

When you  
Are old and grey and full of sleep  
And nodding by the fire  
Take down this book and slowly  
Read...

# My Family Book

by Lars Christian Luther

11/9/2010

**W**hy would I be thinking that any reader of “My Family Book” is an old bearded man? I shouldn’t be, because my crystal ball is very cloudy. You may not even be holding a “book” by the time you are reading this! You may have downloaded a file from a cloud memory onto your handheld reading pad or something even weirder. But if you are not an old man with a white beard keep on going anyway, I would love that.

Since you are reading this, I hope that you, dear reader, are curious enough to take a little while to browse. Maybe you would like to get an idea about why my parents chose to emigrate to the U.S. Or maybe you would like to see a photo of your great grandparents, to look for a resemblance or know what they did for a living back when. Let me help you then. Here is a bunch of photos or drawings, you pick one, and I will tell you what you are seeing, to the best of my knowledge. The past century was hard on my family and so much has been lost to war and repeated migrations from country to country and much has been forgotten.

The quote on the cover, by the way, is from a poem by W. Butler Yeats; go on, google it. I had read a lot of German 19<sup>th</sup> century poetry in my teens and only after learning enough English at Marietta College did I begin to read and appreciate the wonderful world of English poetry. My cousin Winfred Bernhard, the son of Senta Bernhard, who helped us to immigrate, married Betty Kromer, who is an expert on Emily Dickinson. So I had to read a few of Emily’s poems and was totally surprised by her world view, as you might find in “Safe in their alabaster chambers...”.

I started to write and illustrate the pages in this collection around 1995, when I got my first computer drawing program, called “Altamira”. I immediately fell in love with the lady Altamira, but realized soon that I would have to upgrade my computer to make use of her full potential. That of course led to upgrading the software. In 1997 I got my version 8 of “Corel Draw” and slowly began learning to use it. I had so much fun making frames for my family photographs or drawings, building them up from little snatches of scanned ornamental art. And now it is 2013 and I am still obtaining old photographs and even a diary from my great-grandmother from friends and family and learning from them about my parents and their ancestors and thus have an excuse to make more pages. The computer has helped me to find family members who then sent data and photos, and it also helped me to unearth family history. The exciting story of Edmund T. von Glehn’s artist life in Munich came to life for me due to a tip from a Kaulbach scholar in Germany. And only by relentlessly querying Wikipedia and its Estonian and Russian versions about a Russian architect, my great grandfather Rudolph v. Bernhard, whom we did not know much about, did I finally come to the embarrassing realization, that during a week’s stay in Tallinn I had walked right past one of the churches he had helped to design.

While I was writing, some people in my mother’s generation sent me their biographies. There was Lotte, my mother’s foster sister, who asked me to translate hers and put it on the computer. Hein Hoffmann, my uncle, sent me his story: “Remembrances of an Estonian”. Very impressive both of them: regular narratives progressing neatly through the years; I learned a lot of good stuff there. Then there was the “History of the Family Koch”, a collection of unrelated stories about Koch family members by various contributors, friends and relatives. This format I found to be more to my liking; my mother used it also to tell stories about various family members. Writing and illustrating two-page stories one at a time without worrying about how each is going to impact the other pages in the collection, was the only way to go for me, because I acquired material randomly and because I had so much to learn. There were so many errors in my understanding of what had gone on before my time, that I often was forced to revisit stuff I thought I was done with in order to correct the spelling of names, to change dates, and sometimes even to throw out everything I had written, because I had been misled by my own or other people’s imagination.

I am exceedingly grateful for all the help I have received from my daughter Margarethe (Molly), who has both the interest in family history and the technical skill to transfer my stories from the “Grandpa Box” to the “Cloud” where it can be easily accessed by a large circle of relatives and friends, and where they will be safe from fires and floods. She has put many, many hours of work into this endeavor and I have been glad for her interest, insight and helpful editorial suggestions.

**M**y family book is meant to have something for the browser as well as the curious reader with a question or two. It started out with only the vague intent to help rescue my very modest and reticent father from total oblivion. He died before any of his great grandchildren ( you ? ) were born. But as I worked on it and gathered information and pictures from relatives, I began to feel that here was a chance for you and me and maybe others to gain some perspective on the family in terms of individuals, generations and even strings of generations. Things repeat themselves! Thus 250 years ago some of our ancestors left their homes in Wroclaw and the Lausitz region and set out for Estonia. Whether they were attracted by opportunity or fleeing political or religious oppression is not clear, but they left their homeland, houses, families, work places, and friends for the unknown. While their displacement appears small on the map, this was a big decision. There were no phones, radio, newspapers then to keep in touch or to prepare for the new. Even letters were not for common folk then, being expensive and hand carried by travelers.

Six generations and 200 years later homelessness happened again in my family. My parents had to get away from Estonia in 1939; the alternative was death or deportation to Russia. And they only had one week to pack their things. They had no choice but to go to Germany with all the other people of German extraction in Estonia. My mother had grown up there, so it was not so foreign to her as to my father. But the loss of home, extended family, friends, and workplace was terrible for both of them,. The collapse of the German nation at the end of WW II left them in a strange part of Germany, facing hunger, poverty and hostility. They saw no future there and just wanted to get out. My mother remembered the name of her cousin in the USA and wrote to her. "Tante Senta " responded with kindness and eagerness to help. I will always remember her with gratitude. After a long struggle we were allowed to emigrate to the USA.

My parents found much happiness here and met a many wonderful and helpful people, but they, especially my father, never felt at home here as they had been in Estonia. My brother and I had not been emotionally attached to any country and loved the opportunities we found; we could make ourselves at home anywhere. But that is not the same as being as being an American. I think it may take a hundred years for a family to be emotionally embedded in a land or a city, the way my family was in Tallin. So you hear your boss say: "I knew your grandpa, we went to school together." Or somebody points out a house to you, where your great grandfather used to live. However, with today's mobility can this kind of thing ever happen again? Will someone in the future really feel rooted in some part of the states? Will someone have to pull up stakes once again? I hope he won't, but if he does, may he know about the past.

# *My Ancestors in Germany and in Estonia*

## *Luther*

## *von Glehn*

## *Mickwitz*

## *Bernhard*

First Name	Birth date	First Name	Birth date	First Name	Birth date	First Name	Birth date
Daniel	1574 C	Peter	1568				
Georg F. II	1602 B	Peter	1592 B	Jakob II			
Georg F. III	1636 B	Heinrich	1639 B	Friedrich	1659 T		
Phillip W.	1683 B	Peter	1679 B	Christoph F. I	1696 P		
Georg C.	1717 B	Adrian F.	1707 B	Christoph F. II	1743 P		
Christian W.	1774 B	Peter G.	1753 B	Justus J.	1786 P	Gotthilf B.	1782 P
Alexander M.	1810 B	Edmund T.	1800 D	Justus E.	1812 F	Rudolph	1818 A
Ferdinand J.	1838 P	Edmund A.	1841 B	Alexander A.	1848 E	Erwin G.	1852 A
A. M. Christian	1878 B	Felix	1879 B	Gerda E. M.*	1881	Margarethe M.	1879
Ferdinand P. M.	1907 B	Margarethe M.	1909				
Lars C.	1936 E						

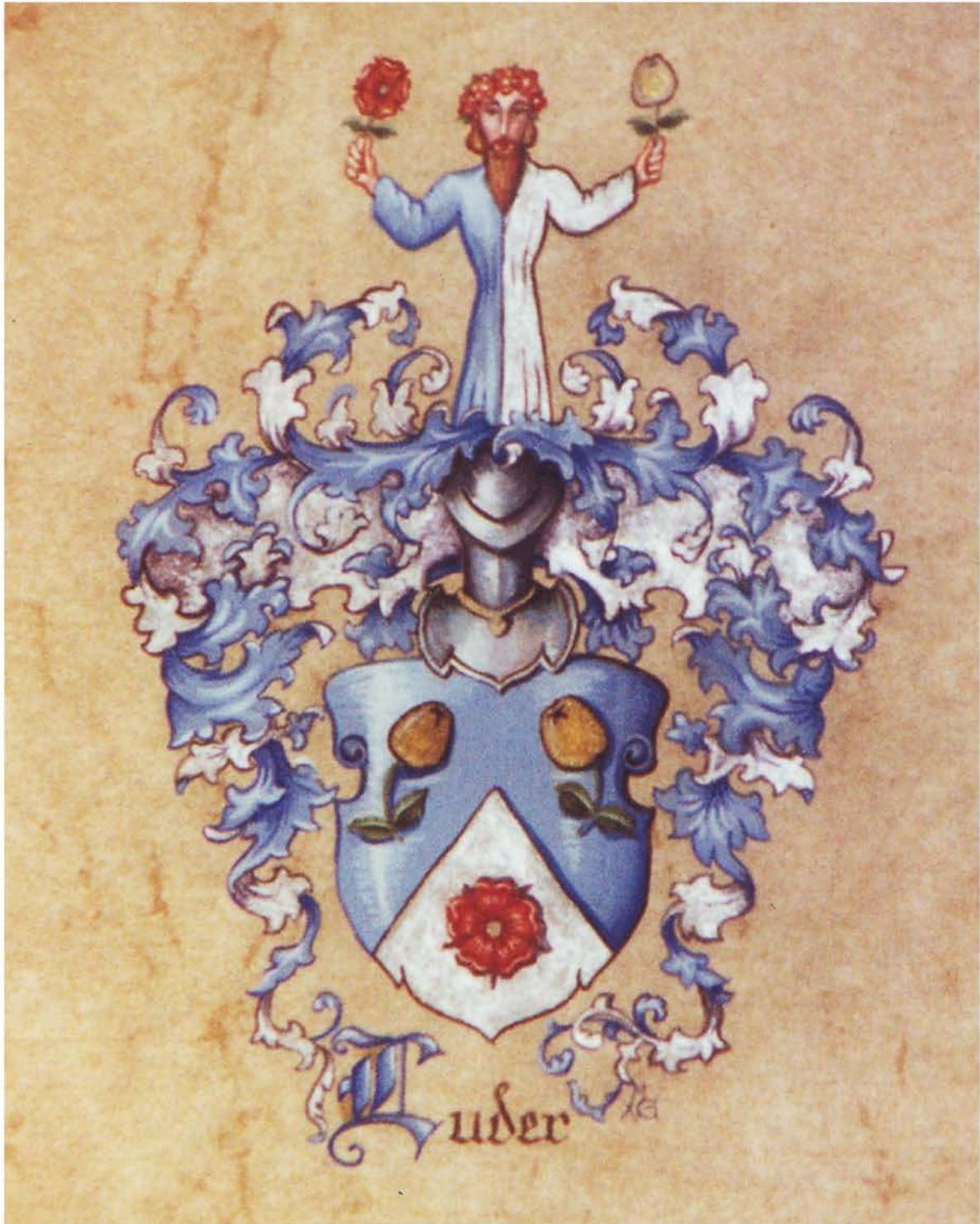
\*born in Helsinki

- A Architect
- B Businessman
- C Clerk
- D Doctor
- E Engineer
- F Farmer
- P Pastor
- T Teacher

blue: born in Estonia

yellow: born in Germany

**Note:** It is of course a great simplification to say that our ancestors came from Germany and moved to Estonia. Neither of these countries existed back then. It would be more correct to say that our ancestors were Germans living in various regions of Central Europe and that they moved to a province of Imperial Russia.



**The Coat of Arms of the Luther Family  
Granted by Emperor Maximilian in 1570**





**Christian II Luther 1774 - 1841**



**Alexander Luther 1816 - 1876**



**Ferdinand J. Luther 1838 - 1910**



**A. M. Christian Luther 1878 -1925**



**Ferdinand P. M. Luther 1907 - 1992**



**Lars C. Luther 1936 -**

Here are six Luther ancestors for whom we have photos or paintings.

The following is translated from the blue Luther book (hereinafter: the book); the numbers associated with persons in it are given for guidance. All dates before 1917 are probably for the Julian calendar. All italics are my comments.

**Christian II Wilhelm (8)** (Feb.6, 1774 – May 18, 1841). He apprenticed with the merchant Stamm in Dorpat (Est. Tartu). In Jan. 1787 he joined Samuel Jencken in Reval, in Sept. 1789 to Johann Heinrich Arwell whose house on Karri street he later bought. In 1832 he bought a large lumberyard, the site of the future A. M. Luther company. He became a member of the city council on Sep 18, 1818. Elder at the St. Nicolai church. He married his cousin **Amalia Gebauer** (of whom there is a picture in the book also).

**Alexander Martin Luther (9)** (Jan. 8, 1810 – Sept. 22, 1876) Merchant, hereditary honor citizen, First Elder of the Great Guild, Church Council at St. Nicolai, owner of the house #12 Karristreet and a lumberyard. As such he was the founder of the A.M.Luther in Reval, which was grown into large organization by his two sons Christian and Carlos. In his obituary in the "Revalsche Zeitung", 1876 Nr. 221 it says: "thanks to his strong personality, quick and accurate judgement and his extensive practical experience he has performed recognized service for the welfare of the town". His sister in law Henriette Lampe described him as a man who always was willing to help others when it became necessary. First marriage to his cousin **Luise Gebauer** on Jan. 24, 1836, second marriage on May 19, 1846 to **Therese Luise Berg**, a niece of his first wife. Third marriage on Sep. 15, 1855 to **Henrietta Carolina Steding**, a cousin of his second wife.

**Ferdinand Justinus Luther (11)** (Oct. 9, 1838 – Aug. 3, 1910). He attended the Domschule 1850-1857, studied theology in Dorpat 1859-1862. He was pastor in Emmast and Keinis (on Dagö), and at St. Nicolai. Oberpastor, clerical advisor to the Consistory, Pres. of Evangelical-Lutheran Club, member of the city school board. He married **Marie Amalie Friederike Steding** in Sasykino Feb. 2, 1869.

**Alexander Martin Christian Luther (92)** (Feb. 8, 1878 – Mar. 3, 1925). He attended the Domschule 1888-1889 Nicolai Gymnasium 1893. Agent at A.M. Luther. *He was an administrative director of the brick factory Rauaniemi, Finland from 1904 till 1914.* He married **Gerda Emilie Mathilde Mickwitz** May 30, 1905.

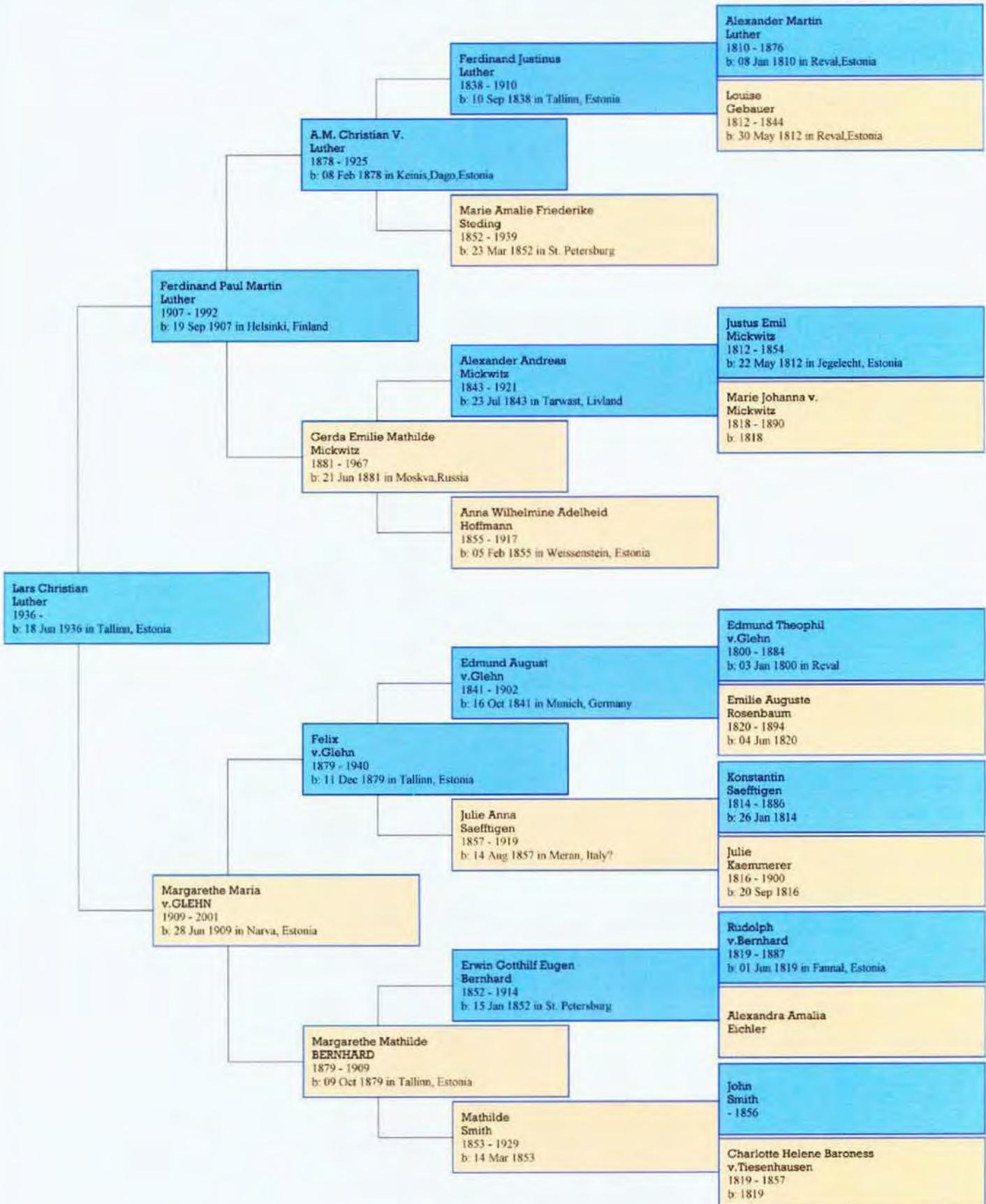
**Ferdinand Paul Martin Luther (93)** (Sep. 19, 1907 – Aug. 19, 1992). He attended the Domschule in Reval and graduated 1927. Employed at A. M. Luther until 1939 *as a wood purchasing agent, after the war craftsman in Glücksburg, Germany.* Emigrated to the USA in 1954. Mill worker at *Marietta Concrete* in Marietta, Ohio. Married **Margarethe Maria von Glehn**, born in Narva, *Estonia* June 28, 1909, silhouette artist.

**Lars Christian Luther** (June 18, 1936 - ). *He attended the Duborg Skole (High School) in Flensburg, Germany. Emigrated to the US 1954. Obtained BS in Chemistry at Marietta College in Marietta, OH 195, and a doctorate from Indiana U. Bloomington, IN as a student of Prof. Walter Moore. Postdoc at H.C.Ørsted Inst, Copenhagen, Denmark 1964. Lifelong employee as MTS at Bell Labs, Murray Hill, NJ and Lucent at Macungie, PA. Married Janet Elizabeth Matheson Jan 23, 1960.*

My family lived in  
Reval, Estonia,  
when I was born



## Ancestors of Lars Christian Luther





Strandpforte

12/18/00

**A**s a very old woman in the Alzheimer's home in Richlandtown, PA, my mother would return to her hometown Reval (now Tallinn) every day. She would retrace the steps from her father's house to that of her grandmother Bernhard nearby. And she would walk through the "Strandpforte", the ancient city gate leading to the harbor, and look up at the city coat of arms with its cross reminding the visitor of the Danish origins of Tallinn.

She was a happy young child – always singing. Her aunt Agnes was a good mother to her and called her Tibbu ( chicken in Estonian). She loved her nanny Ilinka ( Helen), who took her for walks through Reval. One of the free range chickens living in the garden was "hers". Ilinka would run all over the yard every morning to find where that distracted chicken had laid the egg du jour, which was then cooked for my mother.

Later, after my mother had finished High school and had returned to Reval, she lived with her uncle Erwin Bernhard, who had formally adopted her. Again she walked the old streets and learned to love the old towers and the churches. She made some of her first silhouettes then, like the one of St. Olai's church below.





FELIX VON GLEHN



A.M. CHRISTIAN LUTHER



MARGARETHE M. VON GLEHN  
NEE BERNHARD



GERDA E.M. LUTHER  
NEE MICKWITZ



MARGARETHE M. LUTHER  
NEE VON GLEHN

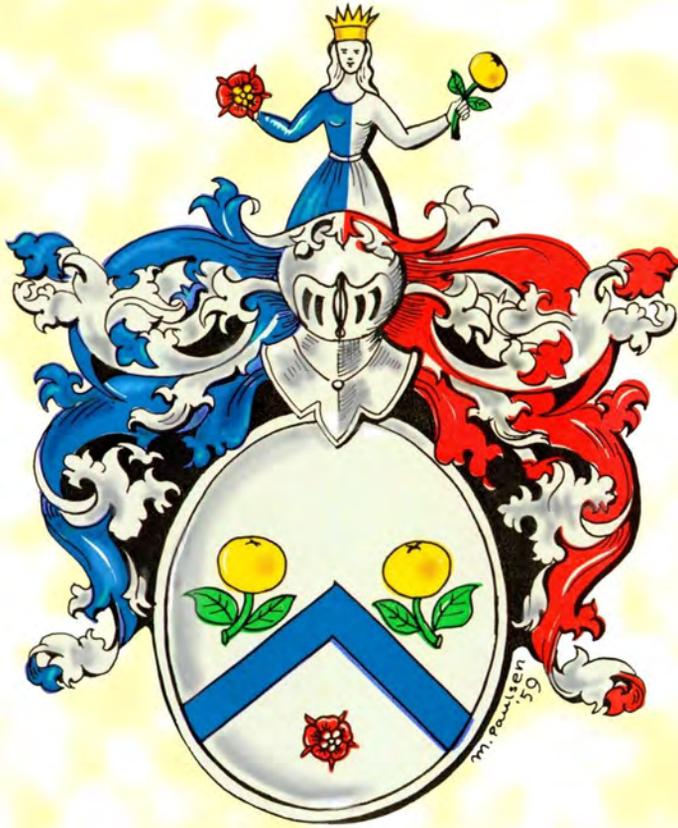


FERDINAND P.M. LUTHER



## EUROPE 1715

**T**hree of my four grandparental families came to Reval from Central Europe and they probably came after the Russians had taken Estonia away from the Swedes in 1710. This happened at the same time as the plague was killing more than 15,000 people in Reval including most ministers and doctors. The town only recovered slowly over several generations. The fourth family, the **von Glehns** probably came from a small town called Glehn in the Rhineland. The first von Glehn in Estonia was Heinrich, who came in 1637. While **Mickwitzes** go back as far as 1583, to Simon Mickwitz of Lubinaw in the Lausitz region, the first Mickwitz in Estonia was Christoph Friederich I, according to a book called: "Stamntafeln nicht immatrikulierter Baltischer Adelsgeschlechter" by Alfred von Hansen, 1933. **Luthers** immigrated from Wroclaw (Breslau) when Georg Christian Luther did not like the 1742 takeover of his homeland by the Prussians and moved to Reval. And the **Bernhards** believe that their ancestors lived in Pirna near Dresden possibly as late as 1775 and that a minister by the name of Bernhard(t) came from there to Estonia one or two generations before Rudolph Bernhard was born in Estonia in 1819.



Fam. Luther in Reval



*Excerpt from an article in Journal of Baltic Studies, VolVIII, No.1(Spring1977)*

Not only were the Baltic-Germans the victims of Nazi-Soviet collusion, they had become an anachronism within their own homeland. For seven centuries the Germans in the Baltic maintained a disproportionate influence in the cultural, political, and social life of their host countries. In the thirteenth century German merchants migrated to the Baltic region, followed in the next century by the Order of Teutonic Knights. The Germans colonized the Baltic, converted the inhabitants to Christianity, and made them serfs in a feudal economy which lasted until 1816-19. Still, peasants could not hold land until Tsar Alexander II enacted the Agrarian Law of 1849. With forced labor also abolished that year the peasants' lot improved, but until World War I they had no chance at self-determination.

With the end of W.W. I came independence for the Baltic countries, which asserted their nationhood by expropriating agricultural property that had for hundreds of years belonged to German landlords. This land the new governments distributed among farm laborers and small landholders, with little or no compensation to the former owners. In Estonia, former owners received monetary compensation for lost property; in Latvia and Lithuania former landowners retained fifty to one hundred hectares of land for individual use.

Of the land expropriated in Estonia, about 86.5 percent belonged to Baltic-Germans, who in turn comprised only 1.6 percent of the entire population in 1922. In Latvia, about 71 percent of the land was contained in larger holdings, with the remaining 29 percent owned by small holders. As in Estonia, the German minority owned most of the larger land holdings, yet they represented only 3.2 percent of the population in 1920. Germans in Lithuania were concentrated in Memel and they held no major agricultural lands, which were in this case owned by Russians.

Many Baltic-Germans sought a living in the cities, where they flourished for a time under generous and enlightened minority laws. Estonia was especially progressive in this respect. The Constitution of 1920 permitted individuals to declare to which minority they belonged. Minorities could establish autonomous cultural institutions and use their native language in local government bodies. Germans, Russians, and Swedes could address the Central Administration in their own language. Until 1934, and the dictatorship of Konstantin Päät, the larger minorities, including the Germans, had political parties. In January 1934, in response to the Liberator's League's alleged plans to pull off a Nazi *coup*, President Päät declared martial law and banned all but his own political party. Aside from political activity, the Germans continued to enjoy their cultural heritage in Estonia.



Edmund von Glehn  
Doctor and Painter

8/20/04

**Edmund Theophil von Glehn** (1800-1894) was a remarkable man, and that is why we know more interesting things about him than about more recent ancestors. He had a medical practice in St. Petersburg and later in Reval and he was so successful as a doctor that he received a medal from the Czar and was elevated to Court Physician. Nonetheless he must have been aware of how little a physician of his time could do for his patients. He practiced medicine before bacterial diseases were understood and before the importance of public hygiene was appreciated. No wonder drugs such as Aspirin (1893) or Salvarsan (1903) had been invented yet. What he did was to prescribe placebos (sugar pills) and alternating cold and hot baths; in other words he honored the physician's creed: First of all do no harm. When he started his practice he was competing with barber/physicians who bled their patients and collected the blood to let it congeal into a pudding for diagnostic purposes.

In 1840 he married an illegitimate daughter of a German Baron von Rosen and to avoid the scandal that was touched off by this mesalliance (probably) he took a sabbatical and went to study painting with Wilhelm v.Kaulbach in Munich. Kaulbach was a very fashionable painter at that time and therefore detailed biographies of him exist. Edmund was mentioned in one of them (Mueller) and from the text one can easily conclude that Edmund and his little family for a while belonged to an intimate circle of four painters and took part in their activities. Thus he and his wife and his little son, Edmund August, my great- great-grandfather, were incorporated into frescos (The Four Seasons) that the four painters created on the walls of a summerhouse (Himbselhaus) on the Starnberger Lake near Munich. You can find details about this in my Glehn Family book. Kaulbach also twice painted Edmund's lovely wife, Emilie, and those portraits were hanging in the Glehn house where my mother lived in her first eight years. There she also saw one of Edmund's own paintings. The Kaulbach paintings were lost when the house was sold in 1918 but you can see them in photographs which Andreas v.Glehn kindly sent to me.

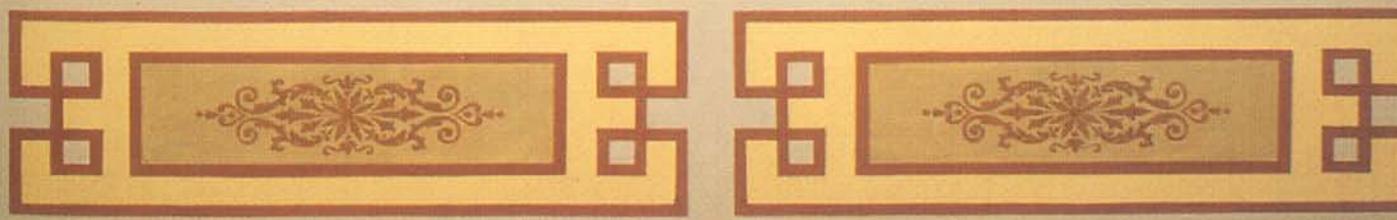
Edmund lived in Munich from 1840 till 43 before returning to Reval and practicing medicine there. He became known as an outspoken atheist. The photo below is a detail of a formal portrait of him and two of his children dating from about 1870. While my cartoon maybe seems irreverent, I have the greatest respect for Edmund; he must have been an interesting and talented and unconventional man.



The real Edmund Theophil v.Glehn, Court Medicus of the Czar.



JULI



12/5/2005

If you read the previous page about Edmund v. Glehn and his friendship and glory days in Munich with the painter Kaulbach, you would be surprised if I had not followed up on the story. Was all this true? Is the “Himselfhaus” still standing? Are the frescoes still there? In the first round I came to a standstill after inquiring at a travel bureau in the Starnberger Lake area: nobody knew anything about this house. But I did mention my quest to a friend from Glücksburg days by name of Gert v. Hassel. He had lived with his parents in the same house as we did then: Miss Ziese’s big old pile of yellow brick on the Sandwigstrasse. He is, oh, maybe five years younger than I am. He settled in Bavaria and started a correspondence after my mother’s death. In one of his letters he mentioned that he loved to sail his boat on the Starnberger Lake. So on the spur of the moment I told him of my quest in my Christmas letter. Two weeks later I get a small package containing a book entitled “Das Himself-Haus”.

“It is still standing”, he wrote, “and lived in and taken good care of”. Turns out my source was slightly inaccurate calling it Himself Haus and perhaps this made Gert’s search a little harder. The book he gave me, by Erwin G. Hipp, essentially confirms the stories of artist life, parties and high jinks and is full of glorious illustrations. There are quality reproductions of the frescoes called “The Four Seasons” which are the ones containing the portraits of Edmund’s family, and the author offers a reprint of a lengthy article concerning an impromptu procession, which culminated in the painting of these frescoes. This article originally had appeared in a local newspaper (left nameless, unfortunately) around 1887. You can’t imagine how thrilled I was by this gift. My search, prompted by the observation that one of Mutti’s ancestors was born in an unlikely place, ended up by opening a wide vista into a totally forgotten world and time. My parents did not know about any of this, I am sure. My mother would have been so proud to tell me about it.

In the picture entitled “Juli”, Emilie v. Glehn is the lady with the fishing rod. She appears to have had some angler’s luck; two fish are sticking out limply from the net she is carrying. In another reproduction Glehn himself appears as old man winter with a fantastic beard which judging from his formal photographic portrait was only slightly exaggerated.





Molly v. Geln

Painted by Timoleon Neff

2/24/05

**M**olly v. Glehn (1809-1871) was a sister of Edmund and a Great-grandaunt of my mother and her life unfolded well before those of my parents'. My mother never mentioned her to me; what I know is from a book of Koch family memoirs, esp. the adoring tribute written by her daughter Maria Amalia, "Misi". Molly was one of the more beloved figures in Reval society; she had a niece also named Molly, whose photo you can see in the Glehn family book.

Aunt Molly married a very wealthy (estimated worth 5 million rubles in 1880) merchant and banker, Andreas C. Koch, who also was the German consul in Reval and whose firm traded with London houses (Mendelsohn, Rothschild). The Koch family owned Kosch, an estate 8 km east of Reval, near the still visible ruins of the ancient cloister of St. Brigit. Kosch was the summerhouse; the family also owned several large houses in town for winter living. The main house of Kosch was a massive pink stone building set in a large park with a wall around it. Other Koch-owned houses with names like Tannrode, Waldfried and Friedheim were nearby; this "village" must have been huge. During her father-in-law's time members of the imperial family, among them Alexandra Feodorowna, the wife of Nicolai I, would frequently come to visit from the nearby castle Katharinenthal, their summerhouse. One of the Kosch houses was where Felix and his siblings played chamber music (see the page "Hausmusik") in later years, when Ida Koch was the hostess.

As the wife of a banker and diplomat Molly spent much time being a hostess and she was always dressed and coiffed by the time any of her eight children would get to see her. Never did they get a glimpse of her in a bathrobe. She had a wonderful sense of humor and would joke and laugh with her children. In the morning she got up early and would first discuss the day's program with her staff and then attend to her correspondence or visit friends and relatives; in the afternoon she would entertain her guests. Though not a member of the aristocracy, she was totally at ease with her many aristocratic visitors. She was very generous and invariably responded to the many letters she received asking for money, advice or comfort. She was never angry or heard scolding any of her staff.

Misi described her thus: "She was tall and slender and of an impressive appearance. Her brown hair was parted and artlessly framed her youthful, happy face with the brilliantly blue eyes. She had a porcelain complexion and blushed easily."

Isn't it a comfort how after enough time we get to be saints.



"Alt Kosch"



reat  
grand-  
mothers



09/04/2000

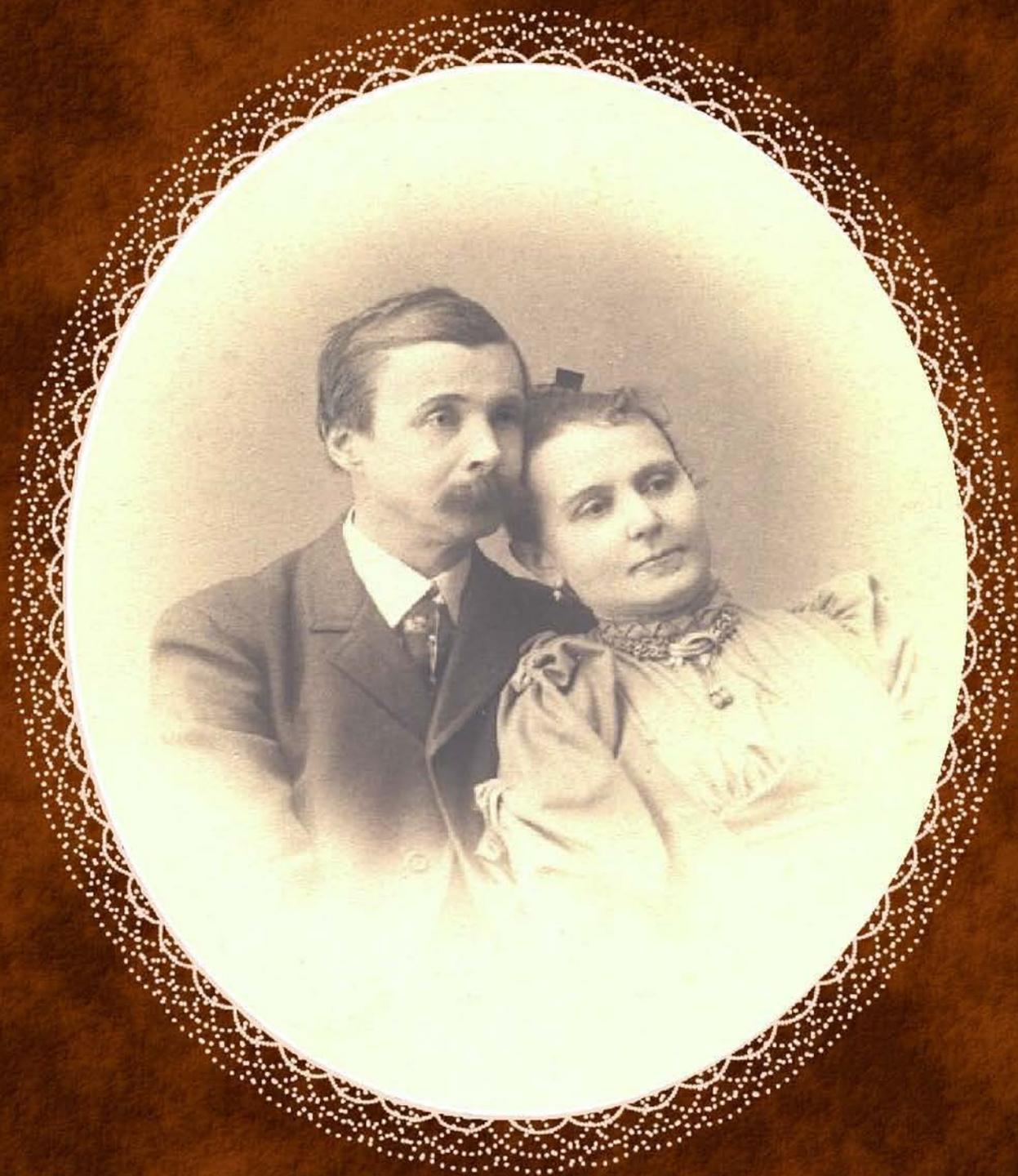
The German- and Russian- dominated Reval of the nineteenth century is a lost world. The city lives on as Tallinn, capital of the Estonians and we may hope it will now forever live free from foreign oppression. A century ago Estonia was part of Russia and the Czar was the ultimate authority. In the capital of Reval, however, the Germans ruled the city as they had for hundreds of years. But both the Russian and the German power were coming to an end with the century. While the Czar (Nicholas II), whose grand father had been killed by terrorists, visited Estonia, his visits were encumbered by security worries. When my mother was a little girl, she often walked with her nurse maid on the main street of Reval. She remembers one day when an officer on horse back shooed them into a side street as the Czar's carriage was coming through.

My two great-grandmothers, Mathilde Bernhard and Julie von Glehn, were best friends long before they were in laws. They had a lot in common. Both were of predominantly German origin and their families had done well for themselves in the Czar's service. Mathilde had been a nurse maid for the Czar's (Alexander III) children. She was the daughter of a Scotsman, John Smith, who had come to the court as an English teacher, and a lady in waiting to the Czarina, Charlotte Tiesenhausen. Julie was the daughter of Konstantin Säfftigen, a court jeweler, who in his later years had built a mansion in Reval on Aia (=garden) street, not far from the house on Pikk (=long) street, where the Bernhards lived. For us the only tangible connection with Mathilde are the silver spoons with the "MB" initials, part of her daughter's dowry. Yes, there was also the "imperial handkerchief", a gift from Maria Fedorovna, (wife of Alexander III), which my mother had treasured for many years; I think Holger has it now.



When Julie's son, Felix, and Mathilde's daughter, Margarethe, were babies around 1880, the two mothers walked in the park outside the city walls side by side, pushing their baby carriages. Long dresses sweeping the ground with their hems, large brimmed hats and maybe parasols. Much later, when the children had grown and promised themselves to marry some day, the mothers still walked in the same park. Margarethe was said to have taken a photo of them on their walk and with a wicked sense of humor to have called it the "Gemütter", which roughly translates into a nonsense word like "motherthing". Perhaps she wanted to call attention to their inseparability.

Revised 1/18/2008



Edmund A. and Julie v. Glehn

*Excerpts from Julia v. Glehn's (my great-grandmother) diary, copied by Gita v. Glehn, Julia's granddaughter, for my mother.*

8/16/1897 Today our Felix (18) left his parental home for the first time, just now Edmund drove with him to the train station to bring him to (St.) Petersburg to the Petri school. One should think that this will be the best thing for him with God's help, he needed to be placed in a different environment and onto his own feet. It is very hard for me to send him to (St.) Petersburg of all places.

8/15/1906 Yesterday declaration of engagement of Grete and Felix. Now congratulations from everywhere, pleasant evening in the family with Felix his good old self. Now start the ... visits for them and a wonderful free time.

8/26 Now my boy is gone again, my dear good boy. May God protect him. Today on the 27th he is already so far away from home, so awfully far. And who knows when we shall see each other again. Separation and avoidance, that is life!!!

11/28/1906 Today my boy is 27 years old. May God protect him. How the years have flown by and yet I see everything as clearly as if it had happened yesterday. Today I read a poem by Th. Storm to his sons: "Always be truthful..." etc.

9/21/1907 Was this ever a day today. Who could have known in the morning how wonderful the day would turn out to be. Felix (27) has found a job and this great worrisome wish has come true. How soon my prayer was answered, how wonderful life is now.

11/26 We travel with Gretel to Ptbz to find an apartment.

1908 Today Matilde traveled to Ptbz in order to make a home for the children, came home on the 9th with Felix as a surprise. On the 12th (December)\* at 4 pm the wedding ceremony took place in the Olai church. Pastor Winkler gave a very good speech and exhorted them to honor their vows, an exhortation which is quite appropriate considering the views of today's generation, while I am sure that the two children who have been faithful to each other for seven years will continue to be steadfast until God's will parts them, may they have a long rich happiness... After the ceremony there was a reception in the house and they came to us for tea before their departure.

6/20/1902 Last attempt by the doctors to raise (Edmund's) heart activity with saline injections. Causing awful shivers lasting for one hour and 5 min. I wish they had spared him this torture, it didn't help, they were all standing around his bed and saw his pain which was fruitless.

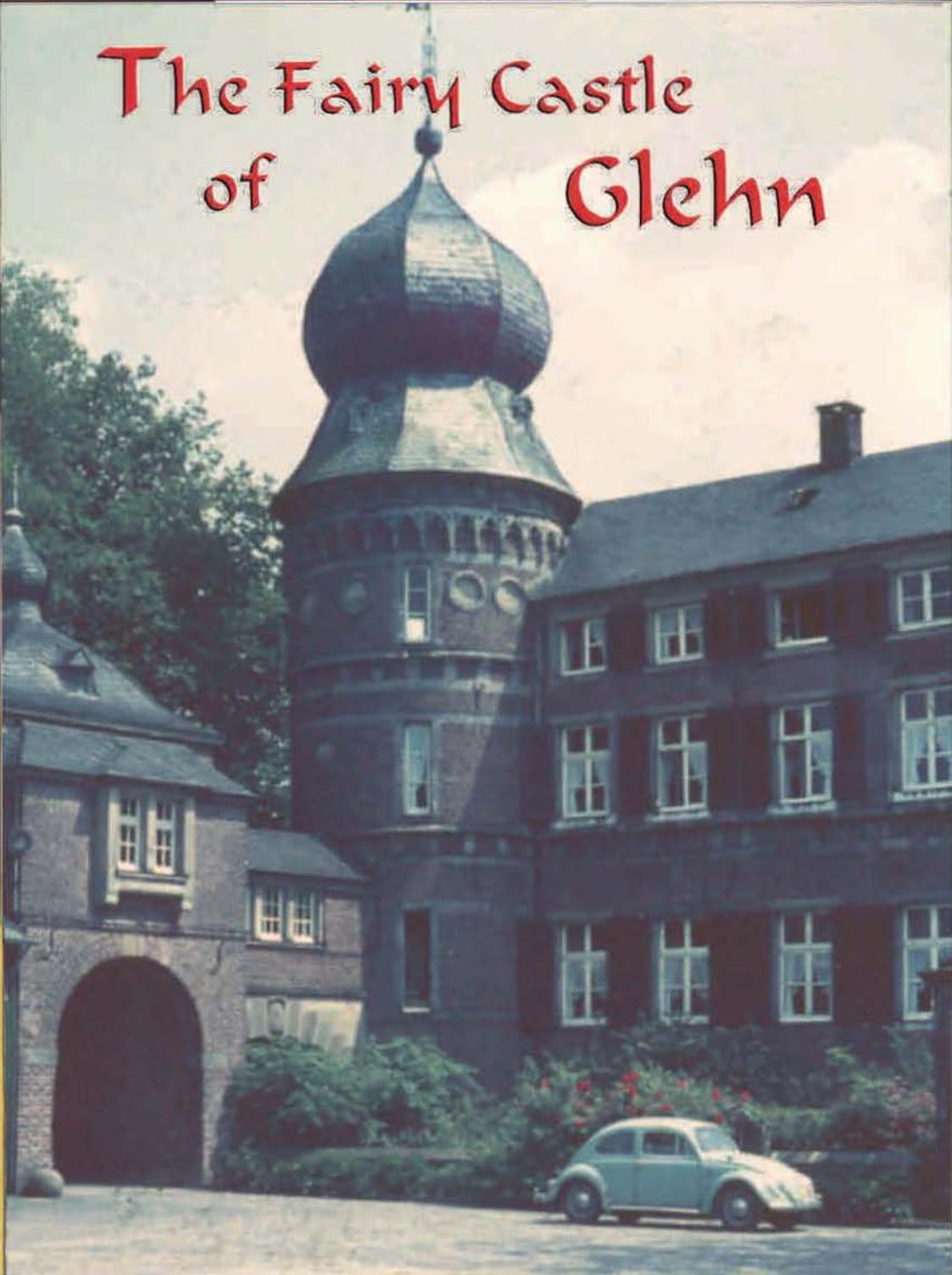
Edmund had wanted to move to Strandheim (Beach home) and had told me to order a carriage in good time, he needed to recover outside the city.

And a beach home received him, a different one than the one hoped for and longed for, a home surrounded by waves, the last one. Oh, for the great quiet loneliness that surrounds me, the loneliness of the soul, which asks without receiving an answer, which yearns without reaching the object of its longing, the great, great loneliness! Growing each day, getting more depressing, since he who was the content of my life went from me. Now I am a fallen leaf, driven by the winds, rolling on the ground; steering out of the harbor again, which the ship of my life had entered, into the wide open sea, victim of wind and waves.

\* Julia uses the Russian calendar, which was 11 days ahead of the Western Gregorian).



# The Fairy Castle of Glehn



Revised 9/05/2004

When my mother first told me about the venerable family of the von Glehns that I was a member of because I was her son, I was deeply impressed. "Our family records go back to the 10 or 11th century," she said with satisfaction as we sat on a dirty and torn sofa. "Your father has been to see the castle and has talked to the present owner. Unfortunately," she added, "our forefathers were robber barons, and the archbishop of Mainz laid siege to the castle and drove them out." Nevertheless, I got the message that "robber baron" was an honorific and that the important part was "baron" and not "robber".

I remember once as a teenager saying to her bitterly: "You always talk of nobility and how rich your family was, and here we have nothing". She replied then that she would not speak of it any more and I was ashamed.

Much later in life, when Janet and I made our "Castles of Germany" trip, we set out to see the castle my father had visited when he worked in Duisburg for a year (1952). But while we easily found the nearby village of Glehn, we got only blank stares when we asked for the castle of Glehn. People would tell us to go and see the Dyck castle and so we did. It is a wonderful castle in a grand old park with a moat around it. It has a terrific armor and gun collection and one of the owners in the seventeenth century was a dedicated botanist and took great pride in his park and species trees. The episode with the archbishop of Mainz is an important part of the history of the Dycks. But from what I saw, none of the former or present owners were called "Glehn" or "von Glehn".

Later I made the acquaintance of Andreas v. Glehn, my cousin in Sweden. He wrote that he had found the real Glehn castle and that it was not the Dyck castle. He sent this picture with his Volkswagen in the courtyard. He said that he had inspected family documents in the castle library. According to him the Glehns had "gotten away" after their defeat by the archbishop. But all this is so long ago that this may just be wish thinking.

In 2003 I received upon request a "von Glehn" genealogy researched by Johann Paulsen, the same historian who did our blue Luther book. What Paulsen wrote has put all my unease about fancy castles in Germany to rest. It appears that the oldest ancestor of the von Glehn family who is documented historically was a Johann von Gelehn who owned property in Aachen and died in 1568. He can be linked by a reasonable argument to the assured ancestor, Heinrich, who moved to Estonia. There is no historical evidence for kinship with any German knights. Read more about this in the von Glehn Book.



V. GLEHN HOUSE AIA STREER

1/19/2008

*This is a garden side view of the house that my great grandfather Säfftigen built for his family after his retirement. He had immigrated to Russia from his hometown of Meran, Italy, and was a jeweler. His daughter Julia married Edmund A. v.Glehn. They had eleven children; the eldest was Felix, my grandfather, who sold the house hastily in 1918 and fled to Germany with his daughter, my mother, and his three sisters. His brothers stayed in Estonia. My cousin Andreas v.Glehn took a photo of the front elevation of the house in 1999.*



**M**y mother wrote in her family history:

My grandfather Säfftigen had our mansion built at the outskirts of Reval with a big park behind it. At the sides were the two "cavalier houses": one for guests and the other for the laundry, kitchen and the living quarters for the footman and his wife. They were identical. My grandfather lived on the first floor and his daughter Julie with her family in the second floor. The third floor I never saw. There were guest rooms and rooms to store unwanted furniture. The kitchen was in the basement plus the living quarters for the cook and the maids. As a curiosity for our times:

I was not allowed to go into the kitchen, that my clothes should not attract kitchen odors, (of course I went from sheer curiosity). There were endless rooms and cellars, and I had the feeling that it was a labyrinth where you could get lost forever. I write about the "laundry kitchen" because in olden days they cooked the white things (sheets, shirts, etc.) in soapsuds in huge kettles.

When Janet and I visited Tallinn in 2007 found only a huge modern sports hotel at the site on Aia street.



EUROPEAN DIVISION

**THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**

101 INDEPENDENCE AVENUE, S.E.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20540-4830

July 28, 1998

Dear Mr. Luther:

This is in response to your inquiry concerning Edmund von Glehn, American Consul in Reval, Russia, in the late 1800's. As I mentioned in my phone call earlier this month, the Foreign Service List May 1890 and December 1891 issues give Mr. von Glehn as U. S. Agent in Revel (sic) as of 1884. As we have a gap in the Foreign Service List, I called the State Department Library, whose staff told me Mr. von Glehn was no longer named in the 1905 listing.

Should you have any further questions, please call me at 202-707-8498 or e-mail me at [tspi@loc.gov](mailto:tspi@loc.gov).

Sincerely,

Taru R. Spiegel  
Reference Librarian

Mr. Lars C. Luther  
OEC  
Lucent Technologies  
9999 Hamilton Blvd.  
Breinigsville, PA 18031

# A List of Consuls and Agents of the U.S. in 1890

24

## UNITED STATES CONSULAR SERVICE.

### PORTUGAL AND DOMINIONS—SALVADOR.

Place.	Name and title.	Where born.	Whence appointed.	Date of commission or appointment.	Salary.	Fees for year ending June 30, 1889.
<i>St. George</i> .....	<i>Joaquim J. Cardozo</i> ..... Agt.			Jan. 7, 1879		\$10.50
<i>St. Michael's</i> .....	<i>William W. Nicholls</i> ..... Agt.			Dec. 16, 1889		98.50
<i>Terceira</i> .....	<i>Henrique de Castro</i> ..... Agt.			Sept. 17, 1875		51.00
Funchal, Madeira .....	Thomas C. Jones ..... C.		Ky	June 16, 1886	\$1,500	133.00
Do.....	William J. G. Reid ..... V. & D. C.			Aug. 16, 1889		
Lisbon .....	George B. Loring ..... *C. G.	Mass	Mass	Mar. 30, 1889	5,000	748.50
Do.....	J. B. Wilbor ..... V. & D. C. G.			Aug. 8, 1883		
<i>Faro</i> .....	<i>F. L. Tavares</i> ..... Agt.			June 1, 1879		No rep't
<i>Oporto</i> .....	<i>William Storc</i> ..... Agt.			Nov. 10, 1876		172.50
<i>Setubal</i> .....	<i>Joaquim T. O'Neil</i> ..... Agt.			Aug. 27, 1874		No rep't
Mozambique, Africa (b) .....					1,000	1.00
Do.....		V. C.				
<i>Lorenzo Marques</i> .....	<i>James McIntosh</i> ..... Agt.			Aug. 9, 1887		No rep't
Santiago, Cape Verde (b) .....	Henry Pease ..... C.	Mass	Mass	Aug. 7, 1882	1,000	41.40
Do.....	José P. Borjas ..... V. C.			May 18, 1883		
<i>Brava</i> .....	<i>J. J. Nunes</i> ..... Agt.			July 3, 1862		85.35
<i>Fogo</i> .....	<i>J. J. de S. Monteiro</i> ..... Agt.			June 17, 1874		No fees.
<i>Saí</i> .....						Do.
<i>St. Vincent</i> .....	<i>Joseph H. Hasly</i> ..... Agt.			Sept. 5, 1888		391.42
St. Paul de Loando, Africa (b) .....					1,000	5.00
Do.....	Robert S. Newton ..... V. C.			Oct. 17, 1868		
<b>ROUMANIA.</b>						
Bucharest .....	A. Loudon Snowden ..... † C. G.	Pa	Pa	July 1, 1889	6,500	No rep't
Do.....	Wm. G. Boxshall ..... V. C. G.			Dec. 2, 1884		
<b>RUSSIA.</b>						
Archangel (b) .....	Ferdinand Lindes ..... Act'g C.					Fees. No rep't
Helsingfors (b) .....						Fees. 63.00
Do.....	Herman Donner ..... V. C.			Jan. 21, 1879		
<i>Wigborg</i> .....	<i>Ludwig Pacius</i> ..... Agt.			July 28, 1885		No rep't
Moscow (b) .....						Fees. 886.00
Do.....	Nicholas Wertheim ..... V. C.			Feb. 27, 1889		
Odessa .....	Thomas E. Heenan ..... C.	Pa	Minn	Oct. 29, 1885	2,000	133.50
Do.....	John H. Volkmann ..... V. C.			Mar. 23, 1877		
<i>Batoum, Pali, and Tiflis</i> .....	<i>James C. Chambers</i> ..... Agt.			Feb. 8, 1886		No rep't
<i>Kostoff and Tuganrog</i> .....	<i>John Martin</i> ..... Agt.			Dec. 23, 1870		Do.
St. Petersburg .....	John M. Crawford ..... C. G.	Pa	Ohio	June 20, 1889	3,000	439.00
Do.....	William H. Dunster ..... V. C. G.			Jan. 11, 1888		
<i>Cronstadt</i> .....	<i>Peter Vigins</i> ..... Agt.			Mar. 21, 1883		No rep't
<i>Liban</i> .....	<i>Simon Schreiber</i> ..... Agt.			Aug. 21, 1886		54.00
<b>Bere!</b> .....	<b>Ebmond Von Glehn</b> ..... Agt.			<b>Feb. 15, 1884</b>		<b>No rep't</b>
<i>Riga</i> .....	<i>Niels P. A. Bornholdt</i> ..... Agt.			Apr. 12, 1880		273.50
Warsaw (b) .....	Joseph Rawicz ..... C.	Russia	Russia	Mar. 11, 1875	Fees.	47.00
Do.....		V. C.				
<b>SALVADOR.</b>						
San Salvador .....	Henry R. Myers (u) ..... C.	Germany	S. Dak	Feb. 19, 1890	2,000	2.50
Do.....	Frederick Baruch ..... V. C.			Dec. 6, 1887		
<i>Acayulha</i> .....	<i>Henry Jones</i> ..... Agt.			Aug. 30, 1889		654.00
<i>La Libertad</i> .....	<i>Emilio Courtade</i> ..... Agt.			July 15, 1887		742.50
<i>a Union</i> .....	<i>John B. Courtade</i> ..... Agt.			Aug. 17, 1888		322.50

\* The Consul-General is also Minister-Resident.

† The Consul-General is also Minister-Resident, and accredited to Serbia and Greece.

# Trio D dur.

1. Ouverture à la française.  
Con discrezione (Lento.)

Violino I.  
(Flauto.)

Johann Ludwig Krebs (1713-80).  
Bearbeitung von Hugo Riemann.

The image displays a page of musical notation for Violino I, titled "Trio D dur." The score is for the first movement, "1. Ouverture à la française," by Johann Ludwig Krebs, arranged by Hugo Riemann. The tempo is marked "Con discrezione (Lento.)". The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The music is marked with various dynamics including *f*, *sf*, *accupre. f*, *cresc.*, *dim.*, *cresc. molto*, *ff*, *rit.*, *Vivace. (F)*, *f*, *dim.*, *B*, *tr*, *cresc.*, *f*, *dim.*, and *mf*. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 0, 10, 18, 17, 20, 27, 24, 41, and 47 indicated. A large, oval-shaped portrait of Felix von Glehn is overlaid on the center of the page, partially obscuring the musical notation. The portrait shows a man with light-colored hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, and a dark tie. The background of the page is a light, aged paper color.

Felix von Glehn 1879 - 1940

This is what my mother wrote about her parents in her Family History. I have edited it slightly for clarity:

## **Felix von Glehn**

(My father)

My father was the oldest of the ten children my grandparents, Edmund and Julie Säftigen, had. He was very handsome and very gifted, and my grandmother adored him. Grandma Glehn and Grandma Bernhard, Mutti's maternal grandmother, were close friends at this time, and their two children, Felix and Margarethe, were packed into one baby carriage, and the two mothers were always sticking together. The two children grew up together. My mother was the dearest friend of Tante Agnes, Felix's sister. She, Agnes, was sometimes annoyed with Grete, because when she came to visit, my mother plunged into a book and got lost in her reading. But Felix and Grete both were determined to marry each other. My mother waited nine years until my father had finished his studies as a chemist and a violinist. He started to play as soloist. But he suffered badly of stage fright, and once his mind went blank out of fear and he had to quit his concert. He never tried again.

My mother was courted by many young men, among them Dimitri Muschketoff, who was so rich, that he did not know how much land he owned in Siberia. Grandma liked Dimitri, so did Uncle Erwin. They all tried to persuade my mother to choose him, but she wanted Felix only. Finally they got married, moved to St. Petersburg where he had a job as a chemist. Her first child, a boy, was a stillbirth. Pretty soon she was pregnant with me. She wanted to have her child in the house of her parents, and in her eighth month she traveled to Reval. But at Narva, at the frontier of Estonia, suddenly the premature birth started. She was brought into a hospital and I was born at 3 o'clock in the morning. After nine days she had a blood clot, which entered her heart. She just bent over me - and fell over and was dead.

This blow my father never overcame. It literally was the end of his life. Often he sat down to the piano and played "The Death and the Maiden" by Schubert - the significance of it I understood much later. He was a broken man. His second sister **Emmy** somehow got him under her influence, which became more and more total after he had to flee from Reval and lost everything. The end was a tragedy. He was but her baby and totally dependent on her. He first contracted tuberculosis in his lungs, which got healed, but a little later he miserably died from cancer of his stomach.

# A Postcard for Felix



2/10/05

Sometime in 1903 this post card was put in the mail in Reval, Estonia, to Mr. Felix v. Glehn, my grandfather, who at the time was a 24-year-old chemistry student in Riga, Latvia. Notice that it is a Russian postcard with Russian stamps. The cancellation stamps say **PEBEAb**, which is the Russian way of spelling Reval, and the time may have been the 23 of Feb. (II in Roman numerals), but I can't say for sure. The address is: Herrn Felix v. Glehn; Herrn is short for "An Herrn...", or To Mr...., in German and the short text on the other side of the post card is also in German. This illustrates nicely how German-speaking people living in Estonia at that time were using the Russian post office, because the country was part of Russia, but continued speaking and writing in their mother tongue.

The post card is signed by "Mary". I am guessing this was Mary von Husen, wife of the Danish consul in Reval and a friend of the Glehns. She got to be the godmother of my mother, when my mother was born in 1909. She wrote about the building featured on the post card and has identified it as the "???? theater, I can't decipher the name. It's not important probably, but here I what she wrote:

*"It's not beautiful, is it? Cordial greetings from Grete. Grete is acting crazy today, as you sometimes did. No matter, Grete says hello. Greetings from Andreas ? (Mary's husband, I think). Mary"*

This somewhat ditzzy message which seems to have been composed in bits and pieces judging from the different handwriting styles probably says: **Grete loves you.** Now Grete, I am sure, is my future grandmother, Margarethe Bernhard. While Felix and Grete were not yet engaged, they had promised each other that they would get married sometime. It is possible that it would not have been proper for her to write herself, or maybe she just didn't feel like writing that day.

When I was about 17 years old I visited Mary v. Husen in Denmark. She and her husband had opted not to leave Estonia in 1939, when most Baltic-Germans did. Perhaps they thought they had diplomatic immunity. Well, the communists deported them to a camp in Siberia, where her husband died. She survived and eventually made it to safety in the West. Unfortunately I don't remember anything about the visit.



**A**gnes v. Glehn was my grandfather Felix's sister. She raised my mother in her mother's stead. She was a piano teacher and spoke French fluently. After moving to Germany with the other Glehns in 1939 she became a companion to Marie (Miederle) Frankenberg, who lived on an estate (Seubersdorf) near Zigahnen, where my mother grew up. There she could visit her and she often stayed over. There were many stories she delighted in telling about Miederle and her butler, Kleinfeld, and her lap dog, a dwarf dachshund. When Miederle died, Agnes moved together with her friend, Mariechen Buddenbrock. After the collapse of Germany in 1945, she and Mariechen came to live in Kellinghusen, Schleswig Holstein, not far from Glücksburg. Unfortunately we never got to visit her there, travel being difficult then. In 1961 Agnes wrote a letter to my mother shortly before her death, addressing my mother as "Tibsichen"(little chicken) and signing as "Tannebia", as my mother called her as a child.



**Felix and Agnes von Glehn about 1883**

Kellinghusen 23. II 61.

Mein liebster Herzensliebster -  
Danke dir 1000x für deinen  
so lieben Brief - u. die Beant-  
wortung aller meiner heiklen  
Fragen! Mein Armes, Du tust mir  
so leid  
so auf  
Deiner  
rechner  
darüber  
geant  
viel  
Schwer  
Wir  
in G  
mein  
Chen



AGNES V. GLEHN ~ 1900

My dearest heart Tipsichen (little chicken)

Thank you 1000 X for your dear letter - and for answering all my troubling questions! My poor child, I am so sorry that once again I upset you so much - I can tell just by looking at your handwriting!! I very much appreciate your answers and give you much credit for answering so willingly and painstakingly. May God give you much joy, many blessings after this difficult passage in your life. We are so far from each other, but in my thoughts I embrace you and press your dear little head to my loving heart so you might know how sorry I am for you and much I feel for you! How I would love to take away all the bad times and know that you feel safe and happy with your beloved Lars! - I would be very pleased to get a picture of Holger as you promised - but don't do this, if it is expensive - I am sure that you must save every penny! - Now I must tell you, that I have felt very poorly this last fall and winter -to my despair I have suffered from diarrhea every day - some times more, sometimes less - but always abnormal stools. My dear lady doctor has given me different medications - unfortunately none have worked! Now she is sending me to our local hospital to have my stomach, liver and gall bladder looked at and to get an X-ray. I am now already waiting for several days - but unfortunately I have to continue waiting until a bed is available, since the hospital is full!! And that is very annoying on one hand, but on the other I am pleased every evening to be able to lie down on my own lovely bed and to sleep by my self and take care of everything alone rather than in public. My dearest - as soon as I know anything for sure, I will write. My loving, golden Mariechen has made it easier for me as much as she could and has taken over all the burdensome tasks - and has brought me out into the fresh air whenever the weather has been mild and quiet - which I am infinitely grateful for. Fortunately this winter we have had almost no snow or frost - still the cold has bothered me a lot and may possibly be the cause of my illness. Work and reading help marvelously to be able to deal with waiting and nervousness. Now I will close with 1000 warm wishes for you, my darling heart, may God bless you and always protect you - you and your loved ones. 1000 thanks again for all your answers from your old Tannebia.



10/24/02

**H**ausmusik is as you might guess music made at home by amateurs. The Glehn family loved classical music and was good at playing it. Edmund v. Glehn had taught himself to play the piano. At parties he would sit down at the piano and entertain the guests with waltzes; some of which he had written himself. My mother also played the piano very well and was invited to recite during her High School functions. She had memorized some of Grosspapa Glehn's waltzes, and thought they were very good. Felix, her father was an accomplished violinist and owned an Amati violin according to my mother's foster sister Lotte.

Helmut Dehio writes in a memoir included in the Koch family story, that his aunt Ida Koch made a tradition of arranging concerts at the family's vacation house on summer evenings. These must have taken place in the years prior to WW I. He reports that all the players of string quartets and piano quintets were from the sibling circle of the Glehn family. That would have been Felix and his youngest brother Walter on violins, another brother Roman on the cello and Agnes playing the piano. I can't tell who could have been the fifth player. Dehio also fondly remembers musical evenings at the Glehn's town house.

Agnes and Walter both eventually became music teachers, the others remained active amateurs throughout their lives. Mutti told me that her father's repertory included such difficult music as the Chaconne of J.S. Bach and the Beethoven and Tchaikowsky violin concerti. He would sometimes visit Zigahnen, where Mutti and Lotte grew up, and would play music with them there. He assigned different sonatas to the girls: Mutti was to practice Mozart sonatas and Lotte was given Beethoven's *Champagne* Sonata.

In the photo of the trio making music in the Glehn house on 24 Garden street in 1902 (or so) we see Agnes, Walter and Roman. The portrait on the wall is of their mother, Julia, painted by the German painter Kaulbach.



Mickwitz

2/16/2008

**M**ickwitz was my grandmother's maiden name, and the name of a very remarkable family which has been dated back to 1583, the year Simon Mickwitz died. He was the "Burgmeister" of the castle of Kamenz, a city now part of Eastern Poland. I believe that meant that he was the manager or administrator of an estate which perhaps had been deeded to a monastery, a common practice then. One of his direct descendants, Christoph Friedrich Mickwitz II, 1743-1801, was born in Reval after his father, Christoph Friedrich I, had moved there from Koenigsberg, an outpost of Germany in the Northeast, and had been entrusted with the spiritual care of the Baltic barons at the very old and very distinguished "Domkirche" on the hill (Toompea = church + chief) in Reval. He probably had received the call to Reval after the big plague of 1710, which had wiped out most of the clerical profession there. He is also credited with re-establishing the Domschule in 1724, the High School preferred by all the Germans of the city, and which my father and his generation still attended.

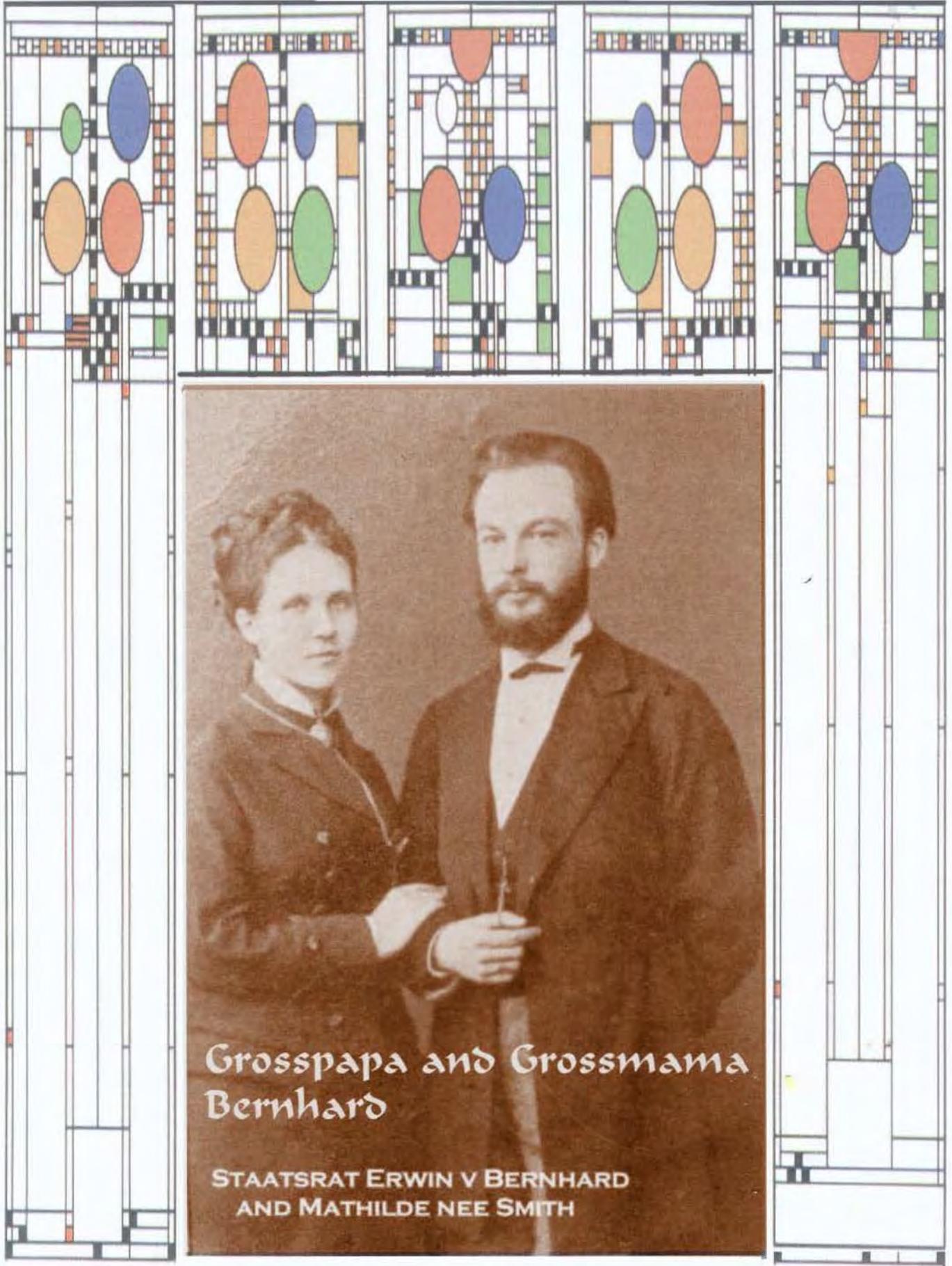


Christoph Friedrich I and his son, Christoph Friedrich II

The son of CFM II, also a pastor like his grandfather and father, was awarded the diploma of Russian hereditary nobility in 1832 and thus became: Christoph Friedrich II von Mickwitz.

As another feather in their cap the family claims to be related to the famous Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz (1798 to 1855).

But my grandmother was a very down-to-earth woman, certainly compared to my mother, and never talked about how distinguished a family she had married into. Most of the Mickwitz family, in Finland anyway, quietly dropped the "von" which after the Russian Revolution no doubt was a wise thing to do.



Grosspapa and Grossmama  
Bernhard

STAATSRAT ERWIN V BERNHARD  
AND MATHILDE NEE SMITH

10/18/02

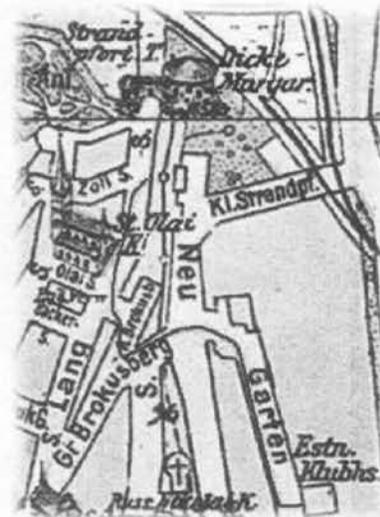
In the summer of 2002 Winfred Bernhard sent me this picture of my maternal great grandparents. My mother often reminisced about "Grossmama Bernhard" and how as a small girl she loved to visit her apartment on the Langstrasse in Reval. This apartment was on the top floor of an old house built directly into the much much older town wall of the city, so that one of its many defense towers became an integral part of the house. Grosspapa Erwin had set up his study in the top floor. He was an architect for the city and among his duties was restoration and maintenance of the old fortifications.

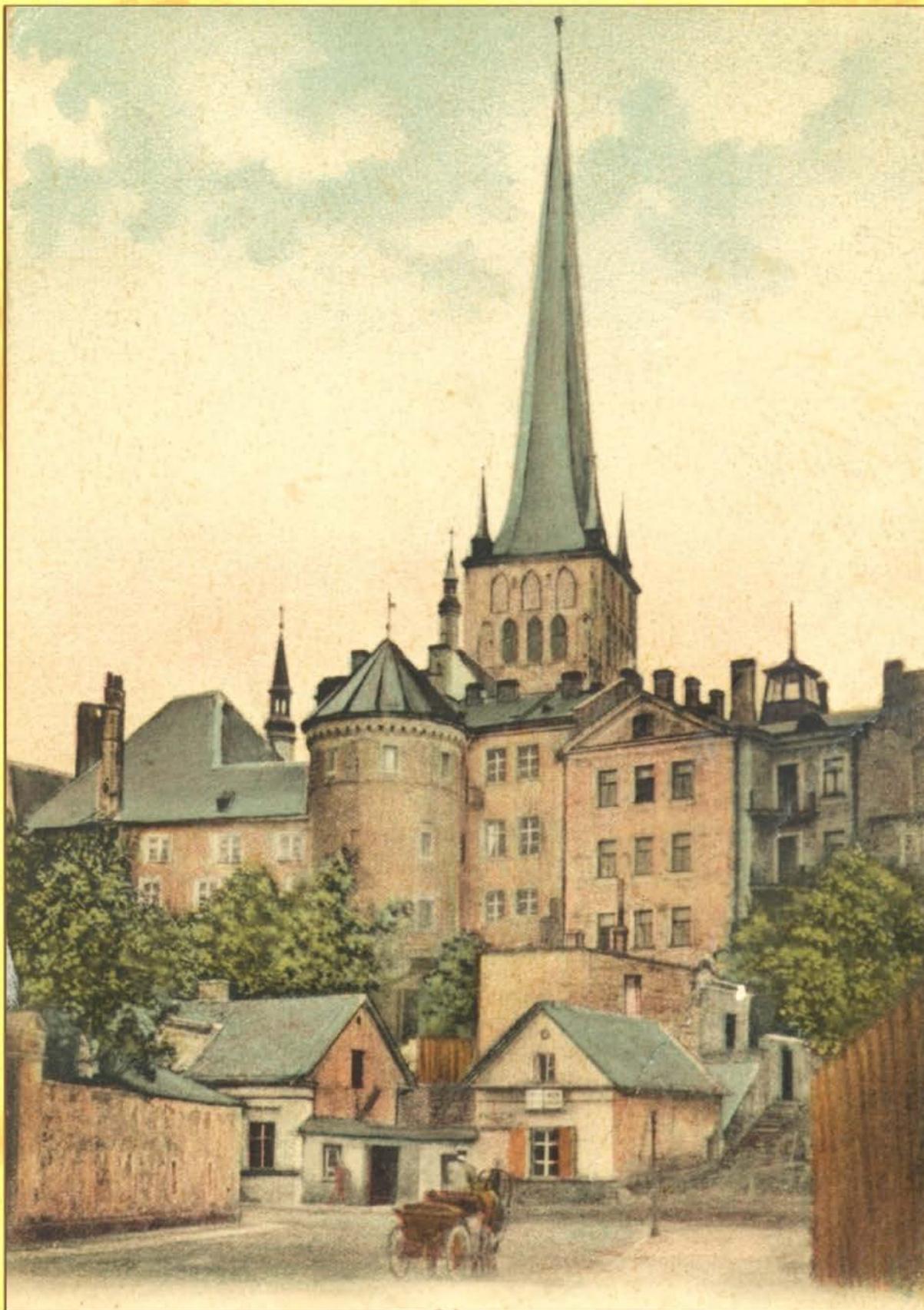
One little pun he was said to have shared with his architect friend had its basis in their common work. A "Tor" in German can mean both a gate and a fool; a "Torheit" means foolishness. So one of the two architects points to the city gate he has been restoring and says: "Das ist meine Torheit". And then, pointing at the other's similar project: "und das ist deine Torheit."

The apartment had a fine view of the harbor and also of the newer part of the city outside the city wall. That's where the Glehn's magnificent house was located. My mother said that some mornings my grand mother would wave from her balcony over to greet her fiancée, Felix. When my mother was a very small girl she lived with the Bernhards. She remembers her grandfather playing piano for her: lively music to dance to and sweet lullabies at bedtime. Later she lived at the Glehns with her father but would make a weekly visit to her widowed Grossmama Bernhard. Her nurse Ilinka would dress her warmly and walk her the ca. 1000 feet, not as the crow flies, believe it, in the crooked old streets to 64 Langstrasse.

She remembers the scary dark spiral stair case in the tower, which apparently led to a backdoor of the apartment. Her happiest memory was of blowing soap bubbles from the balcony and watching them float gently down the long distance to the ground.

My mother's walk from her father Glehn's house to her Grossmama Bernhards apartment.  
I believe that the Glehn house later became the Estonian Club and that the small circle to the left of the Langstrasse marks the tower of the Bernhards.  
Note the Dicke Margarethe at the Strandpforte and the St. Olai church.





St. Olai Church and the Bernhard's house and tower.

**Postcard from Reval to the USA.**

8/13/06

I found this text on the back of the color post card of the St. Olai church entitled "Partie an der kleinen Strandpforte".

Dear Aunt Ida,

1/V 1910 (May 5, 1910)

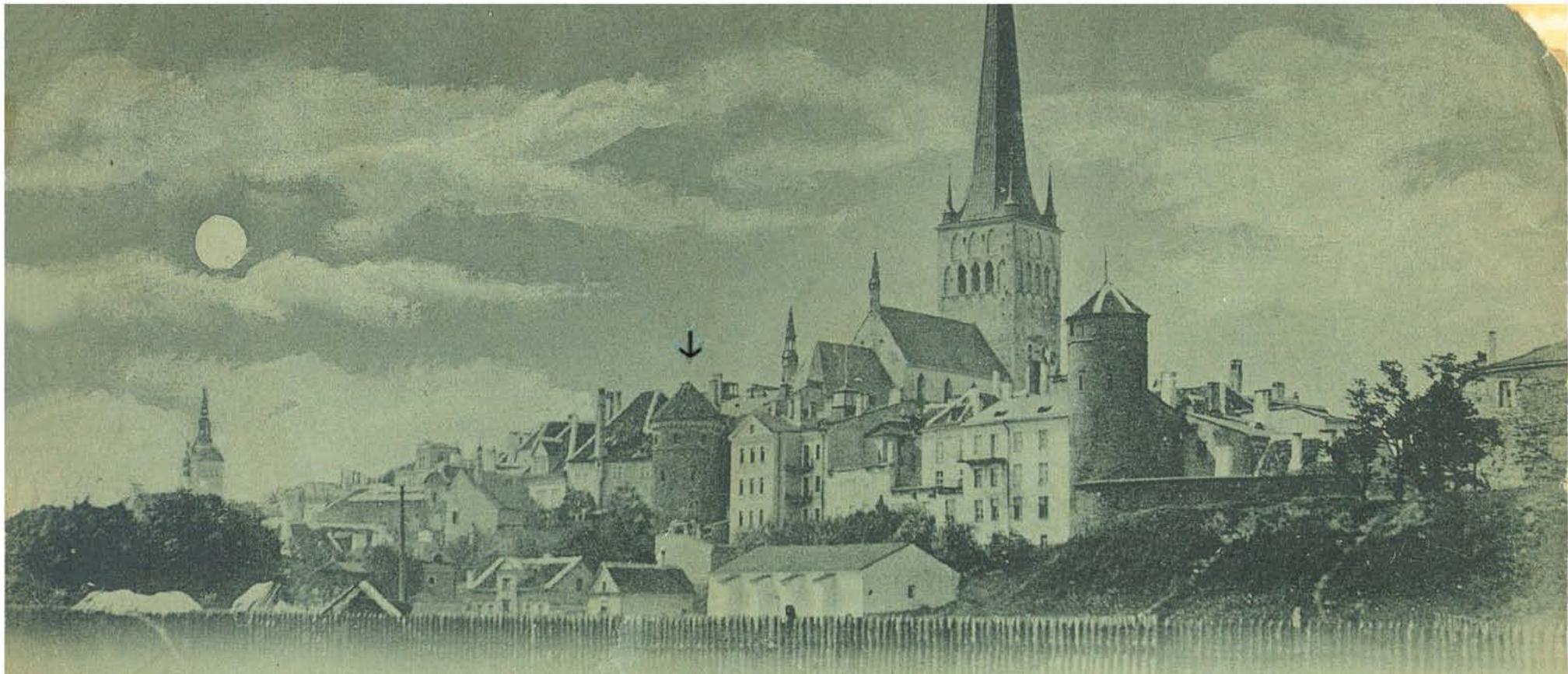
Finally, finally the picture of our house in Reval: the tower and the two windows on every floor nearby. Today I remembered my promise to send it to you. I hope that you soon will have some vacation and some good weather with it, or do you intend to stay in NY. Today is Russian Easter. Gerda and Erna went yesterday to the Russian embassy church for the Russian service. (Here a sentence got cut off)

*The signature is illegible to me; it may be Russian pet- or nick name.*

*The sender must be either Erwin or Mathilde v. Bernhard judging by the address "Aunt Ida", and of course the phrase of "our house". I knew from my mother that they owned the house with the fortification tower but not how many stories it included. I have no idea who Gerda or Erna may have been.*



*The Bernhard's Living room in the Tower.*



Ansicht v. d. kl. Strandpforte.

↑ the tower is an part of the Bernadine tower **Souvenir de Reval**

Blainiam lichen, jorziqan Lu kalifan spika uif miala Goupta  
 und minn pfa ruust kaliriga da farang. Auf diesem Bilde muss  
 du sein von Frau pfa, der zu unsem Goupta gefuht. Frung lichen  
 Auf diesem Lou

Druck v. Grahns R. N. M. Stockholm

R. von der Ley, Reval

1/26/07

In May of 1898 Mathilde Bernhard, known to my mother as “Grossmama Bernhard”, mailed a postcard to Bernd Herrmann, Senta Bernhards’s younger brother, who lived at 147 West 103 Street in New York as is shown on the other side of the card. It was mailed on the second and arrived at the New York post office on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Mathilde was the wife of Erwin Bernhard, the town architect, and Bernd’s uncle.

The message underneath the drawing showing his house (overleaf), which is distinguished by the fortification tower (black arrow) and dwarfed by the 400 foot tall St Olai Church, is written in the old German handwriting called Sütterlin and reads as follows:

*To my dear, lovely little boy I send many greetings and wish him a quick recovery. On this picture you will see the tower that is part of our house. Much love from your Aunt...*

Sadly Bernd died soon thereafter, I believe in 1904.

In what I believe is Senta’s handwriting is a penciled note: The tower is a part of the Bernhard house. The postcard is entitled: View of the “Little Coastal Gate”, or the “Kleine Strandpforte”, as opposed to the “Grosse Strandpforte” next to the “Fat Margarethe”. There is no such gate anymore. It was already torn down in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, before this photo was taken; but the name had stuck.





*Mathilde's Necklace*

The gold necklace in the picture (16" long, slinky-type) is a gift from my mother to Janet. Whoever of you children or grandchildren inherits it some day should be aware that it has been in the family for a long time and that it comes from Czarist Russia. If you look with a magnifying glass at the tab of the catch you can clearly read three stamps. Reading from the tip the stamps are "56", "LR", and "1869". The mark "56" is the gold purity expressed in zolotniks (the old Russian system) and means 56/96 pure or 14/24 karat. The initials LR probably are those of the jeweler and 1869 most likely is the year the bauble was made, a year in the reign of Alexander II.

My mother's grandmother was Mathilde Smith and had early in life lost her mother, Charlotte Helene, born as a Baroness v. Tiesenhausen, who had married a John Smith, English teacher at the court. Two unmarried aunts, Emilie and Mathilde (?), who were ladies in waiting to the Czarina Maria Alexandrovna, raised Mathilde. According to my mother the necklace had belonged to Emilie. Since Mathilde had been born in 1853, she was 16 years old when the necklace was made. It is my guess that Mathilde received it from her aunt as a gift rather than that she inherited the piece.

My mother wrote in her "Family History" that her grandmother once showed her the summer palace of the Czar, "Cathrinthal" on the outskirts of Reval and told her that she used to live in one of the "Cavalier" (separate guest) houses. The palace is now a museum known as Kadriorg to Estonians.



1/19/2008

Janet and I were in Tallinn in July of 2007 for 5 days. One of the great places to see there is Kadriorg, the Estii name for Katharinental, the summerhouse Peter the Great had built for his wife. We had gotten instructions from a very nice lady at the hotel desk but she had no maps to give us. Not long after we had gotten off the highway 20 to Narva we were lost. So we stop to ask and are told to drive back a ways. We are lost again and park in a small lot outside a dingy, dirty super market, dodging big, intimidating delivery trucks. I go inside and ask about Kadriorg but meet only blank stares. Finally someone has a good idea, he runs and fetches a lady in the back making sandwiches. She knows, she is actually enthusiastic that someone wants to see "their" palace. "It's just behind us", she shouts, as she beckons me to follow her. "Wait a moment, I must get my wife". Sure enough, as we walk into the woods behind this deplorable store front a splendid palace appears. There it is, extending invitingly in front of us on this wonderful, mild summer morning with well kept gardens, wide pebble strewn walks and many gardeners busily weeding everywhere. A teenager is stealing coins from the fountain,



Foyer of the Kadriorg



Maria Alexandrovna

The palace was open, a very simple door immediately admitted to a huge reception hall. We felt like stepping into a hangar, except that this one has ornate ceilings. Big staircases lead to the upper floors. There is hardly any furniture, just paintings hanging in large sunlit rooms. I ran around excitedly trying to find a portrait of the Tsarina, that I believed my great-grandmother was attached to as a lady-in-waiting, as my mother said. Unfortunately I was confused. I was looking for Maria Fedorovna, the Danish princess, not Maria Alexandrovna, who was Tsarina when both Charlotte Helene Tiesenhausen, and her daughter Mathilde, who later married Erwin Bernhard my mother's grandmother were at court. So we found and photographed the wrong empress. But I am sure that we also saw the above portrait of the generous donor of the "Imperial Handkerchief" that Mathilde and also her daughter Margarethe M. had worn to their weddings



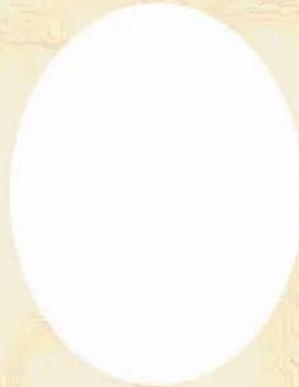
## Four Generations of Bernhards



Rudolph  
Gothelf  
Bernhard  
1852 - 1914



Erwin  
Gothelf  
Bernhard  
1852 - 1914



Ida Bernhard  
1885 - 1943



Margarethe  
Mathilde  
Bernhard  
1879 - 1909



Erwin  
Bernhard  
1881 - 1938



Margarethe  
Maria von Glehn  
1909 - 2001

*I found this article in a Russian encyclopedia in the Lehigh University Library. It is the Encyclopedia Slovar, edition 1905 by Brockhaus. I had been made aware of the article's existence by a letter written by Ida Herrmann, Senta's mother. It translates freely as follows:*

**Бернгардъ** (Рудольфъ Богдановичъ, 1819—87)—одинъ изъ лучшихъ русскихъ знатоковъ строительнаго искусства, сынъ ревальскаго архитектора, началъ свое образование въ существовавшей въ Спб. архитектурной школѣ Толя и блестяще окончилъ его въ строительномъ училищѣ (нынѣшнемъ институтѣ гражданскихъ инженеровъ). Вслѣдъ затѣмъ ему были поручены по вѣдомству путей сообщенія важныя работы, между прочимъ облицовка заново гранитомъ береговъ р. Фонтанки. Позже онъ занималъ должности архитектора одной изъ частей Петербурга, городского архитектора, директора строительнаго училища и члена технического комитета министерства внутреннихъ дѣлъ. Въ 1864 г. акад. художествъ присоединила его къ своему составу въ качествѣ почетнаго члена общины, а въ 1870 г. присудила ему званіе профессора. Въ теченіе многихъ лѣтъ онъ преподавалъ въ ней строительное искусство. Онъ славился въ особенности какъ знатокъ конструкціи куполовъ и потому многократно получалъ отъ правительства порученія свидѣтельствовать нововоздвигаемыя купольныя церкви въ разныхъ мѣстахъ имперіи, руководить подобными постройками и исправлять поврежденія въ уже существующихъ церквяхъ. Важнѣйшія сооруженія его въ Спб.— зданіе евангелическаго госпиталя и домъ германскаго посольства.

**Bernhard** (Rudolph Bogdanovich, 1819-87) - One of the best Russian architects, son of a Reval architect, began his professional education at the St.Petersburg architectural school TOL and completed it with honors at the present Institute of Civil Engineering. On the strength of his record he was given important assignments by the ministry of transportation, among others the cladding of the banks of the Fontanka river with granite. Afterwards he successively took positions as an architect of the city of St.Petersburg, as a director of the architectural school and as a member of the technical committee of the ministry of Internal Affairs. In 1864 he consulted for the Academy of Arts and in 1870 he was elected to be professor and he taught architecture there for many years. He was especially famous for his expertise in the construction of domes and that is why he was asked many times by the government to inspect newly constructed cathedral domes at various

locations in the empire and to manage such construction and to repair existing damage in such churches. The most important of his buildings in St. Petersburg are the Evangelical Hospital and the building of the German Embassy.

*I find one thing in this article especially interesting: his expertise in dome construction. Family lore, not always reliable, has it that the Tsar had asked Rudolph to go to Rome to assist with repair of the great St. Peter's Basilica. It seems that the dome had developed a crack that defied the efforts of the local architects. Rudolph found that a window below the dome had been bricked up at some time and declared this to be the cause of the problem. The window was opened up again and the crack disappeared.*

4/8/2003 I obtained an article about Rudolph in the Deutsch-Baltisches Biographisches Lexicon. It lists among his accomplishments: 1878 Member of the International Commission for the Investigation of the Stability of the Peter's Church in Rome

**T**he architect Rudolph v. Bernhard of St Petersburg, who was on the Commission to restore the Dome of the St. Peters Cathedral, was also vitally instrumental in building the Charles Church in Tallinn or Reval, which is located downhill from the Government building and the Dom Kirche, the heart of the old city, on the corner of Toompulestee and Endla streets. There has always been a significant Swedish community in the city and it asserted its presence by naming its house of worship for the Swedish king Charles XI (1670-96) on whose decree a church had been built on the site in the XVII<sup>th</sup> century which burned down in 1710. The church bell had survived the fire and bore an inscription proclaiming that it been donated by the king.

Kaarli Kirik was completed in 1870, when Rudolph at 51 was at the height of his career. The principle architect Otto Hippius may have asked him as an expert on domes to handle the roof of the church, which would have no internal support.

The web site of the Kaarli Kirik congregation mentions several important people who contributed to the erection of the new church building. Among them are “two professors from St. Petersburg, Rudolph von Bernhard and Otto Pius Hippius, the former being the designer of the roof and the latter the being the church architect.” An Estonian Wikipedia article notes that Bernhard’s wood constructed ceiling was a great achievement at his time and goes on to mention his invitation to deal with the crack in St. Peter’s Dome.



Kaarli Kirik (Charles Church)



Kaarli Kirik  
Rudolph von Bernhard

Margarethe  
Mathilde  
Bernhard  
1879 - 1909





Margarethe Mathilde v. Glehn

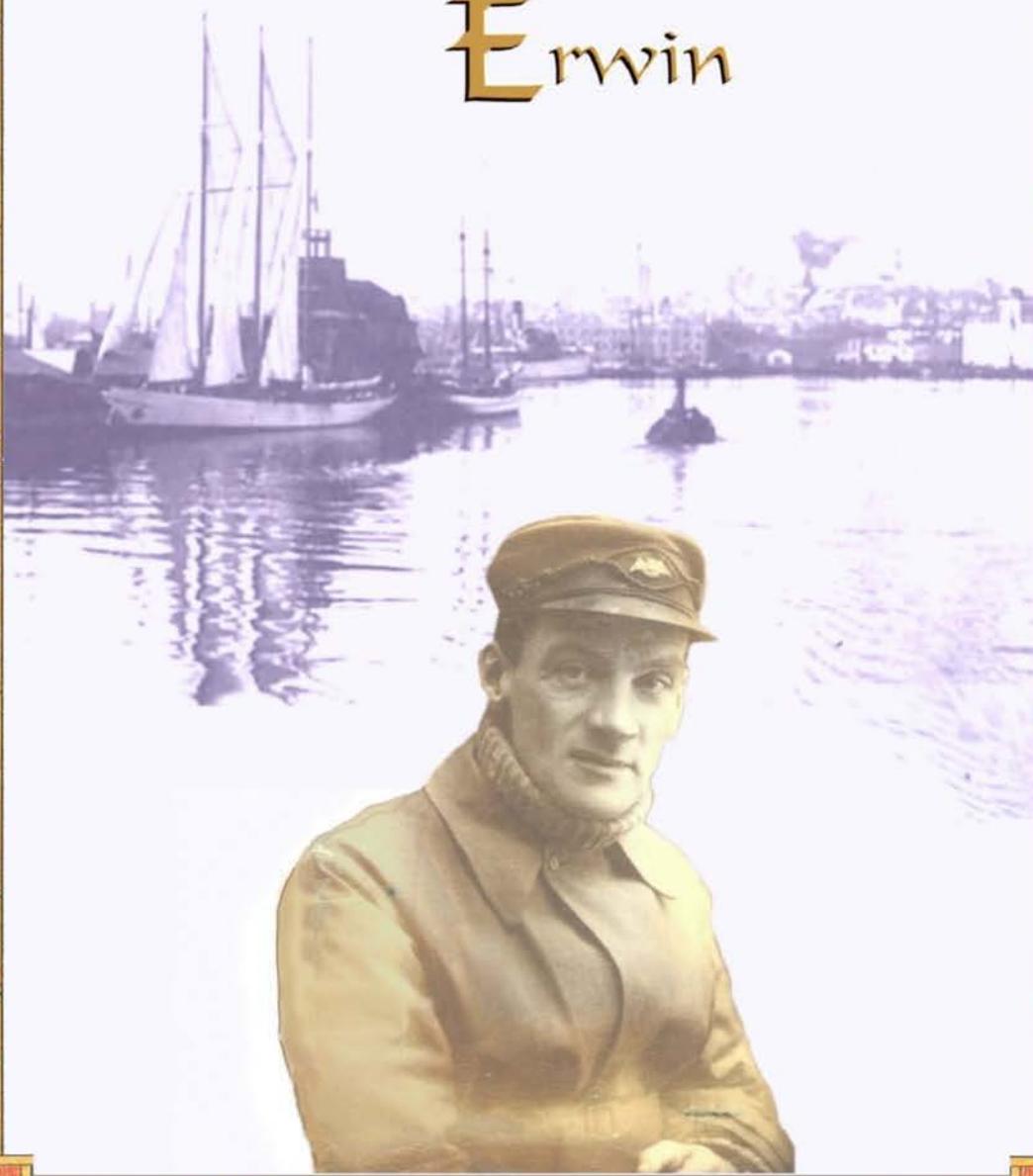
**M**y grandparents, Felix and Margarethe Mathilde (“Gretel”) v.Glehn, started their married life in 1908 in St Petersburg, which is about 200 km from Reval. That was a long distance at that time, but there was no national border. When my mother, Margarethe Maria, was due to be born, her mother took the train from St. Petersburg to Reval. Halfway there she had to get off in the small Estonian town of Narva because the baby was on her way. Tragically Margarethe Mathilde died of an embolism a few days after giving birth.

My mother has written an adoring tribute to her mother, collecting all the little things she heard relatives say about her. I hope you can find it in her collection of stories about her relatives. But it is not much and there are no heirlooms either. All those got lost in the two great wars that shook Europe in the next 50 years. My grandfather “abandoned” my mother as she says and it sounds true enough. Once, after she had moved back to Reval and lived with her mother’s brother, Erwin, she made a long train trip to Silesia, Germany, to visit her father and to bring him some money that a relative in Reval had given her to take to him. The little photo, which I believe was taken on that occasion, shows her looking away from the camera unhappily. Many years later in the nursing home she talked bitterly about that visit. Her father wouldn’t talk to her and she despised Emmy, Felix’s sister who lived with him.



Felix , Margarethe, unknown and Emmy , ca. 1930

Mutti's Uncle  
Erwin



Uncle Erwin Bernhard was my honorary grandfather, he adopted my mother (1932) when her time with the Lotte's parents was over and she had returned to Estonia in 1929. The adoption was only a formality, a convenient way for her to obtain Estonian citizenship and a work permit; she kept her maiden name. He took her in as his daughter, when her father didn't, and she lived for about six happy years with his family until she got married. If you want to know more about him you must read what she wrote about him in her family history. She tells about his school and university days, about his terrifying adventures with the Bolsheviks, and about his two marriages.

Strangely she forgot to write about his love of sailing and his regatta-winning sailboat, the "Ariel" and how she regularly accompanied him on his yacht trips. Many times she has told me that she used to walk out to the yacht harbor after work to meet him there and was told: "You are not to look either right or left but you come straight to the boat". Then they would sail on the waters between Estonia and Finland, the Gulf of Finland, and because the "Ariel" was a small, fast boat, sitting low in the water, they would get very wet on windy days. In the last days of her life she sometimes would burst out unexpectedly: "Klar zum wenden" ("Clear for tacking"), which was what Erwin would always shout when he tacked and, the sail would come over. She loved him and his quiet, thoughtful ways very much.

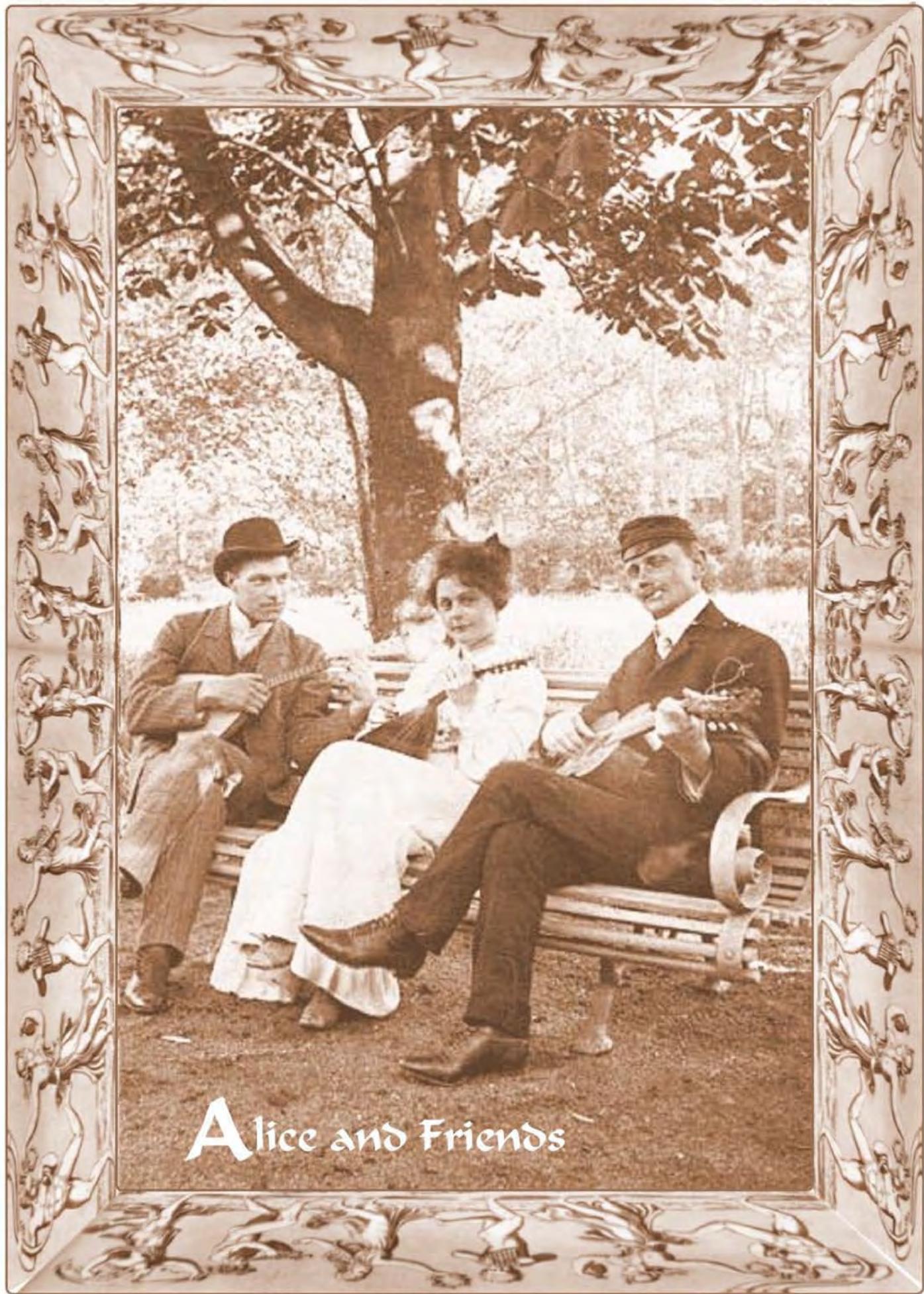
Both Uncle Erwin and Aunt Annemarie died relatively young within a year of each other just before the resettlement in 1939. My mother sometimes stated that she was sorry that they had to die so young but was glad that they were spared the loss of their homeland and the war. Nobody seems to know anything about what happened to their two sons, Erwin and Jürgen.



The Ariel in Reval Harbor

On the back of Uncle Erwin's photo it says in my mother's handwriting:

"Uncle Erwin's Motto: God's are the wind and the waves.  
The sails and the rudder are yours to regain the harbor".



Alice and Friends

10/18/2009

This is Alice (pronounced "Aleese"), Alice von Glehn. The time is around 1910, the place is her parents Victorian parlor on 12 \* Aia (Garden) Street in Reval, Estonia. She is the younger sister of my grandfather Felix von Glehn. In 1912 she married Erwin Bernhard, the younger brother of my grandmother, Margarethe Mathilde Bernhard, a case of sister marrying a brother in law. The marriage didn't last long. She had an affair with a Russian officer, and her mother in law, Mathilde Bernhard, insisted on a divorce. Within eight years the Russian Revolution began to unfold, driving Felix to sell the house and flee the country with his family, including my mother, who was born in 1909.



Emilie, Alice's grandmother, is the lady in the large oil portrait, which had been painted around 1840 in Munich by W. Kaulbach. Emilia was the center of another family scandal. That is why Edmund and she were living in Munich for two years.

So what do you think? Is this before or after her brief marriage? The picture is posed, but she is not smiling as in the previous picture. My mother was a small child then, and this was the time she remembers, when her father regularly had chamber music evenings with his family and friends, when her younger brothers, Romo and Walter regularly got drunk at the tavern, and when her grand mother every morning was painfully harnessed into her corset by the maid.

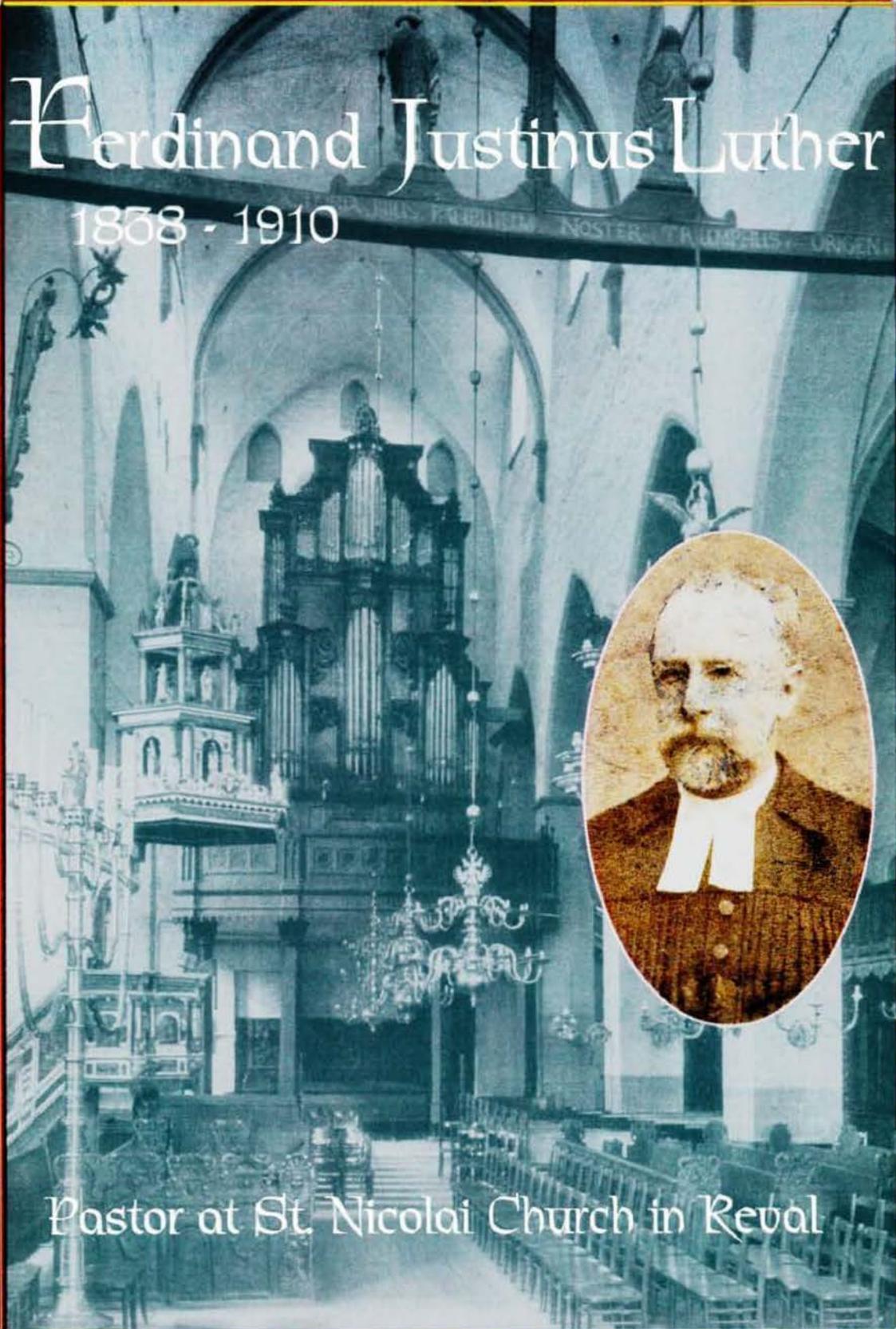
Alice earned a living as a teacher (languages, probably) in Germany and lived through two World Wars. In 1947 she was living with her sister Agnes in Kellinghusen, Holstein.

My mother told me, that her uncle Erwin saw a picture of Alice in my mother's room after she had returned to Estonia in 1929 and had been adopted by him. As she told it, he said to her: "Gretel, don't ever get divorced".

\* My mother had told me # 24 Aia Street, but the Glehn family album says # 12.

# Ferdinand Justinus Luther

1858 - 1910



Pastor at St. Nicolai Church in Reval

When Janet and I made our Baltic trip in 1998 we wanted to be sure to visit the church of St. Nicholas where my great grandfather, Ferdinand Justinus, had been a minister. He started his career in 1862 as a student minister to small rural communities on the island of Dagö ( Hiiumaa ). Eventually he became “Oberpastor” in Reval and sat on various boards. He authored articles published in Reval magazines as mentioned in the blue Luther Book. My mother thinks he must have been something of a domestic tyrant because my father’s aunts would only talk of him in whisper. But that may have been the norm in his Victorian day.

We found the church converted to a museum. During WWII a bomb had fallen through the roof and ignited the pews. While the communist regime did not encourage church use, it did restore the building and made it into a show place for the considerable art treasures that had been preserved. Among them is the famous “Dance of Death” painting by a Lübeck painter Notke in the late 15th century.

Oberpastor Luther is mentioned in a very funny collection of stories based on historical events by a German writer Werner Bergengruen; it is called “Der Tod von Reval” (The Death of Reval”). Unfortunately I don’t think it exists in English translation. The relevant passage is found on p. 68 in the German text.



The German text under the figure of the Empress reads as follows:

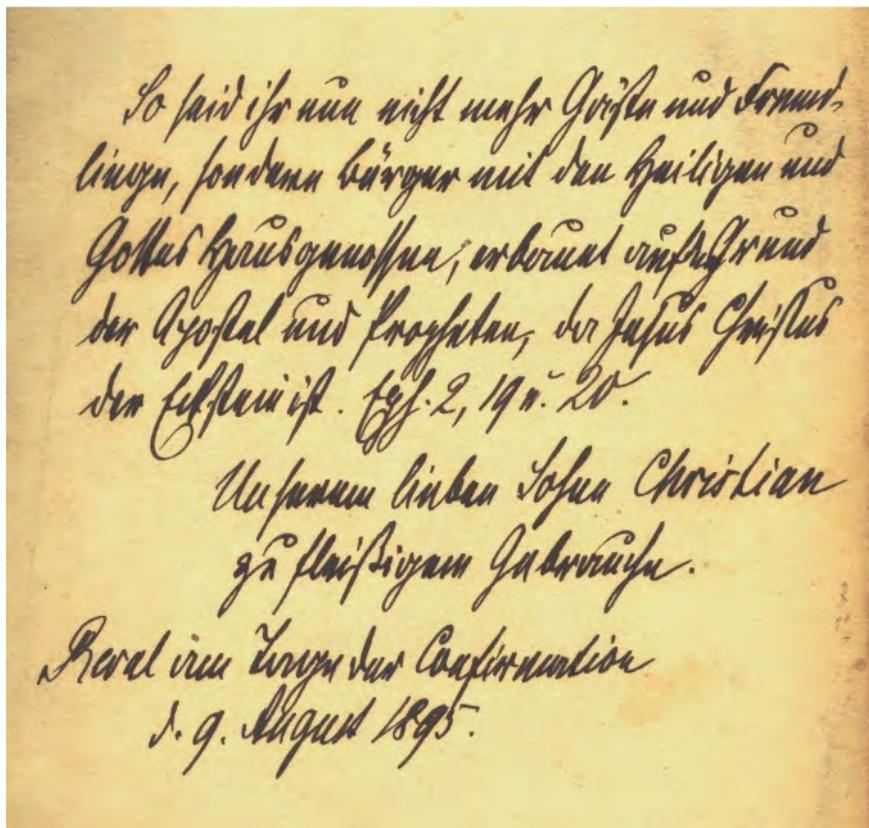
I know Death wants me. Never have been so frightened. I thought he might have made a mistake, because I am still young and I am an empress.

I thought I was very powerful, but I never thought about him, or that anybody else might want to hurt me. Oh let me live, I beg of you.

Detail from the “ Dance of Death “, by Bernhard Notke 15th Cent.

When my grandmother Gerda Luther died in 1967, Christel, her daughter, sent me her German Bible as something to remember her by. I realized that this Bible was her husband Christian's Bible, given to him by his father Ferdinand Justinus, the minister, on his confirmation day, August 9, 1895. I found two things in that Bible: a photo of Ferdinand Justinus, probably from that time, and the letter from Christian to Gerda that told about his internment in Russia in 1916, a story I have told on Christian's page.

The dedication of the Bible was written in a beautiful hand (probably Ferdinand's), in the old fashioned German script called Sütterlin and it is reproduced below. Since Sütterlin is hard to read I must tell you what it says. First there is a Bible verse, it is Eph.(esians) II, 19 and 20. Then: To our dear son Christian for industrious use. Reval on the day of the confirmation August 9, 1895.

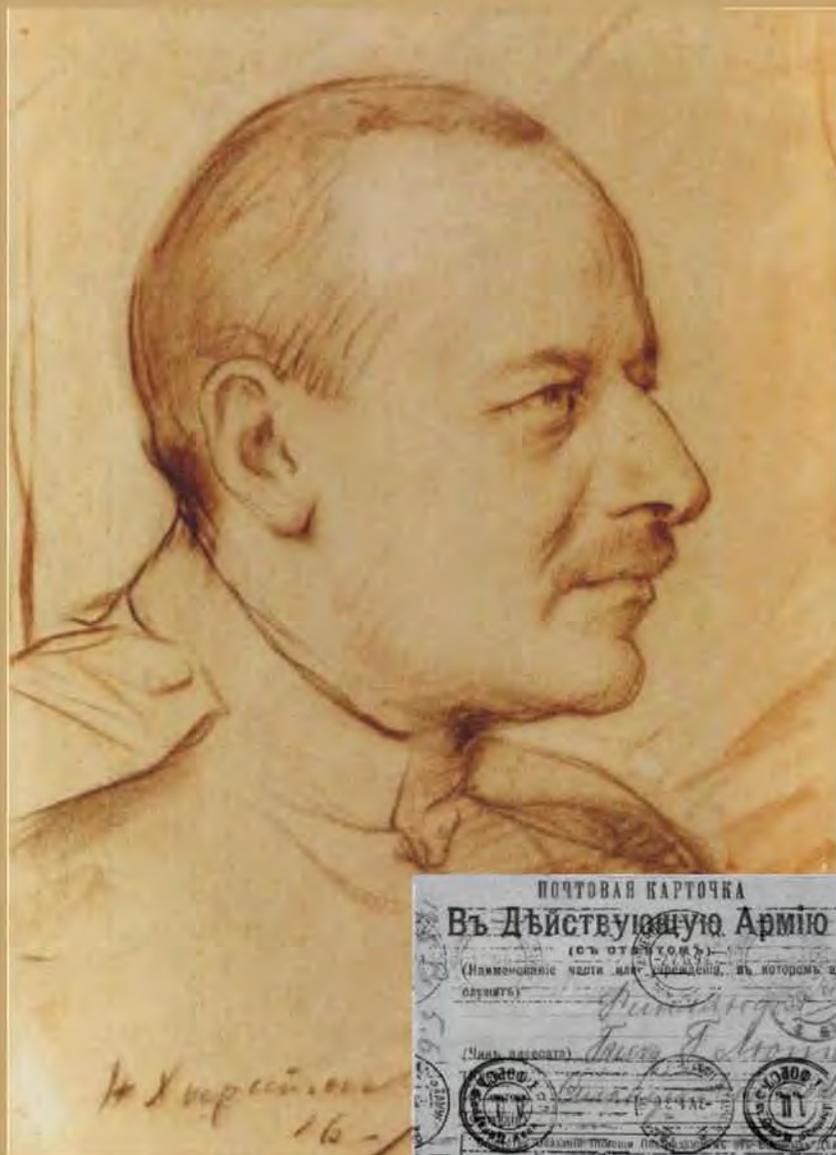


So seid ihr nun nicht weiser Geistes und Vernunft,  
Lingen, sondern hängen mit den Heiligen und  
Gottes Hausgenossen, erbaut einander mit  
den Apostel und Propheten, der Jesus Christus  
den Eckstein ist. Eph. 2, 19 u. 20.

Unserm lieben Sohn Christian  
zu fleißigem Gebrauche.

Reval im Toren der Confirmation  
d. 9. August 1895.

# My Grandfather Christian Luther



ПОЧТОВАЯ КАРТОЧКА  
Въ Дѣйствующую Армію

(Съ отъходомъ)  
(Наименованіе части или подразделения, въ которомъ адресованъ  
служить)

(Имя владельца) *Л. Хурст*

16-1

Почта  
1915

Почта  
1915

1/30/05

**A**lexander Martin Christian V. Luther was a Russian citizen living in Finland and an officer in the Russian army during WWI. He and his unit were suddenly and without prior notice sent to a remote Russian city (Galich, ~300 miles northeast of Moscow) because their loyalty to the Tsar was in question. A postcard he sent to his wife Gerda to let her know what had happened to him was found in the bible given to Christian by his father Ferdinand on the occasion of his confirmation in 1865. Gerda had the bible till her death in 1967. It came to me in 1988 to pass on. I have translated his message from the original Swedish.

16 April 1916

My dear girl! What can I tell you? This much, that I am still alive. As to our future, it has now gotten even darker than it was before the departure. After a journey that took more than 16 hours we arrived yesterday at noon not (in good shape?), because the night had to be spent in a sitting position. After arrival we had to march from one end of the city to the other and back again. Toward evening we arrived at our present destination point, the isolation camp Ocho. Here we --- spent the night rather --- in --  
- and without our things, which had remained at the train station. Today we got our things and get to spend? the next night (s) ? in a better way. With Gertrud

(probably his sister) we could exchange some words on the telephone.

We are being very closely watched and can escape nowhere.

Note: the last two lines are illegible and so is the line on the left edge. (Signed) Chr.

Notice the address to **Mrs. G. Luther** on the post card, it is written in Russian (Cyrillic) script.

Führer  
durch

vom Jahr 1878

## REVAL.

1. Geographisch-statistische Notizen S. 1-4
2. Geschichte der Stadt Reval S. 4-56
3. Würdigkeiten S. (41-62)  
56-
4. Institutionen u.  
Tätigkeit f. Besucher Revals S. (68-80)
5. ...



### 1. REVAL

Geographische Lage: unter  $59^{\circ} 26'$  nördl. Breite u.  $42^{\circ} 24'$  östl. Länge von Ferro; - im Flachland unmittelbar am

<sup>Ufer des finnischen Meerbusens.</sup>  
**My Grandmother**

Klima. ... freundlich u. sehr veränderlich wegen

der Eiden im Ostland vorhanden u. Stürme u. Stürme.

**Gerda Luther**  
Schroffe Übergänge von der Kälte zur Wärme u. umgekehrt

sind nicht selten. Trotz dessen aber ist das Klima gesund

u. häufige u. heftige, vorherrschend aus S.W. u. aus N.O. we-

hende Winde reinigen die Luft u. verhindern ein grös-

2/21/1999

**M**y grandmother, Gerda Luther, was born in Moscow in 1881. She was the daughter of an engineer, Alexander Mickwitz, who moved to Helsinki and there set up a small factory to prepare meat extract intended as a health booster for children suffering from tuberculosis. As a child, Gerda ate a lot of left over, very dry meat. She met and married my grandfather, Christian, in Helsinki and moved with him first to Staryia Russia south of St. Petersburg and then in 1916 to Reval. Since Christian died quite early, my father took his place as the man of the house. Often he felt he had to be at home to help her overcome bouts of depression. My mother never got along with her, nor with Renate, my father's younger sister. Renate felt that my mother was intolerably stuck up about her aristocratic origins, and my mother thought that my father's family was just so incredibly bourgeois. "Imagine, in the middle of a Bach sonata, Renate said something about doing windows with baking soda." And Renate said: "and wherever Gretel ( my mother) visited she brought along her silhouette work and ignored everybody."

I got to know Gerda a little better after the war when she lived by herself in a little rented room not far from us in Glücksburg. She sometimes baby sat my brother and me. Once she took me to a fair and bought me a small erector set. She had much time on her hands and decided to copy an entire prewar travel guide to her beloved home town, Reval, by hand. Page after page she wrote in a steady unassuming hand without making mistakes. She was able to get away from war torn Germany to a better life in Helsinki where my father's older brother, Olav, lived and ran a brick factory. She often was able to send us things we couldn't get in Germany. In 1953 she saved enough from her meager social security money to send me a ship ticket to come and visit her in Helsinki. There I met Olav and his family and also two aunts, Bärbi and Martha Luther, with whom Gerda rented.



3/3/07

When my grandmother Gerda Luther died in 1967, Christel, her daughter, sent me her German Bible as something to remember her by. I realized that this Bible was her husband Christian's Bible, given to him by his father Ferdinand Justinus, the minister, on his confirmation day, August 9, 1895. I found two things in that Bible: a photo of Ferdinand Justinus, probably from that time, and the letter from Christian to Gerda that told about his internment in Russia in 1916, a story I have told on Christian's page.

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So seid ihr nun nicht mehr Jüden und Fremdlinge,  
sondern Bürger mit den Heiligen und  
Gottes Heilighausen, erbauet einpfleget  
den Glauben und Frömmigkeit, die Jesus Christus  
den felsen ist. Eph. 2, 19 u. 20.

Unserem lieben Sohne Christian  
zu fleißigem Gebrauche.

Beval am Tage der Confirmation  
d. 9. August 1895.

# Rauhaniemi



*a childhood paradise*

**M**y father wrote in his short biography about his childhood years in a small village and brick factory called Rauhaniemi, Finland:

My early childhood I spent in Finland some 50 miles north of Helsingfors in Leppäkoski (Finnisch- meaning Aspenfall) where my father Christian (1878-1925) was at the time manager of a brick factory, which belonged to the Finnish branch of the Luthers. I grew up in a totally Finnish environment, although our language inside the house was German and from my mother's side, Swedish. There was no lack of kids my age, because all of the factory workers lived in small cottages in our backyard and there were lots of schildren. At that time it was normal for a family of a certain social position, as we happened to be, to keep a vast amount of maids: a cook, cook's helper, chamber maid, a children's maid, called Mummi, who took care of my older brother Olaf and me. The total household was then ten, which seems just right.

My father had a big stable of horses, there were no cars at that early period (1905 –1914) and the traffic went by horse and buggy. As an extension of the brick factory there was a large family farm with cows, sheep, geese etc., gardens and fields. So we kids always had big company and never a dull moment.

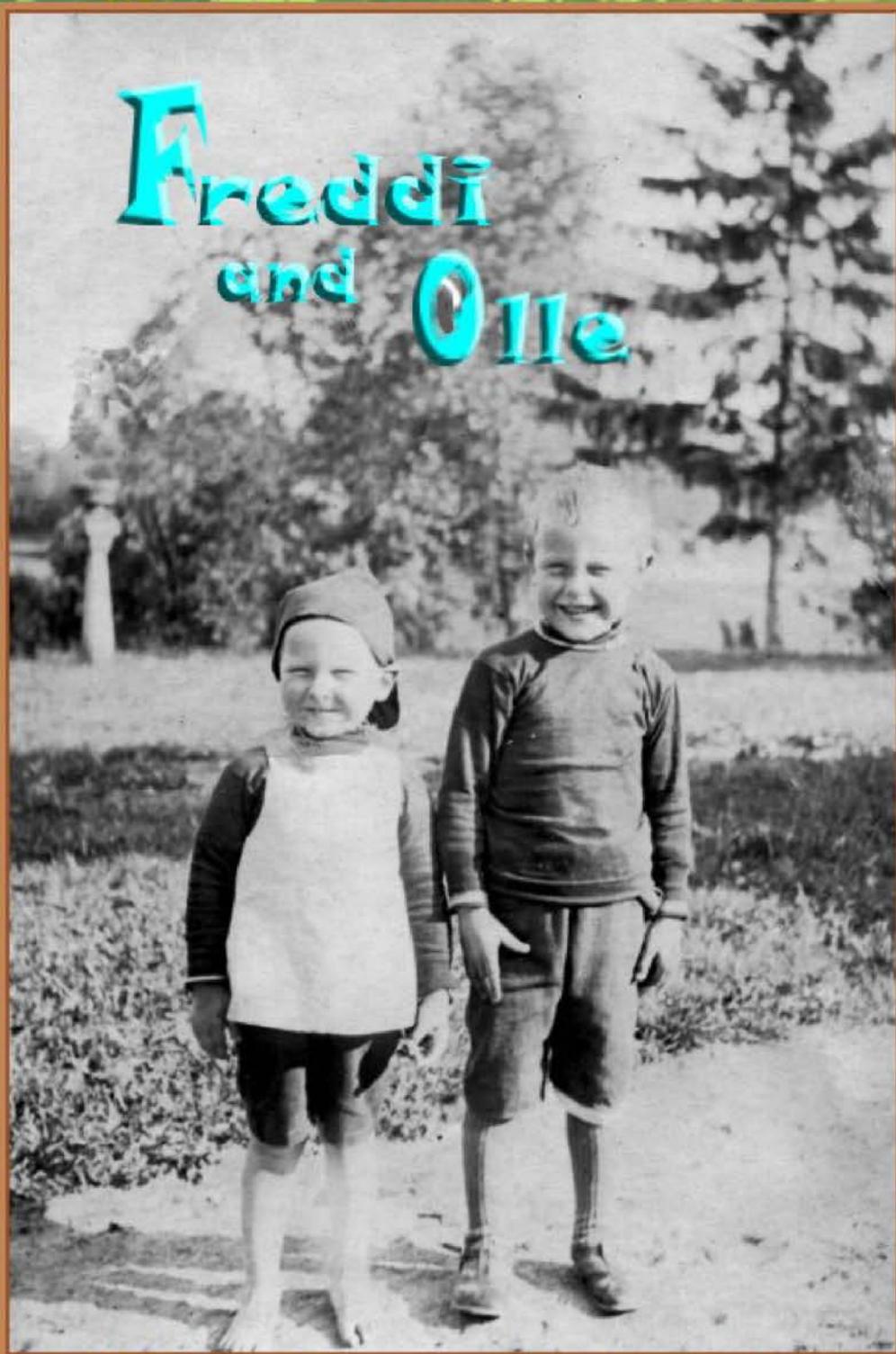
Through the estate ran a big river, Turijoki = Lumber river. We had a nice bath house, where we could row and swim. So you see the conditions were excellent for excitement and fun for us kids.

My first school was Finnish. Politically Finland was then attached to Russia of the Czar, and so we were Russian citizens until 1917. We lived in Leppäkoski until 1914 – in my recollection the most fascinating time of my life – endless excitement and fun.

I developed special skills as finder of the best edible mushrooms (boroviko) and outdid even my parents. There were plenty of wild berries to be found and eaten, specially the wild strawberries, which one could smell one hundred feet away, with more flavor and taste than any garden variety. And then the yellow moss berry (like a raspberry) which grew in abundance in wet places. Unfortunately the moors and woods were infested with copperheads, so we really learned to watch our steps.



Freddi  
and Olle



1/12/04

**F**reddi, as my father was called by family and friends, and his brother Olle (Olav) lost their childhood paradise in 1914, when their father got a new job in Russia. Their life in the city of Staraya Russa (south of St. Petersburg) was unpleasant because Russia was at war with Germany (WWI). Their native language, German, was now the language of the enemy, and the boys learned quickly to avoid speaking German at school. The family left Russia again in 1916 for Estonia, where most of their relatives were. But the found postwar Estonia not to be so German-friendly either. Estonia had achieved independence from Russia at the end of the war, and native Estonians began to shake off the century domination by the German landowners and city officials. Olle left for Finland soon after graduation from High School looking for a better life there, while my father stayed with his widowed mother in Reval and began working for A.M. Luther, the family-owned plywood company. Then WWII began in 1939, and the brothers were separated for a very long time. They got in touch again by mail after the war, but they wouldn't see each other again until 1983, when Olle and his son, Tom, and his family came to visit us in Basking Ridge.

I remember that Olle called from Finland while my father was so sick at our house in Bethlehem. The call came just shortly before my father's death. The brothers talked for a long while, and my father commented that the call had made feel good. "Everything is alright now", he said, "it was like old times".



Lars, Fred, And Olle in Basking Ridge 1983.

Renate A. Epinatieff 1911 - 2001



12/3/05

**Renate Epinatoeff, nee Luther, Oct. 9, 1911 – Jan. 14, 2001.**

Renate was my father's sister. She was born in Finland and grew up along with my father and my uncle Olaf (Olle). Their sister Christiane (Christel) was so much younger that she grew up almost separately. Renate was trained as a children's nurse but didn't hesitate to go out to clean houses during the war years. The Baltic resettlement had brought her to Posen (Poznan, now Poland) from where she fled with my grandmother from the Russians in 1945. She had been married in 1934 but lost her young husband, Hugo Leibert, to WW II. After the war she lived in Hamburg. She met her second husband, Boris Epinatoeff, some time after the war. He had been an Estonian citizen, and was a member of the Order of Black Heads\* like my father. He also had joined the Wehrmacht even though he was of Russian extraction. When he was captured by the Russian army he was considered a traitor and condemned to 15 years of imprisonment in Siberia. Renate and Boris got married in 1958 after his return to Germany. He had contracted tuberculosis in the POW camp, and to help him recover his health the German government sent him annually to a sanatorium in Switzerland. He was employed as an expeditor in Hamburg. Janet, Molly and I visited Renate and Bor on our first trip back to Europe in 1964, when I was a postdoctoral student in Copenhagen. Janet will always rave about the fragrant bouquet of freesias that Bor and Renate brought to our hotel room in Hamburg, where Janet, pregnant with Christian, recovered from the ocean voyage on the S.S. United States.

My mother and Renate unfortunately never got along very well. So I did not see her very often during our years in Germany. I remember her visiting us in Glücksburg, probably during the time when her mother lived there. My father loved her and wrote in his diary that he admired the courage she showed during the hard war years. She helped Christel, who also lived in Hamburg while Hein studied psychiatry there, to take care of their baby twins, Gisela and Gudrun.

Janet and I stopped by on our Europe trips to visit her again in Hamburg, three times maybe altogether. Once, when she still lived in her apartment she had shared with her husband. She had put together a beautifully furnished living room and decorated it with pictures and photographs of Estonian scenes. She had a sunny balcony and showed us what wonderful houseplants Amaryllis are. As we were leaving she gave us a special gift for each of our children. For instance Chris got the original drawing of his great grandfather as a soldier. The last time we saw her, she had moved into an Assisted Living Facility after falling on the ice and breaking an arm. She took us to see one of the few castles in the Hamburg area and She wrote with an admirably even mistake.



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When Advent comes around and it's time think of Tante Renate. She sent me her (Pfefferkuchen) when I retired about amount of syrup (equal parts of turkey syrup and blackstrap molasses works well). Then you dump baking soda into it and start stirring. The mixture begins to seethe and foam, and if you hadn't thought ahead and chosen a large enough kettle you now are in deep trouble. Add spices, flour, and sugar and stir well. Soon it becomes pretty unmanageable. Then store it for a month in a cool place. Ha, if you think that's long time, I have stored it for a year and it still made delicious cookies.

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\* Who are the "Blackheads"? In German they are called "Schwarzhäupter" without any pimply connotations. They are members of a fraternity of young, unmarried merchants who banded together for the defense of the city. Originally, and this goes back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, they were mounted on horseback, and their emblem was a "Moor's" head with a scarf. This moor was the legendary St. Mauritius, a commander of a Roman legion who as a Christian suffered a martyr's death. The "Schwarzenhäupter House" in Reval is one of the principal tourist attractions.

# Wallkill



1/11/99



My grandfather bought some beach property east of Reval near the village of Salmistu in 1923. It had been part of the estate of a Baron Ungern. My father noted in his diary that it cost 175,000 Eesti marka\*. The place was called Walküll. There was a log cabin with a fire place. An old woman and her son lived nearby and took care of the house when nobody was there. Then in 1924 grandfather bought a boat, the Saga, and sailed it together with my father from Reval to Wallküll. A storm came up and frightened them so badly that my grandfather had a heart attack. Fred had to drag him to the house when they arrived. But the next summer was wonderful;

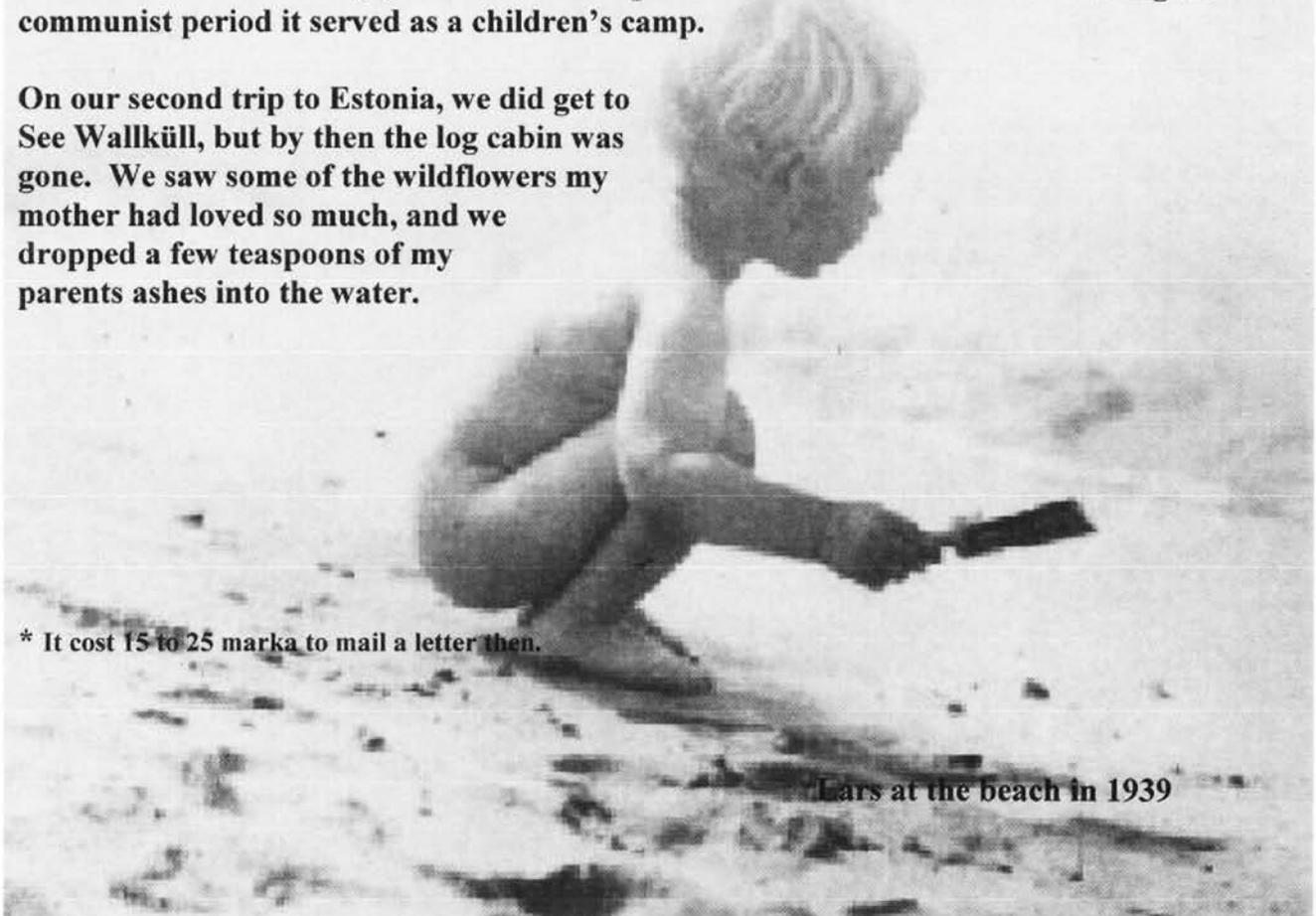
father and son sailed and hunted. The family continued to come there in the summer after grandfather died in 1925. It was about 50 km from Reval, an hour trip by bus or rail. Later, when I was a little boy, I was taken there too, in fact my father tried to get out there to sail as many weekends as he could. Big boulders and windswept fir trees gave character to the beach. My parents often talked lovingly of Walküll.

Since Walküll is outside Reval, Janet and I did not get to see it on our first trip to Estonia. But my uncle Hein Hoffmann has been to visit the log cabin in 1994 and found it in good condition. The old reed (?) roof had been replaced with a modern tin roof. During the communist period it served as a children's camp.

On our second trip to Estonia, we did get to see Walküll, but by then the log cabin was gone. We saw some of the wildflowers my mother had loved so much, and we dropped a few teaspoons of my parents ashes into the water.

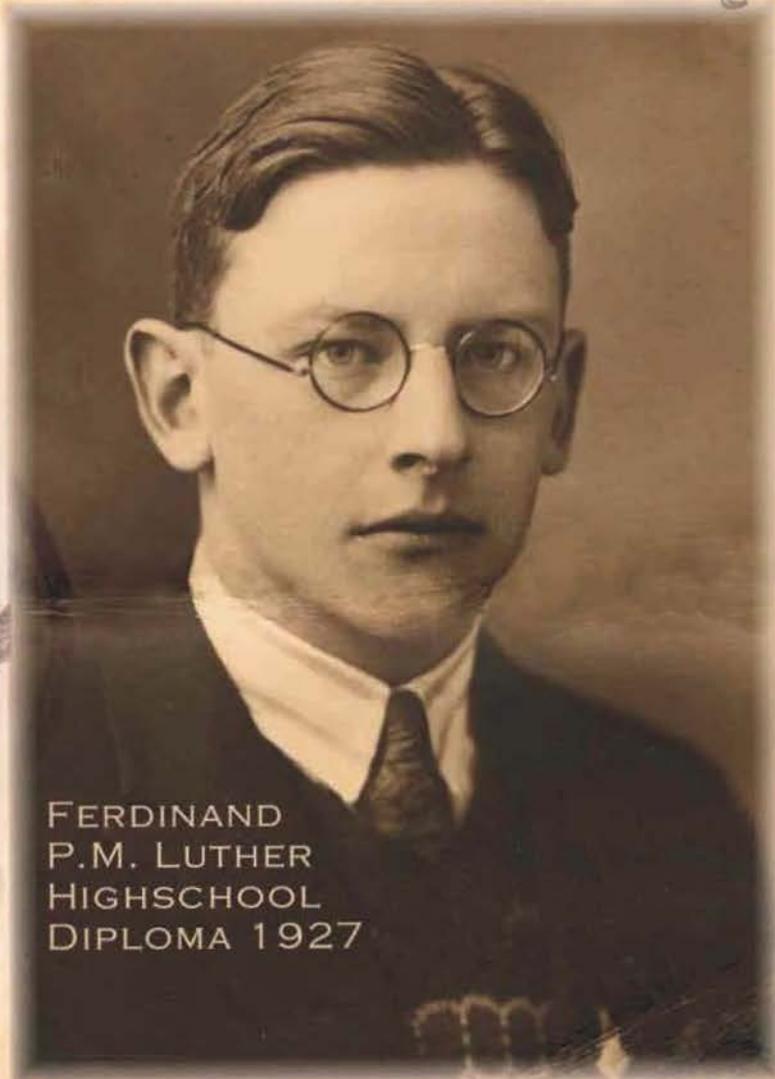
\* It cost 15 to 25 marka to mail a letter then.

Lars at the beach in 1939





# Die Domschule



1/4/02

**M**y father finished his high school education in 1927. We have his diploma still; he was a good student, pretty solid B. He despised over-ambitious people, calling them “Streber”, strivers. His high school, the “Domschule”, was located on the cathedral hill (Domberg) near the Marienkirche, the cathedral of St. Mary. In recent years a memorial plaque was put up to show where the building used to be. The institution dates back to the fourteenth century and was the preferred school for the German-speaking citizens of Reval, but only for young men. During the First World War teachers were required to teach in Russian. My father who attended school during Estonia’s brief period of independence took Russian, as well as German, Estonian, Greek, Latin, and English courses. As a gentleman he only got C’s in Russian and Estonian. Sciences were then not separately taught; instead he took something called “Natural History, Hygiene, Physics and Chemistry”.

In his wartime diary he wrote about his another facet of his teenage life:

I should discuss my extracurricular student life, which seemed more interesting and more important to me than perhaps it should have been. One (activity) was called “Equestria”, a club which all the students in my class belonged to and which was celebrated by turn in different private homes with tea and sandwiches and baked goods at first and later with beer, cigarettes and most wonderful Schnaps. There were lectures, but conversation and other things were at least as important. Frese sometimes played the piano and Eichhorn the violin. Coryus would present songs, but all in all there wasn’t much talent. There was much juvenile optimism and braggadocio.



The building of the Domschule in Reval and a modern memorial tablet

The **A.M.Luther** furniture factory was created by Christian IV Wilhelm Luther (1857-1914) as a side line to the hardware store of his father, Alexander Martin Luther. Christian started the factory operations by making plywood seats for chairs. Alexander was the father of both Ferdinand Justinus, my great-grandfather, and of Christian IV. Another Alexander Martin was “Uncle” Martin; he was the big honcho in the Luther family of the 19th century. My father was grateful for a smile from him, when he first joined the company as a carpenter apprentice. Erwin Bernhard, my mother’s uncle, was also employed by **A.M.Luther**. The invention of making a water proof glue from animal blood by a company chemist (Paulsen) was the entry point for the firm to international scope, as this made it possible to manufacture tea shipping containers for an English company “Venesta”, which operated the tea trade between Ceylon and London. A.M. Luther went public in 1897. The factory (under a different name) is supposedly still in operation today, but we didn’t observe any activity on the site, when Janet and I were in Tallinn in 2007. While the tall smokestacks were still standing, the entire quarter was an urban slum with run-down liquor and tobacco stores.

My father recalled the horrible stench of the barrels of blood imported by the company. At one time he was responsible for getting them through customs.



A.M. Luther in 1930



Newspaper Ad 1902



The A.M. Luther Company was founded in Tallinn Estonia in 1877 and continued to manufacture wood products under different names until 1940. First it was the "A.M. Luther Company for Mechanical Woodworking" and ran advertisements like the one above in 1902. That one I found in the *St. Peterrsburger Zeitung* on microfilm in the Library of Congress. The Grand Prix of Paris had been given for the revolutionary invention of waterproof glue. A.M. Luther responded to economic changes by reorganization and alliance with other companies such as Venesta of London and became A.M. Luther Venesta.

That company's logo was a purple-blue oval, which I saw as a child on a suitcase made of plywood. Many, many years later I saw it again with Janet in New York city, when we had gone to see an exhibit of Aalto's work (best known for his coffee filter shaped vase). Aalto had designed furniture for A.M.Luther-Venesta, so the logo was visible on a chair shown in the exhibit. The suitcases I got to see again too; they were exhibited in a museum for Estonian Crafts in Tallinn. There exists a very good book about the company's long history; it was written by Juri Kermik and was published in 2004.





A. M. Christian Luther

1878 - 1925



**DOUBLE EAGLE OF RUSSIA**

**OUTSIDE OVAL LETTERING:  
"WATERPROOF" IN THREE  
LANGUAGES**

**THE LUTHER COAT OF ARMS**

**INSIDE OVAL LETTERING:  
COMPANY NAME IN RUSSIAN**

**GRAND PRIX 1900**

One of the A.M.Luther Woodworking Company's most important contributions in the development of plywood technology was the introduction of waterproof glue in 1896. This glue was developed by the Luther brothers' cousin Oskar Paulsen (b.1869), a chemical engineer who joined A.M.Luther in 1893. Paulsen's patented waterproof glue enormously widened the field of uses for plywood, and it was the main factor behind A.M.Luther's fabulous success in the Russian and foreign markets. In addition to plywood furniture the glue was used to make plywood suitcases, hatboxes and barrels.

There is an undocumented story that a senior partner, Ernest H. Archer, of a London tea import firm had decided that tea chests should be made from plywood, but found that the plywood that vendors were offering fell apart in water. He came upon the Luther waterproof plywood only by accident: he was walking on the beach and found a piece of it still intact despite being in the water, and carrying the A.M.Luther trademark. A new company, Venesta, was eventually founded with a directing board that included two Luthers and W.F. Raban, General Director of the Darjeeling Tea Company. Venesta made lots and lots of money.



A.M.Luther Factory ~ 1900

12/2/2008



nce upon a time there lived a little girl named Margarethe, named after her mother, who had died only a few days after giving birth to her. Margarethe lived with her father, Felix, and her aunt Agnes but often went to visit her old grandmother, who lived nearby on Pikk street in a very high stone tower. This tower had been built centuries ago and everybody in Reval called it Hattorpe. It was one of about 35 towers, each one of them having their own special name and they all were part of the mighty fortification wall around Reval in Estonia. A spiral staircase led all the way up from a dark and spooky entrance hall to the top, where Margerethe's grandmother had a cozy apartment. Margarethe was never afraid on the worn and uneven stone steps, but she was always glad, when at last she had reached the top, especially on this very fine summer morning with the sun greeting her through the windowless openings of the tower facing the harbor in the Baltic sea.

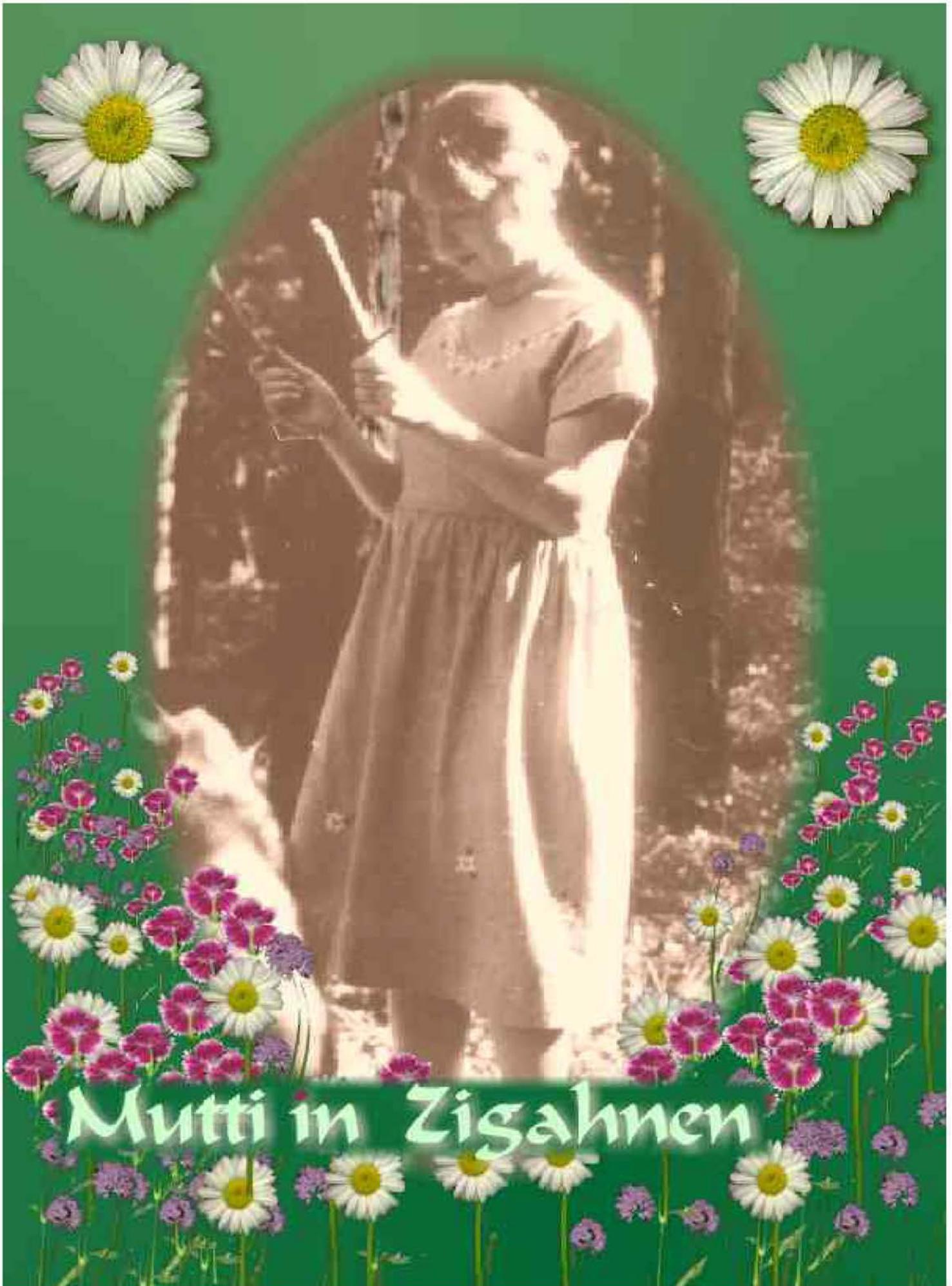
Her grandmother had a surprise for her this morning. She gave her a cup full of soap water and an old clay pipe, and she taught her to blow soap bubbles, beautiful, large, wobbly, and iridescent soap bubbles. "Take your soap water to the tower window", she told Margarethe, "and watch the bubbles drop down on the roof tops below!"

Margarethe let the bubbles fly off her clay pipe and watched the sea breeze carry away her fat bubbles and all their tiny children. They would reluctantly take the air, drifting up and down, gradually losing altitude. And who knows now, but her grandmother may have watched her sorrowfully and remembered the many mornings when Margarethe's mother excitedly had waved down from the same place to greet her sweet heart Felix, who then as now was living in the large house on Aia street just outside the city walls.



Soap Bubbles over  
Reval





Mutti in Zigahnen

## My Family in Ostpreussen



When my parents had to leave Estonia in 1939, they were brought to a part of (now) Poland, where Germans and Poles have lived together for centuries in an uneasy peace. This is a map of a part of the region that was called East Prussia before WW II.

In a way that was a homecoming because my grandmother's family (Mickwitz) originally came from Poland. However, that was no comfort to my parents who had lost their home in Estonia.

Northwest of Gdansk (Danzig) is Gdynia or Gotenhafen where my brother Holger was born. South of Gdansk you can find Kwidzyn or Marienwerder. That's where my mother lived as a girl on an estate called Zigahnen. In the war years (1939 - 1945) my family lived in Hława (Deutsch Eylau), marked by the red circle. When my father went off to war in 1941, my mother started working in a bookstore and found a live-in baby sitter, Lilly to watch over my brother and me. And I started going to school there.

On the night of January 18, 1945 the sirens rang, and we had to flee from the advancing Red Army. We drove in a horse-drawn open wagon from Hława to Sztum that night and slept in a movie theater. Then on the next day we crossed the Wista (Vistula) river with an icy wind nearly blowing us off the bridge. But what luck to find that bridge! It was brand new and not on the maps yet. That is why it was not jammed by refugees like the other one. So we made it safely to Starogard. With the river holding up the Russians we could stay for about a week while Lilly recovered from a terrible cold and while a cover was put on our open wagon. I was very disappointed when I found out that we weren't going to travel any further in that fancy wagon. Instead we got on a train to Gdansk. We were very lucky to get on the right train. Had we boarded one of two others that left that day we might not have lived because the Russians bombed them. A few days later we boarded a ship, the Waida, which took us to Sassnitz on the Island Rügen (not on this map). Again our luck held. Another refugee packed ship, the hapless Wilhelm Gustlow, was torpedoed and sank. From there we took a train to Flensburg. Lotte von Cardinal, my mother's childhood companion from Zigahnen, lived in Glücksburg about 6 miles north of that town, and that is where we stayed until we could emigrate to the USA.



LISELOTTE UND GRETEL

**This is an excerpt of a 1998 Christmas letter from Lotte Cardinal (néé Löffler) in Ottawa in which she talks about her childhood in Zigahnen (then Germany, now Poland):**

....and my thoughts wander back to my childhood days in the country where nature was all around us. In the long winter evenings we made Christmas presents. Our beloved cook, Frau Rettmanski, whom we called “old Rett”, started to make the dough for Pfefferkuchen already back in August, because Pfeffernüsse taste so much better when the dough has been standing a long time.

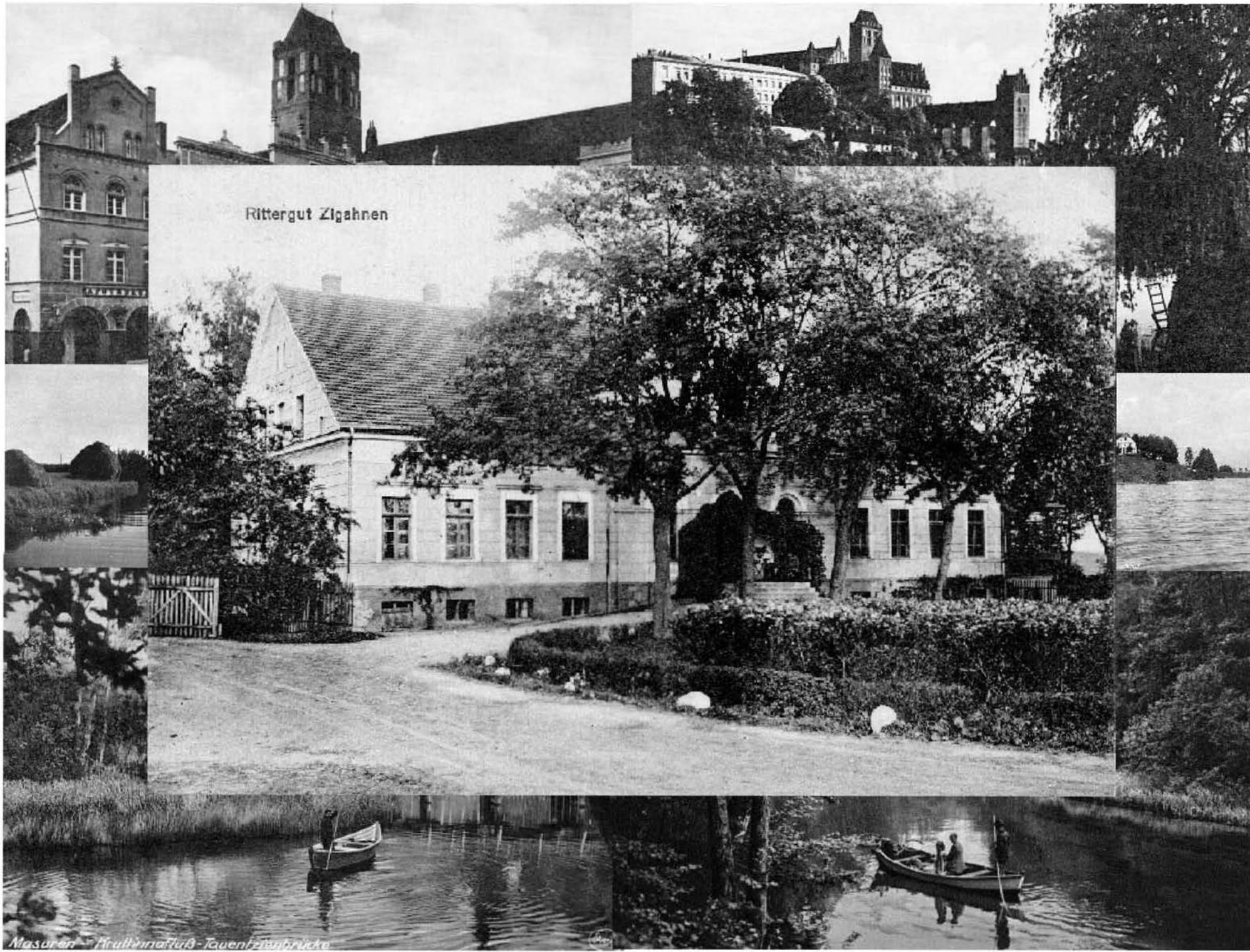
I was born before WWI [12/31/09] and at that time most of the estates did not have electric light yet. The cows were milked by the light of stable lanterns, horses were fed and so were the sheep and the pigs. Inside the house there were the cozy petroleum or alcohol lamps, but they were only lit when it became quite dark. The twilight hour had a very special kind of charm. When I was small Mutti [Lotte’s mother] told me all the wonderful Grimm’s tales which I soon had learned by heart. My beloved nurse maid “Nanna” sang folk songs. My earliest memories are about her putting me into the rocking chair so that I could see out of the window. Behind the gate the sun sank into a sea of gold while she sang: “Golden evening sun, never will I see your splendor without wonder”.

I had no brothers or sisters and when I was 9 years old my parents adopted Gretchen von Glehn. Her mother had died in childbirth and her father and his siblings fled the Baltic countries from the Russians in 1918. It was marvelous to have a companion of the same age.

How great to come home before dark with cold finger tips from sleigh rides and to warm up on the bench near the tile stove [“kachelofen”]. There was no central heating then; each room had a wonderful tile stove, most of them with a compartment for baking apples. No baked apple tastes as good as those that have simmered slowly on the stove and have spread their delicious fragrance. When we went to bed everyone got his own candleholder with a lit candle.

We loved those exciting sleigh rides in the winter, gliding over the snow and hearing the sleigh bells on the horses. Sometimes it was already night when my parents came to bring us home from neighbors or the town. The night sky was spread above us and the stars shone so bright you could grab them. They never shine brighter than on a cold clear winter night. We learned to recognize

Rittergut Zlgahnen



Masurien - Krullinnalüß - Taunelzuebrücke

### 1998 Christmas letter from Lotte Cardinal continued

the constellations: the big dipper, the swan, the Pleiades and my favorite, the belt of Orion which is only visible in winter.

And how magical were those big parties - the rabbit hunts, the birthday celebrations - mostly with all the neighbors and friends. In the great hall the long table was set with beautiful china, silverware, wine and champagne glasses and most festively the colorful cut glass which we called "Römer". The giant chandelier with the glittering prisms in the middle was lit with innumerable candles. No electric lights can be as lovely as candles. Candle light has a special coziness and charm. For my birthday which falls on the last day of the year there was always a big children's party. The best part was when we got a horse to pull a string of sleighs. My, how the last sled whipped back and forth and invariably threw you into a snow bank!

When Gretchen and I turned 9 my parents deemed it important to give us dancing lessons so that we could learn manners and also to dance well. My future in-laws had the same idea for their boys and since my parents and the Cardinals were friends, the three Cardinal brothers visited with us in the country for winter, fall, and Easter vacations. Their summer vacations though were spent with fishermen on the Baltic shores.

After the sleigh rides on the last day of the year we always danced till midnight. My mother played the old dances, such as waltzes, Polkas, Rheinlanders, Polonaises, Krakowiaks on the piano and she was a very good pianist. Later, when the more modern dances such as the Tango came up, we got the gramophone to dance to. At midnight we had punch and pancakes and all sorts of games of chance - we melted lead and poured it into cold water to guess our futures from the bizarre shapes of the solidified lead. We made little boats out of walnut shells and equipped them with small candles. They were placed into a bowl of water and made to drift by paper strips onto which fortunes were written. When they came close enough to a strip to singe it, you had to quickly grab the strip to find out what the next year would bring before the paper was burnt. On the stroke of midnight all the stable boys gathered in front of the house to "crack out" the old year with their long horse whips. It rang out like a volley of gun shots. Father then of course rewarded them with money and brandy.

This happy, carefree time of our youth now lies back so far that it sounds like a fairy tale. But it is a source of energy for my old age.

# Of Mice and Cats





9/18/2000

**S**ometimes the grain harvest in Zigahnen was so plentiful, that some of the sheaves had to be stacked up next to the barn in huge piles called “Staken”. When the Staken then had been worked down in the thrashing machine, only piles of loose straw and lots of grain were left on the ground.

Meanwhile the mice had lived under the sheaves and busily fattened up for winter. Even when the protection of the sheaves was gone they were loath to leave such riches and stayed around for more. Thus they became easy victims for two small girls, Lotte and Gretel, who had hatched a plan to make their three adorable kittens very happy. They took a feed sack and moved in on the mice. My mother was especially clever at catching mice with her bare hands, totally unconcerned about being bitten. When the bag was half full of squirming, wiggling mice, the girls went home ecstatically. In the house somewhere they found the cats and dumped the bag right on top of them. The kittens got it all wrong. They were frightened out of their small cat wits and bolted as though the devil was after them.

Lotte does not remember whether anybody got mad at the girls for letting mice loose around the house. Chances were that nobody ever was the wiser.



## Two Views from Mutti's High School Town



Herrmann- Balk Schule



Domturm



3/22/04

**M**y mother and Lotte were taught at home in **Zigahnen** by various live-in private teachers. You can read about their early school years in her autobiography. Their first teacher was a recent High School graduate, the beloved Hulda Schmidt, "Dittchen". When she left after a few years to get married they got the odious Herr Nagel who disgusted them with his habit of using a tooth pick while teaching and occasionally using it as a pointer. School ran from 8 to 12 in the morning; they had all afternoon off to play.

When the girls were about seventeen (1926 or 27) they split up: Lotte went far away to Kiel in West Germany to live with an uncle and to attend public school there with the aim of eventually going to the conservatory there. Mutti came to live in **Marienwerder**, the closest larger town in the area, where the girls up to then had been driven in horse and carriage for their weekly piano lessons with Fräulein Gibbe. She roomed in a Pension with Mrs. Celestine v.Tippelskirch and her daughter Christa. After three years of attending the Oberlyzeum (High School for girls) called Herrmann-Balk Schule, she worked her way up from Obersekunda to Oberprima and got her "Abitur". Christa, who eventually ended up in New York as Mrs. Armstrong, gave Mutti a program of one school function on Nov. 19, 1928, which tells us that Mutti (Grete v.Glehn, someone fortunately had penciled in) soloed on the piano with two pieces by Schubert. She also sent us a photo of the Marienwerder Domturm (the clock tower of the cathedral). During lunch hour Mutti and her best friend, Helga v.Brockdorff, sometimes would climb up the many stairs to the top of the Domturm to enjoy the wide view of the Weichsel (Vistula River) valley spread out before them.

When I visited Mutti at Zohlman's during her last years she told me stories about the many ways she and her classmates had devised to torture their teachers. There was e.g. the snowball hastily scraped together from the first snow on the windowsill of the classroom and thrown up at the ceiling right above the teacher's seat. Some of it clung there and slowly melted dripping icy water on the bald pate of the unfortunate geography teacher.

In the Pension of Celestine v.Tippelskirch there lived also Heine v.Brockdorff while attending a Gymnasium in Marienwerder. He and Mutti and the nine-year old Christa got to be good friends and gave each other animal names from a book by Manfred Kyber they were fond of. Mutti was Miesimissa Pfofenpuff, the cat, Heine was Nalagiri Lappenhaut, the elephant, and Christa was Flora Flossenfröh, the trout. The loving way my mother talked about Heine, there must have been a little more than just friendship. His photo was among the family photos my mother hung over her bed in Basking Ridge and Ottawa. When she told me about him she always sadly added: "He was killed in the war".



Heine v.Brockdorff



# G irls just want to have Fun



M. v. G.



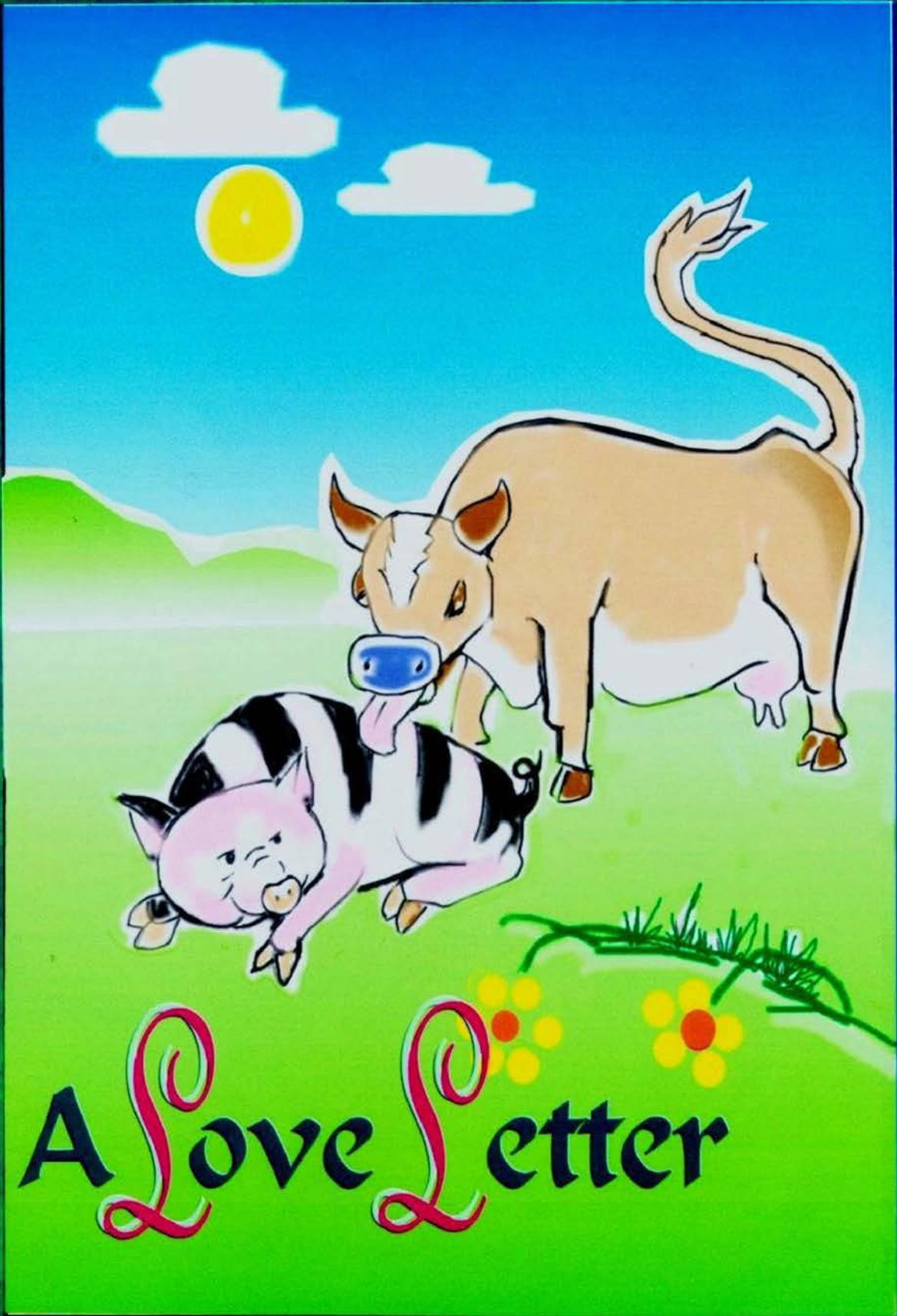
3/22/04

**M**y mother and Lotte were raised to be representatives of the nineteenth century German concept : the “höhere Tochter”, the upper class daughter or debutante. The “höhere” received a High School education, piano and dancing and French lessons and continuous role model demonstrations in deportment by their mothers and aunts. Along with that came material comforts like indoor plumbing and servants. If she had a sizeable dowry she would be able to marry advantageously, but if she didn’t she might build on her art education to qualify as a piano or aquarelle teacher. Certainly an academic career was out of the question and so was business school. My mother’s aunt Agnes was a typical example: she started out as a piano teacher and ended up as a companion to rich society woman.

Our higher living standard and a higher level of universal education have erased much of the class differences so important to people of that time. While elitism still exists it is not as evident as it was a century ago. We still may employ servants but treat them more as equals and nowadays a cleaning woman is a business- person who comes to the house like a doctor did then. A lady of my mother’s time had to constantly advertise her class position by dress, language and fair skin. In addition she had to demonstrate severe self-discipline in her daily actions to avoid scandalizing her peers and on a lifetime scale she was expected to be fair and generous to her servants and be responsible for them.

Lotte’s mother was such a role model who felt responsible for “her people” as a mistress of her estate. She made sure that her farm workers unstintingly received what was specified in their unwritten contract such as housing, a garden plot, a pig, and free medical attention. And she felt that she could not abandon them when the Russian army overran her country in 1945. She repeatedly refused to leave and flee to her safety and so suffered a horrible death.

My mother had internalized much of this attitude even though little of the debutante was left after the losses and miseries of WWII. She felt she could not abandon Lilli on that train station in Preussisch Stargard in order to save herself and her children. On the other hand she also held on to her class-consciousness and kept a punishing eye out for the gaucheries of the “pleb”. Occasionally in Glücksburg she would make a caricature silhouette of a local prominence such as a minister or a pianist. They were hugely appreciated by all but the victim. Unfortunately there exist no copies of those caricatures. An early silhouette of hers: “The Street Sweeper” will give you an idea. The bottom vignette is taken from the painter-poet Wilhelm Busch’s work. Both my mother and Lotte loved his work in which he gently poked fun at the somewhat lower classes.



A Love Letter

This letter is one of the few things that my mother was able to take with her in 1945.

7/7/55

My dear Gretel,

On Friday when I climbed on the bus and got out at Lomome I had a bad conscience - I should have stayed with you and you would have been happier again. But now I have decided: after the 1<sup>st</sup> we will never part again - I will no longer go off by myself and leave you behind. Oh I hadn't seen something very funny on my way. I would have advised being very miserable. You know the place where we waited for Mamma, when she walked with Marianne. I heard grunting from the bushes, continuously and sounding very comfortable - and what was going on - a black and white striped pig of youngish age had draped himself in front of a car and allowed himself to be tickled from top to toe - it was so funny that I laid away my sadness and laughed out loud for a few moments.

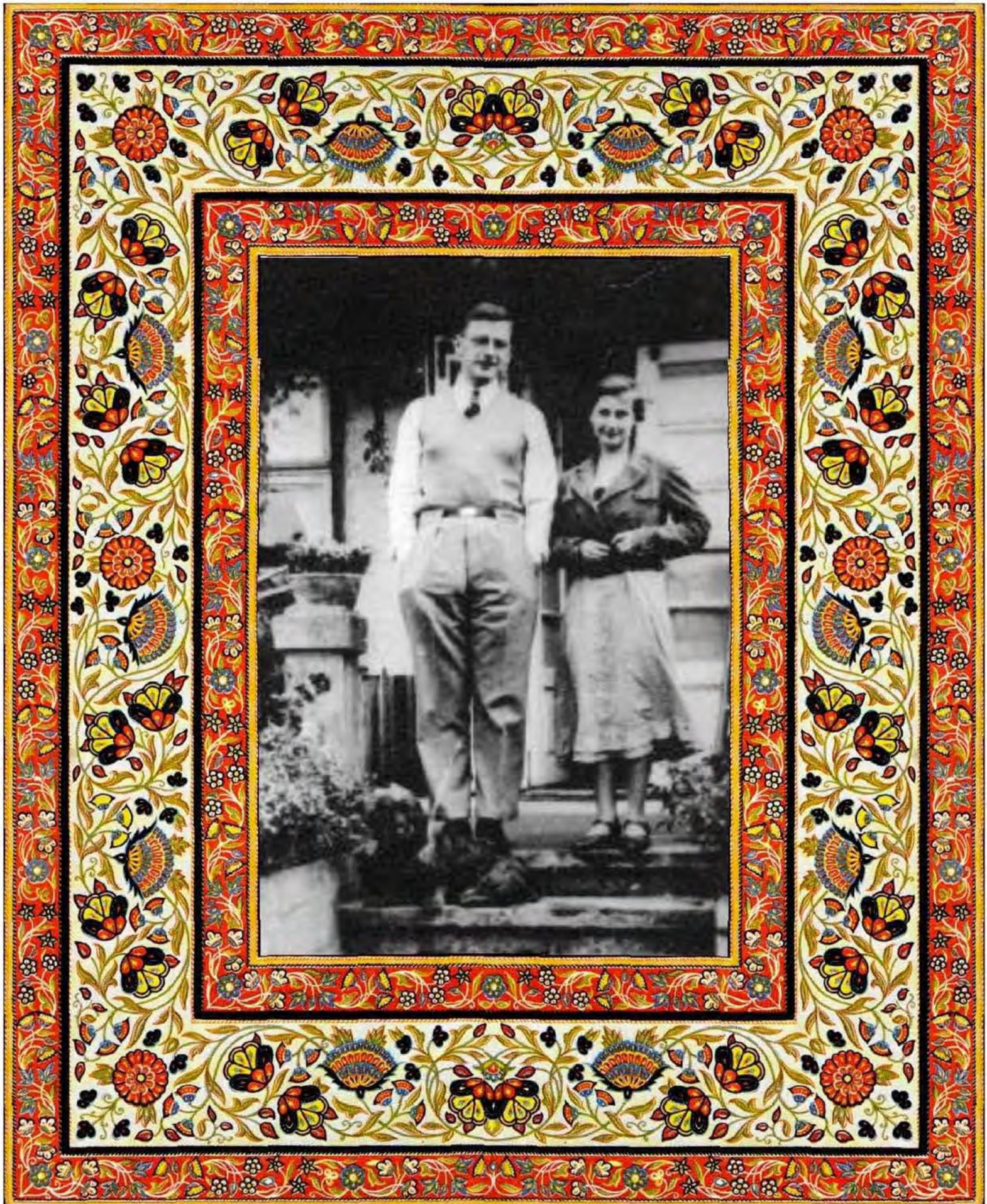
Today is Sunday and with joy I see Tuesday approaching - then I will come to you - it's wonderful that we won't have to worry about separations anymore.

Gretel, I am sorry that I recently again expressed myself badly when I told you that I loved you without worrying about any of us and him - I had wanted to say that from now on we will both share not to worry about any of these things - I didn't intend to make you feel guilty - I know I have no reason whatsoever to do that.

Gretel, please believe me that ever since the 1<sup>st</sup> (engagement day) I have taken you over deeper into my heart and that nothing can come between us - I won't let anything else in and between us there is only one thing and that is larger and stronger than all others.

Today I will also send you the old letter and I hope that you will have happy eyes again when I come.

I love you very much and kiss you  
your Gretel.



1/9/1999

*M*y parents were married on July 11, 1935, but for them the significance of this date paled in comparison with that of their engagement, which fell on a Thursday the thirteenth. Both of them hated family events and gatherings and their own wedding was no exception. But I remember from my youth that whenever a thirteenth of a month happened to fall on a Thursday, they would mention that it was their lucky day. Characteristically no picture of their wedding exists but this snapshot of them standing on the steps of their first home in Järve, a suburb of Reval, captures their newlywed happiness.





Cutting holes into a piece of paper may be fun for half an hour to your average person, but making a life's work of it is not for everyone. The way I remember my mother, she is sitting on a chair just like in the photo and looking intently at the work in her hands, concentrating and constantly rotating the paper around her tiny scissors, as she cuts away anything that isn't a flower or an insect or the portrait of a person.

Gradually, over a period of hours or days, that paper turns into a spidery ball, which only she will be able to disentangle at the end. Paper, when it is cut as finely as she was able to, will deform; it will stretch along the line of cutting. That's why it balls up, and that's why she will have to gently push it back into its original plane, when all the cutting is done. Then she glues it onto a background which mostly was paper - she loved rice paper - but sometimes she selected wood, glass, or tiles.

As she sat there and worked, she hated to be interrupted and did occasionally ask me to tell a would-be gossip that she wasn't in. But she liked to smoke cigarette after cigarette and listen to classical music being broadcast by one of the many European radio stations within the reception range of our small black plastic radio. On Thursday evenings the local librarian, Miss Erdmann, came to visit and read Dostoevski's novels to her until late at night. My father, accepting her as the primary breadwinner during long periods of their marriage, did all the housework of shopping and cooking and laundry.

Both my father and she were enthusiastic nature lovers. Often he would find a wild flower or an insect on his walk to the grocery store or on some other errand and hand it to her with all the air of offering her a Tiffany jewel. She would grow ecstatic over his gift, admire its color or its fantastic shape and declare right then and there, that she must draw it immediately. If it was a bug or a butterfly, it would have to sit under a glass for maybe half an hour or so before regaining its freedom. If it was a flower, it would be put in a vase on her drawing table. As she drew she might pencil-shade an area on very a detailed drawing to help her remember that this was a dark place, or she might even make small notes to her herself about light or dark areas.

She was lucky that my father was a craftsman who knew how to properly sharpen her many small scissors. Their points would not stay sharp for long with all her intensive stabbing and cutting. The kind of paper that could tolerate all that abuse would be heavily filled and abrasive to tools. After the war there were no artist's supplies available, she found that blueprint paper, such as architects used to employ, was the strongest; it didn't matter if it had been exposed. She would make her drawing on the white side and then brush India ink on the other side. Occasionally she might add small cutouts of silver or gold foils from her cigarette packs for accents.

# ALLEY CAT

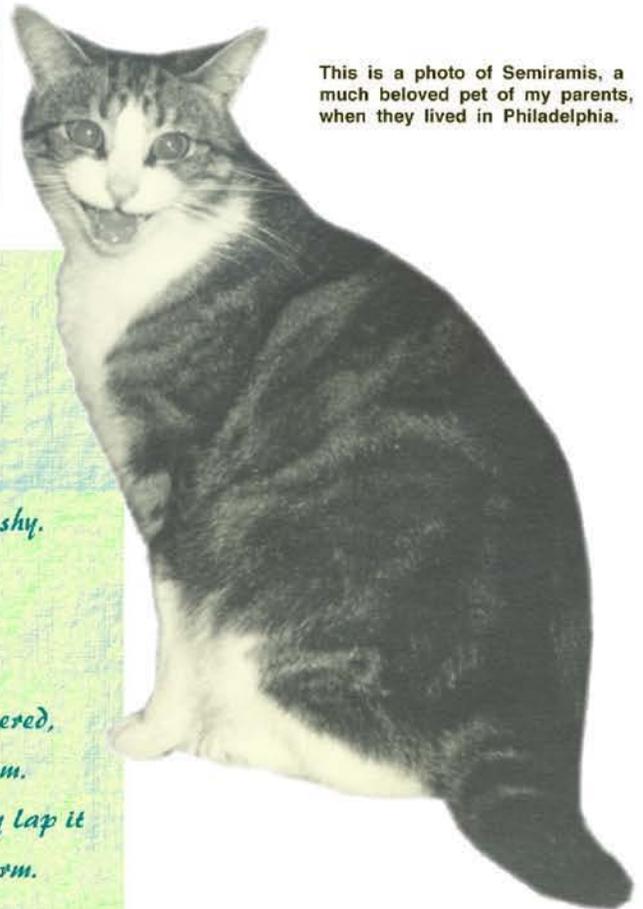
In Reval my mother had a good friend, Ilse von Schilling, nicknamed "Fox". Before Mutti was married she occasionally escaped the restrictive supervision of her adoptive father, "Uncle Erwin", and drank coffee and smoked cigarettes with Ilse in Reval cafés. The two remained friends even after the resettlement in 1939: I found a letter from "Fox" dated 1957 mailed to Marietta. During their Estonia days Ilse wrote a poem dedicated to my mother:

## *The Alley Cat (for Gretel Luther)*

*I am much like an alley cat,  
With badly matted fur and somewhat shy.  
I often make a terrible face  
(Which later I might deny).*

*In your kitchen only I am well mannered,  
There the fire burns bright and warm.  
There I don't gulp my food but daintily lap it  
And snuggle purringly next to your arm.*

*And tell you about my alley cat life,  
About sunshine and rain and barking dogs.  
And about those who give me food –  
And you quietly smooth my matted fur.*



This is a photo of Semiramis, a much beloved pet of my parents, when they lived in Philadelphia.

## Die Strassenkatze

(an Gretel Luther)

Ich bin wie eine Strassenkatze,  
recht stark verwildert und etwas scheu  
und zeige gern eine scheußliche Fratze  
(die ich dann später vielleicht bereu').

Bei Dir in der Küche nur bin ich manierlich,  
dort brennt das Feuer so hell und warm.  
Dort schling ich auch nicht, sondern lecke ganz zierlich  
Und schmiege mich schurrend an Deinen Arm.

Und erzähle Dir vom Strassenkatzen-Leben,  
von Sonne und Regen und Hundegebell  
von denen die mir zu Fressen geben,  
- und Du glätttest mir leis' das Fell.





9/3/1994

Since my mother didn't have a mother of her own to teach her how to mother me, she relied on "Tante" Gertrud Luther. Gertrud was the sister of Alexander Martin Christian V, my grandfather. She was head nurse at the Katharinental Sanatorium in Reval, and she was also keenly interested in crafts, especially weaving. As a nurse she told my mother what to do when I ran a fever, when I should be started on grated carrots and all those other thousand things about baby care.

But Gertrud also had studied weaving: from the simple weaving of linen cloth to difficult patterns in different colors. She knew everything about this craft. She offered to teach my mother about weaving, but so not much because she wanted her to weave, but, because she wanted her to know enough, so that she would be able to design suitable patterns for Gertrud. My mother liked this idea very much and started regularly to pack me up and spend some time in Gertrud's craft shop. There I was set down with a bunch of colored yarn leftovers, which seemed to suit me. This went on until we all had to leave Estonia.

Both Margarethe and Gertrud admired native Estonian folk dress; so it was not a great surprise that Margarethe's big weaving project was a wool peasant skirt. Unfortunately, she admitted, it ended up being so heavy that she couldn't wear it comfortably. And yet she seemed to have no trouble lugging me around at the age of two.

Gertrud, a younger sister of Magda, who painted the sunset aquarelle, survived the resettlement and also WWII. She even started a new craft shop in Germany after the war. But I don't believe that we ever got to see her again.



Tante Gertrud as a young girl in 1895



*Eine Katze steigt  
aufs Dach*

## Little Children's Games

**M**y parents and my aunts often played the "Cat game" with me when I was very young, and I loved it. And so I have played it with you (Children and Grandchildren) too. While the text basically is in High German, the one word "Apapa", meaning Great Grandfather, could only have come from the Baltic German community.

**Eine Katze steigt aufs Dach.** (Finger over finger hand climbs up the one arm)

**Eine andere folgt ihr nach.** (Repeat with other hand on other arm)

**Kommen viele kleine Katzen** (All fingers „climb“ softly up both arms)

**Mit den weichen Sammettätzen.** (Repeat)

**Machen einen großen Krach!** (All fingers dance on the head with much agitation. Pause)

**Kommt der Katzen Apapa** {Urgroßvater}: (Finger over finger hand climbs up slowly and heavily)

**„Kinderchen, was macht ihr da?“** (Index finger knocks pointedly on head)

**Katzen kriegen einen Schreck** (All fingers run down arms)

**Alle Katzen laufen weg.** (Repeat)

Great Grannie Alma also knew a Pennsylvania Dutch game and played it with the same crew. I have tried to fit the pronunciation to her speech, but it is only approximate.

**Reite, reite Gäulie,  
Alle Stund a Meilie.  
Wenn es übern Grabe geht,  
Bumms, fall er nei.**

If you need a translation of the Cat Game:

One Cat climbs onto the roof.  
Another one does follow her.  
Many little kitties come  
On their gentle velvet paws.  
Making a tremendous racket!  
Comes the Cat Great Grandpapa:  
"Children, now what are you doing?  
Kitties all get very scared.  
All the kitties run away.

And Alma's Game:

Ridey, ridey horsey,  
Every hour a miley  
When it's o'er the ditch we go  
Bamm, he falls in!



UPROOTED

**EMBARKATION FOR RESETTLEMENT 1939**

9/10/04

**T**his fall it will be 65 years since the great Baltic resettlement of 1939. My Tallin book ("Reval/Tallin, Portrait einer Ostseestadt", ed. Erik Thomson) tells the following about this momentous event, which was the beginning of WWII, a reshuffling of the pawns.

On August 23, 1939 an Entente agreement (no mutual attack) was signed in Moscow between the German Reich and the Soviet Union. The agreement was executed in the presence of Stalin by the Minister of Foreign Affairs von Ribbentrop and the Peoples Commissioner Molotov.

On October 6, 1939 Adolph Hitler declared in an address to the Reichstag that a retro-settlement of German people living outside the borders of Germany was expected. Already on October 9 the "Revalsche Zeitung" (*the German newspaper of Reval*) announced that resettlement of the German people from Estonia had begun and published a notice entitled: "What every German should know about the Resettlement". In the time between October 18 and November 15 of 1939 fourteen ships were employed in the process and a total of about 12,000 persons were resettled. The last Germans left Reval on May 18, 1940.

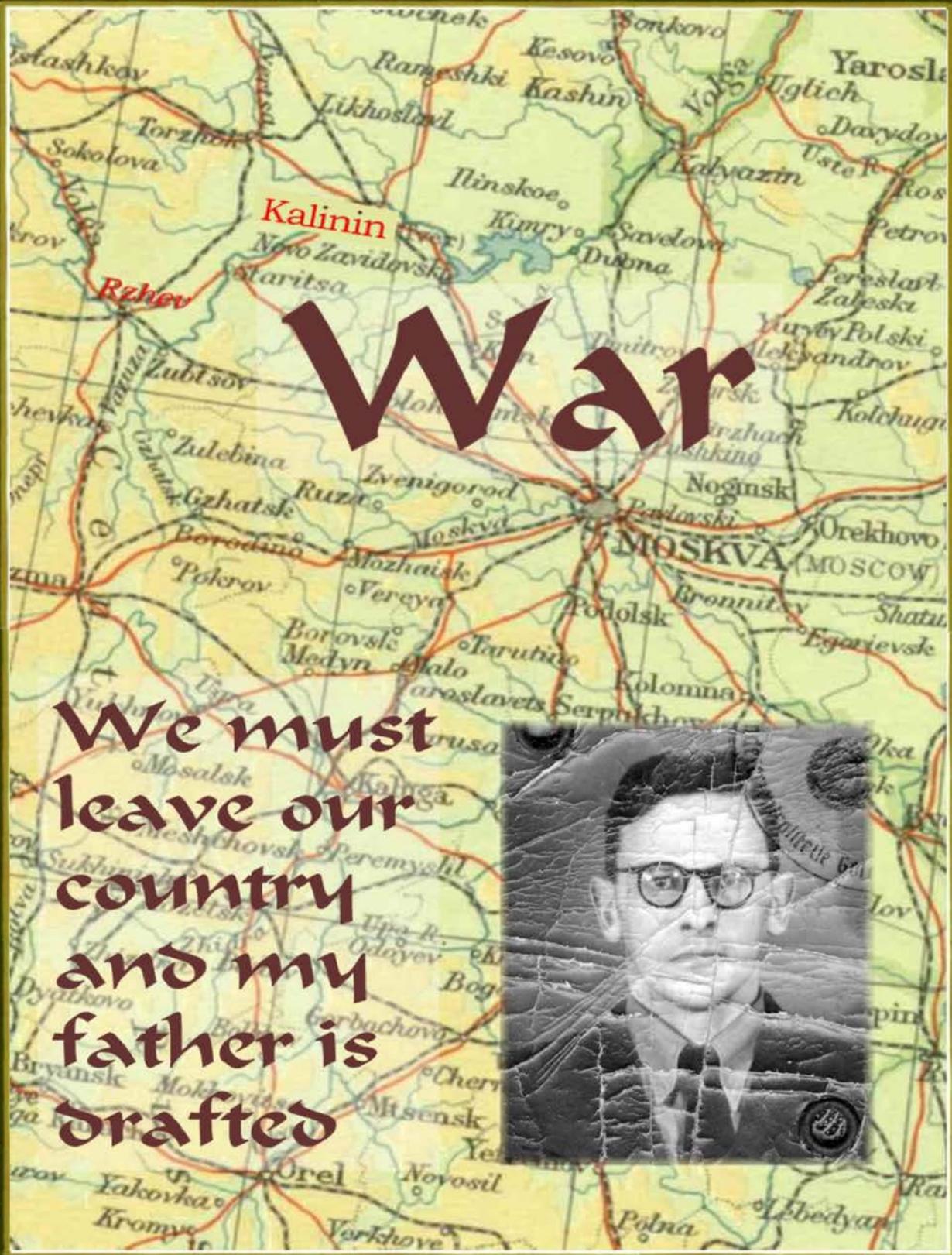
My parent's immigration paper issued by the German government in the port of entry, Gotenhafen, is dated October 31, so they were in the first wave of evacuees. My mother was pregnant with Holger at that time. He was born in Gotenhafen in February 1940.

8/3/01

They were chased out of their Estonian Eden in the Fall of 1939 after only four years of married happiness. Now in the Spring of 1940 everything must have looked grim and hopeless to my parents. I have no letters from that bad time, but there exists a document issued by the German (Nazi) Department of the Interior on October the 31<sup>st</sup>, 1939. It says simply that Ferdinand Luther, born in Helsingfors on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September, 1907, as well as his wife, Margarethe, nee v. Glehn, and their child, Lars Christian, born on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June, 1936, have acquired German citizenship as of the above date. This is a document that condemned us to 15 years of misery in Germany while WW II raged and came to an end and while the country subsequently gradually recovered.

Of course, we recognize that even so we were lucky to get out alive unlike millions of Germans and Non-Germans.





# War

We must  
leave our  
country  
and my  
father is  
drafted



**\*THE NAZI STORM HIT MY PARENTS**

**IN 1939 \* THEY**



**LOST HOMELAND AND HOPE \***

6/4/1997

**M**y parents and I had to leave Estonia very suddenly in the fall of 1939, when Hitler's policies of territorial expansion and repatriation of ethnic Germans were implemented\*. We first came to Gdynia, where my brother was born in Feb. 1940. My mother nearly died then. With Lotte's father's help my father found a job in Deutsch Eylau at a lumber plant. In the year 1940 things began to look up for my parents, but then my father was drafted as the war with Russia escalated.

I remember one afternoon from the summer (1941) before my father was drafted into the German Wehrmacht. I was 5 years old and we lived in Deutsch Eylau in East Prussia. Now that town is called Llawá and is located on two lakes. Our rowboat was tied to a dock on the larger Geeserich Lake. The water lilies drifted by slowly as my father rowed my mother and me. He rowed us past the lumberyard and the sawmill where he was working as a salesman. Out on the lake an exhausted bee landed on the boat railing. I was bored and started to play with it. That is when I got stung.

\* You can read about the "Umsiedlung" (resettlement) in an article by Karl D. Hoover, which I have copied.



Deutsch-Eylau. Partie am See

11/18/02

## **The Sawmill**

With the help of Lotte's parents my father got a job within a year (1940) at Schlohbach's lumber yard on the Grosse Geserich See (Jezorik) in Deutsch Eylau (Ilawa, now in Poland). We moved into the ground floor of a nice house with a bath and tub and water heater (real luxury back then) at 21 Saalefelder Strasse, next to the factory. A small fenced-in garden in the back featured a fountain, though regrettably it didn't spout water. There in spring I found sweet smelling lilac and lovely blue Scilla blooming. The house and garden were surrounded by a wood storage area, with towering high, neatly piled planks of wood. On a small hill just across the street stood a little gazebo. Closer to the lake was the sawmill, where of course I wasn't allowed. Two hundred feet west of us was a small farmhouse, also right on the lake, where the Tucholskys lived. He was the teamster for the mill with a pair of horses. A flock of chickens scratched in the dirt around their house, next to which we could have a vegetable garden.

Russian prisoners of war worked in the factory and took their lunch break outside. They were very friendly, but unfortunately they must have had lice. At one time Lilli told us to stay away from them and washed our hair with petroleum. Holger had gotten a little too friendly with the workers.

I explored my kingdom first within the garden fence, then later outside it, within the wood storage area. Even farther a field a friend and I came upon reed tepees on the lake shore. Many houses at that time had reed roofs, so reed was cut and set up in sheaves to dry. We felt the need to crawl into one of these tepees, but were careless and knocked down some sheaves. Next thing we knew, the farmer was after us. I fell, blaming this on the heavy coat which my unthinking mother had made me put on. But it actually turned out to be good protection. When the infuriated farmer swung his horse whip and gave me a few lashes with it I didn't feel a thing; still we didn't go there anymore.

There were other dangers. My brother and I must have annoyed the rooster of the Tucholskys, at least I found myself running from him, like a coward leaving my little brother behind. The rooster jumped him and hacked at his eyes, fortunately not doing any more harm than a scratch on the eyebrow. But here was bright blood on Holger's face. My mother went to complain to the police and was angry that no action was taken.

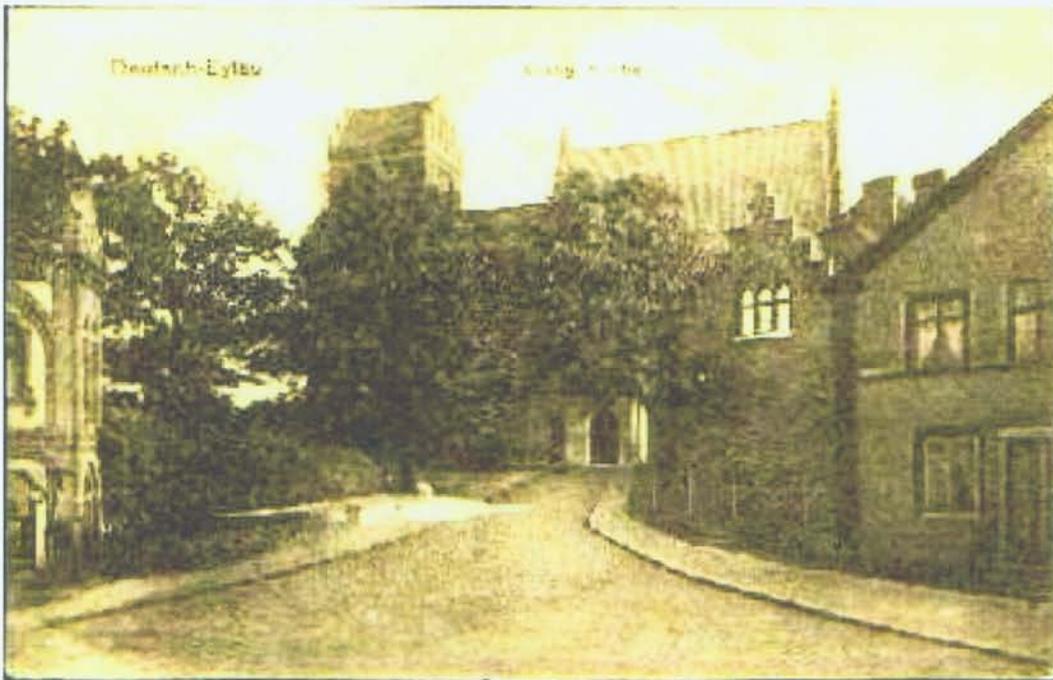
At school the teacher told us that we students were needed in the war effort and should report any discarded metal that we might have found. So I remembered seeing a heap of rusting machinery parts piled up near the Tucholsky's house and told the teacher about it. This was by far the biggest thing anyone in my class had come up with. He assigned an older student to walk out to my house and to evaluate the situation. My advisor was impressed. But a few days later I learned that my effort to save the fatherland had failed. The sawmill couldn't give up the machine parts, as they were still needed.

3/10/07

In 1940 we lived in an Old part  
of an Old\* Town:

# Deutsch Eylau.

\*established 1317



*This is a postcard from 1920 downloaded from the Internet. It shows the Lutheran Church (Evang. Kirche). I believe that we rented an apartment on the ground floor of the house on the right during our first few months in town. I remember the cobblestones and a lot of shade. Soon we moved into a house at the edge of town and on the lake, next to the sawmill for which my father purchased wood from the farmers in the surrounding country.*

*I believe that he brought home cranberries one day in the fall from his travels in the forests. My mother coated them with egg white and rolled them in sugar. I can still taste this delicious treat.*

*My Father in Russia*



1/9/99

**M**y father was drafted into the German army in 1941. As a multilingual former Estonian he had a working knowledge of Russian, which the Germans needed. There was guerrilla warfare and the captured "partisans" had to be interviewed. After a brief refresher course in Berlin he was sent to the front and assigned as an interpreter to his unit. He was part of the staff and enjoyed, officer privileges and did not have to do any of the actual fighting. His unit advanced to a position only 40 km from Moscow in the early successful part of the campaign. I do believe that he wanted the Germans to win the war, because they could liberate Estonia, and then he and his family would be able to return. But then the Russians rallied, and the Germans began to retreat. Towards the end of the war when his skills were not needed anymore he began to feel guilty about his privileged position. Also he worried intensely about his family who he knew only had a fair chance of escaping from liberated Poland. In the spring of 1945 he had had no sign from his wife for many weeks and was sure that she was dead and that he would soon join her.

The following handwritten document was found among Fred's papers:

**Declaration under oath**

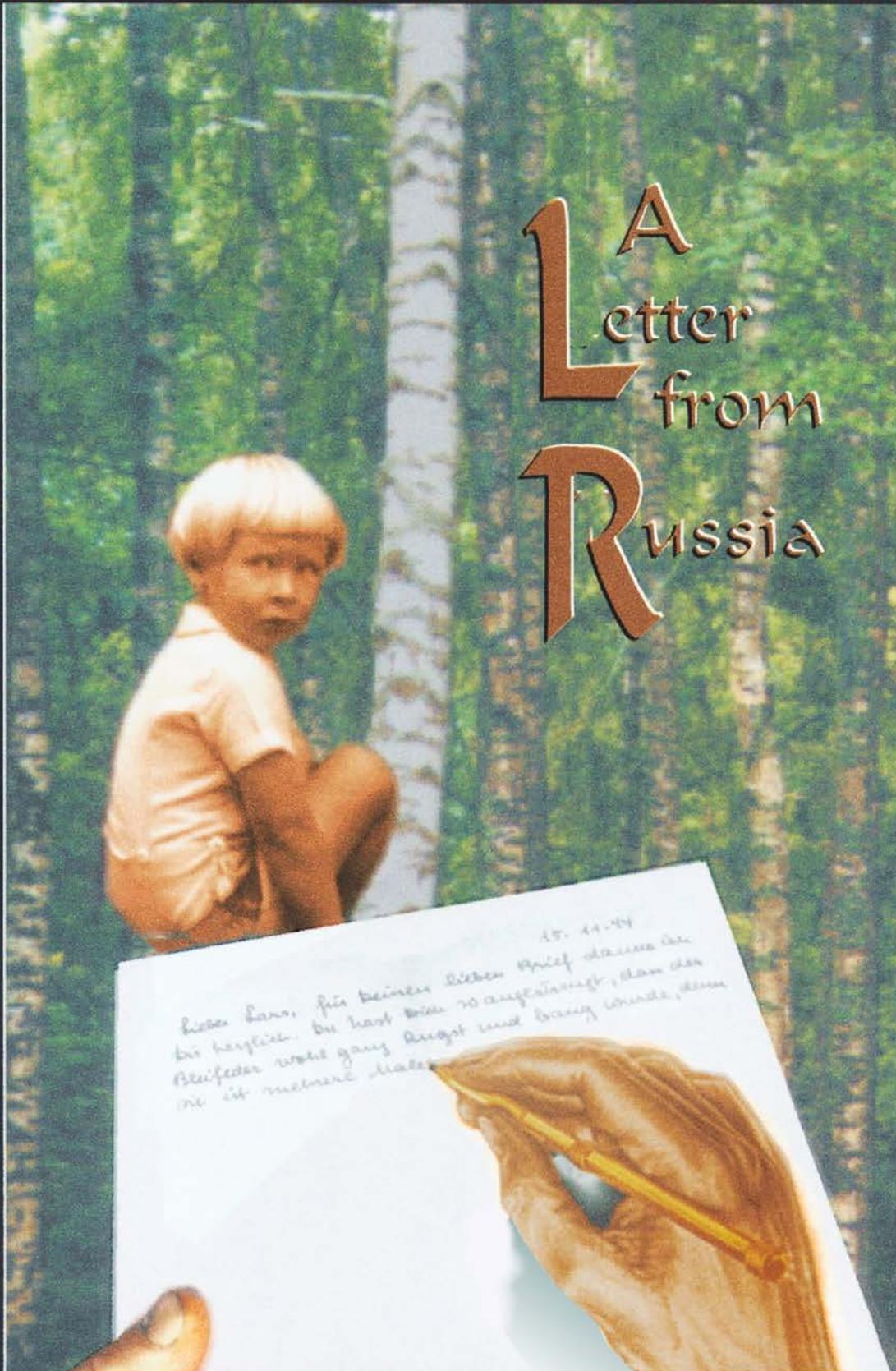
Re: VSNR53190807LO27 [ Pension application to Bundesrepublik 1974 BKZ 5542

Ferdinand Luther  
Born 19 September 1907 in Helsinki, Finland

I declare herewith under oath that I was drafted in July, 1941, to interpreter training school in Berlin. After six weeks of pre-military training I was deployed in the central section of the Eastern front as a Russian interpreter (Specialist G) in Smolensk [Russia] and there assigned by the AOK [commando"] to the staff of the 314" Infantry Regiment under Regiment Commander Oberst von Gerber. I remained in this unit until December, 1941, near Kaliningrad on the Volga [*an error, I believe he means Kalinin. north of Moscow* ], when following a Russian break-through the unit was dissolved near Rzew.

In March of 1942 I was ordered to transfer to the 129t' Infantry Division where I remained until the end of the War, first as a Specialist G and then as a Specialist Z. My first commander of the 129th Infantry Division, General A. Praun, took me along after the capitulation, fifth of May, 1945, to negotiations with the Allied Forces in Reims [France]. There I was dismissed in September of 1945 from a camp in Attichy to return to Flensburg [Germany].

Ferdinand Luther



# A Letter from Russia

15. 11. 44  
 Liebe Hans, für deinen lieben Brief danke ich  
 dir herzlich. Du hast mich so aufgeregt, dass ich  
 Blickefen wohl ganz Angst und Bang wurde, denn  
 ich ist meine Mutter.



9/25/00

In November of 1944 my father had just returned to the Russian front after a week's furlough in Deutsch Eylau. He was in the habit of writing letters to my mother almost every day, so I can date the time of his visit from the gap in the letters. On the 15<sup>th</sup> he wrote a letter specially to me thanking me for my efforts to start writing to him. Apparently it had taken some beating up on me to do that judging from a remark elsewhere. I was only eight at the time, a little older than the picture suggests.

Even though the German front was about to collapse, my father sounds quite upbeat in the letters to my mother. He says he has enough to eat and that he lives in a bunker deep underground. Here is what he wrote:

**November 15,**

**1944**

***Dear Cars, I thank you cordially for your dear letter. You have made such mighty efforts that your pencil really got scared; it slipped several times. I arrived here in good shape, the trip was quite comfortable, soft benches and much room (on the train back to the front). One night I spent in a very clean hotel bed under a soft down blanket. - I have been so happy to see you and Holger again. From now on you will have to write to me more often and tell me what you both are up to and how you are. Both of you take care that you don't catch colds. Be a help and support to mom. You are quite a big lad now. Watch Holger that he doesn't get into too much trouble. Now I will tell you: See You Again, hopefully quite soon. Give mom and Holger a kiss from me; I send you my love, your Väterchen.***

Feldpost



Abs.

*Frau Marg. Lutter*

*Deutsch-Engl.*

*Postfach 21*



Geöffnet

21.11.44

1. Dez. 1944



*Tr 7*

1/29/04

On Nov. 28, 1944 my father wrote a letter home, as he did almost every day, addressed as you can barely read after 60 years to: "*Frau Marg. Luther Deutsch-Eylau Saalfelderstr. 21*". On that day contrary to his habit he used a form supplied by the German army that was to be folded in half. (I have turned the lower half upside down for easier reading). You immediately notice the stamp: **Geöffnet**, that is opened, meaning censored. The censors, represented by the ubiquitous Nazi eagle strutting on the wreath around the swastika, were looking for any violations of the rules, presumably disclosure of where he was and for any sign of bad morale. **Feldpost** means "Mail from the Front". The drawing on the back of the envelope shows a German "Landser" sitting happily among the ruins of an enemy house writing home, his gun, his mess kit, and his gas mask (cylinder) neatly stacked nearby. The return address (**Abs.**) is: *Sdf* (for *Sonderführer*, = *Specialist*) *Luther 17340*.

In his letter my father complains of not having received mail from my mother that day. He had had a dream about her last night: they were together on the water, "almost like Wallküll" and indescribably happy. For now he is content with life, all is quiet on the Eastern Front and the weather is OK, no annoying rain or snow. But he muses philosophically why man must make his short life so uncomfortable. He didn't know than how soon "Ivan", the Russian enemy, would make life exceedingly uncomfortable for them all.

The photo below was taken in 1943 in Posen (Poznan) says Holger (on my father's lap) while we were at the Zoo. Posen, where my grandmother Gerda and her daughter Renate lived after the resettlement, was a fairly long railroad trip away (150 miles) from Deutsch- Eylau. I seem to remember making a stop at Thorn (Torun) on our way. Notice how light Holger's hair is. My father often called us "die Weissen" (the white ones) when we were small. In his letters from the front he would close in writing: "grüss die Weissen". I kept (some of) my blond hair, but Holger went over to the dark side. My mother is wearing her black, short sheepskin coat that my father had brought her from Russia. She loved it because she was always freezing and it kept her warm. She wore it all the time except in summer during the war and long time after.



**The war was a  
terrible time. We did  
not know whether  
my father was alive.**



6/4/97

When I say that the war was a terrible time, I don't mean that it was for me. I played and went to school. I was protected, never suffered any harm and didn't know that there was not enough to eat, as my mother said. Perhaps I was sick more often than normal. Once, towards the end of the war, I saw a long column of miserable, gray and tired people being marched through the main street of Deutsch Eylau by German soldiers. Who were these unfortunate people? Whereto were they marching in the falling snow? And another time I ran to see the bodies of two deserters who had been shot right there in the market square. The eyes of one them were full of blood.

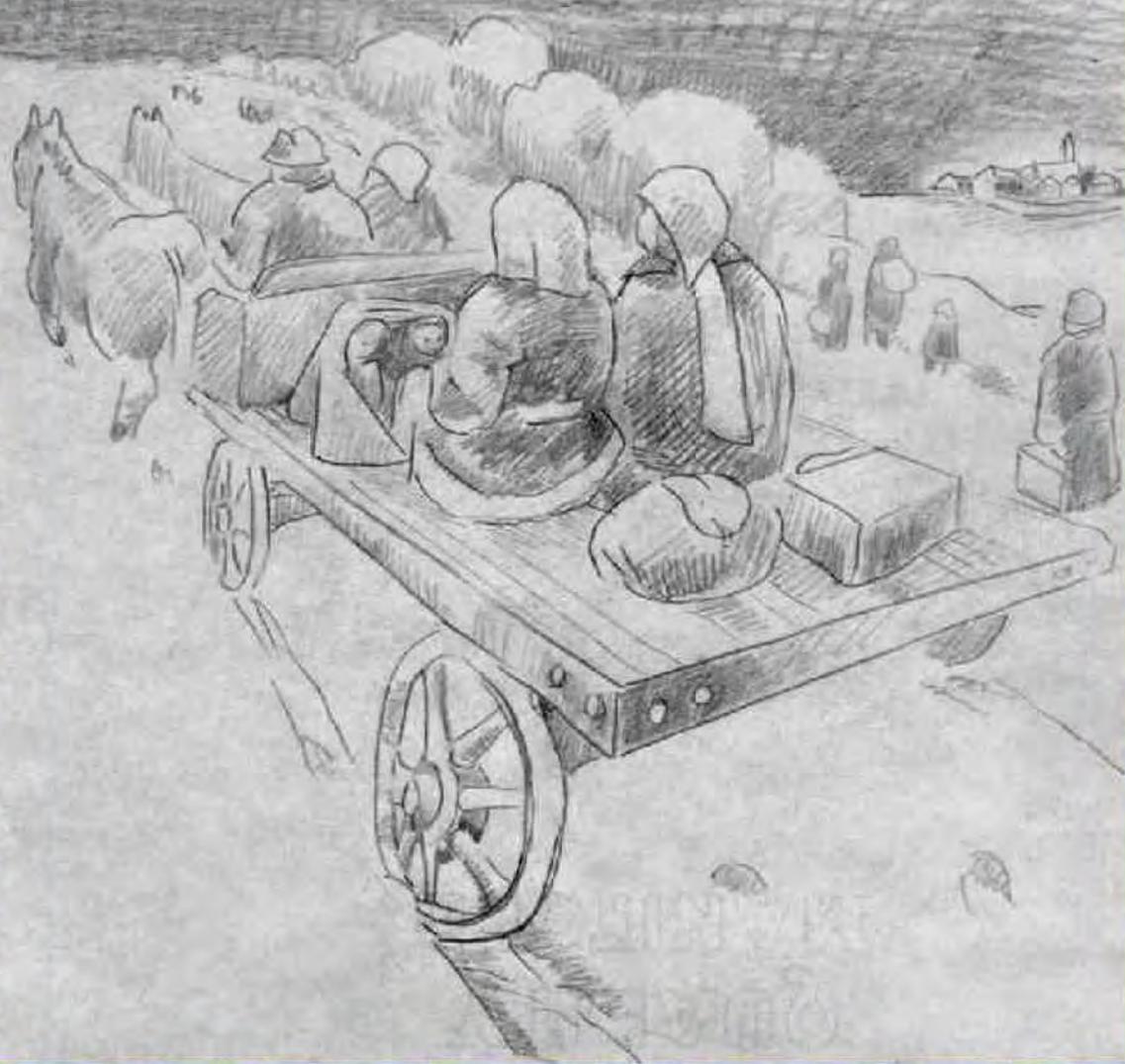
I was curious about death just as I had been at an earlier time when we were on one of our occasional visits to Schönfliess, and I was alerted to something unusual happening by some horrible squeaks. I asked and was told that "they" were

slaughtering a pig today. I raced to my mother who was relaxing in the sun on a lawn chair and asked whether I might be allowed to go see this spectacle. She pleaded with me not to go: "It's an awful thing to see, poor pig, don't go there." I didn't argue with her but ran off, of course, right to the court yard where the screams were coming from.

So I got to see how they were hitting the poor pig on the head with a big wooden mallet, and then I saw the blood being collected in big bowls. I wasn't sure anymore then that I had done the right thing.



# Our Flight from Deutsch Eylau



## From my father's diary

February 24, 1945

Now three days have passed - days that are like years - eternities and seconds. And yet I want to write up what happened to you and me, because it sounds in the telling like a fairy tale and still we both were allowed to experience it with our own senses.

I heard via the grapevine - but I wrote that already - that we had permission to go to the city, so on February 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:30 I drove with a truck via Dirschau to the little town. There I asked for permission to go to Gotenhafen [Gdynia] which also was granted - to my surprise - even though I really didn't have the correct papers. In Gotenhafen magical forces pulled me from the railroad station to the Bismark Strasse 26 to Grohmann's\*. And now imagine my heart, soul, body - as I open the front door - Lilli, i.e., a girl, shouts: "Look, there is Väterchen!" I turned totally to stone and could hardly ask Lilli, "And where is Frau Luther?" because silently I was afraid that you weren't there. But Billo [*Lars*] was already running up the stairs and I behind him - and there you came to meet me, my life, real and yet not real. Then we sat at Grohmann's in the kitchen and you explained - but at first I could not comprehend this happiness and wonder. The tears came by themselves. They were tears of relief after a horrible cramp, the black days. I want to tell your story briefly, because I see in it the wonderful divine guidance.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of January at midnight you were frightened out of your sleep by the sirens and a short time thereafter you were ordered to go immediately to the Rosenberger Highway and from there to move on cross-country in a northwesterly direction. The day before Dornbusch had given permission for you with Lilli and the children to get a ride on Schlobach's \*\* horse carriage. You also took a backpack and two blankets - that was all. And the journey went via Rosenberg, Riesenburg, the Dirschauer Autobahn Bridge to Preussisch Stargard. There you stayed for three weeks with the teacher Hoffmann-Fellin. Schlobach's horses stayed there and also Lilli was supposed to have gone with the Tuchels\*\*\*. However, probably out of love for Holger she was persuaded to stay, this faithful person.

\* A friend from Reval, organist at the Olai church.

\*\* My father's former employer at the sawmill

\*\*\* Neighbors and coachman

PS The drawing is inaccurate in that there were additional people on the wagon.

*At the end of the  
war my mother, my  
brother and I came  
to Glücksburg*



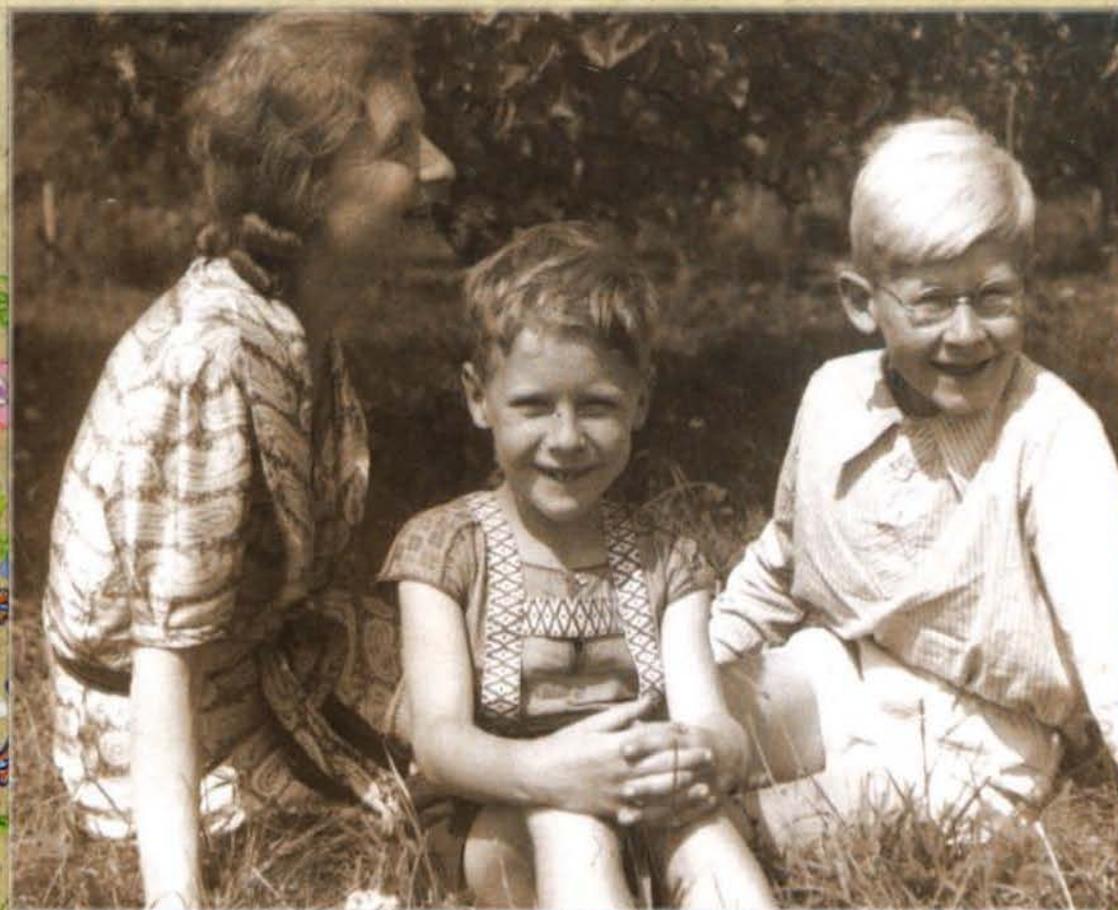
6/4/97

**G**lücksburg is now, as it was before the war, a Baltic Sea spa, a vacation spot with many hotels for summer guests. When we got there in 1945, the town was overflowing with refugees from East Germany just like us. We went to live with Lotte Cardinal and her four children. My mother found work peeling potatoes. Later she worked for a craft shop painting pictures and wooden boxes. Lotte meanwhile went around on her bicycle scrounging up food from the farmers to supplement the rations. Money couldn't buy food then but there was jewelry to barter. I wandered with the other children all around Glücksburg collecting cigarette butts that the English soldiers had tossed. My mother made cigarettes out of them. Nearly all the forest had been cut down for firewood. But gradually things got better. I went to a Danish school and learned Danish and eventually graduated with a highschool diploma from Duborg Skolen in Flensburg. My father found that his toy and craft shop didn't make enough money to support us and got a job teaching wood work at the Danish elementary school.

The big attraction in Glücksburg is the water castle built in 1585. While we lived there the castle was not open to the public except for the chapel where services were held. Many years later, when Janet and I visited, we found that it is a fine museum now and that we could enter it and see many of the barrel vaulted rooms.



Glücksburg castle on an old postcard



Summer 1947 in Glücksburg

1/24/03

This is one of the few photos we have from our life in Glücksburg. It was taken in 1947, probably by Mrs Kistrup, who had gotten to be a good friend of my parents. Her husband owned a mill on the lake surrounding the castle; I believe it was an animal feed mill. Mrs Kistrup (Roswitha) came from Austria while her husband was a native of Glücksburg. I seem to remember that Roswitha had taken another photo of us with some geese, and it would certainly have made sense that the Kistrups would have had geese with all that water and poultry food around. At Christmas time my father played Santa Claus for the Kistrup children, who were younger than we were, and he brought home some wonderful food gifts for our own Christmas.

After my mother had quit her first job peeling rutabagas in the hospital she found more suitable work at a studio/gift shop not far from Kistrup's mill, in the Hotel Ruhetal. I think that in this summer of 1947 she still set out each morning to walk the long way (about 2 km) from our apartment all the way across town to the studio where she painted cigarette cases, jewelry boxes and small water colors. One motif that was very popular and that she therefore had to repeat over and over was "Pine Tree at the Beach". A coworker at the shop, Fräulein von Auwers, painted a lovely portrait of her in 1945, which fortunately we still have; it shows her in her half long black sheep skin coat, which my father had brought back from Russia, and which she had worn on the flight from Deutsch Eylau and which she continued to wear because it was warm and totally indestructible. The artist has made this coat look a lot nicer than it really was.

Several displaced princesses lived in Glücksburg at that time in the guest wings of the castle; among them was the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg, whose lands had been lost to the Russian occupied zone. She and other aristocratic ladies sometimes went browsing in the nearby studio where my mother worked and she got acquainted with them. Later, when my parents had set up their own studio in our apartment, the ladies were occasional customers there too.

I was still in my scrounging phase and regularly patrolled the garbage dumps for neat stuff. One afternoon Holger and I had gotten very lucky and found a large number of empty wine bottles, and had carried them home to our apartment and lined them up on the floor just inside near the door. We were going to sell them at a recycling place, but clearly they needed washing first. Unfortunately for everybody that was just the afternoon the ladies had chosen to visit. My mother, who was working in the other room and had been unaware of our good luck, was very flustered when she found out who was knocking at the door and then had to free up a path between the dirty bottles for her distinguished customers. But by this time a lot of ceremony had become superfluous even in aristocratic circles and the ladies took their unusual reception with good humor.



Mutti  
the  
Story  
Teller



2/18/00

In 1945, when we literally owned nothing but the clothes we were wearing and therefore didn't have all the distractions that claim our attentions now, my mother would keep our spirits up by telling us bedtime stories. We were guests at Lotte's house then until we could get an apartment of our own. She could make a story up in an hour before bedtime and then she would collect Lotte's four children and my brother and me for the telling. She always wanted the room dark and in this time of frequent power failures this was a natural condition anyway. As she never repeated any of her stories, I can't remember even fragments of them, but once she had to re-think the ending of one of them, because I complained that it was just too sad. Fortunately she wrote one of them down using Lotte's typewriter and illustrated it with about twenty small silhouettes. The little booklet was a birthday present for Lotte's oldest, Tina, and she saved it and gave me a Xerox copy of it. The story was, of course, written in German, so I have translated it for you and I also fixed up some of the silhouettes, because the glue failed here and there. There is a well known German children's story: Hänschen im Blaubeerwald, which may have been an inspiration for this one about Tina and Lars in cherry land. I like to think that I contributed to the story in a small way by collecting cigarette butts for her all around the English soldier's barracks. She and Lotte accepted the day's harvest eagerly and carefully pulled the butts apart to roll their own from the tobacco.



P

Peace and a  
new Beginning



May 1945

1/9/1999

**P**eace, “the world’s favorite rose “, was hybridized already in 1939 by Meilland, but became generally available only after the great war, hence its English name. A few seeds of it were smuggled into this country even before 1945. In Germany it was christened “ Gloria Dei”. I recall while we were still in Glücksburg, long before I ever got interested in roses, how I first heard of that name. A local nursery man, Pastorf, knew about my mother’s flower silhouettes and presented her with some buds of Gloria Dei, after they had first opened up in his garden. My mother was totally blown away by their beauty and made a wonderful picture of them. Gloria Dei was mentioned at least twelve times a day while the rose “sat” for her portrait. Since she made so many silhouettes of roses over years, I can’t be sure, but this copy from a poor quality postcard may actually be a reproduction of the picture she made at that time and show what she worshipped.





# Letter from Attichy, a POW Camp

*My Darling,*

*A deep pain gnaws at me. I left you without being able to send you a message and during all this long, this awfully long time, I couldn't write. I pray to God that he may have given you the strength to now also survive these dreadful days. Then, if it may be so, I will soon be with you again and after that nothing shall separate us ever again. I have experienced a lot of things, difficulties mostly, but there were also some golden hours thanks to Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, and Brahms. How wonderful is music and poetry when all lesser things fall away.*

*What chapter in our lives will now begin? The war was ?? ended, it all happened as it had to. I am greatly worried whether you have what you need for your daily life. I have asked God to give you what is necessary: bread, shelter and good friends. You can't imagine how much I am looking forward to being able to provide for you, my beloved family, again. And mainly to be with you and not to have to go away again.*

*I wonder whether you have found anything (a place to live) for us in the meantime, Georgi, ??, Kistrup among others, that would be wonderful. Then we will have 3 weeks to look for work. My heart is longing for you, I am thinking of you without pause, my dearest.*

*Keep me in your heart. I love you, your faithful*

*Freddie.*

**T**he first thing my  
father wanted to do  
when he came back  
was to build toys.



12/17/99

**R**ight after my father came home we moved into two small unheated rooms over the garage at Lotte's house. But with winter coming we needed heat. Fortunately the authorities could give us something: two rooms in Sandwigstrasse 14, owned by Mrs. Ziese. The house was a huge old yellow brick building with a laundry, coal storage rooms and even a chicken coop. When our initial happiness had worn off, we discovered that there were many problems. There was no running water; household water had to be gotten from a tiny spigot in the communal toilet. My parents set up a supply bucket in the "kitchen" and put a scoop into it. Since our two rooms were bed rooms, there was no stove. We learned to cook on a camp stove. After some years I was trusted to operate it. You first poured methyl alcohol into a little cup and lit it with a match. While the liquid was burning you pumped up the pressure on the kerosene reservoir. The liquid was forced through a nozzle and turned into gas, which then could be lit. We never had a serious problem with it even though all the cooking was done on it. Food storage was in the cellar two floors below, where we were assigned a room behind a huge laundry press. The paint on the wooden floors was all worn off and got very dirty from kitchen use and mud. It had to be scrubbed all the time. In the first years Lilli stayed with us and did all the chores. But then she found a farmer to marry and left.

The other room used to have a wooden balcony overlooking the garden. It had fallen off and was replaced by a railing. In the corner next to it I was allowed to set up my chemistry lab. I did wonderful things there and my long suffering family learned about some amazing new smells.

When we visited in 1984 the balcony was back.



To build toys he  
needed tools. But  
where could he find  
tools?



**W**hen my father came home a few months after the Wehrmacht surrendered, my mother, overjoyed, rushed to tell everyone in Lotte's house where five families were living at the time. Later she began to feel very bad about that. One of the women she had told was still waiting for her own husband. She began to cry.

My father found it very hard to find any kind of work. On his travels he ran into his former military commander and that chance encounter turned out badly. The man made him come along to France as an interpreter. After the end of the negotiations my father was kept there as a prisoner of war for several more months. After coming home a second time, he began to think that together with my mother they could set up an art and craft shop. He started making some very crude doll house furniture. It was crude because he had virtually no tools and no wood. For a while he converted some watch springs into jigsaw blades by filing them a tooth at a time. A friend who janitored for the English soldiers occupying one of the fine villas near the beach tipped him off that some boards were being thrown out to be burned. So my father and I set out in the late afternoon to sneak into the yard and to get them. But the guards heard us and next thing I knew, they had arrested my father and sent me home crying.

Fortunately he returned soon after some "community service". Then someone gave him some well made wooden boxes which had contained gas masks. He made quite a few things out of the wood he salvaged from these boxes.



☆ ☆

# Silent Night

☆



2/21/02

**M**y mother passed away on Dec. 28, 2001, just a few days after Christmas. She had been very lethargic several days before and for the first time we could not take her home to celebrate Christmas Eve as we always used to. That was very sad because she loved Christmas, the preparations, the tree trimming, the rituals, and the little secrets of gift giving. And then, once the candles on the tree were lit, she would sit there and enjoy seeing the candles burning down one by one and the shadows on the ceiling getting larger and larger.

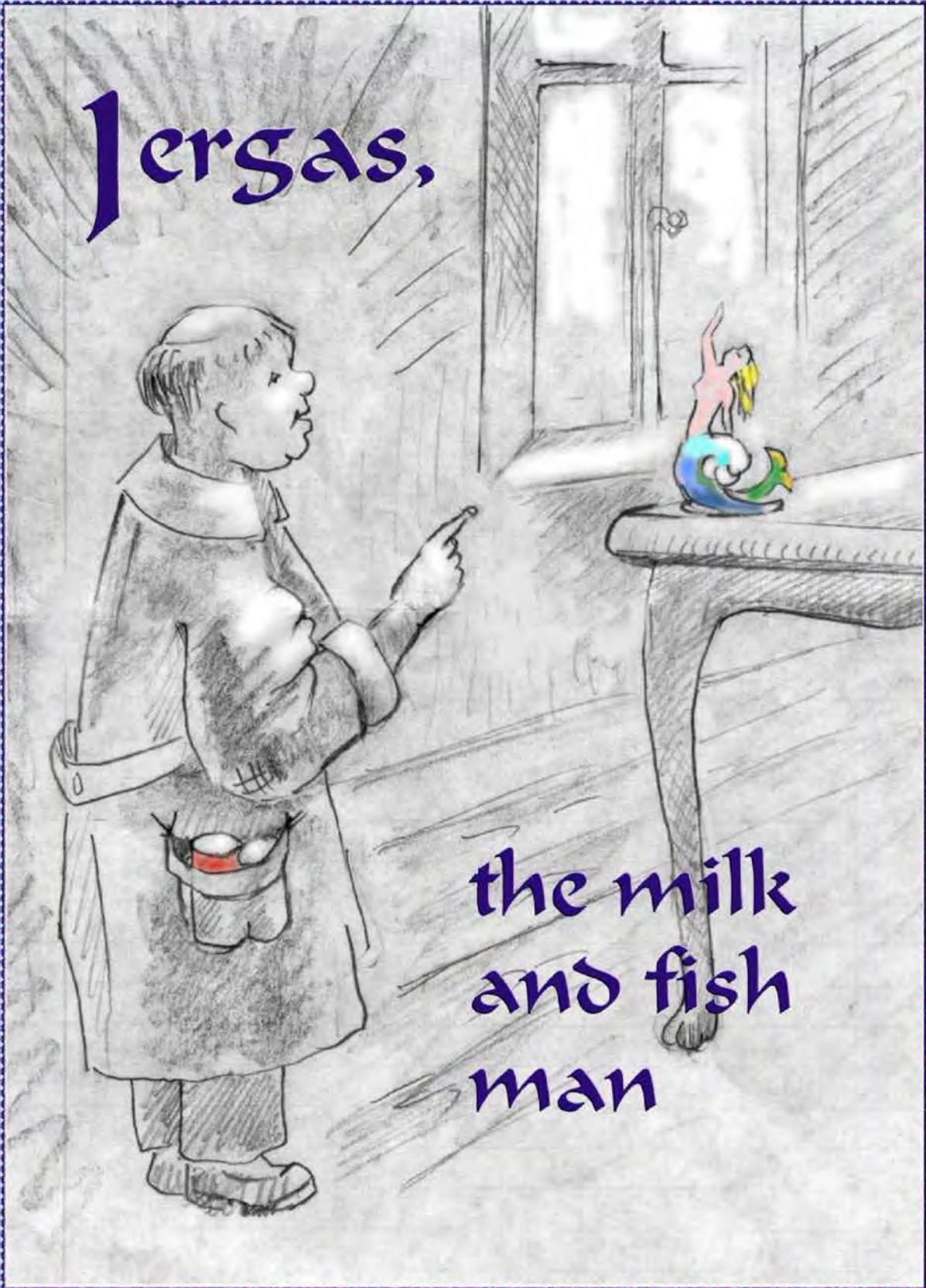
I remember one Christmas about fifty years ago, just after WW II. There was then not much food and there was nothing to buy in the shops. But, of course we had a tree and homemade candles and decorations such as paper star chains. But after a few gifts had been passed out (we didn't wrap them), and after the candles had burned down, there was still a lot of evening left and you couldn't just turn on the lights and go back to everyday routines.

So my mother suggested that we take a walk. It had snowed and everything was covered with fresh snow. We walked to the edge of the woods where young spruce trees had been planted. There she took a candle and a candleholder out of her pocket. She asked my father to fix the holder with the candle to a branch of a pretty little snow covered spruce. Then one of us boys got to light it. Fortunately there was no wind, there was just the immense darkness of the woods. And that darkness was created by the solitary light, which could only illuminate the nearest branches and the neighboring trees. Millions of diamonds reflected the flame. We stood there silently for a few minutes, until we got too cold, and then walked back home.

We never repeated this little ceremony; times got better and there was more to do on Christmas Eve. Maybe that is why, this Christmas stands out in my memory. But it is also because it demonstrated her gift to make something out of very little. And so it has been so true with her silhouette art too. Amazing beauty created from a sheet of paper, using nothing but a small pair of scissors.



Jergas,



the milk  
and fish  
man



Once during the bad years after the war my mother took my brother and me to the pediatrician in Flensburg. She wanted her to declare us undernourished and to prescribe extra food rationing coupons. She was discouraged on her way back, because the doctor had in fact found us undernourished and given her the papers for coupons, but these wouldn't necessarily do any good, since there just wasn't much food in the stores.

My father was eager to cheer her up with good news. "Gretel, while you were gone an angel of mercy appeared. His name is Jergas and he is from the displaced persons camp in Meierwik. He liked our figures," referring to the painted plywood cutouts that they two had been creating, "and he took several in exchange for cans of fish and milk."

The next time Jergas came around he excitedly pointed at the figure of H.C. Andersen's little mermaid and burred: "Jesus, Jesus, make me more fish women. So nice to put on the radio!"\* My mothers little mermaid did not, unlike Disney's Ariel, sport a bra. He offered an irresistible black market price of: "One feesh, one meelk".

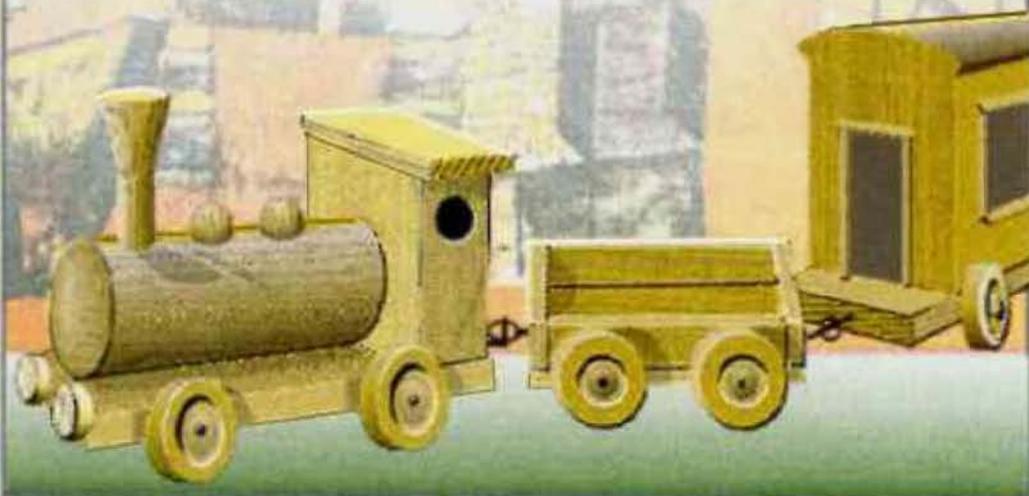
For a while these food supplements were a great source of comfort and encouragement to my parents, and Jergas' visits were feverishly anticipated. My mother designed lots of familiar fairytale figurines, which my father cut out. She painted them with tempera colors, and then he finished them with a glistening coat of nail polish in lieu of lacquer. Unfortunately after a year or so all the displaced persons in the camp received permission to emigrate to the U.S. and that was the end of "Feesh and Meelk".



\*The radio was the big deal in consumerc  
radio was the ultimate touch in interior decoration.

n 1954. Putting that little statue on the

**M**y father went on a long  
trip by train to see a friend.  
This friend gave him many  
tools for working wood.



12/18/00

Six years later, in 1951, my father set out on an other important trip. This time he took a chance at holding a regular job like he had had before the war. With some friends he drove to Duisburg on the Rhine and was hired as an expediter by a river shipping company. For about half a year he worked there while living with a family he had known from Reval, the Wittes. Evenings he would often babysit their two children, Wienke and Helmuth. He became very fond of the children. Many years later he ran into Helmuth again, who by then had arrived in the US to work, also as an expediter. But the office work in the polluted industrial heartland of Germany didn't appeal to my father. He came back disappointed and disheartened.

Danish friends, Mr. and Mrs. Kjems, who worked for the Danish school system in Schleswig Holstein and who were also interested in my parent's art work, helped him to get some training as a teacher. So in the last years before we emigrated, he worked as a craft teacher at the Elementary Danish school in Glücksburg. The superintendent there, Mr. Futtrup, really liked him and came to visit in the last minute before we left for the US to offer him a scholarship for me to attend the university in Copenhagen. Futtrup thought that ought to persuade my parents to stay. But they took a chance at the bigger prize, fortunately.



Barge on the Rhine river

Of all his tools  
he liked the  
jigsaw best.



**M**y father loved woods. The grain, color, smell, and texture of different woods inspired him. He bought veneer samples of everything he could get, ranging from the almost featureless white birch, which is so easy to work, to the gnarled burls of exotic woods which crumble when you try to shape them. Veneers are used for inlay work, and the jig saw is the prime tool for that. He would assemble a stack of his favorite veneers, sandwich the stack between two pieces of plywood and nail the package together. On top he would glue a piece of paper carrying his design and start cutting along the lines. When he was finished cutting, he had as many puzzles as he had veneers, and then he would assemble each of the puzzles and glue them on to a support. If you want to succeed at this kind of work, you must have a very steady hand and keep the saw blade vertical at all times, because otherwise the pieces will not fit together. The reward for all your effort is that you get to paint lacquer on the finished surface and see the incredible colors of the woods come to life.

He made many cigarette cases with heraldic designs like this one.



**W**e share our Nest



3/1/02

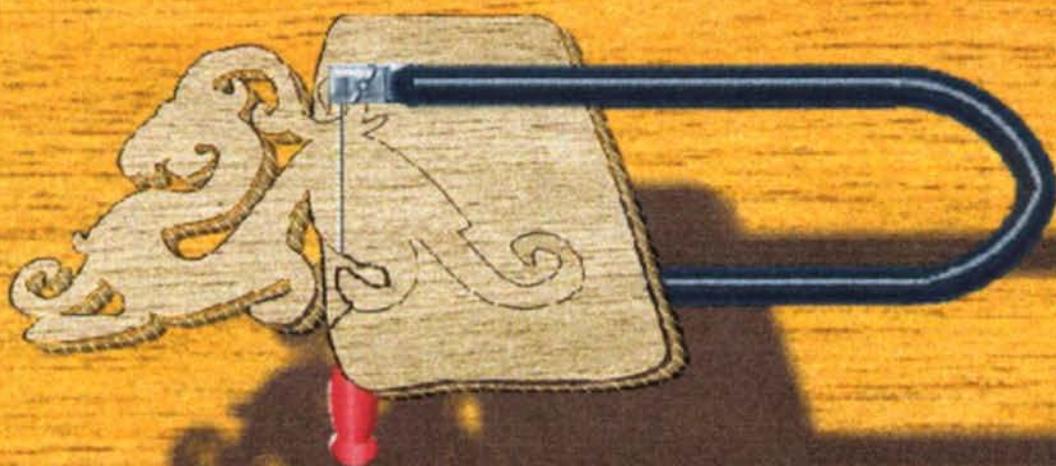
The apartment where we lived during our Glucksburg years was no prize. There was no running water, no sink, and no place to cook, because our two rooms had just been bedrooms. The moldy, greenish wallpaper was hanging down in long strips, the tiled wood stove soon fell apart, and the wooden floors were worn and rough. Still, compared to people living in the big, bombed-out cities, we were lucky. But my parents couldn't always feel that way. They were offended by the lack of basic comfort and frequently quarreled with the landlady.

When during the summer a pair of swallows flew in through the open windows and built a nest where formerly curtains had hung, my parents thought: "how nice, and it certainly can't hurt this dump any. Just let's not let the landlady in and keep the windows open!" So the swallows raised their brood and we cleaned up the windowsills after them.

They weren't the only birds staying with us. During one icy winter a coot with a leg injury came to recuperate in a cardboard box, from which he was released in spring. Also several small songbirds having fallen out of their nests were nursed with varying degrees of success. One of them made his home on my mother's worktable, among paint tubes and brushes, ashtrays and matches. He would regularly attack my mother's sharp pencil and bite off its glistening graphite point, thinking maybe it was a seed.



This is how  
you cut with  
a jigsaw.



2/9/01

Like my mother, my father also started his favorite artistic activity at an early age. While in Europe many boys at one time or another would be given a scroll (or jig) saw kit for Christmas or a birthday, I haven't seen such gift kits here. Typically they contained a saw frame, some saw blades (never enough, for they break so easily) and a preprinted project on thin plywood. My father has told us how delighted he was with his first scroll saw and how he loved to cut out intricate designs with it. The projects, if they came out reasonably well, were in turn ideal Christmas gifts for parents.

He certainly got to do a lot of sawing in the time we lived in Glücksburg, when before Christmas my parents managed to cut out and paint herds, or should we say hosts of angels and "nisser", red-capped dwarves, which in Scandinavia are intimately associated with that holiday. They fabricated tree ornaments as well as little candleholders. Our friends in Denmark helped sell them for us, even my teachers did. During my last years in high school I would help paint the plywood figures, but I never did the cutting out part, I wasn't skillful enough to do it well.

At one time my father even thought of helping my mother with silhouette orders. For some reason people always wanted her to cut religious motives for them and the favorite of all time was the kitschy "Madonna in the Woods". She got so tired of doing that one over and over again, that my father tried his veneer stacking technique on this design. I still have the plywood cover from that clever try at automation. But the challenge was too much even for his skills. My mother was not satisfied with the result and perhaps worried about cheapening her art irretrievably, so he didn't pursue his idea. But it was amazing how close he came to realizing a "twenty at a time" process.



A paper star cut out using the stacking process.



In the summer of 1948 I was the guest of a Danish farm couple, the Jensens, in Bjerndrup near Tinglev, just across the Border from Germany. Their farm looked similar to the one on the picture, and all the men wore those rubber boots and the berets. This was my first letter home.

Bjerndrup 9/7/48

Dear Father and Mother,

I am fine and thank you for the letter which I got today. I enclose two stamps from the new Danish set and the new German one because it is canceled. I have learned to bicycle and master the art tolerably well. I got many



blue marks on my legs but on the other hand now I've got it. I bought myself a ball for 2.80 Kr but unfortunately I lost it in the hay; but I am sure I'll find it again or else I'll get a new one. The foal has learned to drink properly and we often play in the meadow. This year

there are only 2 pigs, 7 cows and one horse. "Old Gray" is dead of the foal and the other horse broke his leg and had to be killed. Two cows

with calves. On a sports event and I to spend. For 1.45 Kr ( a lot ) and two decks was left and with it



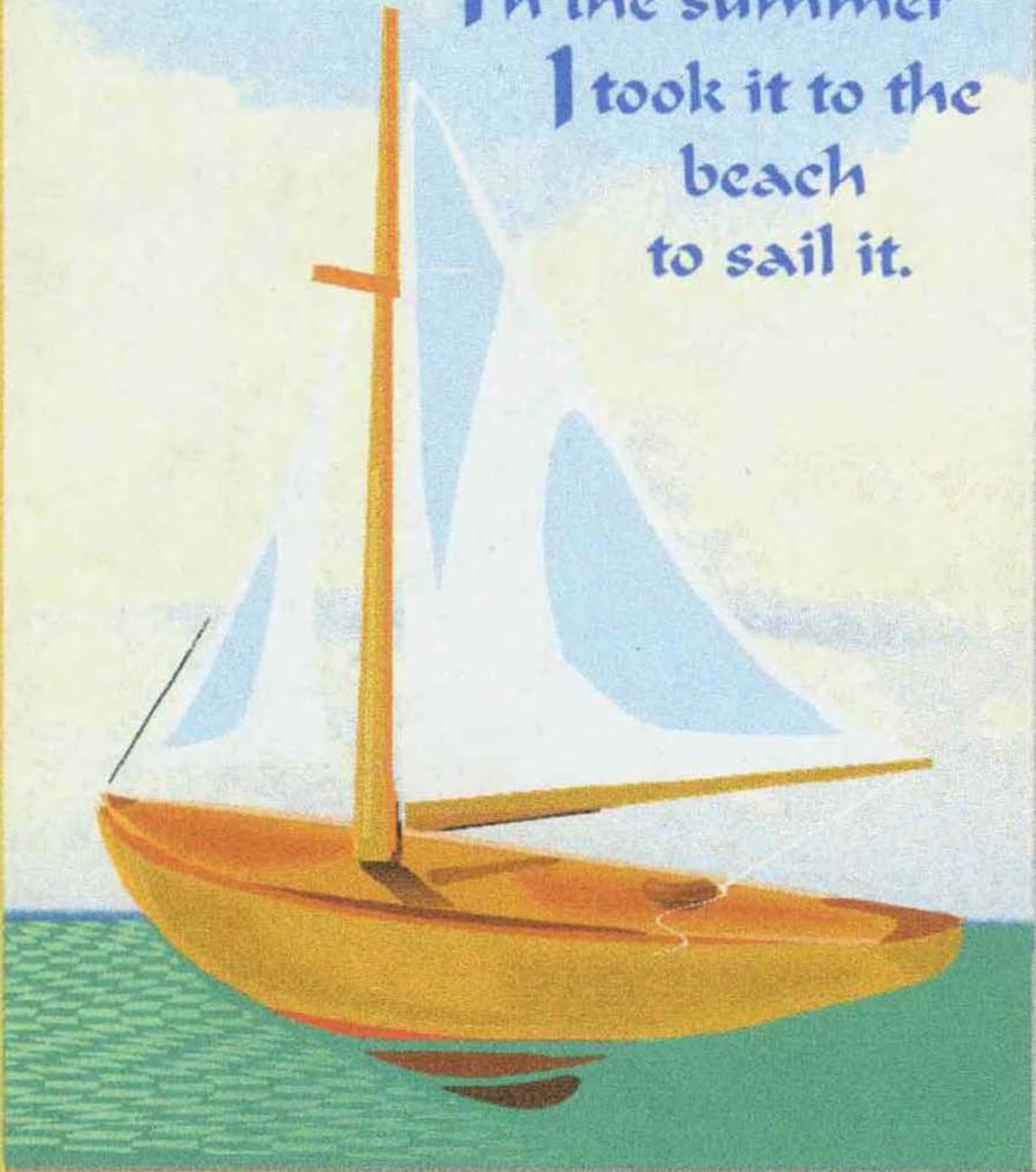
had gotten the other evening when we visited I bought the ball.

also had bad luck Sunday there was given 2.45 Kr I bought ice cream of cards. One Kr and two Kr that I

Many many greetings your Lars.

**W**ith those tools he  
built me a toy boat.

**I**n the summer  
**I** took it to the  
beach  
to sail it.



Sometimes I think that it was a great mistake and a shame that we didn't take the sailboat along to the United States. Instead we loaded ourselves down with this ancient 20 volume encyclopedia: "Meyers Konversations Lexicon", as it was called. I bet that it took up two entire suitcases, weighed a ton, and was ditched as soon as we realized that it was irrelevant in our new lives. But my parents really had no idea where we would end up. They may have thought it would be the only German book they would ever see again. It never made it further than Paradox. After the two months we spent there, it was quite clear that we would not need it to look up how to grow potatoes or when to celebrate Göthe's birthday.

But Vă's sailboat was a labor of love and was loved and it would never have lost its value. I believe that we gave it to some child as we left. On the positive side I can say: "It isn't really lost". I can still see it bobbing on the Schwennau creek where it empties into the Flensburger Förde. It beckons to me from a time when I wasn't in such a hurry. Not that I regret that there was a long time in my life when I was in a great hurry, that was necessary and important too. But now as I contentedly putter away entire afternoons in my garden, I realize that I have gotten it back.

And by the way, Lehigh University's Asa Library has a perfectly good copy of the Konversations Lexicon.





Glücksburg 1/1 1952

Excerpt from a letter written by my father to his mother in Finland.

.....

Now I must tell you something about our Christmas. As usual orders rained down on us up to the 24th; especially transparencies were in demand. I finished the drainage work\* on the 22nd and could then relieve Gretel of housework, so that we were done at four in the afternoon. As usual I had to go up to Flensburg to deliver some of the work. There was a Christmas riot going on as never before. Holger wanted a train set, and I had trouble finding one. Finally I got the last one and could start homeward loaded with packages. Lars got a microscope and various glass vials. Gretel had found a wonderful tree, and Lars had decorated it with homemade straw stars of all sizes and forms; candles and Pfefferkuchen completed the décor. Then we had the various gifts, and among others we also divided up your lovely parcel. Your beautiful blue cups pleased us both very much; miraculously they were unbroken. Also the other things were welcome, Holger was very pleased with the cowboy and Lars with the eye loupe, which in the summer may serve as a fire starter. The socks were very agreeable, and so were the delicious ham sausage and the anchovies. They were consumed in the company of Mrs. Schwarz, who appreciated them especially because she was the niece of the famous Fish-Sörensen in Reval. The poor lady is very unhappy, and we often invite her here. Gretel and I gave each other some wonderful books: Weinheber, Ortega y Gasset, Hölderlin, etc. Thus everyone was deeply satisfied. We read the voluminous mail from many countries, and thought about all our loved ones near and far. Hopefully you too enjoyed a nice celebration, and we wondered whether Renate perhaps was in Dresden and celebrated with Aunt Olja.

Unfortunately there has been no snow; there were even a few roses blooming in the front yard. Now we will probably get some, and I hope not too much, because heating the house is such a pain with these poor iron stoves. Now I will close and thank you once more for all your love – stay healthy. Many warm greetings from all of us and a kiss from your son Freddi.

\* Digging ditches? – in emergencies he had to work for the city because he was unemployed.





THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION  
DEPARTMENT OF WORLD SERVICE  
GERMANY

16. März 1957

Office of Emigration  
Consultant  
**My parents repeatedly  
applied for permission  
to emigrate to the US**

ADDRE  
Gerol  
DRE  
New Yo  
NE:  
1706  
ESS  
Igni



211  
155

Herrn  
Perdinagl

**Evang.-luth. Auswanderermission**  
Leitung: P. Dr. Remig  
Jochims, St. Pl. Nr. 2, 11 125  
Postfachnummer: Hamburg 1947  
Kassabank: Hamburgher Bank, Kommiss.-St. 20  
Telefonnummer: 24 45 22

Flensburg, den 17. September 1957

Bitte senden:  
(Se 200)

Kreis Flensburg-Land  
Der Landrat  
Kreisflüchtlingsbeauftragter  
An Herrn Perdinagl  
in Flensburg

Betr.: Auswanderung nach USA.  
Nach den neuesten Entscheidungen der USIP-Kommission zur Auswanderung eines p... e haben. Ohne Pass wird niemand... einhergeleitet. Die Ausstellung des Passes erfolgt für die... eine Reisekarte. 1. Formular für die Ausstellung eines... von der Ehefrau anzufüllen. 2. Formular für die... e unterschreiben. Falls die Auswanderung eine... übermittlung bereits die Ausstellung... haben, erübrigt sich die Ausstellung...



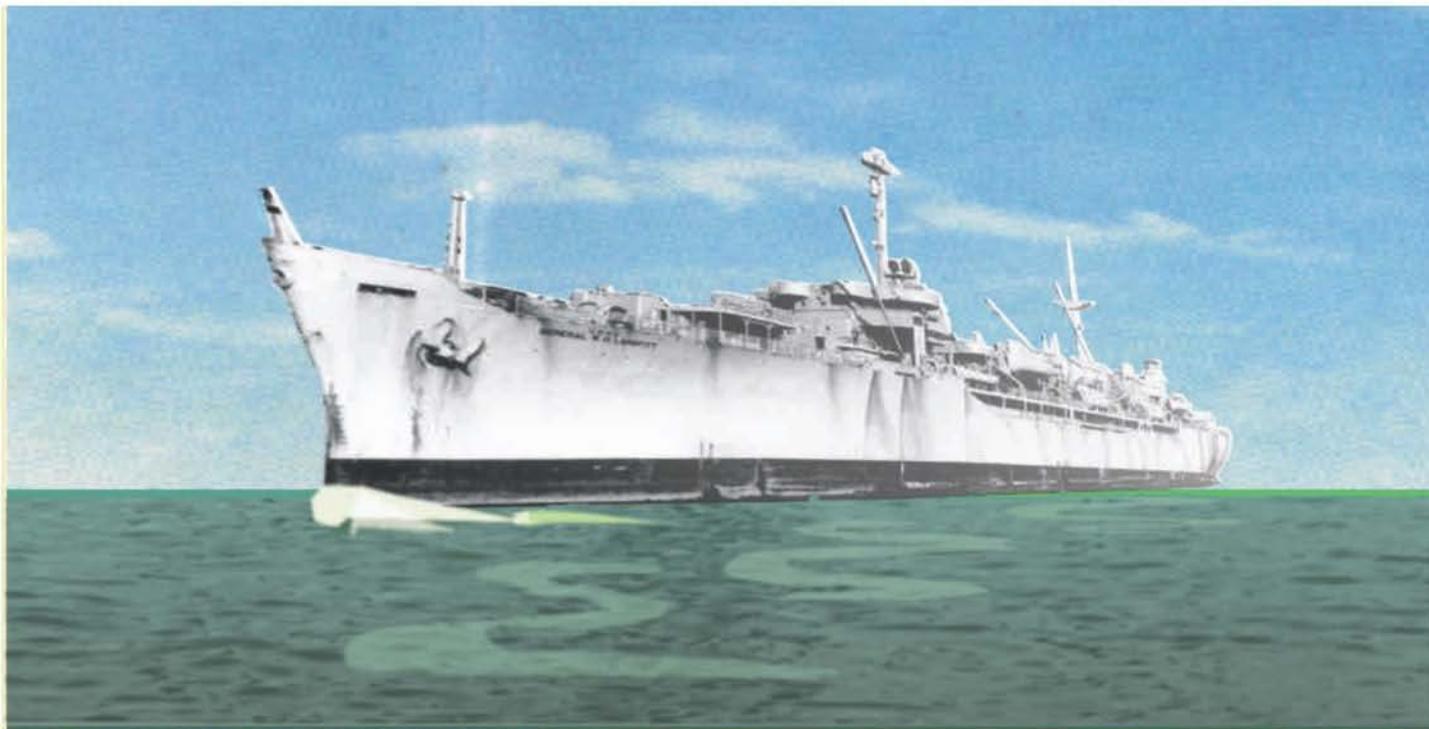
## Immigration 1955

My parents tried a number of times to get permission to enter the US before they succeeded. In their efforts they were supported by a cousin of my mother's, Senta Bernhard. Senta not only sent us CARE packages during the post war years but even offered to sponsor us, i.e. to take on financial responsibility for us "aliens". Senta taught French and Russian at Marietta College in Marietta, OH and owned a summer place in Paradox, NY in the Adirondacks. When we arrived wide-eyed on a pier in New York City harbor on July 11, 1955, Senta and her son Winfred were there to greet us. She took us up to Paradox for the rest of the summer to acclimatize, or, as some might say, to civilize us.

Another individual who favored our emigration application was Pastor Otto of Fremont, OH. He was sent to interview us by the Lutheran World Federation that would finance our passage. During the interview he mentioned that he hoped to hear the St. Thomas choir in Leipzig while on this trip. My mother was quick to pick up on that and responded by telling him how much she loved this great choir which had been conducted by the great J.S.Bach himself etc,etc. Otto was also impressed by my mother's silhouettes and ordered some religious motifs to serve as cover sheets for the music he printed by his Chantry Music Press. Years later Otto also helped my parents get the care taker job at Glen Foerd in Philadelphia.

**MRS. HERMAN BERNHARD, Assistant Professor of Modern Languages, A.B. Barnard College, A.M. Columbia University**





**CLASS OF SERVICE**

This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

# WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

**SYMBOLS**

DL=Day Letter

NL=Night Letter

LT=International Letter Telegram

1201

The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination.

PA006 SYA036

SY NNA014 NL PD=NEW YORK NY 22=

1955 JUL 12 AM 9 08

MR AND MRS FRED LUTHER, LARS AND HOLGER ARRIVE NEW YORK •

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

**O**n July 2, 1955 we embarked on the former USS troop carrier “**General Langfitt**”, the ship in the picture. The day before we had traveled by train from Flensburg to Bremerhafen and then slept overnight in army barracks. A band played a traditional German song ( Muss I denn ... ) as we pulled away from the quay. Onboard the adults were thoughtful, while the kids ran around excitedly exploring the ship. All immigrants, there were about 300 of us, were separated by sex to bed down in large sleeping areas with densely packed, three tiered bunk beds. Naturally we decided that my father would sleep on the bottom, Holger climbed all the way to the top, and I got the middle bunk. There was a small staff of American advisors onboard who arranged lectures on useful things to know once we got to the new country, such as: watch your change, unlike German bills all American bills look alike. There was a small library with games like Scrabble and Monopoly, but Holger and I didn’t know how to play, and anyhow we found out that there was paid work available in the kitchen. He was assigned to prepare sandwiches and I carried steaming hot trays of dishes from the dish washer back to the dining hall. We were paid a princely 50 cents/hr, but nobody told me to save my first dollar, so I didn’t. Holger came across a black olive and ate it thinking it was a plum; he was totally grossed out. The staff made a well intentioned but largely unappreciated fuss about Independence Day. Throughout the trip the sea remained calm. My father excitedly sighted some dolphins, but other than that, nothing much happened. And soon we were **there**, seeing the island of Manhattan, sailing past Miss Liberty. Why was she so disappointingly small and far away, not paying attention? I had imagined that she would be towering over the harbor entrance making a statement about the significance of it all. However the adventure was about to start. We found ourselves on the pier behind a steel fence with our seventeen old, falling-apart suitcases, each decorated with large hand-painted lettering: Mrs. Senta Bernhard, Paradox, Essex County, New York. And there were Senta and her son Winfred waving to us: **Welcome**.



The telegram is a fake, by the way.



Our life in the  
New World started  
with a vacation in  
the Adirondacks.

3/5/99

It was fortunate that our immigration boat sailed in the summer. That meant that our Tante Senta was in her summer place in Paradox, NY, and could take us there for a month or so to get used to a very different country. Her farm is a lovely place looking out over Blue Ridge in the west and with the lake invitingly close for swimming and boating. Senta's father, Eduard Herrmann, had bought the old farmstead in 1888, when New Yorkers first discovered the Adirondacks. He was a musician in that city and came out into the country every summer with his wife, Ida, and his children Senta and Bernd. Tragically Bernd died as a child and was buried on the little island on the property. All her life Senta and her family continued the tradition of Paradox summers with her husband, Hermann Bernhard, and her son Winfred. They had to come a long way from Annapolis where Herrmann worked as a chemistry professor. Winfred has given us an evocative account of their two-day trip by train, ship, and horse carriage to their Paradox paradise.

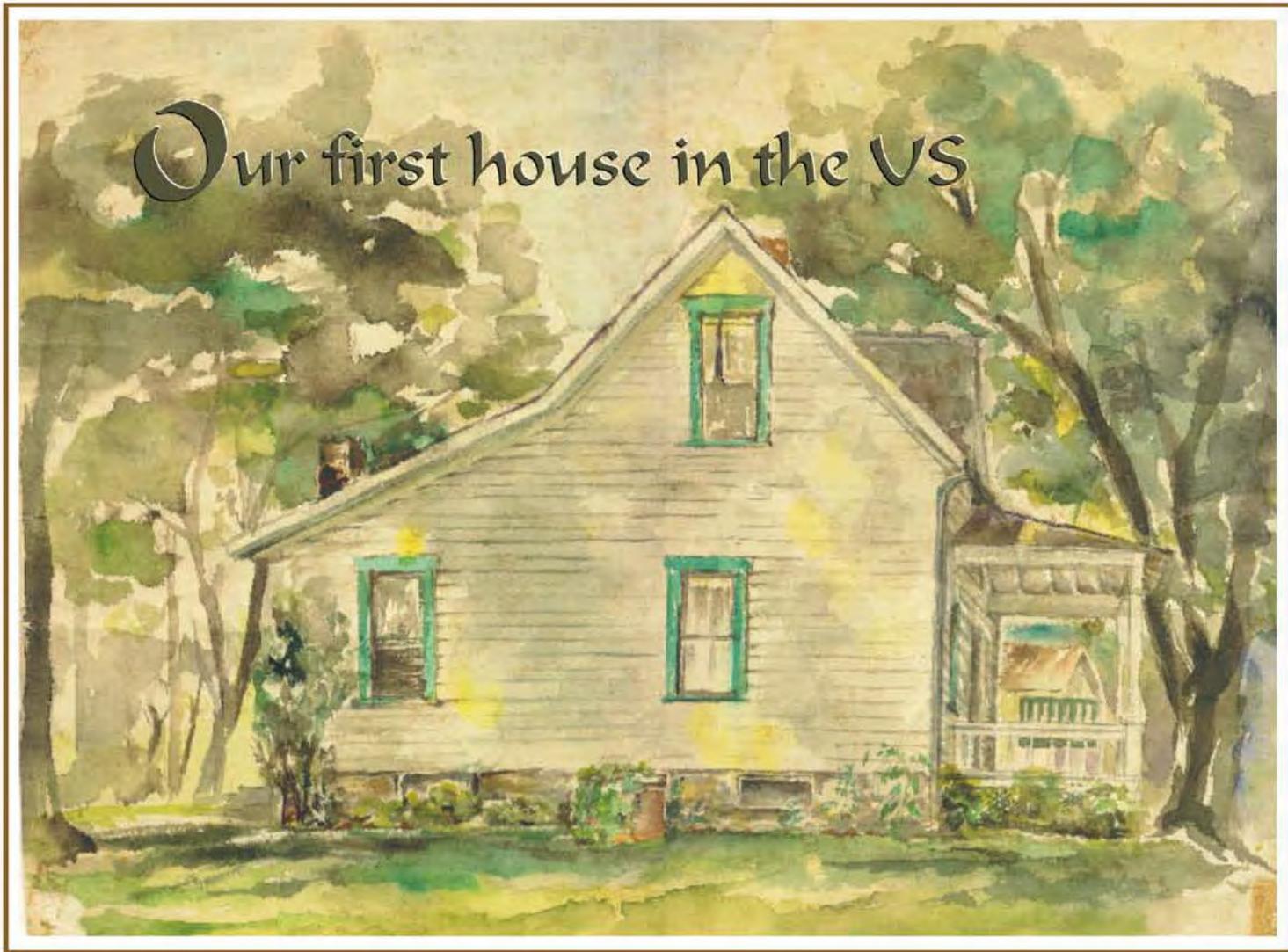
We thoroughly enjoyed our introduction to the US, even in spite of our apprehensions about the future in Ohio, where Senta took us in the fall, when she had to get back to her teaching at Marietta College. She paid for our food and even gave my father some money for various projects around the farm. One such was reviving the well, because so often the water ran scarce. He put in a long swinging boom to lower the bucket into the well, such as one sees in Hungary. We made mountain climbing trips with Winfred; once we trekked all the way up Mt. Marcy and stayed over night in a lean-to.

One morning my brother told me to come and see the studio. That was a little cabin on the steep hill side across the road. Inside stood what had once been a fine piano. Now the veneer was peeling off in large patches after decades of exposure to frost and summer humidity. We tried a couple of keys but they were stuck. Once, a long time ago, Eduard Herrmann, Senta's father had come here every morning to practice. But we heard birds sing in the trees where other birds had heard sonatas.



Holger, Lars, Ferdinand, and Margarethe with Senta in Marietta, 1955.  
The Marietta Public Library is in upper right corner.

Our first house in the US

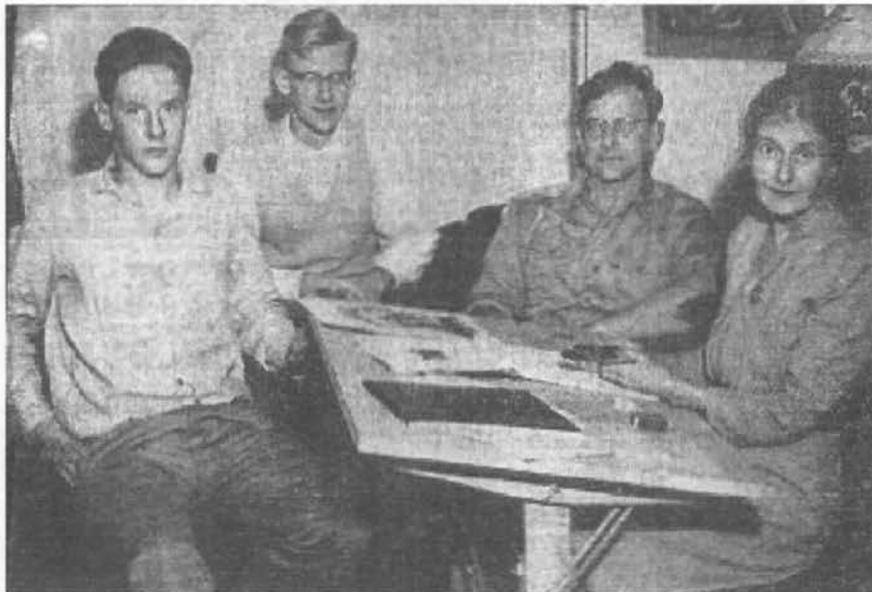


1/3/01

After our summer in Paradox we came to Marietta, OH, where Senta was professor in the language department at Marietta College. We rented a cottage about three miles from the city on Muskingum Drive behind a mansion belonging to the owner of the silo factory, Marietta Concrete, where my father had found a job as a carpenter. The rent was \$ 45 a month, but the Christys often forgave payment, when we were in trouble. Being so far from the city was a problem for all of us at first, but we got rides with colleagues until we learned to drive and could afford a car. My father also had pledged to pay \$ 30 a month to repay the Lutheran World Federation for the passage.

The photograph taken by the Marietta Times reporter in 1956 shows us around Mutti's drafting table, which is now with Erik after Holger restored it. Senta had us join Marietta's Congregational Church and often came for us on Sundays. Other times she drove us around sightseeing in the hills surrounding Marietta. Once we came upon a pawpaw tree with ripe fruit. I thought I had never tasted anything so good. After the trip she would let us boys wash her car to earn a little money.

One person who probably read the article in the Times was Sam Stille, "the poet of the Ohio hills". He was a charming eccentric who tried to persuade my parents to join his colony of artists on his farm. This colony existed only in his mind at the time, but he was raising money for it. He commissioned a pastel from me for a restaurant, but my version of an Indian archer was a little too intense for that purpose. Magnanimously he bought a number of pastels from me anyway and had Holger and me paint an advertising sign.



**FAMILY FROM ESTONIA NOW RESIDENTS OF MARIETTA** Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand Martin Luther, who were forced to flee Estonia when the Russians invaded their homeland, now reside in Marietta. They have applied for citizenship in the U.S. With them are their sons, Lars, 20, and Holger, 16. Mrs. Luther is internationally acclaimed as a master of a rare technique – scissors artistry.

March 28, 1997

Dear children, ( I remember that you aren't,-- but you are)

I came across a letter just recently, a letter I must have read through when I got it but never really read until now. It dates from 1968, 30 years ago. It is a little surprising that it has survived various clean-ups and the move, but there it is. It was written by my mother from Marietta. She says that not much is going on and whatever there is to tell we exchange on the telephone anyway.

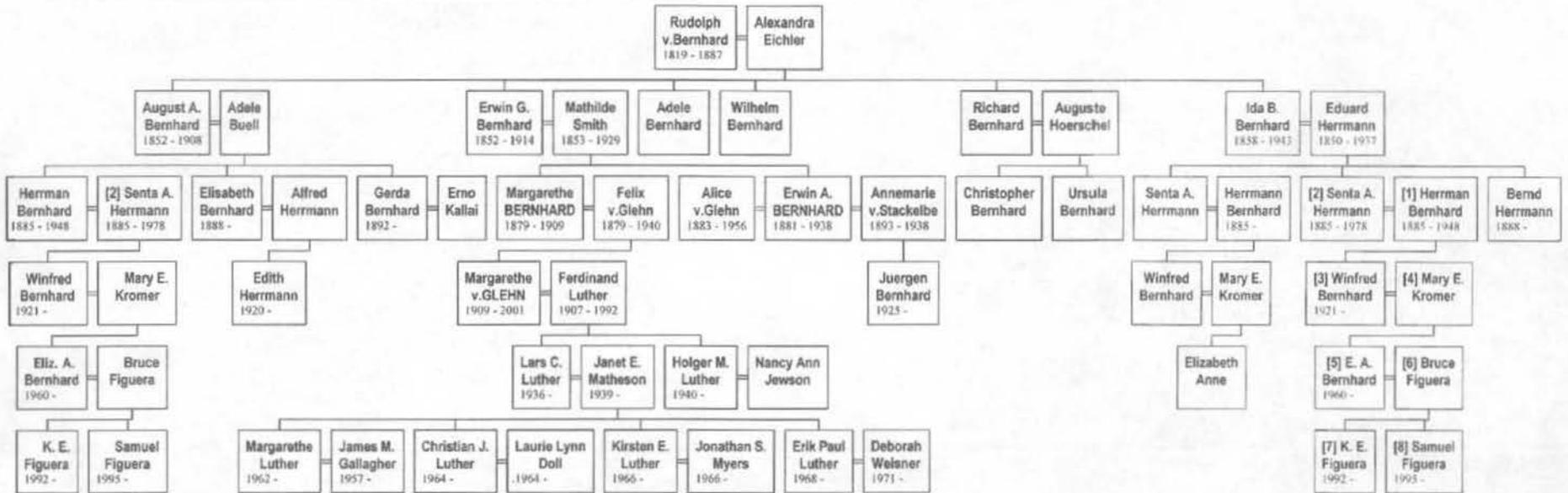
So she tells about a dream which told her to make gold. Making gold was no problem, she said, in my dream I knew how, but I was so disappointed at the result. " My two gold bars were not pure, they were full of dirt and clay". Then she goes on to interpret the dream. Like many of her generation she turns to C.G.Jung for help with that. Jung wrote that the idea of alchemy was not to make gold for getting rich but to perfect your person, so as to be wise. Certainly I can feel with her the disappointment but I cant help wondering whether her two gold bars might not have been her two boys.

The letter goes on to tell about Senta. You all know who Senta was and some of you may remember her. She was the lady who "sponsored" my family so that we got permission to immigrate. At the time that was an absolute requirement. She was also a professor of French Language and Literature at Marietta College and both Janet and I took courses from her. And she was a relative. I have copied for you a mini genealogy of that side of our family. At your age I couldn't care less about relatives. I knew hardly any of them and wasn't interested. I certainly would expect you to feel the same - you have your plates full and great things to do. But as you get older, life runs a little more slowly and the perspective changes. So, who knows, one day you may look at that list again. The original was written in 1938 on stationary from St John's College in Annapolis, probably by Ida Herrmann who is on that list. You can see that Mutti was Senta's cousin and one generation younger.

Mutti is concerned about Senta. She is getting old, her eye sight is terrible. She can't see to fix her hair and her clothes properly. So what does that remind you of? Yes, another generation is passing and here I am in the middle at a vantage point and I can see both ends of life now. Most people get to meet representatives from two generations on either side, but usually they only know two generations really well. So we have to read about our predecessors and if we happen to be at corresponding stages in life we can empathize with them. Here we have three letters written in 1938, 1968 and ( almost) 1998. I didn't select the letters nor the time to write this one on purpose, it just happened that there is a pattern. Time passes, not necessarily so quickly but imperceptibly. Incredibly many things happen. The distant relatives in any genealogy are of course just names, but at one time they were flesh and blood and thought and passion. They married, bought houses, had careers and, fortunately for us, children. Did you know that Mutti's paternal and maternal grandmothers were good friends and took their baby carriages with little Felix and little Margarethe for strolls in a Reval park more than 100 years ago? One day I must translate for you some brief diary passages from Felix's mother, Julie, in which she agonizes over her son being so far away in St Petersburg.

Love, Dad.

*Descendants of Rudolf v. Bernhard*





My Father in his work room in Basking Ridge

**Dear Chris, Laurie, David and Steffen,**

7/26/98

Thank you for making the long trip to Bethelhem for Luther day. Even though it's much too chaotic, noisy and confusing for really enjoying one another, it has it's moments, and they are precious. Steffen is such a good baby, or is it the parents that are so good at keeping him happy? Anyway, he almost went unnoticed, until one sought him out. And David was really super about playing with the other kids. Thank you, Laurie, especially for the carrot cake; it was wonderful. Anytime you want to practice on us, feel free.

As you requested, I am sending you copies of the photos of my father that the Bernardsville News made in 1981 for the yearly Symphony of Trees. The one picture shows him working on his angel tree, the other his specialty: bone work. He learned to work with cow bones in Germany from a man who gave him a general crash course in shop. In case the immigration had not worked out - and there were serious doubts and many failed attempts - he would have continued teaching shop at the Glücksburg Danish Elementary school. During the work years he could only occasionally devote time to this hobby. Once in Basking Ridge and in retirement he had time to do it more seriously. So he would often ask Janet to get him some cow thigh bones from the butcher. At first he had been able to get them in BR, but eventually only a butcher in Green Village would supply them.



Now he was set. First he boiled the bones for hours to clean them of scraps of meat and make a good bouillon which he always shared with us. Then the bones had to be bleached; he did this with buckets of peroxide. After drying, the bones were cut into slabs, and then he would glue his design on paper to the bone and use his hand-powered jigsaw to cut it out. He found his designs in many places, but he preferred ancient primitive ornaments. The Dremel tool was next; he really appreciated that after many early hours working with only files. But the bone and the grinding heat resulted in a noticeable aroma, not to mention the fine dust that would hover in a cloud around him. Not good in the confines of a

small retirement apartment. So he pushed us a little to make room in our basement for this work. Looking back I should have made his work shop just a little bigger, but as you know space wasn't exactly plentiful. But this cubby hole we all as a family donated also gave him a chance to get away from the apartment.

He was always working in the shadow of the "great artist", my mother.

Maybe you recall the bird seed the great animal lover kept in this work shop, many were the moths that your mother had to beat to death.

We are about to see his home town, and I must be packing.

Love and hugs, your Opa.



3/16/04

This picture I didn't invent: it came to me. Janet snapped the photo quite routinely on a hike through an abandoned industrial park. The photo wasn't staged or deemed striking at the time of its taking. But it grabbed me the moment I saw it among the developed photos. It was trying to tell me something very important; but what? I couldn't tell right away. Then, after turning it over in my head during the next few days it came to me: it had to do with my relationship with my parents. The old rotting train car reminded me of the bearded skeleton my father had become, when cancer was slowly starving him. And what could better evoke the ruins of my mother's mind than this old wreck? And there was I, walking away quickly, running actually.

Thinking back it seems that I have always associated poverty and failure with my parents and couldn't get away quickly enough from them when the opportunity came. I probably blamed them in some less than conscious way for the misery of being poor and messy and was afraid of being stuck with them for all my life. As a boy of about seven I had recurring nightmares of being swallowed up in dark holes along my path. Whatever that meant. Later I had less frightening dreams of always having to clean up frightful messes of wood scraps and refuse under the kitchen table, just like the real ones we had in our house in Glücksburg.

As the head of my young family I have fought against guilt feelings about running away from my parents and having to clean up their messes. I feared they might make demands on me: like to give them money when my father was out of work or had hospital bills or like moving them closer when he retired at seventy one. If it hadn't been for my wonderfully generous wife, the battle with my guilt feelings and my reluctance to get involved with my parent's life might have been much worse. Janet did a lot for them with money, visits and help, and I have been grateful to her for taking the initiative and urging me to do the right thing.

I dreaded it when the moment came that they had to move into our house in the final days of my father's sickness. And again I dreaded the prospect of my mother moving into a home near us when the time came that she couldn't live without constant help and vigilance. I, an old man, was still like a small boy fearing their anger and criticisms. And was trying to run away.



FERDINAND PAUL MARTIN

SEPT. 19. 1907  
HELSINKI. FINLAND  
AUG. 19. 1992  
BETHLEHEM. PA

MARGARETHE MARIA

NEE VON GLEHN  
JUNE 28. 1909  
NARWA. ESTONIA  
DEC. 28. 2001  
RICHLANDTOWN. PA

LUTHER

**M**y parents bodies were cremated, and we placed the urns with their ashes in the carved cupboard which they had brought with them from Glen Foerd. There they sat for a number of years. Janet and I had thought that if we ever would get to go to Tallinn we might want to return the ashes to their beloved Wallküll. And then all of a sudden we found that traveling to Estonia would be feasible. So we explored the legal way of doing that and found that it was not easy. The Estonian embassy in New York was helpful but we, carrying cremated remains, couldn't manage to obtain the documents required. Time went by and then Janet's aunt Betty died, and Janet was named the executrix of her will. There was a lot of work associated with that, but the reward was that we suddenly we learned of four vacant burial lots in Union Cemetery in Slatington, PA.

Janet found out that none of the other relatives of Betty would object to our placing the ashes of my parents in those lots and so it was arranged with the cemetery ground keeper and so it was done. Janet found a stone mason and we got together the data that we wanted on the stone which was chosen to match Betty's stone.



This is Union Cemetery just south of Slatington. From route 873 enter the road leading to the pavilion near the red A flag. Don't go as far as that but turn right near the first row of trees and proceed all the way to the utility buildings in the North West corner. Betty, my parents, and Janet's grandfather are resting just under the last tree in that row, and at sometime Janet and I will be joining them there.



10/28/2010

**D**avid Christian Luther, my first grandson was born in 1994 and that event, as dictated by family tradition for some time now, decided, who would be the next owner of the "Luther Christening Bowl". His father Christian, is the oldest son, like I am the oldest son of Ferdinand, who was not the oldest son. By rights, Ferdinand's older brother Olav should have been he recipient, but he had no son in his first marriage. And therefore Gertrud Luther, the oldest sister of the deceased Christian A. M., who was an oldest son, decided that it should go to my parents, when I was born,

This wonderful baroque (in the narrow art historical sense) piece of table ware has been in our family for a while. When it was first hammered out around 1700 by a Reval silversmith **Christofer F. Mansfeld**, it was not intended for baptisms. The antiques appraiser we consulted called it a charger, i.e. a plate to be placed under a dinner plate at formal party. Here we probably have the "form versus function argument": a rich man, like one the first owners, **Herrman v. Drenteln\***, may have used it at formal dinners in a function mode, poorer folks like the Luthers, who probably got it as a gift in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, decided it made a good aesthetic display at baptisms, or they may have thought, that it was likely to confer good fortune on the child being baptized. I very much hope that will be true for David and his descendents; it was for me.

Somewhere in my digital files I have a letter which tells quite a bit about the history of this bowl, as it was reported to me by a Swedish graduate student, who has described it in her thesis. I gave it in "analog" form to Christian in 1994. But here is one thing in its history, I want mention here: my mother deserves all the credit for having saved the plate during our flight from the Russians in 1945. A more practically minded woman might have taken food along on a last minute escape; she put the bowl into her rucksack along with some clothes to preserve it from damage. The Nazis had promised to ship all evacuee's belongings that been packed weeks before. She was right about that being just another lie. She refused to sell the bowl in the bad times after the war. She was a proud person and understood the value of family traditions as support of an individual's self respect.

\* His name is seen on the rim.