed. Around August 1935, the publisher Springer terminated Neuberg's editorship of the "Biochemische Zeitschrift" and thereby deprived him of his life's work he had built over three decades.

Despite the loss of his academic positions, Neuberg remained in Berlin for almost three more years. The reasons likely lay in Neuberg's private circumstances. As a single widower, in the spring of 1933 he took in the widow Hilde Frank and her children at his villa at Hittorfstrasse 18, which he had built for himself and his family in 1915.

To this end, he had the ground and upper floors of the stately two-story residence converted into two fully furnished apartments. Carl and Hilde began a love relationship, which was not disclosed to Hilde's children.

Neuberg presumably hoped that through high-level protection and by virtue of his outstanding scientific abilities and their importance to the German war economy, he could come to an arrangement with the regime and remain professionally active in Germany. By the end of 1936 at the latest, however, these hopes must have been dashed. At that point, he could still have found a position abroad and emigrated. But to take Hilde and her children with him, the two would have had to be married.

Neuberg's letters indicate that marriage had been discussed as early as 1933, but Hilde had refused. One of her motives may have been Hermann Frank's testamentary provision that upon a new engagement, Hilde would have had to hand over three-quarters of her Leipzig inheritance to the children. In the event of a marriage to Neuberg, the foreseeable consequence would have been that party-loyal functionaries would have been appointed as legal guardians for the children, who would sooner or later have interfered in the business of the "Gebr. Frank" company in Leipzig. Hilde may have been skeptical about a joint escape with Neuberg after the November pogroms, as it would have meant the loss of her entire German fortune. From the perspective at the time, she could hope to save the family's life and her fortune by acquiring Swiss citizenship. A diary entry by her brother-in-law Alfred Frank from September 15, 1945, contains the suggestion that Hilde had made fatal mistakes for financial reasons.

As a result of the sale of the city villa, which Neuberg had arranged under the pressure of circumstances, he and Hilde had to vacate the premises at the end of September 1938, at which point their paths separated.

Neuberg left Germany in August 1939 and reached the USA via Holland and Palestine. From March to September 1940, he stayed in Jerusalem, where he worked at the Hebrew University and lived with Liselotte Katz, born Plaut, a niece of Hermann Frank. From March 1941, he lived and worked in New York.

There, he resumed his correspondence with Hilde. He addressed everyday letters, in which he told her about his affairs and inquired about her family, to Ernst and Hilde Kindler in Bettingen, and love letters to Hilde's post office box in Basel. The correspondence continued until the end of 1942. From 1943, Neuberg no longer answered Hilde's letters. As early as 1940, he had met another woman in Palestine, Hilde Unger. After his departure from Palestine, he had appointed her as his representative in Palestine to forward his mail, and later had her join him in the USA. There, she temporarily ran his household. In 1950, the two married. In 1953, Neuberg separated from her again, but did not divorce her.

The city of Hanover honored Neuberg posthumously by renaming the street where the Hanover Medical School is located to Carl-Neuberg-Strasse.

Prochownik, Gertrud

Gertrud Prochownik (1884-1982) (usually referred to as "Mrs. Pro" by Hilde and Anita, and coded as "Trudel" by Carl Neuberg) appears in the papers left by Hilde for the first time on October 9, 1939, and for the last time on January 20, 1943.

Her letters express a strong personality, clear thinking, empathy, and helpfulness. After Hilde's move to Switzerland, she was a source of emotional support for Anita in Berlin.

The following biography can be reconstructed from various internet sources: Gertrud Borgzinner was born in 1884. In 1909, she married the painter and illustrator Leo Prochownik (1875-1936). Since her husband earned little money from his artistic activities, Gertrud became the family's breadwinner. From 1917, she worked at the Association of Jewish Employment Agencies in Berlin. In 1919, her daughter Marianne was born. In 1920, Gertrud Prochownik moved to a state employment office. In 1925, she took over the management of the Jewish Employment Agency.

Her husband, Leo Prochownik, died in 1936 after a long illness. His works were found after the war in the cellar of the Jewish Hospital.

In 1939, the now 55-year-old Gertrud Prochownik worked first as a social worker, then as a secretary for the Jewish Community in Berlin. After the pogroms of November 9/10, 1938, she sent her daughter Marianne to England. In 1942, her sister and brother-in-law were deported to Auschwitz. In April 1943, she also received a deportation order. Thanks to her professional activities, she had an extensive network of contacts, which allowed her to go into hiding quickly. She contacted Lothar Kreyssig, a member of the "Bekennende Kirche" (Confessing Church) who had connections to opponents of the regime. He sent her to a farm where she did agricultural work under a false name, but she continued to feel endangered and always carried a cyanide capsule with her. Once again, she asked Kreyssig for help. At the end of 1944, he brought her to his own estate near Hohenferchesar, where she remained hidden until the end of the war. Lothar and Johanna Kreyssig took her into their family, shared their food rations with her, and treated her with warmth and kindness.

After the war, she first lived in Australia, then in England with her daughter Marianne's family. She died in 1982 at the age of 97.

The Christian couple, the Kreyssigs, with whom she had found refuge from the Gestapo in the final months of the war, were posthumously honored by Yad Vashem in 2018 as "Righteous Among the Nations."

Schulmeister, Edith and Julius

Edith Schulmeister (1890-1942) and Julius Schulmeister (1882-1942) were Reinhard's foster parents from March 15 to August 10, 1942, and the parents of Rolf Schulmeister, Anita's beloved. The parents and son were deported at the end of August 1942.

The entries in the Federal Archives' Memorial Book read: "Schulmeister, Edith, born Rosenau, born on December 8, 1890, in Berlin/City of Berlin, resident in Berlin (Schöneberg), Deportation, from Berlin, September 5, 1942, Riga, Date of death, September 8, 1942, Place of death, Riga"; "Schulmeister, Julius, born on June 20, 1882, in Berlin/City of Berlin, resident in Berlin (Schöneberg), Deportation, from Berlin, September 5, 1942, Riga, Date of death, September 8, 1942, Place of death, Riga".

From Riga, the young and able-bodied Rolf Schulmeister was transported on to the Stutthof concentration camp near Danzig, while his parents were murdered in Riga.

Schulmeister, Rolf

Rolf Schulmeister (1919-1945) was the son of the couple Edith and Julius Schulmeister and, from 1940, Anita's beloved.

The available documents provide no information about his education. He wrote poems, which were set to music by Leo Lewy and performed at private song recitals.

From November 16, 1940, Rolf performed forced labor in Berlin.

Apparently, his superiors were satisfied with his work, because on August 18, 1941, Anita reports that Rolf had received a supervisory position there and was now earning "almost double." At the end of October 1941, Rolf turned to another woman, a nurse named Gabriele, who had been or later became one of Anita's superiors at the Jewish Hospital. Rolf wanted to get engaged to her in

the spring of 1942 but was arrested shortly beforehand, in March 1942. He was held in Spandau prison for four months before being transferred to Tegel prison and deported to the East in July 1942. The entry in the Federal Archives' Memorial Book reads: "Schulmeister, Rolf - born on September 2, 1919, in Berlin/City of Berlin, resident in Berlin (Schöneberg). Deportation from Berlin September 5, 1942, Riga; October 1, 1944, Stutthof, concentration camp. Date of death January 5, 1945, Place of death Stutthof, concentration camp."

In 1942, Stutthof was not yet an extermination camp but a labor camp for the German war economy. It was eqipped with extermination facilities in July 1944. The evacuation of the camp began in January 1945 in view of the approaching Russian Army. About 11,600 prisoners were then driven west on death marches. 34,000 prisoners remained behind. The camp was liberated on May 9, 1945, one day after Germany's unconditional surrender. Whether Rolf Schulmeister, whose date of death is listed in the Federal Archives as January 5, 1945, perished on a death march or in some other way is not apparent from the available sources.

Sünder, Max

Max Sünder (dates of life unknown) was Hilde's non-Jewish banker and asset manager and one of Hilde's three business confidants in Germany; the other two were the Jewish lawyers Dr. Hans Gumpert in Berlin and Dr. Walter Rudolphi in Hamburg. Sünder held a high position at the bank "Merck, Finck & Co." in Berlin, which was known to be Nazi-friendly. He also advised Hilde during her time in Basel and supported her and Anita in Berlin as best he could. His high position in a "Nazi bank" made it easier for him to secretly help Jews - not just Hilde - without arousing suspicion.

Reinhard recalled having initially considered Max Sünder a Gestapo informant and distrusted him. Only in hindsight did he realize that Sünder was completely trustworthy and could probably have been counted among the "Righteous Among the Nations," had the full extent of his doings in favor of persecuted Jews become known.

Weiss, Regine and Fritz

Regine and Fritz Weiss (dates of life unknown) were Anita's foster parents from October 1940 to February 1943. Reinhard also lived with the Weiss family from August 21, 1942, to February 1943.

In November 1941, Regine and Fritz Weiss spent a week, presumably at a deportation assembly point, before being sent back. During the foster parents' absence, Anita lived in the Nurses' Home of the Jewish Hospital; during this time, the Weiss family's apartment was robbed.

Fritz Weiss probably went into hiding at the end of 1942.

The documents last mention "the Weisses" in the plural in October 1942. Fritz Weiss may have felt particularly endangered after his brother was murdered in Spandau prison (see Anita's coded message of November 24, 1942). Regine Weiss went into hiding with her young daughter Ellen in February 1943.

The Weiss parents and daughter presumably survived the war. They are not mentioned in the Federal Archives' Memorial Book of the Victims of the Holocaust.

Wieser, Gottlob

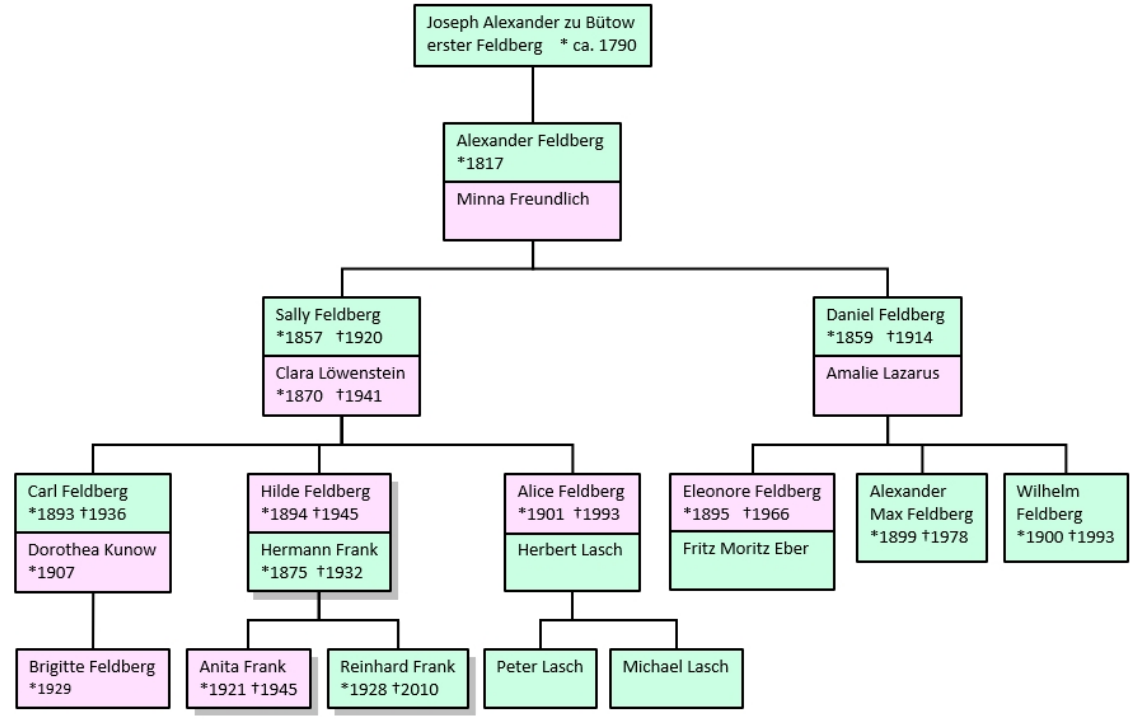
Gottlob Wieser (1888-1973) was one of two parish pastors for the Protestant-Reformed parish of Riehen-Bettingen near Basel from 1937 to 1954. He provided pastoral care to Hilde and actively supported her in administrative matters.

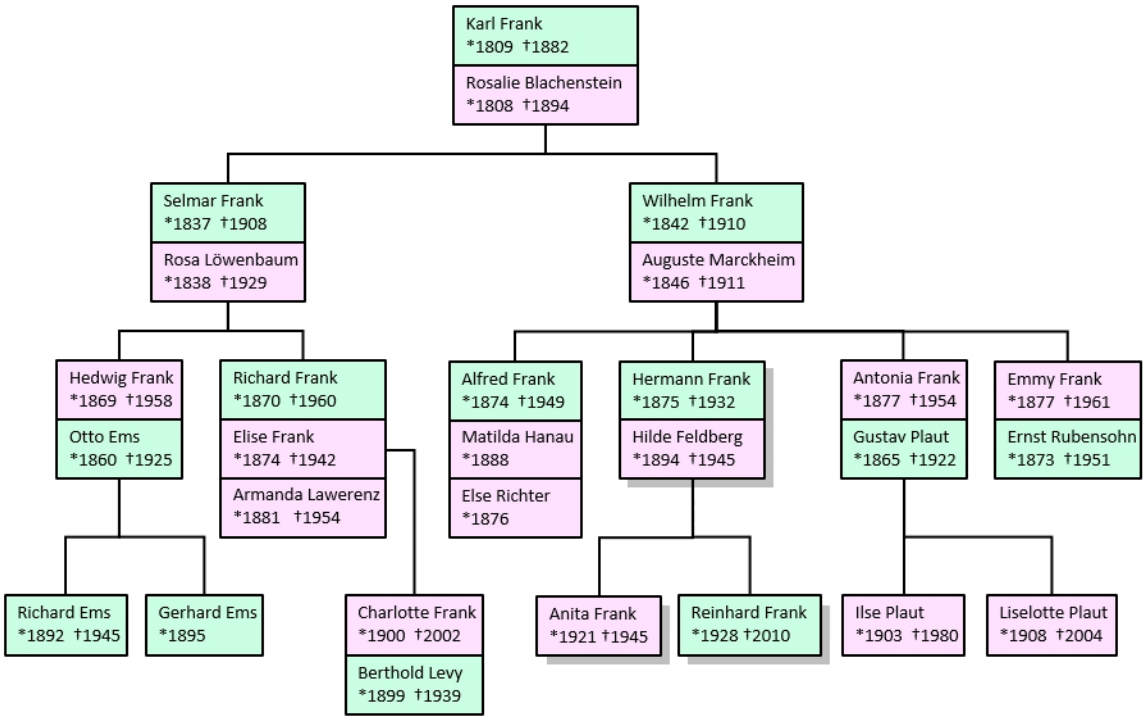
He was reportedly an intellectually vibrant man and a prominent figure in the Swiss clergy, far beyond his own parish. From 1936 to 1970, he was editor-in-chief of the "Kirchenblatt für die reformierte Schweiz" (Church Journal for Reformed Switzerland). In the paper, he also took a stand in 1942 against Switzerland's restrictive refugee policy and reported extensively on the persecution

and deportation of Jews in Germany. It is possible that Hilde's fate, in which he took a personal interest, particularly spurred him to write these articles.

In recognition of his achievements, the Theological Faculty of the University of Basel awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1958 on his 70th birthday.

Family Trees of the Feldberg and Frank Families





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