



*Kathleen Schmitz-Hertzberg*

**A Quaker Concern for Pre-World War Two Germany:  
Kathleen Hertzberg’s “Report of Visit to Germany, 14 April 1938 – 18 January 1939”**

Introduction

Robynne Rogers Healey

Kathleen Schmitz-Hertzberg (nee Brookhouse) has been a member of the Toronto Monthly Meeting for nearly 58 years, being active throughout that time in the life and witness of Friends in Canada. She was also instrumental in the founding of the Canadian Friends Historical Association (CFHA) in 1972. Her influence has been felt deeply among Canadian Friends. It is, therefore, a great honour for CFHA to publish Kathleen’s report of her visit to pre-World War Two Germany, a journey that she says “laid the foundations for the rest of [her] life.”<sup>1</sup> The visit arose from a youthful Kathleen’s concern to contribute to Quaker service for international peace and reconciliation.<sup>2</sup> The report she wrote after returning to England in early 1939 is both prescient and perceptive, especially since it was written by someone so young. Kathleen later reflected, “In the report, I shared my experiences, which had touched the heart of my being. It had been a tremendous challenge to the sensitive, idealistic young 22-year old I was then.” Though challenged by the experiences, her report of them is astute and will continue to challenge readers today to reconsider notions of Germans and attitudes towards war in Germany in the months leading up to World War Two.

Kathleen Margaret Brookhouse was born on 16 February 1916 in Lancashire, England.<sup>3</sup> Her mother and father became convinced Friends when Kathleen was a child; she herself was admitted into membership in the Stafford Meeting (Staffordshire) in the early 1930s. Kathleen became involved in the meeting’s large Young Friends Group and attended the regular lectures delivered by visiting lecturers from nearby Woodbrooke College in

Birmingham. In 1936, one of Stafford Meeting’s Elders, Harold Clipstone, suggested that Kathleen attend Woodbrooke. He arranged a bursary to make her time there possible and, as the manager of a shoe factory, even ensured she was well-outfitted with shoes. Kathleen spent two terms at Woodbrooke in 1937 – 1938 where she studied Quakerism, the Bible, and International Affairs. She also attended philosophy lectures at the University of Birmingham. During her time at Woodbrooke, she met students from a number of countries, including Germany. Reflecting on her time at the college, Kathleen considered it formative in the path her life would follow. In her 2002 Sunderland P. Gardner lecture, she maintained, “I believe with Thomas Kelly that ‘All our apparent initiative is already a Testimonial to God’s secret presence working amongst us.’”<sup>4</sup>

One of the Friends’ initiatives that really piqued Kathleen’s interest was the Quaker Embassies or Quaker International Centres as they came to be known. They were a program of the Council of International Service (CIS) of the London Yearly Meeting and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). The idea for the embassies had originally been conceived by Carl Heath, a past secretary of Britain’s National Peace Council and a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.<sup>5</sup> Heath’s utter opposition to World War One and his leadership of peace initiatives among British Friends resulted in the post-war establishment of centres that were to provide “neutral and friendly ground for exchange of information and viewpoints between people of different nationalities, a focus for various activities that aim[ed] at spreading goodwill and

understanding, [and] a base from which Quaker ambassadors of peace [could] operate during crises.”<sup>6</sup> Established in Europe’s large cities, such as Paris, Warsaw, Moscow, Geneva, Berlin and Frankfurt, the Centres became more than a place for the peaceful exchange of ideas; they became locations where relief could be dispensed and where the persecuted could seek assistance.<sup>7</sup> In the early interwar years in Germany, Friends were best known for the “Quaker feedings,” or *Quäkerspeisungen*, which at their height providing meals to over one million people.<sup>8</sup> As Nazi power and the persecution of Jews in Germany expanded in the 1920s and 1930s, the Centres became places where the persecuted could find friendship and even assistance to emigrate, although Friends who offered this assistance did so at great personal risk.<sup>9</sup>

While at Woodbrooke, Kathleen became interested in working at one of the centres, but the ability to speak German or French was essential to this service. Kathleen remembers that she felt “drawn to go to Germany and to become proficient first in German, then in French.”<sup>10</sup> Her sense of calling, or concern, was advanced by her empathy for the German students at Woodbrooke, the influence of visiting lecturers like Carl Heath and Swiss

theologian Karl Barth who had been instrumental in the writing of the Barmen Declaration opposing the Nazi-supported “Deutsche Christen,” and the reports of Friends who had travelled to Germany. As she recalled when reflecting on her concern to travel to Germany, “I was keen to increase my understanding of what it meant to live in Nazi Germany, to be persecuted for one’s beliefs and one’s reputation as a known opponent of the Nazi regime.”<sup>11</sup>

When Kathleen’s time at Woodbrooke ended and she was invited by a German student, Ruth Oeschlin, to go to Germany, her sense of calling was complete. Financial assistance provided by the Travel Bursary Committee, Woodbrooke College, Stafford Quaker Meeting, and Kathleen’s parents<sup>12</sup> made it possible for Kathleen to undertake her concern and travel to Germany in the late spring of 1938. Arrangements were made for her to stay with Ruth Oeschlin’s aunt and family in Stuttgart; while there Ruth would teach Kathleen German. At the request of the International Students Committee at Friends House (London), Kathleen agreed to attend the Germany Yearly Meeting in August 1938 where she would hear Thomas Kelly deliver his now-classic lecture “The Eternal Now.” She also



*Kathleen (second from left) at Woodbrooke.*

agreed to participate in an International Young Friends *Wanderung*, or hike, from Bad Pyrmont to the town of Kassel where a number of Quaker families lived. It was at Kassel that Kathleen met a young medical student, Fritz Hertzberg. When they agreed to marry in the autumn of 1938, they could not have known that they would soon face a ten-year separation because of the war and Fritz’s subsequent internment as a Soviet prisoner of war.<sup>13</sup>

Kathleen returned to England in January 1939 and spent about three weeks writing her report. She took great care to avoid identifying anyone who might be seized by German authorities for their part in the Quaker relief activities of which she wrote. These names have been provided in this transcription of the report. When asked about the goal or purpose of the report, Kathleen indicated there were two. The first was to share her experiences with those whose financial contributions had made the journey to Germany possible. Her second objective was to “make very clear the plight of those being oppressed.”<sup>14</sup>

The report itself resonates with the sentiments of the age – anxiety over the threat of impending war coupled with ongoing hope that war would not come. No one, least of all Kathleen and Fritz, were aware of how close the outbreak of war actually was. Between her return to England in January and August of 1939, Fritz visited Kathleen twice. He returned to Germany after his second visit just three days before war broke out on the continent. According to the memoir of Fritz’s time as a Soviet prisoner of war, he “returned to Germany, in the hope that the threatened war would not be declared.”<sup>15</sup> One can look back now and see quite clearly the timeline in which war was declared. But, in 1939 the threat of war had been imminent, but averted, for years. The occupation and remilitarization of the Rhineland in March 1936, the annexation of Austria in March 1938, and the cession of Sudetenland to Germany in September 1938

had brought Europe to the brink of war a number of times. Even though Quaker pacifists acknowledged that “no one seriously believes that [the Sudetenland] was [Hitler’s] last territorial demand,”<sup>16</sup> as late as mid-August 1939, Quaker peace activists Corder Catchpool and Charles Roden Buxton, a British politician, travelled to Berlin with peace proposals.<sup>17</sup>

In Kathleen’s “Report of a Visit to Germany,” readers will find the mixed expression of concern that there would be another war and the hope of a pacifistic future for Europe. Her account of Germans’ gratitude that war had been averted with the cession of Sudetenland suggests how abhorrent the prospect of another war was to all Europeans, including Germans. Working fervently for peace, Quakers were a vital part of what has become known – rather derisively – as the policy of appeasement. From a post-war perspective, it is easy to be critical of the failure of appeasement. Friends themselves who encouraged appeasement in 1938 and 1939 acknowledge now that they feel their work was in vain. For instance, Roger Carter, representative of the Friends’ Service Council in Berlin, and a tireless worker for peace admitted fifty years after the war that “it was, of course, pretentious of us to think that any action on our part could make one iota of difference, but ‘leaving no stone unturned’ was the dominant thought in our minds.”<sup>18</sup> While World War Two is frequently identified as an example of a “just war,” pacifists point to the horrors of the war itself as justification for every attempt that was made to avoid it.<sup>19</sup> In her 2002 Sunderland P. Gardner address, Kathleen was clear about her lifelong commitment to peace and her stand as a pacifist during World War Two, despite the fact that she “knew better than many the evils of the Nazi system.” She stated firmly, “My stand was based on my conviction that evil cannot be overcome by the exercise of other equally evil means... How do we overcome evil, evil

systems, evil men and women, and remove them from power without resorting to violence? Friends work diligently on removing the causes of war, both within the individual and between nations – surely this is likely to lead to a peaceful world?"<sup>20</sup>

Anyone familiar with Kathleen's life and work can attest to the fact that her travels in Germany in 1938 – 39 did indeed lay the foundations for the rest of her life. On her return to England, she became a case worker on the Quaker Germany Emergency Committee. When the war made it impossible to continue that work, she moved on to Friends House where she worked on a committee that brought relief to Polish refugees in Hungary and Romania. During the early months of the war, she participated in non-violent resistance and peace protests, despite the censure of passers by. In 1940 she joined the Friends Ambulance Unit and worked evacuating shelters in the East End of London during the Blitz. Then, in 1943 she went to Wales as a social worker under the British Home Office program working to assist refugees from the continent. When the war ended in 1945, she went back to Friends House in London to work on the Germany Desk of the Friends Service Council where she waited until October 1945 to hear word that Fritz was alive, but a prisoner of war in Russia. In 1947 Kathleen returned to Germany, accompanying Fred Tritton, secretary of the Europe Committee of Friends Service Council; in 1948 she travelled to Germany again, this time with William Hughes who was visiting interned Nazis as part of the De-Nazification Program. And in June 1948 Kathleen was appointed to the British Quaker

Relief Service in the British Sector of Berlin where she experienced the Berlin Blockade of 1948 – 49 firsthand. In May 1949 Fritz was finally released from Soviet captivity and by December of that year the couple was married. They settled in Kassel where Fritz completed his PhD and their first child, Evelyn, was born. The family immigrated to Canada in 1952 where two more children, Andreas and Martin, were born and where Kathleen's work in community and peace activism continued. In 1963, in the middle of the Vietnam War, Kathleen became clerk of the Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC); for the seven years that she was Clerk, Kathleen was active in helping to get medical relief supplies to non-combatants suffering in war-torn Vietnam.

Kathleen's experiences in Nazi Germany may have been tremendously challenging to the idealistic young woman she was in 1938 - 39, but instead of extinguishing the light of peace, her experiences ignited her lifelong commitment to the Quaker Peace Testimony and the possibility of a peaceful world. Her report is a reminder of the efforts of those who believed in leaving no stone unturned to achieve what seemed to so many to be impossible. In assessing the work of Quakers in achieving a lasting peace in interwar Germany, Hans A. Schmitt remarks, "the peacemakers failed, but they did what they should have done. ... [W]e cannot but admire and respect them for their 'Inner Light' that radiated so much hope for so long during the darkest times. They continue to set a moral if not pragmatic example for the rest of us."<sup>21</sup>

~ ~ ~

## Report of Visit to Germany from April 14<sup>th</sup> 1938 to 18<sup>th</sup> January 1939<sup>22</sup>

In giving a report of my stay and travels in Germany I have only attempted to give outlines of the most important experiences and events which happened to me during that time. It would of course, be impossible to crush into such a report all the vivid experiences of those ten months, which occurred during one of the most momentous crises of the Modern World since the Great War and a large-scale



persecution of the Jews which has never been equalled since the Middle Ages. I refer to the crisis in September [Munich] and the Pogroms of November 10<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>.

My stay in Germany can be divided into three almost equal parts as follows: -

1. In Stuttgart – three months, May, June and July. (the first fortnight of my time was used in travelling through Germany from Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Naumberg, Bamberg, Nuremberg to Stuttgart, visiting a few Friends on the way for a short time).

The people with whom I stayed in Stuttgart in South Germany in order to learn German, were relatives of R.O.<sup>23</sup> who I met at Woodbrooke. The purpose of being asked to stay with this particular family was to be a companion for their only daughter and to help a little in the house.

I had a good impression in this home of what an ordinary middle-class family life in Modern Germany is like. Herr N.,<sup>24</sup> though not a member of the Party, was quite an enthusiastic supporter of the present regime, although I believe very bigoted on the subject of politics, he was a very kind and friendly man. I did not learn very much about his own ideas on the subjects of the day, because it was quite impossible to get a discussion going on anything like an objective basis, as is often the case in Germany today. His wife was a loyal-church-goer, though she had not until November, any criticism of the Government. She was however, a real Christian in her personal life and if I tried here to give an appreciation of her kindness and hospitality to me, which amounted to being treated exactly in all possible respects as her own daughter, I should need more space than I can here allow myself. The daughter aged 17, proved to be a jolly companion for me and I hope I did for

her. I noticed in discussion which I tried to have with her from time to time, the effects of propaganda in the secondary schools, and felt what a struggle she would have in the future if she faced up to things, between the example which her Mother showed her and what she heard and was taught in school.

I had a great deal of spare time in which to learn the German language, though it was rather difficult because only a very broad dialect is spoken, even amongst the educated people, in South Germany and also because I had to begin from the very beginning with scarcely any knowledge of the very difficult grammar. I spent however, often the whole day learning the grammar and practicing speaking and with Frau N's<sup>25</sup> help, in the first three months I managed to pick up quite a lot in spite of the drawbacks.

Part of the N's kindness was their efforts to show me as much of the beautiful surroundings of Stuttgart and the scenery in South Germany. I visited Wildbad in the north of the Black Forest at Whitsuntide. We stayed with relatives of the family. The gentleman being a press reporter we had admission into the hotels and all the interesting things which compose the attractions of a Black Forest Spa. I had a good opportunity of seeing the type of thing which Modern Germany offers to her wealthier citizens and foreign visitors. One very interesting gentleman to whom I was introduced, a middle-aged titled man, who had been a general in the army during the war and who now owns a large and most famous international Art Factory, where the Great Masters are reproduced by a special colour process, gave me an insight into the attitude of the old Conservative Aristocracy towards the new regime. I soon discovered that he was no friend of National Socialism, he told me that we wasn't political, and would on no account become a member of the party, he did not like National Socialism. He invited me to visit his home and art factory should I ever be in Berlin

again.

One of the most interesting experiences during the first part of my stay in Germany, was a visit to Tubingen University Festival in June. Ruth and I arrived on the third day of the programme and attended the first session of lectures in the University Hall at 10 o'clock in the morning. I was very surprised to find that every single active partaker wore some kind of uniform. Even the Rektor wore the uniform of the Sturm Abteilung and many Professors that of the Sturm Staffel. The majority of the students wore their Student "Verbindung" uniforms or S.S. uniforms. When three months later I saw a minister enter the pulpit with an S.A. uniform under his cassock, the incongruity struck me even more forcefully than a professor wearing such a uniform.

The Hall was bedeckt with red flags with the white ring and black Haken Kreuz. It was a very different scene from that which is to be seen in our universities and I suppose very different from that which was to be seen in Germany before 1933. The subject of the Rektor's speech was "The place of Politics in University life" and no less than three political speeches were held during the day by various District Political leaders of Youth etc. My deepest impression and I think a right one, was that the Universities of Germany are no longer the centre of that glorious culture and learning which had been the gift of Germany's great minds to humanity in the past. That unbiased teaching is all gone and the Universities have been made the centre of political propaganda. One could see how the propaganda has attacked the cultural life of that great country.

During the afternoon of Saturday, I had the occasion to speak English with a student of Modern Languages. We discussed the rights and wrongs of being patriotic and the effects of the new drive for super physical fitness in Germany, on the cultural and intellectual life of the people. I had my first insight here into the mind of a young cultured National Socialist.



This meeting lead [sic] to an invitation from the young man's parents to visit their home in one of the most beautiful parts of South Germany, U<sup>26</sup> in the Schwabische Alb. His father is the head of a Protestant Theological College for training young boys up till the age of 18 before going on to the university. I accepted this invitation with pleasure, because I thought here would be a wonderful opportunity of seeing an important side of life in Germany, and so it proved to be!

Herr. Dr. is a doctor of Theology and also of Old languages, and quite a famous Geologist, who has done much excavation in the surrounding mountains and written a book on the Prehistoric inhabitants of Germany. I was able to see his collection of implements etc. which he himself had excavated and also to visit the actual caves of the prehistoric pygmy folk.

The most interesting part was the conversations which I had with him, with the help of his wife who spoke a little English. I discovered that here was a learned theologian who could reconcile Christianity with National Socialism and who tried to convince me that it is possible. I of course, endeavoured to show him, and I feel sure that in his heart he felt that I was right, that the present system in Germany is contrary to the spirit of love and friendship of Christianity (the sacrificing love of Jesus). I was surprised to find that they spoke of Hitler with almost adoration. They told me that if I could once see Hitler's eyes I should never forget the expression in them!

It was interesting to note that they held the Quakers in high esteem on account of the feeding help which they gave the German people during the blockade after the war. They said that what the Quakers had done would never be forgotten.

I learned about the Winterhilfswerk (Winter Relief Work) Frauenschaft (Women's Organisation) and Youth Organisations of National Socialism.

One afternoon was spent in discussing the Czechoslovakian Problem which was then, in June, just beginning to come to a head. I discovered that Germany had apparently an alternative namely the Canton System, in their minds. This student however, really believed and told me many facts to prove his point, that the Czech Government had been really unjust and cruel to the Sudeten German minority, facts which contradicted what Frank Hnik, A Czechoslovakian at Woodbrooke, had told us, which I passed on to the student. Though he listened very carefully to what I had to say, he told me that I did not know the full facts, otherwise I would not in all decency support the Czech Government. The great deciding factor in any case for him, was the fact that the Sudeten Germans were German and it was therefore, inevitable that they should one day return home to the German Empire. He believed it so ardently that somehow my political arguments were out of place. He believed in the sacred mission and supremacy of the German Aryan Race and treated the Jewish question entirely from this angle. He did not suggest, like many others who I met, that the Jews are all rotten etc. he merely said that they are not German and simply do not belong to Germany, and that was the unalterable law behind the persecution of the Jews.

There was not much that one could say in reply to that, except to point out that no principle however great, could justify the cruelty of the persecution of the Jews and of course, to put the Christian point of view, which I always found seemed to strike home somewhere. I also had another very interesting conversation in which he told me that he believed that it was impossible to discuss with any foreigner the deepest facts of life or of one's heart because the background was so different, there could be nothing more than a superficial relationship between two people of different nationalities. He gave many instances, but I hope even if only by the very fact that we



were discussing such things, that I succeeded in showing him that this isn't true. I believe I might have done so! He was very kind and each day taught me German, which helped my knowledge of the language considerably.

Apart from this opportunity, during the first three months of my stay in Germany, I did not really see much of the side of life which I knew must be there, and if I had returned home at the end of July, I should have had a very different opinion about Germany than what I have now. It would have been one of happy and bright memories of jolly times, lovely scenery etc. It was almost as if, even the people who did not agree with the Hitler regime, tried to show me all the nice things and to keep the gloomy side from me.

One other incident is however, worth mentioning. One Monday evening Ruth and I attended a meeting of about 20 people in the home of a South German Authoress. The people were composed of one or two from the remains of various circles which had existed before 1933, Religious Groups, Discussion Groups and one or two Quakers. An American Pastor was present who was travelling through all the countries of Europe, staying two or three days in each, in order to tap the atmosphere as to peace or war. It was quite interesting but aroused the question in my mind as to whether it would be possible to achieve such a task by spending only a few days in each country, when after being already three months in Germany, I was just beginning to get hold of something of the real spirit there! I told him that I did not feel that his procedure was reliable, in spite of the fact that in each country he spoke with the people are in touch with such tendencies. Here I met G.S.<sup>27</sup> one of the very fine German Quakers, who has done much travelling round Germany visiting people of all kinds in order to help and encourage them to hold on to their beliefs and to assure them of friendship in their loneliness. It was with her help in Bad Pymont that I tried to do

the same thing.

A visit to the south of the Black Forest and a journey up the Rhein [sic] as far as Neuwied and back to Stuttgart in glorious Summer weather, marked the end of my first three months in Germany. On the whole the time spent was for my personal enjoyment the most valuable, but it left me with a feeling of dissatisfaction because I had not seen the side of Germany or met the people who I wished very much to get to know.

The things which stood out in my mind after these three months were: -

1. The beauty of the Germany countryside.
2. The cleanliness of the towns.
3. The kindness and hospitality of the people.
4. The feeling that the real spirit was hidden behind a mask of outward enjoyment and pleasure.
5. A feeling that people, including Quakers, did not want me to see the side or meet the people who were suffering.

After all this, I might say as an answer to my prayers, I received £5 from the Travel Bursary Committee which enabled me to buy a "Rundreise" Railway ticket and make a plan for visiting friends whom I already knew and to visit Yearly Meeting in Bad Pymont.



2. Yearly Meeting and travelling round Germany.

a. Yearly Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> August.

On my journey to Bad Pyrmont where the Yearly Meeting of the German Quakers was to be held, I visited Heidelberg and spent one day there looking round that lovely old town in the hills. No English person could pass “Heidelberg” without seeing it: I stayed for three days in Frankfurt-a-M in the fine Youth Hostel there. The Quakers who live in Frankfurt were all attending the “Frei Zeit” prior to the opening of Yearly Meeting. I was therefore, only able to visit a “friend of the Friends,” an elderly lady and sister of LB.<sup>28</sup>

In the Youth Hostel however, I had a wonderful “free lance” opportunity of speaking to all kinds of people who were staying there. First of all a student of law from Berlin, I discussed with him the Jewish question, which I thought at that time was the most important thing of modern Germany. I did not get much out of him, he being very discrete, apart from putting my point of view and listening to his reply to it. Then three medical students from Munich, with whom I also discussed the Jewish question, but discovered that like most S.S. men, though very anti-semitic [sic], they were quite incapable of arguing intelligently on the subject, or on any subject for that matter. I met also a professor of German from a military college in Bucharest. I had many discussions with him and heard some of the most evil and fanatical remarks about the character of the Jews which I ever heard in Germany outside “Der Sturmer.” At one point however, I refused to listen on the grounds of common decency. Sometimes when we meet with a deadly challenge to what we believe in, we get a new determination to put the Christian point of view as far as it is within our strength to do so, and this is what I tried to do in answer to his remarks. When I had finished, he said at least “Well, I am glad to have met somebody who

holds the ideals which I once held, try to stick to them as long as you can.” What effect my efforts really had on him, I cannot really say. It is very interesting to note that this man spoke almost perfect English, in spite of the fact that I was only the second English person with whom he had ever spoken in his life! He had a rather bad accent of course, but a good vocabulary and correct grammar – he had learned it all from the wireless and gramophone records. I asked him why he had learned English, he replied “For the same reason that I have learned in the same way French, Danish, Russian and Italian, in order to be able to appreciate the culture of these lands,” to which I replied that he was one of the best practical Internationalists I had ever met, in spite of his intense nationalism.

The next place I visited was Marburg, the lovely old University town, with beautiful Gothic architecture in the Elizabeth church. I met here a student of Culture. I discussed Pacifism with him, and he told me that he was convinced that war was inevitable because of the nature of man and that it is necessary for his future development. Just as there is something of sin about everyman, so is there the elements which breed war in nations!

b. Yearly Meeting

My first impression when I had been one day in Bad Pyrmont was one of great relief and pleasure to see Friends again after being and feeling isolated from the atmosphere which I had for so long become accustomed to. It was like arriving in Mecca after a long journey across the desert, I felt just like basking in the atmosphere of friendship and goodwill which I found there. Perhaps this feeling on my part was the natural reaction of [a] 22 years’ [old young person] abroad for the first time, but in any case it brought home to me how much such a gathering must have meant to isolated Quakers in Munich or Hamburg who could only come together with other Friends once in

the year. Later I felt this to be the note of the whole meeting and the cause of some of the difficulties, certainly of the inability to get silence in the Meetings for Worship – anyway one can easily forgive that when one has experienced what it means to be a Quaker in Germany! To those who live and struggle alone in what is often a hard and cruel environment.

A scientific lecture – though entitled “The only Religion which always existed” was held in parts on each of the first three days, the lecturer being Gerhard V. Schulze-Gaevernitz Professor of Philosophy at Freiburg University. The lectures being of a very scientific nature, caused much controversy. I found some things to be a little too far removed from the burning questions of the day.

The meetings for worship were on occasions very deep and true, but often a little disturbed. I felt very grateful for the meetings for Worship.

The personal contacts which one made there were perhaps the finest thing of the Yearly meeting and to meet old friends and Old Woodbrookers again.

The most valuable thing for me however, was a talk given by E.F.<sup>29</sup> to the Young Friends on the Tuesday morning after the official close of the Yearly Meeting. I felt that the message which he gave to us was the fruit of a life spent in service and sacrifice to God, it was a message to which the heart of any young seeker could not fail to respond with enthusiasm and a feeling of awe and respect. It was about not being hypocritical with yourself, feeling a responsibility for life yourself personally, and following the calling voice down a lonely way – but down a way where God is always with you – about the seriousness of life and its task. We must remember that our passions are created by God to be used for him – we must not be afraid of them. We cannot understand the state of Europe today unless we realise how strong these passions are in man and how they can become beasts of prey and

hate and be cruel if they are not faced up to and used in the service of God – it was a message to youth to arise and grasp all that youth means, passion, enthusiasm and strength and to use it for God.

c. The “Wanderung” after Yearly Meeting

A party of a few German Young Friends, a few English and two Irish Young Friends under the leadership of HO,<sup>30</sup> hiked from Bad Pyrmont to Kassel. It was a very happy and interesting time, especially for me because I was able to renew a very deep friendship which I made at Woodbrooke. The hike took us through the lovely Weserland, through forests and old villages, visiting old churches, down the river Weser on board a steamer in the evening, into Youth Hostels and visiting a few Friends of the Friends on the way. In Lippoldsberg we all had coffee with Hans Grimm, the famous German Political writer and author of “Folk ohne Raum,” in his lovely home, an old nunnery.

The tramp ended with three days in Kassel getting to know the Kassel Quakers who fortunately live together on an estate on the outskirts of Kassel.

d. Visits to Jewish Homes in Wuppertal Elberfeld and Berlin

My next journey was a visit to Jewish friends of mine in Wuppertal Elberfeld. I was very interested to have the opportunity of staying for some time with them and my conversations and discussions with anti-semitics [sic] had increased that desire to really get to know them. I should like to mention here to prove how poisonous anti-semiticism [sic] is, that I went to these people with the intention of observing if possible, whether there was any truth in what had been told me about the Jews. This is of course, a natural but I fear a wrong attitude because it puts one in the attitude of mind which sees unconsciously the bad things about people first, and not the good ones. That only

by the way, it must belong to the psychology of Anti-Semitism [sic]!

I found myself in the midst of despair and sadness, neurosis (neuroticism) and hysteria and I was at first completely overwhelmed by the atmosphere. I think only those who have lived in Germany with the Jews during this time can have any idea what it means to a comparatively normal healthy-minded person.

I read again now the letters which I wrote home, asking my parents to help the son of the friends with whom I was staying, and I am obliged to confess that I did not escape the effects of this abnormal atmosphere of fear and despair, and felt often quite desperate myself in my wish to help these people.

They were business people, had been very rich and successful and very materialistic. They had the attitude which I later often met among the Jews of bitterness and hopelessness for the future and had no spiritual power whatever to help them. They related to me from morn till night the history of what they had suffered by way of loss of business, capital, opportunities and humiliations until I felt that the thing which had touched them most had been the loss of material power and possessions, though they had of course, still much money and came nowhere near the state of feeling hunger, in fact they lived so luxuriously that I was myself surprised. I tried always to discuss the spiritual implications of the present persecutions and so on, until I did discover that they had no faith whatever in God and that when they thought about these things, they were up against a wall of darkness and despair greater than that presented to them by their material situation. I tried to pass on to them that burning necessity which I feel myself to find the way to God, to spiritual health and security. These Jews, although they had not become Christian, had not at the same time remained true to their own religion. It was very interesting on one occasion to be present when four of them were discussing Jesus Christ and trying to find

somewhere where they could begin to approach him. I realised then the difficulty of a Jew who has absolutely no background and no conception of what Jesus means. This was not my last experience of this!

It was a never-to-be-forgotten experience to go out with these "outcasts" and to be classed with them and to be able to appreciate what "mass ostracism" in practice means. How one gets a fear of humanity, a feeling of loneliness in the midst of crowds, a bitterness and also an inferiority complex.

There is much more to be said of course, but that just gives a brief idea of my experiences there. This is no place or time to criticise people who are in great difficulty, but my experience brought home to me the uselessness of a life of pure materialism and pleasure, and showed me the necessity more and more of finding a security and a stronghold based on spiritual values. One young Jewess with whom I discussed the existence of God, said something very true – "I do not believe in God, events of the past five years haven't given us any grounds to believe that there is a God of Love." I asked her if she had believed in God before 1933 before all these difficulties came along, she replied "No I never really thought about it at all." I remarked then, that it is always difficult to seek for God, even when everything goes well, in fact, even more so then because there does not seem to be any need for God during the good times, and then when the material things are against one, it is difficult to suddenly build a spiritual life and belief in a God of unflinching love. Her reply was simply "Yes, I think things went too well for us before to bother about God."

To write down everything that I saw, heard and thought about the Jews and their present situation in Germany, would take more place and time than I can give to the subject here, but it seems to me important to realise that all these questions and difficulties ARE NOT

ISOLATED TO THE JEWS, they touch all humanity at the present day. The Jews are not the only ones who have suffered or who are suffering in Germany today in this physical way, there are other religious and political people, including the Quakers, but there is one outstanding and remarkable difference between the sufferings of the Jews and those of the others. People like the Quakers, Social Democrats and Church Ministers, etc. are suffering BECAUSE THEY HAVE CHOSEN TO STAND OUT FOR THEIR IDEALS, but the Jews are sufferings simply because they are Jews and belong to that particular race, regardless of their belief, some of them would even have become National Socialist and ardent followers of Hitler if they had been allowed to do so, in fact some were supporters of the Party before 1933 and I have heard Jews say that National Socialism is a good thing for Germany! This difference which I have pointed out does not in any way minimise the actual suffering of the Jews, because that is the same whether it be German or Jew who is persecuted. There should be a great fellowship in suffering, which I sometimes felt in passing from a Jewish home to the home of an Aryan Quaker, but the fellowship is only possible if each individual is willing to arise through the suffering to the level of fellowship.

The friendships which I made during this time will always remain because of the sharing of those sad experiences, in spite of any objective looking-backwards which one is often forced to do.

In Wuppertal Elberfeld, I met with great pleasure the old father of Pastor Niemöller. It was a wonderful experience to find a man with such a deep and simple faith in God, with a strength which all those who came into contact with him, could not fail to be helped by. He told me that his son, though physically suffering from the effects of his long imprisonment, was spiritually fine and strong. He told me about his wife and children and

other incidents concerned with his son's stand against the Government. He said "He is happy, and it is only those who are standing out for what they believe in who can be happy these days, the others are unhappy." And I found that to be true from my own experience.

I met many other Jews in Wuppertal, but only one, if I may judge, who had a real and living faith and something constructive to offer in spite of all the persecutions – she was a friend of the Friends.

e. An invitation from a National Socialistic family

During the few days in K<sup>31</sup> after the "wanderung" I had received an invitation from a National Socialistic family which I had accepted. The eldest son, a very clever medical student<sup>32</sup> who had also given much time to art and philosophy at the University, was a friend of a family of Quakers who were just emigrating to America, and I was introduced to this family by these Quakers. It was a great relief to come back into the normal round of life after being with Jews for two weeks. I discovered that the family, like many other professing National Socialistic families, were only acquiescing outwardly in the present system, and the four sons at least were very open minded in spite of the propaganda in the schools and university. There seemed to be more criticism of an intelligent kind levelled against the Government in that family than amongst the Jewish family. I hoped at least to get the eldest son interested in Quakerism. It would be too much to give accounts of discussions and ideas which I met with in this family. I was at any rate introduced to German Art, Literature and Poetry and I felt relieved to find a young student who loved the cultural heritage of Germany's past more than anything else in his life and who tried to live his life inspired by Goethe, Schiller, and Durer [etc.] I met his friends of the same type, and have since learned that they are in contact with some

of the finest professors of art and philosophy who still remain in Germany though not in the capacity of professor as they were before 1933 [e.g. Prof Hankamer].<sup>33</sup>

During this week I witnessed one of the saddest things I saw in Germany, including even some of the pogroms in November. The Gs<sup>34</sup>, the Quaker family mentioned above, were taking their farewell of Germany to emigrate to America. He had been a school master and Social Democrat before 1933 and had been pensioned off [by the Nazis]. His wife was Swiss by birth and a very clever and fine woman. They have two children and it was for their sakes that they did not [wish to] remain in Germany, otherwise they would have done so. Herr G. loved Germany very much and because of his love for Germany he was very distressed at having to go. I shall never forget those few days when these people took leave of their friends. One evening a few people from a religious group (Bekennnis Kirche), a few personal friends and one or two Quakers, met together at the home of a Pastor. A few lovely German Folk Songs were sung – "Kein schöner Land" etc. when this little group of faithful friends had their last evening together. The pastor spoke a few words the gist of which was as follows – "We belong to a land which has no earthly frontiers, and though our friends are leaving us here, in spirit we go with them and they remain with us. When Jacob left his father's house, he had a vision of a ladder which went up to heaven, and God said to him 'Behold I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land, for I will not leave thee.'" If sincere tears were ever shed, it was on that occasion when these friends, though strongly bound by a common bond of fellowship in God, parted perhaps never to meet [again] on this earth – but Germany has been the scene of many such partings, between husband and wife, parents and children – it is one of the most tragic and [word crossed out and replaced with

moving] results of the [Nazi] system in Germany.

f. Visit to Jews in Berlin

At the end of August, much later than I had expected, I continued my journey to Berlin. I stayed with relatives of the Jewish friends of mine in Wuppertal Elberfeld, a doctor and his wife who is also a doctor. After I had been there three days, the man left Germany to make an "InformationsReise" in America. That was another very sad parting. His three brothers and his wife and I saw him off at the station – one felt so terribly incompetent to comfort these people when the last carriage of the train had disappeared round the bend – there had been the breaking up at a beloved medical practice and dismantling of instruments which had taken 20 years to [word crossed out and replaced with assemble], a parting with everything which had been the result of [word crossed out and replaced with almost] a life-times devotion to medicine, patients, books, reports etc. the very handling of some of these things for packing was like parting with your life's blood. All except the knowledge, which nobody can take from us!

Both were in a very bad state mentally, the lady had never slept a night for three years without sleeping draughts and their behaviour and method of speaking lead [sic] me to believe that the tremendous strain on their nerves had effected their [word crossed out and replaced with minds].

They had one little son of five years, he was very naughty owing to the distressed condition of his parents. He suffered like many other Jewish children, from the effects of loneliness and abnormal conditions, the "Aryan" children were not allowed to play with him, and when they did do so occasionally or talked to him over the garden fence, he was eventually called "a dirty/Jew" and so on, repeating things which they must have heard their parents say, and which they did not understand of course. One

day the little boy came to his Mother and said “Mother, Freddy says I am a Jew and he can’t play with me, why am I a Jew? I don’t like being a Jew and I am not going to be a Jew either.” His Mother tried to console him by telling him that there is nothing bad about being a Jew and that he would always be a Jew. The next day we heard the children talking over the fence again, Freddy was saying “I can’t play with you ‘cause you’re a Jew, but” he added, “maybe I can play with you next year because perhaps I’ll become a Jew myself then!”

Frau. Dr. and I had many discussions on religion and politics. Just at this time the Czechoslovakian problem was becoming intensely serious. I had the feeling from the majority of Jews who I met at that time, that they felt that only military supremacy and force on the part of Great Britain and France would “call the bluff” and defeat Hitler’s threats against Czechoslovakia.

How can I convey the atmosphere of a Jewish home during this days? It was always one of suffering through depression, fear, loneliness and expectancy of worse to come, which amounted in some cases to hysteria, an atmosphere of tension heightened by ceaseless listening-in to the news from all over the world on the wireless from morn till night. During these days a definite hope was there that the “Democracies” would defend Czechoslovakia by force of arms and that Hitler would be defeated. Many Jews whom I met during these days were in a very abnormal state of mind as a result of nearly six years of persecution. Sometimes they were pettyfogging [sic] and quarrelsome in their family relationships and the children often naughty and untrained and very sophisticated as a result of all that they had seen had heard, a great problem for the future whenever they are living under normal conditions again. A young Polish Jewess said to me once, “We never dreamed in 1933 that things would be so bad as this, but they get worse and worse, and still we are alive, it is

surprising what people can endure when they have to.” In spite of that I don’t think she thought that even worse than that was yet to come for them.

In Berlin I celebrated the Jewish New Year’s Day, but though my friends were Jewish by religion, I got no insight into the spiritual significance of this day for a Jew. They were Jews who had not kept close to their religion for some time.

Owing to the size of Berlin and the fact that there are many thousands of Jews there, it was possible to go about it September without quite the same fear as in small places, that of course, accounts for the many thousands of Jews who were constantly flocking into Berlin from small places. All the Jewish shops had the name of the owner in large white letters on the windows, there were special benches in parks and on corners painted yellow and marked “For Jews.” The Jewish owners of motor-cars had a special car number, in order that they could be recognised at sight by the police – in September I thought this to be one of the cruellest things I had yet heard of – the drivers being already nervous and unsure, were put in almost a state of frenzy when driving their cars bearing these special numbers through the busy streets, where they knew that if anything happened they alone would be to blame and that the eyes of the police were always on them. The cars had been an escape for them until then and a means of travelling which was at least independent – Jews were not welcomed in public conveyances. All Aryan shops, cafes and places of amusement bore notices “Jews not wished here” or “Jews forbidden.” On this account the Jews had lost all touch with ~~the~~ ordinary ~~things~~ of life – they had for the most part no ~~work~~ jobs to do and no incentive to ~~create~~ work for themselves – and were persecuted by propaganda – who can wonder that they became steadily more and more abnormal, and with few exceptions, psychologically unhealthy? Quite a number



committed suicide. In Berlin however, I met Jews who had remained true and loyal to their religion and this had done a great deal to counteract these psychological difficulties. Many of these were very fine, clever men. It was at that time scarcely ever possible to meet any Jews between the ages of 17 and 30, the

The Jews were not without a few loyal “Aryan” friends who they visited by night and did not acknowledge in daylight, because of the danger. This atmosphere of going by night and doing things in secret was quite unpleasant to an outsider. These people were I felt sure, overcautious and very anxious to keep all the



majority were fortunately already in Palestine.

Though I often asked to do so, I had great difficulty in meeting a really poor Jew, I met lower middle-class Jews, but “sehr arme” Jews were difficult to ~~get at~~ encounter. I felt that the standard of living of professional Jews and business people, had been very high contrasted with that of professional Aryans. This is merely my own observation and I am not aware of any figures showing the average incomes of the Jews and “Aryans” in Germany.

unjust laws which had been make against them – out of this terrible fear of course – I could have admired some of them more, if they had tried to be passive “resisters” instead of passive obeyers, but it is hard and perhaps not right to judge, five years of that is enough to knock the spirit out of the bravest of us. Without doubt there was much exaggeration and one-sidedness, or at least one felt that it was so in September, but in November there wasn’t any room for exaggeration, things happened even

worse than the most vivid imagination could picture!

It was a relief to meet many Quakers in Berlin and to attend Meeting for Worship, to renew acquaintance with two great people E[mil] F[uchs] and G[rete] S[umpf] and other Friends who I had met at Bad Pyrmont, especially the Young Friends, Horst Rote. I had visited many Friends in their homes and discussed [word crossed out and replaced with matters] with them, which was very helpful in [word crossed out and replaced with regaining] my balance [two words crossed out].

In one discussion group we had the question of the different approaches to Quakerism and the place of Christianity in Quakerism. The question had arisen from the Young Friends Group where there were one or two Jews who found it difficult to accept Quakerism as a fundamentally Christian Religion. I think during these discussions I saw perhaps the essence of the spiritual difficulties of Modern Times. It is the question of Jesus which humanity is facing, not the historical Jesus, because the so-called Christians are just as affected by it as the people who have not accepted the Historical Jesus; it is the Jesus of experience, or the Way of Love as revealed by Jesus. Humanity is at the cross-roads this way is the way of Anti-Christ and that way is the way of Jesus. Unfortunately large numbers of people already been led down the way of anti-Christ by those who are themselves almost completely given over to that way and who are therefore, competent to lead humanity along that way. It is when these people get the power of Government in their hands, that we get the results which can be seen in Germany today. They are the grumblers, the bitter ones, the opportunists and the cruel ones of the nation. It was a very valuable thing to have to face up to how much Jesus really and sincerely means to one, apart from just ideas and knowledge about him. The Quakers in Germany seem to be split on the question as to the fundamental

nature of the Christian experience in Quakerism. This is just by way of indicating problems which arose in discussions [in] which I took part [word crossed out] with German Friends, and which I value[d] above all else [word crossed out and replaced with in] my German experiences.

Erich Ursell one of the Jewish Young Friends had a very unusual attitude towards Germany and a very admirable one, namely, he wanted to help Germany and to work for her spiritual future. He had a feeling of responsibility for Germany.

#### g. The Czechoslovakian Crisis in September

During my stay in Berlin, the Czechoslovakian Problem was becoming more and more critical, the international atmosphere more and more tense. In Germany the atmosphere was one of outward calmness I think compared with England, where provision of gasmasks, digging of trenches and evacuation of children from slum areas were in progress. There was none of this in Germany, because of course, all this was already prepared. The newspapers and wireless were a typical example of the power, the thoroughness and poison of the propaganda machine. Full of bluff and lies and sentimental accounts of suffering Sudeten Germans and cruel heartless Czechs and personal slander against every statesman in Czechoslovakia, France, America, Russia and some English ones, not of course forgetting "Welt Judentum" which was really at the bottom of the whole crisis and the cause of the coming war; the injustice of any solution other than the one which would bring the Sudeten Germans "Home to the Reich" etc. Apart from the justice, reasonableness and inevitability of the German demands, there was "the historical mission of the German Race" to bring all her people together in one Reich! Czechoslovakia was working hand-in-glove with the Russian Communists, in fact Herr. Benes was a Communist. Horrible pictures

were shown in the newspapers of Stalin, Benes and French Ministers together and sentimental pictures of the ill treatment and cruelty suffered by the Sudeten Germans etc. until one was heartily sick of the whole business and I for one, [even] if I had been of the opinion that Germany's claims were just and right, would have been turned against the Nazis on account of this propaganda and the lies which were told. I think this opened the eyes of some Germans because I think you can inject some people with propaganda that they eventually become immune to it! During this period at any rate the majority of Germans had a fatalistic attitude towards the whole situation, Hitler would either get what he wanted, or the matter would be settled by force. Their only hope was that England would remain neutral so that the annexation would go off without war.

If one visited a film during this time, sentimental pictures were shown on the very long news-reels, depicting Sudeten women and children crying, their husbands being dead and they homeless and fleeing, and as they tried to flee into Germany, being shot at by Czech soldiers; short speeches by Henlein and Sudeten refugees, and then German soldiers marching, to show how prepared Germany was! One could feel this atmosphere working itself out on the people present.<sup>35</sup>

I have many letters which I received from Germans during this time, expressing their opinions. The letters are very valuable from this point of view. They showed that even those who were not under the spell of the propaganda, believed that Sudeten Germany, should and would come back to Germany. Those who were not National Socialist but who were loyal Germans, wanted Hitler to achieve his ends by diplomatic means because of restoring some of Germany's lost prestige in this connection. They were very surprised and pleased when the Fuhrer agreed to "talk things over" at Berchtesgarden and Konigswinter. The letters at any rate, told me how the crisis was

affecting every single person and that very few were able to think normally at this time. It would of course, be useless to deny that many [word crossed out and replaced with millions] agreed with everything the Fuhrer did and said during that time, even when he called Herr. Benes a liar, but when Hitler proclaimed that he had the whole of the German nation behind him, he deceived himself and nobody else.

Finally came Hitler's speech in the Sport Palast in Berlin on September 19<sup>th</sup>. It was on this evening that I left Berlin to go Lepzig to stay with Horst Bruckner and his wife, an Old Woodbrooker.

As I left my Jewish friends, I was overcome with the feeling of tension and crisis which hung in the air and which was heightened by the following scene. At about three o'clock in the afternoon, as I travelled by tram from one end of Berlin to the other, the scene presented the usual Berlin city life, but at five o'clock the scene suddenly changed – from out of everywhere, shops, cars, buses, tubes, poured men in the innumerable uniforms of Modern Germany, the black uniforms of the S.S., brown of the S.A., Hitler Youth, Soldiers, Police and the Sudeten German "Frei Corps"! The red flags with the black Hagen Kreuz hung everywhere and the busy people, like so many human ants, marched towards the Sport Palast; microphones were in every street in readiness for the speech. The majority of English and American people had already left Berlin by this time and in the midst of the excitement preceding the speech, I felt very much alone and wished that I too, had gone home to England, except that I did not wish to return home without first seeing some very dear friends, especially at that time when it was a very valuable thing for Germans to be in contact with English people.

#### h. Visit to Leipzig

The train to Leipzig was a slow stopping train which was crowded with people, who

alighted at the different small stations where the train stopped. It was a curious experience to be in that train and a very interesting psychological study! In the big compartment (third class) without any partitions and only wooden benches, all the seats were full and every person was reading the latest edition of the evening papers. One or two would whisper together, but everyone had the air of excitement and tension and I think, fear. There seemed to me to be an inarticulate appeal to "what ever gods may be" for the avoidance of war, two young people read the paper and looked at each other as though they expected soon to be parted. I could not bear to read those terrible newspapers, they were the same everyday.

When I reached Leipzig, everywhere was deserted, the trams empty, the streets bare, it was eight o'clock and everyone was listening to the speech of the Fuehrer; everyone felt that the turn of events either way hung on this speech. The Germans who could still feel as ordinary human beings, hoped to know from this speech that war would be averted, they hoped with a fatalistic hope and their opinions were not expressed aloud, but it is at such times in Germany that one feels public opinion even clearer than by our means of deputations and letters to the newspapers.

After eventually finding a taxi driver, I managed to reach my destination just in the middle of Hitler's speech. It was an experience I shall never forget; after leaving those hundreds of uniforms behind in Berlin and travelling through so many silent, rather hopeless people, and then hearing that loud, almost brawling voice of the Fuehrer defending the Sudeten Germans, calling Herr. Benes a liar, defying everyone and asking for justice, blaming the Jews and threatening Czechoslovakia. It was the voice of a lunatic, not the leader of a great nation. Sometimes as his voice reached screeching pitch and his words were applauded by yells of "Heil Heil"

etc., I wondered if there had ever been a similar moment in history before – that of a fanatic inciting millions to fanaticism!

I spent two weeks in Leipzig with H.B. and his wife. Before '33 he had been a Social Democrat and a Quaker. He was a teacher by profession, but had been [word crossed out and replaced with dismissed] from duty and was living on a small pension granted to him by the State. He had the intention of refusing military service but at that moment no call had yet been made upon him to serve. During the crisis he expected to be called up immediately as he was only 35 years of age, and if he had refused, he would certainly have been executed; [that] he knew. It was therefore, a wonderful experience to see the courage and faith shown by that family during the whole period of the crisis.

On the Thursday before the meeting of Chamberlain, Daladier, Mussolini and Hitler in Munich on the Friday, the American Consulate advised me to leave Germany and try to reach the Dutch frontier, but I decided to wait for the result of the meeting, which turned out to be a wise course. In order to hear the Empire News from England on the wireless during the whole of that week, I used to visit an English girl, the sister of an Old Woodbrooker, who had been married to a German four months. It was a very distressing and lonely time for her and it was a great joy for us both to be together so often during those critical days. We talked of England and tried to think of how much England really meant to us and in spite of all, we both felt a love in our hearts for the land of our birth, mostly for the green fields and peace of England which have so often inspired the literature and poetry of England, which we found we cherished above all. England seemed to us then as Shakespeare described it "A fortress built by nature for herself," if not against the "hand of wars" against the insanity.

After Munich, the nightmare passed, but not the insanity with it; the propaganda continued and only a week after Hitler had got all he

wanted as a result of Mr. Chamberlain's efforts to avoid an international conflagration, he told England to "mind her own business and look after her own affairs." This sort of thing was an "eye-opener" for many Germans who thought that Hitler had at least shown a spirit of reasonableness and conciliation at Munich and were grateful to the efforts of Mr. Chamberlain in bringing Hitler to agree to a conference at all. They considered his speech as a breach of etiquette and ingratitude which did not represent their feelings about it in any war. The Munich Agreement did bring about a feeling of friendship towards England and the German people were very grateful for it.

Just as the atmosphere for the past two weeks had been one filled with unspoken fears and dread, so on the Saturday after Munich and for some days the atmosphere was filled with relief and joy. Dances and carnivals were held and for once the flags did not seem useless. They were supposed to represent the triumph of the return of six million Germans to the Reich, but in reality they represented the people's jubilation at the avoidance of war.

The crisis was settled without open warfare, but anyone who was in Germany during that time, knew that in spirit the world had lived through a "war" – it was not a moral triumph or a settlement by discussion and negotiation, it was the triumph of violence and aggression by all the means of warfare, lying, propaganda backed by armed force – everything except the loss of thousands of young lives – but perhaps with the loss of thousands of young souls in the future. In spite of all I felt glad at the settlement because as I wrote home at the time "We can at least do something now that there has been no actual outbreak of war and this is our chance."

i. Naumburg

My next visit to Naumburg, a lovely old town with a beautiful famous cathedral 60 km south west from Leipzig, was a glorious

epilogue to the turbulent events of the previous month. Here I found the real Germany which I had come to find, the Germany I knew must still exist, apart from National Socialism, Jewish persecutions and sufferings, the Germany which I began to get a glimpse of during my visit to Kassel in August - the Germany of culture and learning, of Goethe and Schiller.

I stayed with Herr. S,<sup>36</sup> his wife and two children. He is a teacher in a modern central school in Naumburg.

Of all the people who I met in the course of ten months in Germany, Herr S. was one of the two very finest. Through him I got to know the good and true and everlasting things of Germany and learned that they [word crossed out] are not things of the past but are still inspiring some of the finest and most "German" of Germans.

Herr. S. was an ardent lover and exponent of Goethe and Schiller and the poets and philosophers of the past, also of Gandhi. He suffered very much trying to work as a teacher under the present system and was very thankful to be able to discuss his difficulties with me. He said that besides his ordinary duties as a teacher, he was called upon to do so many other things, collections for "Winter Hilfswerk" and so on that he had scarcely time to spend on the things which he loved so much. He said he did not know how much longer he would be able for conscience sake to carry on with his profession.

It was a wonderful opportunity for me to get to know [more of] the situation in Germany because as he was on holiday, we were able to discuss from morning until night. I saw a little of the mental suffering which the pressure of the system brings. He was a man who had also suffered very much before 1933. Having been trained to be a teacher he had been unemployed eight years and had spent this time working in the Youth Movement and "Wander Vogel" and in getting to know and to love

Goethe and the heritage of Germany’s past. In about 1930, he had been able to get a post as a teacher and even then it was not until 1933 that he received his full wages. After that, owing to the shortage of teachers, he had steadily bettered his position to its present state, but the stories of how they had lived in two rooms for many years, which were almost like an attic and terribly cold during hard bitterly cold German winters, made me realise how much the middle and poor classes suffered between 1922 until 1933. It seemed a curious and sad thing to contemplate that before 1933 Herr. S. suffered so much materially, he had mental health and freedom, and then when 1933 brought material prosperity, it took [his] mental freedom and brought another kind of suffering, almost as if it is not possible to have the two things together in this life. Owing to the free time which material poverty and depression had given him, he had got to know and to understand the real values of German Poetry, Literature, Art and Music and now he was learning that material prosperity of [two words crossed out and replaced with Nazi Germany] was the negation of all these things.

I learned very much German here and was introduced to Goethe and Schiller. We visited Weimar and tried to live in the spirit which Goethe passed on through his works, that of untiring search for truth, love of beauty and of nature, of freedom and universal brotherhood and above all the search for God. It was a beautiful Autumnal day, full of colour and glory and will remain for me a vision of “the things which are most excellent.”

I must not fail to mention the Cathedral in Naumburg, the acquaintance with which brought me so close to the real Germany.

I feel now that in trying to understand the message of the stone figure of Mary on the left hand side of the crucifix in the Lettner Gate, the work of an unknown master of the thirteenth century. It seemed to bring me closer to Germany and helped me to understand

something of the meaning of suffering in relation to the present situation [two words crossed out]. Those beautiful works of art, inspired by a deep understanding of the message of Christianity, stand there as immortal reminders and challengers to any soul who seeks to read their meaning. Just as these figures stand in that Cathedral in the midst yet apart from the new materialism of our times, so in the midst of the people who are themselves bearers of this new materialism, are to be found bearers of the same spirit expressed by these wonderful works of art; men and women who are still sensitive enough to consciously suffer and who are still great enough to love unto death. Many people today visit the cathedral and admire the figures from the point of view of pure art and historical values, but few are sensitive enough to let the figures have a personal message for them – who knows however what effects the memory of that sorrowful face of Mary may have even upon the most materialistic of observers – it could mean a vision of the same kind which came to Paul on the road to Damascus!

Although in Germany today there is a movement which tries to increase the interest of youth in the old churches and works of art in Germany, the number of those who understand them is really small. The motives of the exponents of art and culture in the schools and universities are very different from those of the previous teachers and professors. But perhaps we trust that beauty and inspired craftsmanship will speak for itself and be its own interpreter.

j. Visit to S<sup>37</sup> in the Thuringen Forest

My next visit was to Quakers who have a little shop in a village in the Thuringen forest. The daughter had attended the Young Friends’ Conference at Otterden, Kent and had afterwards spent two weeks with my parents [in Stafford]. Herr Zeppler<sup>38</sup> had been a clerical worker before 1933 and had worked for the

Trade Union Movement. He lost his job in 1933. After much hardship and poverty, he opened this little shop which had become a small "goldmine" owing to the arrival of a huge factory in the neighbourhood. I learned much of another side of German life here. Here was a type of man able to understand the real needs of the German worker much better than those who profess to have done so much for the German Workers.

I saw a great deal of the difficulties in present day Germany of obtaining supplies of food commodities like butter etc. necessary for sale in such a shop, and the compromises which a Quaker must make in running a business there.

The Thuringen Forest was very beautiful at that time, decked in beautiful Autumn tones, often beneath a glorious autumn sky and sunsets which one only sees towards the end of the year's departure. I grew to love that beautiful Thuringen Forest, and felt that just as the forest still stood in the same splendour and beauty as in the days when Goethe so loved it, the great things which Germany has given to humanity through the centuries, still remain and still inspire a few here and there in Germany today. I shall never forget those happy days tramping through the forest and singing at the top of our voices German Folk songs and laughing.

I visited the Wartburg and saw the room where Luther translated the Bible – Germany has been the battlefield of more than one struggle of new ideas to break in upon humanity!

In Schwarzburg I found like in most places and [with] most people with whom I talked, a real interest in the spiritual difficulties and results of the present system.

#### k. Munich

The next place I visited was Munich. The only Quakers there, Jewish, were in England making an "Information Reise" and I was



therefore unable to visit them.

In Munich I really continued discovering and getting to know the valuable things in Germany which I had begun in Naumberg. I met a few students who are trying to study and carry on their work as seekers for truth apart from any political direction and system: who are trying to equip themselves to help their country out of the mess in which it now finds itself when the day and opportunity comes, not by political means and underground societies, but simply by being greater and better people than those who are at present damaging and ruling their country by force, bondage and untruth. They seemed to feel that anything other than the achievement of personal morality was at the moment all they could do towards helping their country, whose psychological difficulties they understood but are trying better to understand. This is the direction also of [some] literature and poetry in Germany today. It is a great hope for any country that such people exist especially for Germany at the present day. I heard of the kind of men we can watch and whose works we can read as men who are also trying to do the same thing for their country by the only weapon that is still in their power – literature and poetry – Hans Caressa, Hans Grimm, R.A. Schroda, Ernst Wiechert, and one or two professors of philosophy and literature who, though released from duty by the present Government, still live in Germany, as well as



backed up by a few religious people who are trying to keep hold of things in their personal lives. Perhaps this doesn't seem at the moment to be a very quick way of attacking the present system in Germany, but who are we English to judge? That was the first thing I learnt whilst staying in Germany that we should be the last to criticise, we have no right to do so.<sup>39</sup>

In Munich I met two young people who were thinking and clearly at that, about the future, about the day when they would take their places in society as doctors and teachers, and seeking for a way to equip themselves personally for this task apart from their scientific training. It introduced me to that clear-thinking, energetic, interesting, life-giving spirit which must have produced Germany's great philosophers and thinkers of the past of which Goethe seems to be the greatest Master. [sentence crossed out]. It is this spirit which will exist long after the ideas of National Socialism have been forgotten.

If we wish to understand Germany today, we must make a distinction between the past and the present Germany. Not between the past which is dead and a present which will remain forever, but a past which lives and moves and inspires many people in Germany today, and between a present which must because of its very nature, be only temporary and which is for ever in conflict with the past, between "Vergangenheit" and "Gegenwart." If we do not make this distinction we shall be despairing about the spiritual and intellectual life of Germany and about the future. I was told that a few people have their roots in the past and the ideas of the present regime pass off them like water off a duck's back and only so far as they are forced through outward circumstances do they acquiesce in the present. They look from the past to the future. I must say that these are mostly young students otherwise they would not be able to take this stand and will of course, find their position much more difficult and perhaps almost

impossible when they have to take their [professional] places in the present [system].

If anyone would seek to understand the way in which these people are holding on to the past and trying to radiate it into the present, an example is to be found in Hans Carossa's "Goethe Rede". I think in this speech we can see very clearly how the author realises that the present system is a challenge and a denial of the ideas of Goethe and Schiller with his belief in the Universal Brotherhood of mankind. And also of Durer, Bach and Handel. Wherever one goes in Germany one sees and hears reminders of these things which I am now sure will struggle again for supremacy. It is because of the presence and challenge of these things that the students and others get so deep in their discussions when one speaks with them.

I attended a lecture at the university and was shown round the buildings. I saw Hitler's first Office and other early haunts of the party before it attained power, also the new architecture of the Third Reich, the War Memorial, Art Galleries and wonderful Museums.

I visited the Austrian Alps, Seefeld and Innsbruck and accomplished my first feat of mountaineering, the weather being glorious and as warm as in summer.<sup>40</sup> It was noticeable how much the Austrian peasants grumbled at the Hitler Regime and in some cases quite openly too.

#### 1. Return to Stuttgart

After an absence of three months, instead of one as originally intended, I returned to Stuttgart to complete my promised time there. I was welcomed home as if it had really been my home, and indeed the atmosphere was really like home, fruit and roses on my table and a spirit of friendliness and kindness.

I spent the few days between my return and the 10<sup>th</sup> of November, visiting the Quakers in Stuttgart who I had not previously really been able to get to know in a helpful way because of

my poor German.

Johannes Lehmann is I think, the most wonderful of all the Friends there, even perhaps of many in German. He is a very spiritual man, a worker, but with a natural gift as a spiritual leader and the bulwark of the group in Stuttgart. His deep love of the bible and his fine appreciation of Quakerism as a spiritual power are rare to find and very valuable to our society because through these means, he gave out such spiritual strength, which Germany needs so much today, for the future and for healing purposes at the present day. He is also a clever man, though not perhaps in the intellectual sense.

The group met in a little room on the fifth storey of a block of flats, the Meeting being composed of five or six people. The Meeting always began by a bible reading in which everyone took part, and sometimes a terrific discussion followed about the small daily affairs of the week such as I have never before in a Friend's meeting experienced. The one lady member of the group is a lady who is living alone the whole week, is therefore so relieved to see the Friends again that she can't stop talking about the events of the week. It was of course also a very seldom occasion in Modern Germany when like-minded people who could trust one another could come together and speak freely about the difficulties which surround them.

There was also another family of Friends living on the outskirts of Stuttgart. They did not attend meeting however, they seemed to find no spiritual home there. They felt these Friends were often too sentimental and not sufficiently intellectual for them. I tried to encourage them to attend Meeting because of the necessity of all such people keeping together and supporting each other in Germany today, but didn't have much success, I think there were other reasons why they did not attend meeting, which I do not wish to mention here.

R.O.<sup>41</sup> an Old Woodbrooker, a student of Law doing practical training at the Law Courts in M<sup>42</sup> had many difficulties. I saw how impossible it is to be a Quaker and to have anything to do with the Law under Nazism. No matter how much you may try to do on your own, you have to deal with the most important and deadly weapon of National Socialism when dealing with the Law – as contrasted say with the medical profession – even the Jewish Persecutions and Pogroms were made legal! It is not for us to judge or to tell others what they out to do, but as Friends we should try to encourage and to remind them that the least line of resistance is not the easiest way out for a Quaker in the long run.

#### m. The Jewish Persecutions in November

After the murder of Von Rath [at the German Embassy in Paris] there was a continuous outburst of propaganda against the Jews in all the newspapers and on the wireless, against World Jewry and those in league with World Jewry, men like Anthony Eden, Hore Belisha, Duff Cooper, President Roosevelt and some French ministers and Stalin etc. This went on for two or three weeks, Von Rath was given a State Burial of course, and at the ceremony Goering spoke of what the whole of the Jews now left in Germany would have to suffer to pay for this murder etc. They simply went wild about the whole thing, until one wondered if the whole business of the murder was not trumped-up. In any case not many people believed that the persecutions and huge fines which followed were punishment for that murder as the Nazis would have us believe, the murder was simply an excuse for carrying out the remainder of an old programme of persecutions and extermination which had been in existence probably before 1933.

The cruel atrocities of which I know a great deal from personal experience but which I do not consider it helpful to repeat or to spread stories of, happened during the night of

November 10<sup>th</sup> and of course, many Germans were unconscious of these things happening, and are still unconscious of them and even refuse to believe them when you tell them what happened, simply because it all happened in the night, never appeared in the newspapers and nobody whatever made any fuss about it or spread stories about it through fear. This happens with many things in Germany, things like Concentration Camps and victimisation remain very much in the background and out of the public eye. The sufferers nearly always keep quiet even the Jews, they are so afraid of spreading things because there are spies



everywhere who keep a look out for the people who tell and then they suffer the same fate again. For example, a former Social Democrat who had been in a Concentration Camp four years, was released. His back was so badly damaged that he was an invalid when he came home. His wife mentioned the fact to a neighbour and two days later the man was fetched back to the Concentration Camp, and as far as I know he remains there still. I only want to emphasise what a fear everyone has of saying anything, and so many people live in a fool's paradise. Perhaps it is good to remember this when English people ask "How can decent

German people stand by and see all this done." It is in any case begging the question, because they have no other alternative than to "stand by" but they [often] do not "see it done" at all.

[Kristalnacht November 10, 1938]

On the Wednesday afternoon I determined to see what results I could of the last evening's events. At first I had no idea whether there was anything to be seen, the people with whom I was staying being supporters of the Nazis, did not mention anything to me at all and therefore the results of the persecutions which were to be seen by everyone, came as a shock to me.

I had the intention to buy an English newspaper and read about the persecutions because I thought I should be able to find out more about it in that way until I met my Jewish friends, than I should be able to hear in Germany. I bought a copy of the "Times," [two weeks old] the only English newspaper which could be bought at that time, [two words crossed out and replaced with later] it was only occasionally possible to buy even than newspaper. I took my paper into a nearby Park to read and having sat down on a bench where a few others were sitting, I began to read, no sooner had a lady next to me noticed that I was reading an English newspaper than she asked me if I were English. When I replied in the affirmative, she immediately commenced, like many Germans at this time, to pour out her opinion of the Jewish persecutions, how terrible it was, so cruel and unreasonable to make so many pay in this way for the death of one person, she said she knew many good Jews and she told me of many things which had happened during the night and that very morning. She said she didn't know what was going to happen in Germany next, and as she was letting steam off in this way, along came an S.A. man, who were to be seen everywhere, in order to see what all the excited talk was about but I made no attempt to lower my voice in order to show him that I was English though I

altered the [topic of the] conversation.

I then went into the main streets and side streets to see the results for myself. The streets were crowded with curious onlookers. I shall never forget walking down the Konigs Strasse, looking into the bare, battered and broken shop-windows which seemed to have the air of outraged suffering themselves, and told with a certainty which no words could express, what sort of madness and bestial force had been used here; then amongst the crowds I moved towards the still smoking synagogue and stood for a very long time gazing up at the sky through the burned and broken windows and roof of the building, the heavy smoke still curled forth from the windows and hung in the damp November air. Then I studied the faces of the people who stood all round me, turned towards the damaged synagogue, I beheld no happy face, scarcely a word was spoken, the S.A. and S.S. men were scattered amongst the crowds to prevent that and to be on the look-out, only a few Hitler Youths said something because I presume they were so excited at seeing a building burning which had been legally set on fire and about which no authorities were annoyed or tried to stop from burning; the atmosphere was one of perplexed tension but nobody gave expression to it.

And then I moved away with what must have been an expression of disgust and revolt on my face, but also somewhat overcome by that amazing scene, I was accosted by an S.S. man who asked me why I shook my head, assuming I suppose that I was a German, I was nearly too speechless to reply in German, but I did manage to say words to effect that I was English and that I thought the whole thing was terrible and would have an awful story to tell when I got back to England. I must say at least that he was also speechless and looked very crestfallen and ashamed – he may have been one of those who set the synagogue burning! I went quickly away in order that he shouldn't follow me to where I was staying because of

the danger to my friends, and turning down one street corner I came across another crowd standing in front of a little shop, the window of which had been boarded-up and from inside came the sound of glass being swept up[.] Nearby could be seen a number of houses without any windows. Whenever I smell smoke or see broken glass, I shall always be reminded of that [terrible] scene.

Perhaps the sight of the police vans bringing in the Jews ready to take them to Concentration Camps was even more fearful and oppressive than the above mentioned scenes because it concerned people, the other only things. The huge crowds which stood round just stared, were mute and [word crossed out] very [word crossed out and replaced with discouraged and frightened].

After this I returned [to my] home, I felt naturally very depressed and stunned and thought of Jews whom I knew in Berlin and in other places and what they would be suffering. Everyone [word crossed out] was also depressed and unnatural but nobody wanted to discuss the matter with me. I think they were too ashamed and perhaps too proud. When I did however mention it, I realised how much they had been affected by it, especially those who were churchgoers. They said that they could understand other things such as taking their money from them and so on, but burning their places of worship, that was too much for them. Frau. N. said it was very unjust but I am sure that she did not really know what had happened during that night.

I visited Jews the next days and discovered that most of the men had been taken to Dachau Concentration Camp. The women were mostly in a terrible state of nerves and talked of nothing else than what had happened, though I was surprised to find how comparatively coolly they had taken it all when one knows how terrible it all was. The men were later released and told to leave Germany within a certain length of time. There was of

course, a great rush upon Quakers and I might say upon myself because I happened to be English.

I remember walking down towards Stuttgart two weeks later with a Jew[ish friend] who had just been released from Concentration Camp that day. Stuttgart looked like a fairyland with the lights all twinkling, he was very calm and as he looked at Stuttgart where he had lived all his life, he said "Isn't Stuttgart lovely, and what a good time we have all had here and now we must say goodbye."

Sufferings such as this can have one of two effects on people: it can either refine them or make them bitter and full of hatred. The experiences of some of the Jews made them better people, they came out of it refined and nobler. Perhaps only those [with] characters which are already fine potentially can be made better through such suffering. In any case it is a fine tribute to those Jews who as a result of their sufferings, were [word crossed out and replaced with ennobled] and refined. They have a great deal to teach others.

I also met through J.L.<sup>43</sup> a half-Jewess, actually by then a Czech by nationality, who was interested in Quakerism. I was asked to visit her and to help her if possible, to understand the spirit of Quakerism as she was interested, not in the material help which Quakers could give, but in the spiritual message of Quakerism in relation to Germany. She is one of the two most wonderful people with whom I made a real and lasting friendship in Germany. One meets many people, but with only one or two can one have a deep personal friendship of this kind. She is a psycho-therapist and understands very well the mental and psychological difficulties which have resulted from the system of repression and lying and the ways in which people have to live in society under the present system in Germany. She told me of many people who had been hardened in their souls and who had become [word crossed out and replaced with confused] inwardly and the

psychological difficulties resulting from having to wear "a mask" always and never being able to be your natural self; how such things as naturalness and spontaneity are very seldom to be found in Germany. The people with real fear complexes and neurosis had vastly increased during the past few years and are steadily increasing. A system which goes right down into the personal relationships and lives of people and which is based on fear, is bound to have serious results for any society.

I was introduced to her teacher, a [so-called] Aryan Psycho-therapist, who is also very interested in Quakerism. We discussed the persecutions of the Jews and the nature and foundation for anti-semitism which is to be found almost everywhere, but which has come to a definite head in Germany. What meaning has all this in history? We discussed our various experiences amongst the Jews, some of mine which had turned out already to be very disappointing and some of which were very fine and helpful. I realised from this expert in these matters that we should not treat the Jews either from or in Germany in the present day as normal people, they have suffered too much for that, nearly six years of mental and physical persecution is too much for the mental capacity of all except those who have a firm belief in God. The psychological implications of this are too great to be gone into here but they affect us all. I believe that the Jews with whom we come into contact have either a message for us and for humanity as a result of all that they have gone through, or they are looking for a message for themselves from us.

This Jewish friend was only the second Jewish sufferer who I had met who did not begin by telling me all that she had suffered. In spite of her own difficulties, she was first and foremost interested and concerned for the moral and spiritual implications of the present difficulties of the persecutor and the persecuted. It was only with great difficulty and after I had won her friendship and confidence

that I learned her present position. She had no money, couldn't get a job and though she is still actually a Czech subject until April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1939 under the Treaty of Versailles, she had lived all her life in Germany and couldn't speak Czech. She had suffered just like all the other "half-Aryans" which was often worse than full Jews because they do not fully belong to either side. It was a great tonic to meet such a person and she was really the first and only Jew whom I felt it would be of service to the future of our Society to help.

I visited other families and other Jews until Christmas I had had the intention to be home for Christmas, but as I received an invitation to stay with the non-Quaker friends, whom I had met previously in Kassel, I decided to stay. As the time drew near to Christmas I found that it was going to be very hard to leave S<sup>44</sup> just at Christmas time, as I received an invitation from a Quaker family to stay for Christmas. It was very much a question of loyalties, but when I realised how much these Friends needed me, how much it meant to them, I decided that it would not be right to leave these Quakers and to put my own private feelings before loyalty to a larger community. And so I stayed in S.

The weather was beautiful: ideal Christmas weather. I spent Christmas Eve with the Oechslns in Ludwigsburg and experienced my first German Christmas. It was a very religious occasion, not like our usually jolly sort of Christmas. Perhaps the sadness and deep feeling of the need for God's love to come down into the world again as it had done two thousand years ago, reflected the stain and suffering of the year which lay behind.

The snow lay thick everywhere and Weihnachts Stimmung hung in the air. I began the evening by singing English Carols on the doorstep on my arrival.

Before entering the room, the young people each took a spray of fir-tree with a burning candle on it and took our seats still holding it in our hands. The room was lit only by candles

and in one corner stood a tall Christmas tree decorated only in white, white candles and silver balls and tinsel. The Mother of the family read the nativity story from Matthew[<sup>s</sup> Gospel] and afterwards a prayer and then we had a period of silence. I felt that Christmas had a very special significance for Germany and everybody present felt so too. We sang German Christmas Carols for some time and then each of us were shown to our own little table where our presents were laid and with great excitement parcels and packets were undone. From 11.30 to 1.30 we listened-in to Bach's Christmas Oratorio. Perhaps just the fact that I was a Quaker helped and comforted those whose knowledge and vision of Quakerism had brought them was causing them so many inner conflicts and difficulties.

Christmas Day was spent in Stuttgart with the Nageles and Boxing Day again in L, when we were able to skate and ski.

After visiting other people and saying goodbye to the friends I had made, I prepared to leave S. I wished that I had been freer to do more visiting, if I had been on my own and not tied to any one family, I should have been able to do so and to have offered friendship and comfort to more people.

It was very difficult to be really going away from Stuttgart and my friends there after having been there for so long. It meant a great deal both to myself and to those who I left behind, in the words of Hans Carossa, we all felt: - "Was einer ist, was einer war, / Beim Scheiden wird es offenbar."

#### n. Visit to Mannheim

Two days spent with E.H.<sup>45</sup> in Mannheim were a very happy and helpful time for me. Through their connection with Jews and the help and friendship which they offered to them, they understood much of their sufferings and were able to discuss and compare [word crossed out and replaced with experiences]. We visited a family of Jews. Again in the

atmosphere of strain. The man had been in a concentration camp and I was told that he was one of those whose experiences had made him a better and finer man with a new purpose in life. He was a Liberal Jew and on the Committee of the Local Jewish Community. I admired him very much for having remained so loyal to his religion and for working so hard for the Jewish Community in spite of the setbacks the Community had suffered by way of loss of money and men. He told me terrible stories of what had gone on during the destruction of the Synagogue in Mannheim.

The Hs are very fine people who are helping the Jews with friendship and advice in spite of the great danger to themselves and to their livelihood, unlike other Quakers whom I have met. I was able to do a service for them, which though it scarcely cause me any difficulty, would and will be of immense value to one Jewish family.<sup>46</sup>

o. New Year in K<sup>47</sup>

I passed New Year and two weeks afterwards in K[assel] with the same family with whom I had stayed in August. It was a very interesting experience to be with Germans of that type. The gentleman is a lawyer for the town of Kassel and a good supporter of Hitler and his policy especially towards the Jews. I learned a great deal about the secondary schools from the two sons and had many opportunities of discussing politics and pacifism with the boys. It was amazing to see how well they were able to discuss these things in spite of their ages, 15 and 17 respectively. They had a fair amount of intelligent criticism to level against the Nazis. This was strongly disapproved of by the father, who really represented the Old German Nationalistic Military type who put their trust in military power alone to achieve political ends. We had many discussions about colonies and democracy. I found myself up against a very clever and learned opponent!

I visited a Military Barracks during my stay here under the name of "Brockhaus," otherwise of course as foreigner I would not have been allowed to enter in[side] this "Kaserne" I discussed the futility of war and [word crossed out] intense nationalism with one of the soldiers and we wondered what the authorities would think of such "Hochverat"!

I must not leave K without mentioning the Quakers there. There is one Friend A.F.<sup>48</sup> [a teacher dismissed by the Nazis] who is doing a very great service by helping [word crossed out] Jews in a practical way and what is far greater and just as urgent, by spiritual help. I was very much impressed by the work he is doing and would like to pay tribute to it here. It was sincere, [word crossed out] with the foremost aim to help people spiritually and to spread the Quaker Message of fellowship and of [the] brotherhood of all men.

H.O.<sup>49</sup> is also a very dear Friend, has many difficulties and get[s] depressed as a result of his present position.

I would like to stress how much the knowledge of the help and support by friendship of the English Friends [Quakers], means to the German Friends. When they send us Greetings it is not just a formality [word crossed out and replaced with for] them, but a living reality of fellowship, without which I doubt if many could carry on. It brought home to me the necessity of being sincere about Quakerism and of not letting it just become sentimental; two words crossed out] trying to be as loyal to our belief as the German Friends are trying to be to theirs. My last words to H.O. were to tell him "We always think about you in England and assure you of our Friendship always."

p. Return home.

On my return home, via Hook-v-H and Harwich, I called to see Jewish Friends of mine in Wuppertal Elberfeld and ate my last meal in Germany in a Jewish Resterant [sic]. And also



Frau J.<sup>50</sup> who was preparing to come to England whose courage in leaving her Aryan husband behind, I shall always admire. She is a very fine Jewess who sees her task in trying to help and to understand the disruptions of the present day.

When by chance on the train through Holland I met a Dutch lady smuggling jewels and many other valuable things to the value of thousands of Marks out of Germany, and when I considered what I too was [word crossed out and replaced with taking] with me, it all seemed like some strange dream in an unfamiliar world. I can still hear the woman's voice saying "Well, I know it isn't honest from the German Government's point of view, but somebody has to get to try and help these people and to make up for "man's inhumanity to man!" It was amazing how she got through [German] Customs with her cases, but she did it! Mostly by sheer bluff.

It was interesting to see how the whole atmosphere in the train changed as soon as we were over the German frontier – the German business men who were in the same carriage began to talk quite freely to us.

The Channel crossing was a very bad one, the little steamer was full of Jewish Refugees – everyone was sick for about seven hours and I remarked to one of the Jewesses in my cabin that it is remarkable what we have to go through to reach England! It meant much more for them than it did for me: it meant facing life anew in a foreign land but in a land where there would be at least a respite and freedom from the oppression and terror of the past six years.

As we neared the English coast, I was wondering what England would be like after ten months [of] absence in which time the geography of Europe had been changed and Europe had passed through the most dangerous crisis since the Great War and had experienced persecutions and the drawing to a close amidst air-raids and more refugees of the Spanish International War – not to mention the

war in the East.

I thought also of the people who were all around me, and of the many thousands like them, who had in the past few months, been in the same position as I – nearing England! How many wistful eyes and aching hearts had turned towards England for their future. I know how many had thought of England as a "demi-paradise" as the land of protection, shelter and freedom – and even I, looking on my experiences of the last ten months felt something of the relief it would be to be back on English soil – but I had a home to go, where love and a place in life awaited me, they had an Unknown before them which would need every ounce of courage and faith which they might have left.

I was very happy to be back again. The Customs Officials thought I was a refugee too until they saw my passport and then I felt that there is an advantage in being "British." They all asked me what it was like over there [word crossed out]. I replied "Well, it's not so bad as I suppose you all [over here] think it is, and in general not such a barbarous land as you can imagine." They were very surprised!

It seemed a curious thing to be still speaking German right until Liverpool Street Station and then to wave goodbye "Aufwiedersehen" to the refugees whom I had got to know on the journey home. Some were going straight to jobs. It did seem strange and cold that there was nobody there to give them a welcome or to make them feel at home in England!

How dull England looked without all the smart uniforms and Swastika flags, but how nice and ordinary, homely and democratically jumbled with the big pennies, smoking chimneys and Cockney dialect!

-----

I shall never know the fullness of what my visit to Germany will mean to me, I found so much of myself there, so much of God, so much that spurs me on to build my own personality, to seek and to know God, in

consequence perhaps to be made thereby more capable of being of true service to mankind.

Many experiences there opened to me a reality of what I had previously only anticipated as meaning life, truth, beauty and personality. I am therefore, extremely grateful to my parents, Gerald K. Hibbert [of Woodbrooke] and the Travel Bursary Committee who made these wonderful experiences which are only the beginning possible and to the German Friends and friends whose friendship and generosity gave me these experiences.

In seeking for and in finding some measure, the best part of any land, namely the finest people and the spirit which gives them life and inspiration, and then seeing and knowing the present system in Germany, I feel with Hans Carossa, “The world looks at this people with faith and trust in spite of all, and believe that only the shell is broken, not the kernel, the kernel of the kernel which is depicted in the Poets and Dreamers, the Creators and Singers. Do not let us believe that God sent such a spiritual power into the world for only one generation to build on. Our world is much too poor not to turn backone day to this spirit.”

“We recognise each other, coming and going, of the order of those to whom all the land and seas of the world would not be sufficient, if the kingdom of the mind and heart remained unconquered.” Hans Carossa, 1938.<sup>51</sup>

Kathleen M. Brookhouse,  
“Brecklee”,  
Castle Bank,  
Stafford,  
12.2.39

#### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Kathleen Hertzberg, “Doing the Work: Finding the Meaning,” Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture 2002, Canadian Quaker Pamphlet Series #56 (Argenta, BC: Argenta Friends Press, 2002), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Kathleen Hertzberg, 23 February 2010, Richmond Hill, Ontario.

<sup>3</sup> Hertzberg, “Doing the Work,” 18.

<sup>4</sup> Most of the biographical details of Kathleen’s life in this introduction are taken from her 2002 Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture, “Doing the Work: Finding the Meaning.” Her reminiscences there were rounded out by an interview with her in February 2010.

<sup>5</sup> Hertzberg, “Doing the Work,” 11. The quote is from Thomas Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1943), 29 – 30.

<sup>6</sup> Hans A. Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis: Inner Light in Outer Darkness* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1997), 13.

<sup>7</sup> “The Nobel Peace Prize 1947: Friends Service Council, American Friends Service Committee,” [http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/1947/friends-council.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1947/friends-council.html), (accessed 20 June 2010).

<sup>8</sup> Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis*, 13 – 17; Henning Miekke, “Quakers in Germany during and after World Wars,” *Friends Journal* (April 2010): 18 – 19.

<sup>9</sup> Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis*, 16.

<sup>10</sup> Hertzberg, “Doing the Work,” 11; Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis*, 32 - 74. A number of Friends were arrested and imprisoned for their efforts in assisting persecuted Jews, Roma, and others whom the Nazis designated as “sub-human.” Foreign Quakers who were arrested and interrogated for their activities included: Corder Catchpool, Gilbert Macmaster, Elizabeth Fox Howard, and William Hughes. German Friends were also arrested and interrogated for their relief and refugee work. Leonhard Friedrich, who along with his wife, was warden of Quakerhouse in Bad Pyrmont spent over two years in Buchenwald for his part in Nazi resistance. See Brenda Bailey, *A Quaker Couple in Nazi Germany: Leonhard Freidrich Survives Buchenwald* (York, UK: William Sessions Ltd., 1994).

<sup>11</sup> Hertzberg, “Doing the Work,” 12.

<sup>12</sup> Interview, 23 February 2010.

<sup>13</sup> Interview, 23 February 2010.

<sup>14</sup> The story of Fritz’s imprisonment by Soviets is recounted in Friedrich Schmitz-Hertzberg, *The Night is Full of Stars: An account by a German physician as a prisoner of war in the Soviet Union, 1945 – 1949* (York, England: William Sessions Limited, 2009).

<sup>15</sup> Interview, 23 February 2010.

<sup>16</sup> Schmitz-Hertzberg, *The Night is Full of Stars*, 7.

<sup>17</sup> Roger Carter to Bertha Bracey, 3 October 1938, quoted in Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis*, 170.

<sup>18</sup> Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis*, 172.

<sup>19</sup> Roger Carter to Hans Schmitt, 27 June 1995, quoted in Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis*, 171.

<sup>20</sup> Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis*, 173.

<sup>21</sup> Hertzberg, “Doing the Work,” 39.

<sup>22</sup> Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis*, 173.

<sup>23</sup> To maintain the flavour of the original report, this transcription adheres to the report’s original style, spelling, and grammar. Kathleen Hertzberg typed two copies of her report in 1939. In the second copy she made corrections to the first copy and did some minor

editing. These changes have been incorporated into this transcription. Any changes or additions to the original report, made by Kathleen Hertzberg herself at some point after the original two copies of the report, are noted in square brackets within the text itself. These changes were made at different times much after the original report. Additions or clarifications to the report, provided by Kathleen Hertzberg or others and done for the purpose of this transcription, are included in footnotes.

<sup>24</sup> Ruth Oechslin.

<sup>25</sup> Herr Nagele.

<sup>26</sup> Frau Nagele.

<sup>27</sup> Urbach.

<sup>28</sup> Grete Sumpf.

<sup>29</sup> Leonora Bernitz.

<sup>30</sup> Emil Fuchs.

<sup>31</sup> Heinrich Otto.

<sup>32</sup> Kassel.

<sup>33</sup> This is Fritz Hertzberg.

<sup>34</sup> This is Fritz’s family Schmitz-Hertzberg that Kathleen is describing.

<sup>35</sup> Giesslers.

<sup>36</sup> This paragraph is in one of the two original reports typed by Kathleen, but not both: “During this period at any rate, I should say that the majority of Germans had a fatalistic attitude towards the whole situation: Hitler would either get what he wanted, or the matter would be settled by force. Their only hope was that England would remain neutral so that the annexation could go off without war.”

<sup>37</sup> Schwarza

<sup>38</sup> Schwarza

<sup>39</sup> Herr Zeppler

<sup>40</sup> This note is in the original text: See Hans Carossa’s “Goethe Rede 1938,” “Wirkungen Goethes in der Gegenwart,” Hans Grimm – “Wie ich den Englanedersche,” Karl Kaltwasser – “Vom tatigen Wort,” Introduction by Dr. P. Hankamer to “Verpflichtendes Erbe”

<sup>41</sup> This was with Fritz together as he was studying in Munich.

<sup>42</sup> Ruth Oechslin

<sup>43</sup> Marbach

<sup>44</sup> Johannes Lehmann

<sup>45</sup> Stuttgart

<sup>46</sup> Eva Hermann

<sup>47</sup> Kathleen’s daughter, Eve, comments here that “perhaps this is where Kathleen agreed to smuggle out some diamonds in her clothing.”

<sup>48</sup> Kassel

<sup>49</sup> August Fricke

<sup>50</sup> Heinrich Otto

<sup>51</sup> Frau Jordan

<sup>52</sup> “Hans Carossa was a German physician/novelist who was interested in a philosophy he called ‘inner emigration.’ It was a method of being objective about one’s experience of the world. He was awarded the

Goethe Prize for literature in 1938. Therefore, at the time of writing this report he was in the public’s consciousness.”