INVENTORY OF LETTERS/DOCUMENTS IN THE HOERLIN COLLECTION

As compiled by Bettina Hoerlin, PhD, March 2013

I. LETTERS WRITTEN IN GERMANY

A. Booklet: Kate Tietz Schmid personal letters to Hermann Hoerlin July 1934- June 1938 (#1 - # 375)
   Excerpts of letters translated by Bettina Hoerlin and collated on January 7, 2008. The booklet was sent to family members only. Letters in excerpt are numbered 1-375; note that among letters there are several sub-numberings (i.e. #62a, 62b, 62c, 62d, 62e) due to complexities of original research. Please note glossary of Dramatis Personae (pgs. 3 to 5) for identification of major persons referred to in this inventory. Also note Kate Tietz Schmid (and as of July 1938, Hoerlin) is referred to as Kate and Hermann Hoerlin as either HH or Hoerlin.

   These translations were later revisited when they became part of the Bettina Hoerlin’s book, Steps of Courage: My Parents’ Journey from Nazi Germany to America. In doing so, I (Bettina) found several mistakes. Between the time of Booklet/Excerpts (completed in 2008) and the time I wrote my book (completed in 2011), my German had improved as well as my ability to decipher Sueterlin Deutsch schrift. The translations in my book are the more exact and reliable ones.

B. Originals of additional personal letters from Kate Tietz Schmid to Herman Hoerlin July 1934- June 1938 (#1-#375). These include additional letters/documents that surfaced after I had compiled the Booklet. They were not part of the booklet translations, but now have been integrated into the original letters collection and given numbers appropriate to timeframe.

   # 1a. August 1, 1934. Letter from Kate to Hoerlin.
   Rudolf Hess has come to her house to officially apologize for the “accidental death” of Willi Schmid. “Er beugte sich sehr lang und tief über meine Hand” Hess was accompanied by his Adjutant of the time, Fritz Wiedemann. Kate continues to do work associated with aftermath of the Nanga disaster. Reworks Bechtold piece and has his diaries. Is off to Aarau.

   #1b. August 6, 1934. Hedi asks where Uncle Hoerlin is... Kate has sent various Nanga photos/articles to newspapers, including to Paris. Kate invites Hoerlin to Aarau.
- #62f. Dec 14, 1934. Letter to Kate from Schulte Strathaus, der Stellvertreter des Fuehrers, giving permission to publish posthumously a collection of essays by her husband, Willi Schmid with a forward by Peter Doerfler. When this collection, "Unvollendete Symphonie," was published (1935), it was removed from bookstores etc by Gestapo, most likely because of introductory essay by Oswald Spengler, whose writings were banned by Nazis at that time.

C. Additional original letters (not in the booklet) given to me by my sister (Duscha Weisskopf) after my book, Steps of Courage, was published
- Kate (still in Austria) to Hoerlin (in Binghamton, NY) May 28, 1938 - talks of his getting house for them in Binghamton. Kate making reservation on either the Columbus on Aug 27 or Bremen on Sept 2: everything is sold out. Goes to Munich with the kids on June 3, will visit his mother in Stuttgart then and in mid-month go to Berlin "und den dingen dort gruendlich nachgehen. Noch ist kein Bescheid da."
- Kate (still in Austria) to Hoerlin (in Binghamton) June 10, 1938 - has read his letter about the the 'neugeschute, wunderschoene Land...Ich habe nach Berlin geschrieben und warte nun auf Bescheid, ob ich am 17 oder 20 June dorthin fahren soll - diesmal bleibe ich solange, bis die Dinge - so oder so - zu einem Ende, d.h. zu einer Entscheidung gefuehrt sind." Talks of various moving preparations.
- Kate (Austria) to Hoerlin (Binghamton) June 16, 1938 - Wiedemann hat mich gebeten am Montag, den 20. Juni vorn, bei ihm zu sein, dannach waerde ich dann all weitere Schritte tun, es ist ja um keine Zeit mehr zu verlieren... Vielle. treffe ich Rausch, der geschaeftlich im Ausland ist, am 29. in Nuernberg. Im Juli...von Feldburg wuerde ich nach Berlin fahren und dich dort erwarten. Wie wird es in Berlin gehen?

D. Originals of Hermann Hoerlin personal letters to Kate 1934-1938. Since these were not translated into a booklet, I have made notations. The letters are numbered #1-97
1. Sept 34; Uli Wieland ".. der liebste Freund" - compares to Erwin Schneider
2. Fall 34: "Ich will nicht auf Expedition gehen .."(another expedition to Nanga Parbat - Schneider wants him to come)
3. Late Sept 34; reference to Kate's upcoming meeting at Braunes Haus
4. Fragment - 1934 - he's coming to see Kate in Aarau
5. Fall 1934 -- Erwin's Vortrag war gut, sehr gut " comments on excellent photos -- afterwards goes with group (including Erwin) to Akademischer SkiKlub
7. Before Sept 12, 1934: was in Aarau with her and children for 2 hours- will return for longer -- relates to Kate's grief
7a. Fall 1934
9. Missing
10. Fall 1934: happy day with kids and Kate
11. Fall 34/Sept 24?: Kate going to Ulm -- he thinks of her in Englische Garten when they rode bikes together
12. undated: works with Borchers again -- Kinzl coming from Heidelberg (Kinzl was geologist on Andes expedition) to work on Peru map
13. after Ulm/undated -- saw Kate briefly in Ulm
14. Sept 24/25 Hoerlin from Schwäbisch Hall - walked to Comburg. Kate working with Fritz Bechtold -- HH knows it will not be easy
15. Missing
16. no page 1. Sept/Oct 34: talks about differences in Kate's and his worlds- they disappear by being outdoors together -- like at Chiemsee
17. early Oct: was at VA for 3 and ½ hours
18. Sept '34: written from Schwäbisch Hall -- thinking about going on an expedition next year to measure monsoons on Himalayas. Shows photos of Kate/the children to his sister. Begins preparation for selling house and business. Will send back to Kate letters of Willi Schmid's he has read
19. Sept '34
20. Sept 22?: Erwin did good job of presentation in Munich -- will do same in Dusseldorf. Erwin called 'a Communist' by Fritz Bechtold. Refers to legal difficulties of his/Kate's relationship (i.e. her Jewish background): "...ich weiss es, dass wir sehr kämpfen mussenn, gegen einen sehr maechtigen Feind..."
21. Oct '34: feels like he has to spend too much time with AV on small things. Is unhappy with what Bauer has surfaced - doesn't understand Bechtold, who is too much of a party follower (PG/ Partei Genossen) and holds Bauer too much in esteem because of his party connection.
22. Oct 10, '34
23. Oct or beginning Nov '34: Talks about Kate's many friends
   "Ich habe einen junge und tiefe Liebe zu Dir, voll Verlangen u
   Sehnsucht, ... es gibt kaum noch etwas anders auf der Welt fuer
   mich, als Dich." People in that sense take her away from him.
   Talks about his feelings of jealousy. Kate very much in Pitsch's
   (Willi Schmid's) world - don't want to pull her away. Wants to
   go with Kate - create their own path.
24. Nov '34: Ski Club meeting - one faction in SA uniforms -
   others in black uniforms. He wonders what he's doing there -
   they know his position. Talks about political turmoil at
   University. Social gathering of AV
25. Nov 5?: hatred of Political Police (Gestapo) and Hitler
26. Nov 3
27. Nov '34: HH burns for Kate. Responds positively to Kate's
   suggestion to go to Inntal with 2 children over Christmas.
28. Nov /34 - HH must work hard - for the sake of him and
   Kate but also help other people because things will be difficult for
   them.
29. Was with Kate, the children in Munich for 2 days
30. Talks again about working hard
31. Dec '34 - looks forward to Christmas with Kate
32. "ist's Traum oder Wirklichkeit?"... full of love for her.
33. Erwin visiting - takes a lot of time... various festivities. Talk
   with Regener (with Erwin) about the Nanga expedition - need for
   radio contact/meteorologist for such an expedition. HH spoke
   with Erwin a long time - neither Hieronymus nor Baumeister are
   the right people (my note: not clear for what) Tschammer is
   cowardly and too influenced by Bauer. Erwin tells disgusting
   story about Finsterwalder - refuses beer with von Ficker, who is
   not in good graces politically. Von Ficker has helped
   Finsterwalder a lot in past. Clear in this letter that Erwin does not
   know about Kate and HH romance
34. Before Christmas 1934: "Rassenfrage" .... Dass Du so
   ganz anders bist als fast alle Frauen, die mir bisher begegnet sind.
   .... Entweder gibt es tausende von Rassen oder gar keine jetzt bei
   uns."
35. Dec 2?
36. Before Christmas - New Year's plans/problems
37. December: HH quotes Kate's letter: "Es kann nichts
   wichtiger sein fuer mich als Dir alles zu bringen, was mein ist."
   He asks, "...was brauchen wir dann fuerchten? Du begleitet
   mich auf Schritt u Tritt." Erwin knows about Kate now. Regener
   gives HH a compliment.
38. Undated. "Ich nehme unsere Liebe als ein rechtes, guetiges
Geschenk des Himmels, fast unfassbar ist mir, wie grenzenlose sie zu sein."

39. Dec 24, 1934: passionate love letter. HH gives Kate vicuna he bought in Peru 2 years ago

40. Jan or Feb '35: HH echoes Kate’s question if it (i.e. the relationship) is good for him – he says he has no choice. Talks about wanted to leave a conventional, burgerliches (bourgeoise) life—turned to extreme mountaineering, expeditions, avoidance of “the feminine”. Tells how Kate has changed him in last 6 months.

41. March 1935? Erwin sent HH a copy of his letter to Tschemmer – written well. Erwin tells Tschemmer why he rejects Bauer’s view – recommends 2 Alpenvereins people (note: this must be to the proceedings that accused Schneider of poor judgement re sherpas on Nanga)

42. Jan 1935?

43. Feb 1, 1935?

44. March 35; HH having difficulties at home in Schwaebsch Hall – his sister not well, etc. Will tell Erwin that it is only because of Erwin’s expedition that HH is still in Alpenverein (AV) - that the AV (meetings and various business) demands at least 50 days/yr. – HH says he would rather spend that time in mountains than at a conference table.

45. March 35 – upset by what Kate told him (note: it must be about way she’s being treated regarding the reparations) – horrible bureaucracy – uncourageous men – he would not have the patience that Kate does. A year ago HH didn’t know he could despise people (note: current regime) as much as he does now.

46. March 30, 1935: apologizes for hasty and poor letters over last weeks – thanks her for visiting on March 26 – Erwin brought her to Stuttgart. Incomplete....

47. April 24, 1935 – was with Kate for 3 days at Meersburg – like a dream.

48. April 12, 1935 – frustrated about his progress at work. Sees completion of work (PhD) as very important for them....

49. May 1935 – Unvollendete Symphonic has come out – he read it. HH will try with all his strength to get them out of the country – hopes he is not too weak and that it will not be too late.

50. July 2, 1935 – HH must share Kate all his confusion and jealousy and questions. Reference to Erwin’s “report” – unclear what it was. Erwin told HH about someone named Reindl who wants to marry a loose woman. Then Erwin told him about rumor of Bernard and Mullritter (both members of Nanga expedition). HH is wondering about men in Kate’s life – her
relationship with them, such as Willi Bogner, whom he doesn’t like... partly because HH can’t separate him from the clique of Tsch u Osten, etc. (Nazis). HH quotes Willi Schmid saying the most important thing is spiritual (not physical) – a comment Kate relayed to him when talking about Kurt Haniel. HH says he cannot separate spiritual from physical.


52. Sept 15, 1935 – HH sister, Liesel, dies

53. Undated: HH says love can overcome fear

54. Fall 1935? visited in his lab by Meier Leibniz, a physicist and Pres of German Research Foundation and a relative of Misch’s and student of Frank’s in Gottingen. Now Frank in Copenhagen. Now HH must go to endless meeting of the VA

55. Undated – needs the absolute security of Kate’s love

56. Oct 20, 1935 – HH comments on how much Kate has been through over the last days (sounds like she was Berlin). Is meeting with Kinzl about Peru expedition; will go to presentation by Walter Brecht.

57. Dec 21, 1935: HH praises photo portrait of Kate that she has sent him

58. Dec 23, 1935 from Schw Hall: HH disappointed that he can’t give completion of his doctoral research as a gift to Kate and his mother, altho he’s progressed on it “...dass ich noch ein sehr ausdauernder Physiker aus mir wird.” He’s pleased with the Cordillera Blanca book – gave copy to Regener. Was in Ludwigsburg to be with Hurrle family (his mother’s family)

59. Jan 12, 1936: someday Kate will feel more secure. HH says if Kate finds someone who is more, and more to her, than he will go away without complaint. “Es kommt wieder eine Zeit, in den wir Hand in Hand über die Huegel gehen, die Schoenheit den Welt sehend und ihr Grausamkeit vergessend”. HH hopes that her brother and family will make it out of Germany – commends her for helping him

60. Early Spring 1936 – HH sends greeting to Uncle Hans

61. March 3, 1936: HH had fears over last several weeks – now allayed. Went hiking around Schw Hall – beautiful. Can Kate come with Bumke and the children?

62. May 12, 1936: was at Alpenverein. Talks about photo of them: “Mann und Frau” ... missing page/s

63. May 20, 1936. After 2 days with Kate “...fast als ob wir auf einem andern Stern gewandert waren...” HH talks about his evening with Uncle Hans – who has great trust in him.

64. June 24, 1936
65. July 8, 1936 will be in Aarau in afternoon tomorrow. "Wir sind jetzt ein gutes Stück Weges zusammen gegangen. Ich glaube wir sind weiter gekommen und nicht im Kreisen gegangen..." Soon will go wandering together

66. July 13, 1936 – HH goes to Swaben Alb – he’s happy about reconciliation between Germany and Austria. For sake of VA and also they can now go to Gufidaun

67. August ’36 – after Gufidaun. HH has spent 2 weeks with Kate and 2 older children – best vacation he’s ever had. Talks of her teaching, showing the children – now can both hike and go climbing

68. Undated – how wonderful it was to be with her

69. August 26, ’36. Kate’s favorite Uncle (Hans) has died. Talks about how much they liked each other when they met in Degerloch – gave his blessing to their love. It was clear to Hans that HH would never disappoint him.

70. Aug 1936 – after Uncle Hans’s death. HH will come as soon as Kate wants him to.

71. Sept 2, 1936: wishes her well for Berlin trip – talks about having a life together

72. Oct 11, 1936: Schwe Hall house not sold yet – Kate must go again to Berlin

73. Oct 13, 1936: wishes her well for her journey – Kate will also be with her old good friend Inge. Kate will be part of the time with Herr Geheimrat Bumke. Also Kate will see Erwin Schneider and Eveliese (his girlfriend)

74. Oct 14, 1936 HH wishes her strength/resolve for upcoming meetings – she must fight for her children. HH praises Bumke (who brought Kate to Berlin) – says he was shy around him, but he has won HH’s heart. Thanks Bumke for letter to him.

75. Oct 17, 1936 HH writes from Schwe Hall to Kate in Berlin. Quotes from her letter of Oct 15: "Ich stehe nun ganz und gar unter dem Gesetz der Liebe zu Euch Vieren" HH says nothing can separate them.

76. Oct 19, 1936 Kate still in Berlin. Thanks Kate for writing him immediately about (positive) decision. HH trying to sell Schwe Hall store and house. Is going to VA meeting.

77. Oct 27, 1936 – has been with Kate last 2 days (prob in Munich). Likes Bumke so much – hopefully things will go so well when he meets Reusch.

78. June 17, 1937 Kate has visited him in Dessau – HH feels the distance between Dessau and Salzburg has decreased, Knows how difficult things are for her in Schwerin. HH looks for new room in Dessau. HH mother moving near Stuttgart near
her Hirle relatives

79. June 21, 1937 Happy about good news about Hedi. Was in Berlin with friends – slept in tent with “Vater Bo” (Borchers from Peru 1932 expedition). Also was with Erwin and Eveliese. Read the news about the Nanga 1937 disaster with horror.

80. June 25, 1937 – in last two weeks has been burdened with AV actions that they sent him. Tell Kate to enjoy her summer. Tomorrow goes to Saxon Switzerland/Bad Schandau to climb. In 8 days will be back in Berlin. Wieland’s mother wrote him a nice letter.

81. June 28, 1937 from Dessau. Knows that she will visit Willi’s grave – 3rd anniversary of his death.

82. Sept 1937 – before Gufidaun. Upcoming weeks are harder for her than him – Kate must wait; HH can work. Kate is planning to talk with Duscha about HH and her. Gets a letter from her from Altesee – she was in Berlin. HH was recently in Berlin – saw Erwin (in good form) and Eveliese

83. Undated. “Wir muss mit aller Kraft und Mut allen was in uns lebt und in jeder Secunde ersehnen”

84. Oct 1937 (is this correct?) – HH imagines Kate arriving in Berlin – which will be doubly strange/foreign to her with the alarms of today... HH talks about her “...zitternden und sorgenden Herzen...” Does she sense how close he is to her?

85. Oct 5 or 7, 1937 – “Du wirst heute ein Stück weiter sein und so oder so über die Aussichten unseres Wollens mehr wissen, als bisher.” Even a negative reaction will not make them lose their courage

86. Oct 7, 1937: “Mir ist es recht, dass Du den Weg über den Schiffbauerdamm nicht mehr weiterverfolgst, nicht nur recht sondern auch lieb. Jetzt ist jedenfalls in dieser Richtung alles klar gestellt. (my note: this must be in regard to her being illegitimate daughter of von Alvensleben and her mother and resulting classification as a Jew or Mischling). It does not make a difference to HH’s plans – he will not be in Wolfsen or Berlin after ¼ year. That Wiedemann is helpful is good. I can get you and the 3 children out. …” auch wenn wir uns nie begegnet waeren, dann haette ich fast sicher diesen oder einen ahnlchen Weg gesucht. Fuer Dich ist es schwer, riesen-schwerer die naechsten Monate wie untactig zu sitzen. Ich bitte Dich innig behalt mich lieb und glaub an mich.” (KEY LETTER! ) Obviously Kate has been advised by Wiedemann to get out because of her Jewish background – does not seem to want to pursue her illegimate lineage – von Alvensleben – as documented in Schiffbauerdamm. HH assures her he would want to leave
Germany anyway, even if he hadn't met her and says he will manage to get her out — to believe in him)

87. Undated — often thoughts go in circles in terms of finding the 'right way' (Die Gedanken gehen oft im Kreise um den richtigen Weg zu finden) "Lieber, es kommt wieder die Zeit, wo wir Hand in Hand wandern..."

88. Oct 20, 1937: HH met with Gajewski at Agfa. Gajewski wanted to help — personally and professionally. Was warm — letter from Wiedemann has not yet arrived. But it looks like things will happen soon. Preferably Agfa would like to keep HH in Dessau. But will consider a 'sister firm.' Difficult to find a good fit for HH skills and a position. HH hopes to meet with Reusch in Hamburg. HH may not be able to get away to see her until Christmas holidays. Everything in flux — he feels he needs to be around. "Wiedemann schrieb mir sehr lieb, dass ich jeder Zeit zu ihm kommen konnte, ist ein Mensch, den man sich sehr zum Vorbild nehmen muss. Du hast ihm so geschrieben, wie man es besser unmöglich machen kann. Er hat sich sicher von Herzen gefreut über Deinen Brief." Is going to an AV meeting in Dresden.

89. Fragment of letter — undated

90. Jan 1, 1938 from Dessau. Was at AV meeting in Stuttgart: Finsterwalder (cartographer for Nanga '34) ousted by/will leave AV probably. HH wrote to Wiedemann — Gajewski going to Egypt. HH feels he has been reenergized by his weeks with her in Salzburg.

91. Jan 11, 1938. More correspondence with Wiedemann — also met with Gajewski. Wiedemann has best perspective on things. "Vielleicht ist es zu viel verlangt jetzt beides zu haben, die Heimat und den Atem" Kate worried about HH's health — the chemical environment. HH says it makes no sense to try and change rooms now.

92. Jan 1938: letter from Regina Ullmann- very supportive of them.

Kate knows they cannot waste time...

93. April 26, 1938. From Binghamton, NY, USA. Has just gotten there — unpacked his suitcase. "Ich fühlte mich heute schon heimischer in Binghamton als ich es je in Dessau tat... wir werden es gut und schon haben hier." Thinks of her in NY

94. April 29, 1938. Wants to work hard so Affidavid is not in question — can get from Schwarz or Eckler. Or maybe Nina Warburg in NYC. Dubious that he will leave Binghamton in next 3 months. (my question: was it a 3 month trial arrangement? In fact, he did go back to Germany in 3 months, when he and
Kate married and emigrated). HH still can’t believe that all 5 of them will be together in Binghamton.

95. June 21, 1938 — HH thrilled over June 10 telegram Kate has sent him. It must be the final OK to get married and leave Germany. "...letzten Endes hast Du es geschafft, Dein Wille, Deine Liebe und der Mut dieses prachtigen Freundes. (I assume Wiedemann, Reusch, etc) Wir wollen dankbar sein" 

96. Letter from HH to North Germany Lloyd Bremen ocean liner dated June 4, 1938 for his return to Germany

97. Letter of Sept 2, 1932 (out of sequence!) to HH from his sister — during HH trip to Andes — his mother does not recognize him in photo. She also congratulates him on being invited to be on the Ex Committee of the Alpenverein

I. RESEARCH INITIATIVES/DOCUMENTS

A. Bettina Hoerlin inquiries to MM Warburg Archives, German Consul Busso von Alvensleben, German Alpine Club, Munich archives and Berlin Stadtmitte. Sampling of respective letters. For the Berlin archives, I was assisted by Dr. Jana Leichenring, currently a historical specialist in the German Parliament.

B. Berlin Archives

1. Annotated summary of research conducted by Dr. Leichenring for Bettina Hoerlin: "Mord aus Versehen: Der Fall Willi Schmid." Listing of documents and persons involved (21 pages)

2. Official correspondence (28 letters) in 1934-5 regarding Kate’s compensation for Murder of Willi Schmid (Wiedemann, Reich’s Justizministerium Schlegelberger, Diess- Kate’s lawyer, SS. Oberfuehrer Breithaupt). Listing of letters compiled by Bettina Hoerlin and copies of letters are in folder.

Note: for continued information about Pension and original documents see section III. H below

3. Official correspondence (23 letters) in 1938 between Adjutant Fritz Wiedemann (W) and Kate Schmid and Hoerlin regarding permission to marry and leave Germany. Also letters from Dr. K. Blome and SS Oberfuehrer Breithaupt. Listing of letters compiled by Bettina Hoerlin and copies of letters in folder.
- letter to Interior Ministry from HH, March 20, asking for exception to Nurnberg Laws ("Frau Schmid ist nicht arischer Abstammung")
- letter (copy) HH to W, March 20, 1938 (mention of Kate’s Abstammungsunterlagen...die im Sippenamt am Schiffsbauerdamm liegen)
- letter to HH from Kurt Blome, medical consultant regarding Jewish classification, March 24, 1938, citing that W has told him of seeking an exception and asking for residency information of KH, “Mischling.”
- Letter to German Consul in Salzburg from Kate, March 31, 1938 to ascertain KH residency in Salzburg
- Similar letter to German Consul in Salzburg from Kate and HH, April 1, 1938, citing letter of support from Wiedemann
- Letter to German Consul in Salzburg from Kate and HH, March 31, 1938, saying they are applying for exception to Nurnberg Laws
- Letter to Blome from HH April 2, 1938 (Salzburg affirmation of KH residency), citing March 11, 1938 letter of support of W
- Letter to W from HH, April 3, 1938, (tells W of Blome correspondence and Salzburg affirmation of KH residency; also says HH leaving for U.S./Agfa trip and Kate also on April 6, 1938
- Letter to HH from Blome (has forwarded exception request to Minister of Interior) April 8, 1938
- Heiratsurkunde (Wedding Certificate), July 12, 1938, Berlin: Kate listed as Catholic and her mother and father (Hedwig Pinner u Adolf Tietz) as “mosaisch”
- copy of Permission to Marry May 21, 1938

C. Original correspondence from the files of Kate Schmid and Herman Hoerlin for permission to marry/emigrate (12 letters and 2 documents)
* Genealogy of Hermann Hoerlin document dated 1933
* Hermann Hoerlin to Adjutant Wiedemann June 8, 1937 and June 16, 1938 – meeting with him and thanking him: “Es kann ja nicht anders sein, als dass ich mich sehr zuversichtlich und tief ueber Ihre gute Hilfe treue.”
* Hermann Hoerlin 1938 letters to Wiedemann (copies) January 5, March 20, April 3
* Hoerlin to Ministerium des Innern March 20, 1938
* letters from Dr. K. Blome to Hoerlin (originals) March 3 and April 8, 1938. Letter to Blome from Hoerlin April 2.
* letters to Deutsche Konsulat in Salzburg from Hoerlin March 31, 1938
* Marriage certificate from Berlin Stadesamt #341, July 12, 1938
* Polizeiliches Fuehrungszeugnis for Hermann Hoerlin, July 7, 1938
*Polizei Fuehrungszeugnis for Katharina Schmid May 30, 1938
*letter to Hermann Hoerlin from L. Eckler, Vice President of
Agfa Ansco/Binghamton, USA June 29, 1938 to facilitate
immigration visa and confirm employment

III. LETTERS/ etc IN AMERICA

A. Fritz Wiedemann (former Adjutant to Hitler)
* Wiedemann (now German Consul in San Francisco) letter to Kate Schmid Hoerlin (now in United States), Nov 6, 1940. Cannot meet with her in NY
* letter from Wiedemann’s replacement in San Francisco with note from
Wiedemann. July 11, 1941.
** 1946 account of Kate Hoerlin post war actions on behalf of
Wiedemann. Kate travels to Washington (offices of Nuremberg Trials
in the Pentagon) with key wartime letters from Wiedemann to her
showing Wiedemann’s anti-Hitler stance. This account was found in the
Sir William Wiseman archives/Yale University by historian Professor
Thomas Weber in summer of 2012. The letters documented Wiedemann’s
attempts from 1940 onward to convince Allies intelligence agents to
eliminate Hitler as well as his helping Jews (in addition to Kate) in
Germany. (Dr. Weber has published this research as a postscript to his
book, Hitler’s First War (Oxford University Press, 2010))

B. Original Letters (packet of 21 letters from/to Herman Hoerlin regarding problems
at Agfa/Ansco 1942-3: Treasury Department taking over German-owned company,
suspension of employment of my father because of enemy alien status, intervention of
Eleanor Roosevelt through Mrs. Eliot (Trude) Pratt (later to marry Joseph Lash),
problems of my father being reinstating and having to report to a Nazi at Anseco,
correspondence with Department of Justice Otto Brodnitz, General Osborn, Bettina
Warburg.

- note letter from Trude Pratt to Hoerlin Oct 5, 1942: “I am
sending you a copy of Mr. Crowley’s letter to Mrs. Roosevelt
which, of course must be kept completely between you and me.
I know that she has done a great deal to help you, but it would
be very much better if her interest were not mentioned, especially
as I am convinced that this decision is the only just one.” Also
note earlier letter from Trude to Hoerlin: “I am now writing
Mrs. R. Again as I think she ought to know the whole story as
otherwise she would not be able to really talk to Sec’y
Morgenthau…. I think this business about Peru complicates
matters as you can only give your word and no other proofs
about your completely accidental relationship with the
film” (this refers to his processing film for the 1939 German Expedition to Peru). Also note Trude letter to Hoerlin Jan 25, 1942: “I am writing to Mrs. Roosevelt who is a specially close friend of Mr. Morgenthau. She would, I think be willing to send the Secretary a note…”

- note letter to Bettina Warburg from Otto Brodnitz (exact date unknown but based on forwarding note from Bettina Warburg, most likely written late Feb or early March 1942), asking Hoerlin to name Nazis at Agfa. “Biedermann” front and commentary about Fritz Wiedemann as follows: “In a broader aspect the Government is also interested in any additional light the Hoerlins may shed on Wiedemann’s attitude and actions and his “feelings” to which the correspondence refers so often, and would be interested in having the Hoerlins submit any additional correspondence they may have from him. I understand their personal attitude toward him and their feeling of gratitude for the decency he showed Mrs. Hoerlin when she was in need of help. The Hoerlins, however, must understand that we are interested in Wiedemann as an official of the Nazi Government. It goes without saying that there can be no better proof of loyalty to their new country than to assist us in this broader aspect.”

- letter to Hoerlin from “Lloyd” (last name unknown), Aug 10, 1942 urging HH not to leave Ansco in spite of having to work for someone he considered a Nazi (a Mr. Schmidt”). It was also the advice of Eckler, VP of Ansco. Note that Hoerlin was subsequently reported to someone other than Schmidt.

C. Original Letters (packet of 12) in 1942-4 from/to Herman Hoerlin regarding freezing bank accounts, cataloging alien property, confiscating cameras and radios, etc.

D. Original Letters (packet of 16 letters in 1943 from/to Herman Hoerlin regarding maps: Austrian Alps, Italian Dolomites, Berchesgarden area, Central Europe).

- note correspondence with Tom C. Clark, Assistant Attorney General

- note correspondence with Hannes Schneider of North Conway, New Hampshire, the famous Ski Meister (“father of modern skiing” who was a fervent anti-Nazi and escaped from Austria in 1939), who also shared maps. Additional correspondence between Hoerlin and Hannes Schneider is available at archives of the New England Ski Museum.
Note 1943 Herman Hoerlin drawings of I. G. Farben Wolfen factories near Dessau and Bitterfeld with railways, details on # of employees and of estimates of nitrate and acetate, emulsions for film production, infra red capabilities, etc. Obviously Bursler/Dept of Justice interested re chemical capabilities and possibly concentration camp activity.

E. Original Documents: citizenship application and citizen certificates 1943-44

F. Assorted letters during war and post-war
   - from Herman Hoerlin (Binghamton) to Swiss friends, Marguerite and Alfred Ohler, May 17, 1945: "Last week was VE Day, endlich-endlich. We are glad that the fighting is over at last, but there is little rejoicing, we had no thoughts for celebrations - we had waited too long. We had been waiting for the uprising of what we believed was still left of the democratic Germany, we had hoped that the Germans themselves would get rid of their monsters and, at least try to start a new life. But nothing of this sort happened, it seems that all of them lost their courage and honor. Yes, we are grateful and proud for our new country, but it is very depressing to see the old county which we still love, go down the path of unspeakable crimes to the last step." (then goes on asking for their help in contacting Hoerlin's mother - is worried.)
   - Kate correspondence with Regina Ullman (living in St. Gallen, Switzerland), well known poet and a protégé of Rainer Maria Rilke: 6 letters. September 23, 1938 - impressions of life in U.S./isolation of Binghamton; June 12, 1939 - joy of birth of Bettina; Aug 7, 39 - everyday life; Okt '39 - sorrows about what is happening in Germany; Jan 25 1946: Kate's responses re war, reports on children and how hard Hoerlin works; Sept 25, 1946 - losses of war. These letters are copies from the Munich city archives. Also included are copies of 5 letters Ullman wrote to Kate and one to Hoerlin in 1938.
   - Hoerlin correspondence with Dr. H. Haerting in Shanghai regarding professional and political matters: Aug 19, 1946; in Chile Jan 17, 1949
   - Hoerlin correspondence regarding a Dr. Ernst Lenz, Nov and Dec 1947 in response to Professor Regener's inquiry regarding political background
   - Hoerlin correspondence regarding immigration visa for a displaced person, Wolfgang Hennssler with involvement of Betting Warburg and Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society (7 letters/1948)
     - Hoerlin letter from Alfred Oehler to Hoerlin from Aarau Dec 1, 1948
     - Hoerlin letter from Lou Schopper Set 20, 1949
     - Hoerlin correspondence with Prof John Eggert in Zurich, Nov and Dec 1949
     - letter from Hoerlin to W.G. Alexewicz in Burbank Aug 10, 1949
     - letter to Hoerlin from Gretel Volmar-Auer, a cousin reintroducing herself and seeking job. Jan 15, 1951
G. Original Political action letters (packet of approx. 21) from/to Herman Hoerlin (e.g. 1942 letters to ACLU’s Roger Baldwin, 1944 re news coverage of Roosevelt, 1946 protesting Poles treatment of German nationals, 1960 Kennedy support)

H. Follow-up on Pension (because of death of Willi Schmid) from German government (pension payments were stopped in 1940)
   - Original letter of notification of the pension  Sept 7, 1934
   - Original document regarding payments Sept 7, 1934
   - Letter to Kate from Franz Breithaupt Jan 18, 1935
   - Letter to Kate from Dr. Kornalewski (Berlin Rechtsanwalt und Notar) July 11, 1938
   - Evidence of payments
   - Pension will be sent to Salzburg on Feb 20, 1937 because of Kate’s move there (“an die Regierung von Oberbayern in Muenchen”. She has to report changes to the Regierungspraes of Obb. Done on request of “Adjutant of Fuehrer u Reichskanzler Hauptman Wiedemann
   - Letter from Kornalewski to Kate in Salzburg regarding payments, July 1, 1938
   - Letter from Kornalewski to Kate July 11, 1938
   - Response to Kornalewski from Bayrische Hypotheken und Wechselband, June 27, 1938
   - Letter from Kornalewski to Kate, Sept 21, 1939
   - Kornalewski to Kate, Sept 21, 1939
   - In disposition (Oct 29, 1956), Kate says pension discontinued after the summer 1939.
   - Letter from German Consulate in New York to Kate March 7, 1941
   - Letter from Franz Breithaupt to Kate Aug 18, 1941
   - Letter from Kate to Dr. Kornalewski (Rechtsanwalt und Notar) in Berlin May 6, 1941 summarizing situation
   - Correspondence between Bayerische Hypotheken & Wechselband from Kate Oct 2, 1948; response from Bank on October 11, 1948; response from Kate to Bank Oct 19, 1948; series of transactions between bank and Kate and letters until 1963!
   - letters between Kate and Nicolai Friedrichsen (from the Bank) 1953, 1954, 1955 – as far as I can make out there was initial agreement in Sept 1955 (file includes deposit forms, etc)
- personal letter from Kate to Hoerlin, May 17, 1953 – note (highlighted) help of industrialist and her friend German industrialist Paul Reusch in pursuing reparations – praises her legal representative Dr. Alfred Holl (Rechtsanwalt)

- Kate documents meeting in October 29, 1956 when she went with Dr. Holl to the Finance Minister in Munich who chuckled at her saying “Na, wieviele lebende und tote Schmids wollen Sie mir den nun presentieren?”

- Correspondence with Kate, beginning Aug. 26, 1959. Holl makes case for pension - notes that children of Kate … musste mit ihrer juedischen Mutter… Deutschland verlassen” Cites attempts of Kate Nov 2, 1949; March 1, 1950; Jan 27, 1950…to receive pension


J. Musical life/ Kate Hoerlin

- Original Letters to/from cellist Pablo CASALS (12 letters/ cards from Pablo Casals to Kate Schmid Hoerlin, 1949–57).
  Also unpublished ‘notes’ written by Kate in Fall 1951, the 2nd Prades Musical Festival in Peripingan

- Original Letters arranging the appearance of the Budapest String Quartet in Los Alamos (1956) and press reviews; letters arranging Mischa Schneider (cellist of the Quartet) andLeo Smit concert at St. Johns College (1966). Personal letters from Mischa Schneider to Kate 1955, 1960 and 1966.

K. Los Alamos chapter: Hermann Hoerlin 1953 to death in 1983

- transcript of “Interview” of Herman Hoerlin by U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, Jan. 11, 1954 (questioning affiliations with perceived left-wing or Communist organizations/people: e.g. the American Civil Liberties Union membership, friendship with Paul Robeson, Jan Struther, etc.)

- Letters to Hoerlin and Kate from St. John’s College/Santa Fe campus indicating their role in its development, particularly with the Los Alamos community (1961-66). A more complete file is available in St. John’s archives.
  - Testimony by Dr. Hoerlin to the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, U.S. Congress, March 8, 1963
  - I.F. Stone Bi-Weekly (3/18/63) commentary on
Herman Hoerlin "Fortunately there was an independent minded scientist from Los Alamos, Dr. Herman Hoerlin at the hearings on March 8, whose plain speaking annoyed the military". Further citations of Hoerlin

* - Report June 1976 (when it became declassified)
  "United States High-Altitude Test Experiences: A Review Emphasizing the Impact on the Environment" by Herman Hoerlin
* - Correspondence with McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the President April 1, 1963
* - Correspondence Hans Bethe (Nobel Prize 1967)
  - Bethe to Hoerlin June 28, 1973 - personal letter for 70th birthday: talks about visits to Hoerlin's Santa Fe house: "...it was always like coming home." Also states: "For many years, the work that you and J-10 (Note: J-10 was the Los Alamos Scientific Lab division headed by Herman Hoerlin) did was the most interesting work in the laboratory for me. And I believe it has contributed a lot to solving our puzzles, and to preventing some nonsense in national policy. I remember how much you impressed the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy with your calm, factual testimony."
  - Bethe to Hoerlin July 4, 1983 - personal letter for 80th birthday.
  - Bethe to American Physical Society July 6, 1979:
    "... (Hoerlin) is recognized as one of the world's experts in the physics of high-altitude nuclear detonations. His publications in the area, and those he has personally directed, are numerous and consider by most to be the definitive works. His expertise is further substantiated by two appearances before the Congress for testimony on weapon effects questions of highest priority in the nation's defense occurring on March 8, 1963 and March 4, 1969... responsible for the development of many pioneering diagnostic techniques and physical measurements.

* - Letter (July 5, 1983) from Victor Regener, Professor of Physics at University of New Mexico congratulating Hoerlin on 80th birthday: "But foremost, I cannot think of those days without being reminded of you always as a true and courageous friend of my parents. Just by being there and being yourself you did more for them than anyone else could have done. That was almost exactly fifty years ago..."
This refers to Hoerlin protecting his thesis adviser, Professor Erich Regener, from Nazi thugs at the Technical University/Stuttgart. Regener's wife was Jewish.
* - Acceptance of nomination of Hoerlin to The American Physical Society January 1981 with supporting letters and
extensive resume

- Letter from Guy Barasch (colleague of HH) to Bettina Hoerlin, Jan 27, 2003
- Obituary of HH, Boston Globe Nov 8, 1983.
- Obituary of HH, Physics Today by Hans Bethe and Donald Kerr

For further readings:

The Road from Los Alamos by Hans Bethe (1991) for chapter on “Five Physicists: J. Robert Oppenheimer, Freeman Dyson, Herman Hoerlin, Paul Ewald and Richard P. Feynman”

The Life It Brings by Jeremy Bernstein (1987) re Hoerlin p. 129-132
The following had been compiled by Bettina Hoerlin
March 2013

THE TIETZ / SCHMID / HOERLIN STORY

The love story between Kate Tietz Schmid and Hermann
Hoerlin spans some of the most profound markers of the 20th
century: the rise of Hitler's Germany, the American immigrant
experience and the growing threats of the Cold War. They met in
July 1934, when Hoerlin (as he was called) was an aspiring
physicist and a world record-holding mountaineer. Despite his
quintessential Aryan looks, he was a staunch anti-Nazi. Kate,
born into a Jewish family, was a widow with three young children
(Duscha, Hedi and Thomi). Her husband had been killed by the
Nazis on June 30, 1934 in the Night of the Long Knives ("Roehm
Putsch") and subsequently apologize, in the person of Rudolf
Hess, for a case of mistaken identity.

The first section of this collection is comprised of about 500
love letters written between Hoerlin and Kate in the years of their
courtship between 1934 and 1938 (he was at the Technische
Universitat in Stuttgart and she lived in Munich). The letters
attest to the tightening vise of National Socialism and how it
affected every aspect of society. More specifically, it impacted on
Hoerlin's world of physics and mountaineering and Kate's of
music and culture. Her first husband, the renowned music critic
Willi Schmid, had been an early victim of Nazi terrorism that
soon resonated throughout the cultural life of Munich.
The letters also portray how Kate, who had converted to Catholicism in 1921 when she married Schmid, becomes classified as Jewish according to Hitler’s racial dictates. This determination became complicated in that Kate was purportedly the illegitimate child of a long-term liaison between her married mother and a Freiherr von Alvensleben. Accordingly, she was categorized as a Mischling by Third Reich authorities. Nonetheless, the Nuremberg Laws forbade marriage between Jews and Aryans. To have a future together, Hoerlin and Kate knew they must flee Germany.

Kate and Hoerlin’s personal letters, along with the results of archival research (mainly found in the Berlin Stadtmitte), indicate top Nazi involvement in several phases of this story: 1) Kate Schmid’s insistence of reparations from the German government for the wrongful death of her husband, who had been assassinated in a case of mistaken identity. Among those involved were: Adjutant to the Fuehrer Fritz Wiedemann, Deputy Fuehrer Rudolf Hess, S.S. Commander Heinrich Himmler, Oberfuehrer Franz Breithaupt, Justice Minister Franz Schlegelberger. 2) Kate Tietz Schmid’s Jewish classification: again, Fritz Wiedemann; also Dr. Kurt Blome, the Reich’s medical consultant; the German Minister of the Interior; and the German Consul in Salzburg. Her many trips from Munich to Berlin to confront authorities in the government and top party officials are documented as well.

Kate Schmid was connected with leading figures of
Germany's intellectual life, often referenced in the letters. They include the historian Oswald Spengler, the Rector of the University of Munich Karl Vossler, the Catholic priest/author Peter Doerfler, the head of the Munich Psychiatric Institute Oswald Bumke, the psychiatrist August Bostroem and major industrialists Paul Reusch and Curt and Karl Haniel. Karl was also the managing director of the Munchen Neueste Nachrichten. Kate regarded the eminent mathematician Felix Hausdorff as her beloved Uncle. And she was friends with several musicians, notably the conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler and cellist Pablo Casals.

As integral to the world of culture as Kate was, Hoerlin was to the world of physics and mountaineering. He studied in Stuttgart under Germany's foremost cosmic ray physicist, Erich Regener. Hoerlin also was one of Germany's top climbers, having made first ascents in the Alps, Himalayas and Andes. In 1930 he held the world record for summiting the highest peak to date: Jongsong in the Himalayas.

Although invited to be a member of the infamous 1934 German expedition to Nanga Parbat, Hoerlin declined for several reasons including the expedition being promoted by Hitler as a model of Aryan superiority. When it ended in disaster, Hoerlin met Kate who with her husband Willi Schmid had responsibilities as the expedition's Press Liaison. When Schmid was killed, she continued to serve this role.
Hoerlin met Kate to assist her with the aftermath of 10 deaths on Nanga Parbat. Hoerlin’s letters to her refer to Germany’s elite climbers of the era and his resistance to Gleichschaltung, the attempt by the Nazis to take over the venerable German-Austrian Alpine Club with its 240,000 members. I have contributed letters that focus solely on mountaineering to the German Alpine Club archives, including one that documents that the Nazi’s wanted Hoerlin to “disappear.”

In 1936, my mother moved to Salzburg with her three children in the hopes that life would be safer there. Hoerlin, having received his Physics PhD, found a position in Dessau with the Agfa film company, a subsidiary of I.G. Farben.

With enormous persistence, willed optimism and good connections, Kate and Hoerlin married in Berlin in July 1938, a rare exception to the Nuremberg Laws. They immigrated with Kate’s three children to America in August 1938, where Hoerlin had procured a position with a subsidiary of Ansco/Agfa Film firm in Binghamton, New York. Clearly this was a major adjustment for the family, although Kate and Hoerlin were enormously relieved to be out of Germany and determined to become American citizens. A year after they came, I (Bettina Hoerlin) was born.

In Binghamton, they made new friends but also stayed in touch with friends from the ‘old country’ who had immigrated: the Budapest Quartet, pianist Rudolf Serkin, the von Trapp family,
the skier Hannes Schneider (a few letters between Hannes and Hoerlin were donated to the New England Ski Museum), and Trude Pratt (later Trude Lash). They were also very connected to the Warburg family – my mother knew Max Warburg in Germany and Nina (Mrs. Paul) Warburg and her daughter Bettina Warburg became close friends in the United States. My mother also stayed in contact with Fritz Wiedemann who in 1939 became German Consul in San Francisco.

Life in Binghamton settled in but in 1941, when war between Germany and America was declared, the U.S. Treasury Dept. seized Ansco/Agfa as a German company and my father was suspended from his position. With the intervention of Mrs. Roosevelt (via Trude Pratt Lash), Hoerlin was reinstated. His assets, however, remained frozen and he found himself in the uncomfortable position of reporting to a Nazi-sympathizer at Ansco. That too was changed, with the facilitation of Mrs. Roosevelt.

Hoerlin’s correspondence with different parts of the U.S. government indicates he cooperated with them in terms of sharing detailed maps (his climbing maps) with them – for use in clandestine activities and bombing missions. These included maps of the Italian/Austria mountains, the mountains around Berchesgarden and drawings of I.G. Farben plants.

At the end of the war, my mother read in the NYTimes that Fritz Wiedemann, the man who had been her major protector, was
being brought back to Germany to be tried as a war criminal. Recently uncovered archives (at Yale University by historian Professor Thomas Weber) showed my mother played a key role in Wiedemann's exoneration by sharing his wartime letters to her with Pentagon officials in Washington. The letters and other documents revealed how Hitler's former Adjutant had in 1940 urged British and American intelligence to get rid of him.

In 1953, Hoerlin was offered a job as a group leader at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, a position his friend and colleague Hans Bethe (Nobel Prize Winner in Physics) recommended for him. By that time, my siblings had left home, graduated from college and married. Therefore I was the only child to move with them. Los Alamos was still a secret, gated community.

A year after arriving, my father was questioned by governmental officials, stirred by the McCarthy era about parts of his background that indicated left-wing leanings. In particular, his membership in the American Civil Liberties Union was questioned (our family has become friends with Roger Baldwin, spending a few summers at his Martha's Vineyard home), as was his/Kate's friendship with Jan Struther (author of Mrs. Miniver) and singer-activist Paul Robeson.

Life in Los Alamos for me as a teenager was a strange experience and I came East often. On one of my trips, I stayed in NY with my namesake Bettina Warburg, who mentioned my mother's Jewish background. When I arrived back in Los
Alamos, I questioned my mother about it and she told me “That was in the past.” I was unable to ever get her to talk more about it. Her Judaism remained essentially hidden to her children – and her friends – for all her life.

Hoerlin spent considerable time in the years 1954 to 1961 at nuclear testing sites in Nevada and Johnson Island in the Pacific. His focus was on developing measurements of the impact of high altitude testing on the environment and determining methodologies for detection of high altitude nuclear tests. The latter led to the first nuclear test ban treaty, a precursor to a comprehensive nuclear disarmament treaty. His 1961 Congressional Testimony led the journalist I.F. Stone to praise him for his honesty and clarity.

In 1963 Kate and Hoerlin moved from Los Alamos to a home they built in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The last chapter in their life was spent happily with a lively circle of friends: scientists, artists (Georgia O’Keefe, for ex) and liberal political activists. There were weekends spent hiking or skiing. My mother was one of the founders of the Santa Fe Opera and she and my father helped institute a branch of St. John’s College/Annapolis in Santa Fe. In addition, she taught courses there on Goethe and other greats in German Literature. My father died in 1983 and my mother two years later.