

# **Werner Wilhelm**

**His life in story and picture**

**1928-1993**

**Part 1**

Martha Brehmer Klodmann told her husband, Dr. med Werner Wilhelm, that it was time to call the midwife as she now knew she was definitely in labor. Dr. Wilhelm was not too enthusiastic about Martha having a midwife instead of an obstetrician, especially considering that he was the general practitioner for over a 20 mile radius, and what would his patients think of his wife not utilizing a physician. But Martha was more comfortable using the old fashioned midwife. Dr. Wilhelm then notified his and her relatives that the baby was now on its way into the world, and shortly thereafter there was a gathering in the first floor parlor of the grandparents, aunts and uncles of the child to be. I assume you want a boy, Doctor, but what does Martha want, a boy or a girl? No, actually I want a little girl, was the doctor's reply, and so does my wife.



Werner Wilhelm II in 1928

“Do you have a name picked out yet?” asked the grandparents. “Yes, if it is a little girl, her name will be Rosemarie”, Doctor Wilhelm replied, “after my mother”. In fact, we are so sure it will be a little girl that we have decorated her bassinet with a fabric of pink roses.



Werner Wilhelm I & II



Werner Wilhelm II – January, 1928



Martha & Werner Wilhelm



Werner Wilhelm II

But if it is a boy, his name will be Richard Friedrich August Werner Wilhelm. Richard for his grandfather, Richard Brehmer, Friedrich for his great grandfather, Friedrich Brehmer, August after my father and grandfather, August Wilhelm I & II, and Werner after me. We will call him Werner. Werner is also a family name on Martha's side; her grandmother's maiden name was Wilhelmina Werner. Wilhelmina died at the age of 48 in 1898 of stomach cancer and is buried in Roldisleben. That is the main reason that the Brehmer family sold the family Rittergut in Casekirchen and moved to Altraden near

Posen. The Werner family, who owned the tavern, the Weisse Rossl (The White Horse Inn), felt very bad to see them leave Germany and move to what is now known as Poland. This was the second move in a very short period of time as the Brehmer family lived on a Rittergut in Roldisleben when they got married, and shortly thereafter sold the Rittergut and moved to Casekirchen near Camburg, where Martha and her brother Otto were born.



Martha, Werner, Lydia, Otto & Richard Brehmer Weisserossl – Werner Family Lydia, Richard, Martha, Otto, Herman, & Friedrich Brehmer

Richard and Lydia Eschenbach Brehmer enjoyed living in Casekirchen with Richard's father Friedrich and Richard's brother Herman, but like the old wild west in America, the vast territory of West Prussia beckoned to them and they could not resist buying much



Casekirchen, birthplace of Martha Brehmer



Altraden in West Prussia



Altraden in West Prussia

more territory for the money, especially when it contained several small lakes and a fairy tale huge mansion of very modern dimensions. So they moved to Altraden and remained there from 1898 to about 1906 when they returned to Naumburg, then to Rittergut Lehnstedt, about 5 miles from Grossobringen, where they were now sitting in the front parlor with the Wilhelm family awaiting the birth of Martha and Dr. Werner Wilhelm's first child. Werner took his fat sweet old time arriving, as was usual his entire lifetime, so the family had a long wait. Shortly after midnight, sometime around 1 am in the morning, Werner made his grand entrance, and shortly after the family heard his stout wail, they all tramped upstairs to get their first look at the newborn child. They all remarked on his beautiful light sky blue eyes, his white hair and his broad forehead. They also noticed the look of intelligence in his eyes (never dreaming that he was to become an \$8 Million dollar baby by life's end). They all then went downstairs again, leaving Martha and the baby alone with the midwife, and assembled once again in the main parlor for tea. They all got to talking, and in the course of the conversation the question came up, was it a boy or a girl? Half insisted it was a girl, the other half said no, it was a boy. No one knew for sure, so they all trudged back upstairs, pulled up the night-gown and pulled down the diaper, and said, "ah, it's a boy!" The family then dispersed back to their homes, to meet again in a few weeks for the Christening.

Werner's Christening took place a few weeks after his birth. His parents bought an expensive crystal bowl for the holy water to be placed into and all of his grandparents,



Kurt, Dr. Werner, Martha, August, Rosa, Martha, & Eberhard Wilhelm & Irmgard

aunts and uncles were there for the event. Because they were the most prominent family in the village, the minister came to their home and the christening took place in the main parlor downstairs, in a room that was later to be used for a few years by Dr. Wilhelm for his practice.

One look at Dr. Wilhelm's face and you can see how proud he was of his new born son! It is such a shame that this pride and contentment that the father had for the son could not have continued on throughout their lives. It seems that this was the last time that the father was completely content with his son, and that forevermore after this time the father was continually measuring up and finding that his son fell short of his expectations. I'm sure that the father would have been much more in awe of his only son would he have known that he was holding an \$8 Million baby in his arms!

Among those present at Werner's Christening was Uncle Kurt Wilhelm, brother of Dr. Werner Wilhelm. Uncle Kurt owned a drugstore in Derenburg am Harz, near Wernigerode. Kurt was a pharmacist, having been put through the pharmacy curriculum by his brother Werner. Dr. Werner paid for all of Kurt's tuition and whenever Kurt got bad grades, his brother Werner beat him so hard that Kurt studied twice as hard as it was too painful to flunk and face his brother's wrath. Kurt was a very friendly, fun loving sort of guy, and back in Derenburg his pharmacy was the town meeting place. Kurt disseminated all of the latest news, jokes and gossip to all who happened by.



Martha, Dr Werner I & Werner II



Wilhelm Villa in Grossobringen built in 1928, Dr Wilhelm in front

The home Werner was born in was barely ready in time for his birth. At the time of their wedding, Werner and Martha were living in a home down on a side street in Grossobringen. Richard Brehmer, Martha's father, expended the money in order to build the Villa in Grossobringen where Werner was born. Werner's grandfather August Wilhelm, a Steinmetzmeister (master stone cutter who made statues out of stone and who was a real artist), carved the corner stone for the Villa, which was set over the main entrance door. The 5 acres of property on which this house sits was purchased on the 5th of January, 1925, the day Martha and Dr. Werner were married in the Herter Kirche in Weimar, a large impressive gray stone church with a very tall steeple which has blackened with age over the centuries. It took the family almost 3 years to complete this Villa, and Martha was very pregnant when they finally settled into their impressive new mansion. Martha's happiness in this gorgeous new mansion was to be very short lived.

Werner had a very classy bassinet, tall with pink rose colored cloth covering the head. This bassinet was purchased with a girl child in mind so Werner always thought it was a bit sissified for a boy.



?, Werner II, Martha & Dr. Werner Wilhelm

Werner also had a high class very impressive perambulator. It can be seen in the picture of his parents and relatives at the side of the Villa in winter.

Werner was on his feet and walking before his first birthday. (He probably did more walking that year than he did in all the years I knew him. From the time I met him he hated walking and did everything in his power to curtail walking as much as possible. He used to drive over sidewalks, jam his car against buildings, have me drive him right to the front door, etc. just to avoid walking a few steps. He used to at times get his car totally enmired in a ditch, mud, etc. trying to get just a little closer to where he was going. But it was probably because he had a bad heart and tired quite easily.) Mutti said he was always a bit on the lazy side, but again they knew his heart was bad since he was 5 years old. Anyway, he had a good bit of wear on the bottom of his first pair of walking shoes when he had his first birthday picture taken with his mom and dad in the entrance way of their home in Grossobringen. (And no, they were not sandals, they were regular shoes.) Even back then they probably had a very hard time fitting him for a pair of shoes because all of his life he was hopelessly flat footed. His foot imprint looked like a bear paw. And 5E was too narrow for his foot. When I met him he was jamming his 10EEEEEE foot into a 9 M shoe, so no wonder he was totally turned off over wearing shoes. I found it almost impossible to find a shoe that would comfortably fit his humongous foot. Part of the wideness was due to water retention in his feet and ankles but most of it was due to his very large bones and bone structure. His entire bone structure from head to foot was very, very large. When the dietitian measured his wrist in the dialysis center at the end of his days to determine his bone structure, he laughed and asked her didn't she have a pair of eyes in her head, it was so obvious what a massive bone structure he had.

His hands were always like Bear paws too. One look at his baby pictures and you can see that this was the case with both him and his father. The large bone structure can from both the Wilhelms on his father's side and Uncle Hugo Eschenbach on his mother's side.



Lisa, ?, Hugo Eschenbach, Martha Brehmer, Margarete, Toska Eschenbach, Otto, Christa, Henny & Richard Brehmer

His forehead was very broad, just like Uncle Hugo Eschenbach's and the intelligence was very obvious just from looking into the eyes of that small infant. Later in life his eyes were very expressive and you could guess his frame of mind by taking a gander at his

eyes. You could just read the happiness, anger, rage, skepticism, disgust, playfulness, pensiveness, calculation, etc. by just glancing into his eyes.



Werner Wilhelm II



Werner Wilhelm in Sudbury

He always thought of himself as heavy, but in looking at many of the pictures taken of him before he was 40, he was of normal build and sometimes even somewhat on the thin side. But due to his heavy bone structure he, his family and acquaintances never thought of him as being anything but large. Being on the short side also contributed to him looking broader than he really was. At full stature he was only 5' 7" tall, and when he was standing on the porch next to Dinora I smilingly noticed that he was standing on his tippy toes. He also said he tried out a pair of elevator shoes in this time period also, but found them to be more bother than they were worth.

Werner said there was also a period of his life where Mutti decided that his ears stuck out too much, so she taped them down to his head! Werner felt that it worked for in his later years his ears did not stick out at all.

His nose was patrician. Astrid always admired his fine nose, saying he got it from his mother's side of the family. She also kiddingly told him that it was an indication of Jewish ancestry, something that could get you in a lot of trouble during the Nazi years.

His upper lip was quite thin, and the lower lip normal. When I first met him he pronounced a number of English words with a sort of a lisp. His most difficult word was "three", he pronounced it "sree". He also had some problems with pronouncing an "r", as most Germans do. His pronunciation improved over the years I knew him, but to the day he died he spoke with a heavy German accent, but his English was perfect, although sometimes when writing a letter his sentence structure bore a resemblance to German. His spelling in German and English was impeccable. I had to come all the way over the ocean to tell you how to spell in English, he would bellow at his secretary when she fractured the English language. You should be ashamed of yourself, he would holler. He did have 8 years of English in high school in Germany, and was able to speak correct English when he came over here, but he did not feel too comfortable in speaking the language until he had a couple of years application in Canada.

His neck was always as thick as a bull's, again inheriting that trait from the Wilhelms. You could almost say that he had no neck it was so thick and short. If he closed his collar, the shirt would be partially sitting over his face on the sides, especially if it was a more expensive shirt and had a deeper collar.



Amtsrat Hugo Eschenbach

His legs were always a bit on the short side, just like Uncle Hugo. He had most of his height in his torso, not his legs. I used to like to tease him now and again about his short legs, and he would get very perturbed, then tell me look who's talking. One time we were going to a unit owners meeting (AUO) in Pelican Bay and he found out they were having a formal banquet and all he had with him were shorts, which even he conceded, were not appropriate for the occasion. And God forbid that he go out and buy a pair of pants. He wasn't that desperate to look good! So he looked over my wardrobe and found himself a stretchy pair of light blue dress pants with a false fly in the front that might pass for a man's pair if you didn't look too close. Da, ya! give me those, he said to me. I'll try those. They stretched to the limit, but other than being real tight in the belly, they fit. They fit to a tee in the length, which made me chuckle to myself, as I am quite short. But I didn't ruin his evening by saying anything out loud. He pulled a decent looking shirt over the pants and looked quite presentable, all things considered. It wasn't a suit like the other guys were wearing, but it wasn't shorts and sandals either.



Werner Wilhelm II

He always had a barrel chest, also something he inherited from the Wilhelms. He had this barrel chest due to the bad heart, which kept enlarging over the years and his chest cavity kept enlarging to accommodate the increasing size. Toward the end of his life he actually had a bump and two broken ribs where the chest actually pushed outwards due to the greatly enlarged heart.

Werner had a normal abdomen until he got into his late 30's when it gradually began enlarging, and at the time I met him was at its maximum size, which was quite protuberant, he now weighing in at 290 lbs. Werner loved to use his abdomen to push people around with when the going got tough. He used to give them a verbal warning to get going, and when they did not move, he would throw his shoulders straight and very far back, stick his abdomen as far out as it would go, hang his arms toward the back of

his body and straight down, and then start walking right into the person, with only his abdomen touching them. The person was not able to hold his position when Werner walked into him, as Werner was very strong, so the person would end up hopping on one or both feet sideways or backwards until Werner was done pushing him as far as he wanted the guy to go.



Werner Wilhelm II

Werner's arms and legs were as solid as tree trunks, and about as large, mostly due to the massive bone structure, and later in life, due to the excess weight he carried. He had real cute stocky knees which were always sticking out of his shorts in his later years. In later years in his shorts and sandals, he was an adorable sight, like a warm, friendly, cuddly teddy bear.



Werner in his sandals

His feet were adorable as they stuck out of his sandals, or just bare. The night I came home to his bedroom and found him dead on the floor, the first thing I saw were his adorable feet, and it warmed my heart until I took it in that he had fallen on the floor and was in some kind of distress or peril. Even in death, those feet were so cute you had to smile when you saw them, even while taking in the grief and total shock of the situation at hand. His feet were swollen all the years I knew him due to his bad heart and the fluid accumulation from this condition. The problem was static for about the first 12 years, but then the fluid started increasing until at the end his feet were swollen like footballs, and I would apply pressure to them as he was lying down to try to get some of the water out of them as they looked so shiny, tight and painful. His toes were purple from being strangulated due to excess water cutting off what circulation was left in them. After dialysis started, his feet became totally flat, you could see every bone and vein in them, they were pink again, and he could wear 10 E shoes.



Werner Wilhelm II

But the most impressive part of Werner was his brain. He was brilliant beyond measure, from birth to death. He attained a Master's Degree in Physics, but the major part of his brilliance was not in academic attainments, it was in acquiring and handling finances. He had an instinctive knowledge for what would be a good investment, and in the last few years I told him he must have a very astute financial manager for a guardian angel, for very few of his investments ever went sour on him. He said he was poor in languages, and you could forget the social sciences (in fact the teachers labeled Werner as "asocial", a very bad thing to be under Hitler). But in figures Werner was absolutely without equal. Even as a small child, not yet even 5 years old, he would stack and count his money, putting each kind of coin in a stack by itself, tallying each stack, and then the aggregate total, would write it down on paper, then put the money back in the bank and save it up. He kept records to ascertain whether he was gaining or losing financially. His parents gave him a few exotic rabbits for pets and had the maintenance man build a rabbit cage for them. Once Werner found out the rabbits were profitable, they became a business venture rather than a past time. He would buy two of every species and then put the male and female together in one cage. He would sit there fascinated, watching the male and female go at it, and was delighted at how often they produced offspring. Soon the maintenance man was ever again enlarging his cages as the number of rabbits was increasing by a binomial progression. Werner, only 6 years old at most, was delighted. He subscribed to a rabbit raising magazine and was soon shipping his excess rabbits all over Germany at a good profit, and acquiring ever new ones for his stock. At the height of his rabbit raising career, he had 89 rabbits. The hired help was not so enthusiastic about Werner's rabbit raising project, however, as they had the job of cleaning the cages. (Sort of like a lot of my life with Werner. He started and completed grandiose projects, and I came along behind him and cleaned up the sh\$%.)

For every venture Werner would enter into, there were at least 10 that he almost bought but backed off at the last moment. For every venture that he backed away from he always tracked it to see if he would have made money from it if he had purchased it. He was quite pleased with himself, telling me that almost without exception if he would have completed those other ventures he would have done well with them financially.

Werner's mathematical ability was beyond belief. When I first met him, one of the things that hooked me on him for good was his ability to add 5 columns of figures all at once in his head, coming up with an accurate total at the bottom. He would hold the pen or pencil in his hand, stick his tongue out the side of his mouth and then add almost under his breath in German, and in almost no time, write down the correct figure. Once he

added all 5 columns simultaneously, not starting from right to left as the rest of us do, and then he wrote down the figure, popped out of his chair and went to the bathroom. While he was gone, I added up the same columns on the adding machine, and he was right to the penny!

Werner always did his math in his head, and he would get so aggravated at people who couldn't do the same thing. What's 13 times 11? was the question you were always asked in an employment interview. If you couldn't get the answer, or close to it, in your head, forget getting the job. Good mathematical ability was the sign of an organized mind, Werner always said. His colleagues always said that Werner's brain was a computer, he could do so much with it mathematically speaking. There wasn't any set of figures, no matter how complicated, that Werner could not run up and get a precise answer to, in his brain. In the last days of his life Werner discovered that he no longer had this ability. It shocked him right to his toes. He was still smarter than 98% of the population in what he could still do with his brain, but his unique gift had abandoned him due to uremic poisoning. But he contented himself with his present state of intelligence, saying that he was very surprised that he still kept his mental abilities through such a high level of uremic poisoning, with a BUN of 256 and a creatinine of 11.

Another of Werner's unique God given gifts was his strength of will. He had an unbelievably powerful will. When he was determined to do or get something, there was no stopping him, come hell or high water. If he wanted it, he plowed in and forged on until he got it. I also have a very strong will at times, but next to Werner, I was nothing. There was no contest. What Werner wanted, Werner got. Plain and simple. The statement I hear so often after his death is "How could you have ever let him talk you into doing that?" The answer is plain and simple. All of us who buckled under to his will would have to say, "You would have to know him and have dealt with him to understand the situation."

One of Werner's non talents was the musical field. His parents sent him to music lessons with several different teachers with disastrous results. The teachers were highly upset over how their nervous systems were assaulted by Werner's total lack of musical ability. There was no way that that boy was going to learn anything about music, let alone learn how to play it, was the general consensus. And singing? oh, boy! I thought my singing was bad, but next to him, I sounded good. But in church services at the end of his life, what he lacked in musical ability, he made up for in enthusiasm. In school in music classes they put him in the very back of the room with the rest of the hopeless cases and told him he belonged to the hummers. All he was expected to do in singing class was to softly hum with the rest of the hopeless cases so as to not ruin the joyful sound being created by the rest of the more talented members of the singing class.



Werner Wilhelm II at his lab at General Motors

He was very good in the sciences, although not to the degree he was in math. He worked and went to school too in America and earned a Master of Science degree from Wayne State University, and worked with highly technical physics and chemistry projects for over 11 years with Ford and General Motors in Detroit. He was a Senior Scientist at the GM Tech Center in Warren, Michigan for over 7 years. His main work was with nuclear ray instrumentation, mainly using this method to find out why materials failed in time. The one project that they were never able to find a solution for was why chrome bumpers rust and pit. They studied that problem for years and years and never did find a solution to that problem. In the GM Tech Center Werner learned how to write a technical report. Never admit failure, GM told Werner. Walk all around the problem, use a lot of obscure language and double talk, but never address a failure head on. Never admit it is a failure and talk the problem away.

He had an abundance of common sense and street smarts, which he used liberally to build his economic empire over the years. He was also a street fighter and could handle himself well in a pugilistic situation. He used to get into fist fights with some pretty tough characters at 1919 Wyoming when they wanted to rent a room for only one hour and he wouldn't do it. He ended up getting his glasses busted a number of times. He also fought with the East German Gestapo and came out on top, hitting one guy in the Adam's Apple and knocking all the wind out of him, and knocking the other guy right over the stair rail. Another time he woke up to find two strange men in his bedroom and he decked both of them with the same tactics he had used on the German police many years before. (A humorous aside to the break in story. Werner woke up in the middle of the night and found two strange men in his bedroom approaching him. As stated above, he sprung at them, hitting them in the Adam's apple and face, flew out of bed, out of his apartment and down Michigan Ave to a pay phone to call the police. This is where the dilemma occurred – you needed a dime to place a call at a pay phone and being Werner slept in the nude, he didn't have any pockets in his birthday suit!) Anyway a passer by gave him a dime, he called the police, they captured the guys but the judge let them go when the guys told the judge that they simply wanted to ask Werner if he had any vacant apartments. Werner said all the judges except one in Dearborn were crooked. The one honest one was Judge Guy. Werner had a lot of respect for him especially when Werner saw Judge Guy take on the in crowd of politicians in one case before him. Werner sat there in Judge Guy's courtroom one day and watched the city charge a man with moving heavy machinery across town without a permit. The Judge asked the fellow why he didn't get a permit before moving the machinery. "I tried to your honor, the man said, but they wouldn't give me one. They only give moving permits to their political

buddies". Did this man apply for a permit, the judge asked the city? Yes, the city replied. Case dismissed, bellowed Judge Guy. As long as I am sitting on this bench this will continue to be a free country.



grade school building in Grossobringen where Werner attended for the 1<sup>st</sup> 3 years.

When Werner worked at Ford and GM, he used every bit of knowledge he had acquired in graduate school, but when he quit there and bought and ran St. Anne's and then later Wil Mar, he said that the only education he needed to run a nursing home was what he had learned in the village school in Grossobringen. Nursing home management is like managing a large family, you are the father or the mother and what is needed to run the place well is an abundance of common sense, which Werner had.



Werner Wilhelm II

What attribute got Werner so far in life besides what is listed above, you might ask? Guts. Plain and simple. Werner was not afraid to take chances and plow through where the rest of us would dare not tread. Some of his chance taking led to failure, but most of it led on to fortune. And don't think that when he liberally applied his guts and forged ahead while the rest of us stood back and gasped at his chance taking that he felt as cool as a cucumber, not by a long shot. He sweated these situations out just like the rest of us would, and that is one reason why his health failed him so early. He did literally grind his insides up from all the nerve tension and indecision. Nothing ground him up more in life than when he couldn't come to a decision. That would drive him crazy. No matter how serious the problem was or how fraught with danger, Werner felt so much better once he came to a decision as to how to handle it.

All of the above attributes Werner was born with. It was genetically encoded within him. He had no more choice over what he was about to become than the rest of us had. Within that little infant born on the 16th of January, 1928 dwelt the 8 million dollar man. Being a true Capricorn by birth and nature, he just had to climb those mountains till he reached the pinnacle of his success in life, even though he often had to take one step backwards for every 2 steps forward. And often just as he was within reach of something, some one would throw a rock on his front paws and cause him to lose the very thing he had striven so hard to attain. But he never cried over spilled milk, he just bellowed and cussed a lot

over what someone did to him, but the next day he was back on his feet and off and running toward some new goal in life. Just like his Eschenbach and Brehmer and Werner relatives before him. He was always a survivor and usually a winner. And if he didn't win, Lord help the guy who wrested the prize away from him. It was never too healthy for one to screw Wilhelm. You never would come out ahead in the end.



Martha Brehmer Wilhelm Klodmann

What set him back the worst in life? Without a doubt it was the loss of his beloved Mama to stomach cancer. That took all the wind out of his sails and depressed him to no end. His Mama was everything to him and without Mama the apartment buildings didn't go too well after her death. To the day he died he always talked about how much he loved and missed his Mama. From 1955 to December, 1965 when she had to return to Germany for removal of her cancerous stomach, she worked right along with him, side by side in his apartment buildings. She collected rents, talked to tenants, advised Werner of tenant and apartment problems. She kept the apartments in order, mopped the main hallway, and helped with rentals. She also kept the hired help happy by inviting them over for dinner and TV viewing. She always apprised Werner of who was a good worker and who was not worth keeping. Mama also kept a large lovely garden across the street from 1919 Wyoming. It reminded her of her younger days when her mother Lydia Brehmer also worked in the fields along side her husband Richard. Martha's garden abutted another woman's garden and the two women would happily work many an hour together in the warm summer sunshine. They were both so proud of their fine gardens. One day Martha sadly told Werner that her friend contracted cancer and had to end her gardening. Then the same year Martha also was greatly weakened by stomach cancer and her gardening days also came to an end.



Werner Wilhelm II



St. Anne's before the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor addition



Werner in front of St. Anne's

What was his biggest success in life? The purchase of St. Anne's, without a doubt. He always called it his crown jewel. He made most of his fortune on that project, and the day he sold it he was very depressed and upset indeed. He always admired that building every time he passed it. He thought it was a fine looking apartment building. So when he saw it go up for sale he contacted his attorney, George Armbruster Sr. and told him he

wanted to buy it. George told him it was not an apartment building, it was a nursing home. What's a nursing home, Werner asked him. George told him it was a place where invalid old people were taken care of in the end stages of their lives. Well, how many apartments are there in that building, Werner asked. No apartments, just beds, George replied. What do you mean, BEDS!!?? Werner asked. It was a very strange concept for Werner to imagine – no apartments, just big rooms with beds in them. But he decided to buy it. There were 4 other bidders on the nursing home so Werner gave the Real Estate Curren and Johnstone a \$200,000 deposit. George had apoplexy. You never give a real estate that kind of down payment to hold, if the deal doesn't go through the real estate might keep your money. But Werner, never a trusting soul, said that he personally knew that this real estate had a sterling reputation and he trusted them. He got the deal. The two owners, Dr and Mrs. Farnum needed to get out. Dr. Farnum dropped dead at the age of 52 on his desk in the facility. Mrs. Farnum had cancer. She trusted this clean cut looking young man. But not completely. He was not allowed to call it a nursing home in the closing papers, only a piece of real estate. She wanted to make sure she didn't get it back. She succumbed to cancer within a year afterwards.

Werner was scared to death the day he closed and took over. They told him he needed an Administrator's license. What is an Administrator, he asked George. The boss. Well then why don't they just call the boss a Manager, Werner asked? The day Werner took over and had to meet the staff he was so nervous that he who never touched liquor, drank a whole bottle of Drambuie before meeting his new staff. And when he gathered them all together he sat on the deceased Dr's desk, twirling the stethoscope that fell off the Dr's neck as he fell dead on his desk, and asked what the doctor died of. 'DON'T YOU KNOW!!' All the employees said at once – the nursing home killed him! What a way to start out a new venture! He almost sold St Anne's 3 weeks later. Lloyd Johnson, an astute and very respected nursing home owner, offered him a quick \$35,000 profit to take over the nursing home from Werner. Werner almost did it, then on second thought he figured if such an astute nursing home owner operator thinks it's a good enough deal to put another \$35,000 in then maybe I should keep it. That was the best decision Werner ever made. It was his Crown Jewel. A real money maker. Especially after Werner was his own contractor and added a 3<sup>rd</sup> floor with 36 more beds to the facility.



Martha Brehmer Wilhelm



Werner Wilhelm I & II



Werner by the Villa



Werner, middle at the Villa

When Werner was only 1 year old, Dr. Werner decided to go to the University of Jena for advanced studies, and he decided to live in the student center there to save commuting time. Martha decided to live in her beautiful new home in Grossobringen and let her husband come home on weekends. Her brother Otto and his wife Henny Brehmer told

her that this was a bad mistake, that her husband was a very young virile male with a gleam in his eye and that she had better stay with him if she wanted to protect the marriage. Martha trusted her husband and stayed in the Villa in Grossobringen. That was a bad mistake, it turned out. Werner met an aggressive, well dressed young woman named Charlotte Nael, who was a pharmacist's assistant in the drugstore in Buttelstedt. It was love at first sight for Charlotte. She hung over the counter of the drugstore, and showed a great deal of interest in the very handsome young doctor. And it wasn't long before he noticed her attentions, and before long the attraction became mutual. He started making lots of excuses for frequenting that pharmacy, and soon the whole countryside for miles around started talking about the scandal going on between Dr. Werner and Charlotte. The pharmacist in Buttelstedt became very uncomfortable over the notoriety attached to his pharmacy and fired Charlotte Nael. Charlotte found another Pharmacist's Assistant position in Bad Frankenhausen, a town about 10 to 15 miles north of Grossobringen, and soon the young Dr. Wilhelm could be found frequenting this far out of the way pharmacy, pursuing the young Charlotte Nael.



Charlotte & Werner Wilhelm



Charlotte



Charlotte Wilhelm

Much later poor Martha found out about this budding romance, but by this time it was much too late to do anything about it as the new relationship had a firm and deep foundation. So poor Martha rocked her young Werner and cried over this catastrophic turn of events in her life. She confronted her husband and he in turn set to work building an addition onto Martha's garage in the Villa property, turning the garage into a residence and his doctor's office. He then moved into the garage on Martha's property with Charlotte Nael, much to Martha's shock and to the delight of all the gossips in Grossobringen! Dr. Werner and Charlotte lived together in that garage house for 4 years before he divorced Martha and married Charlotte, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October, 1935 when that sort of thing just wasn't done, especially by the village physician! Poor Martha thought she would die of shame, especially when Charlotte spread the word to Emma Thiele, who was the village newspaper and naturally told everyone else in Grossobringen, that the reason Dr. Wilhelm left Martha and moved in with Charlotte, was that Charlotte was much better in bed!

Emma Thiele was as conservative as any other housewife in the village at that period of time, and she said to Charlotte some time after she moved in with the Doctor, "Charlotte, you have a lovely set of parents, why don't you move back in with them?" Emma started spreading the gossip after that conversation that Charlotte was the village whore. But to Charlotte's face, Emma was all sweetness and cream, for after all, Charlotte would probably someday become the second Frau Dr. Wilhelm.



Henny & Otto Brehmer



Henny, Christa & Otto Brehmer



Brehmer's Lehnstedt Manor

Dr. Wilhelm started the divorce in about 1933 and it became final on the 4th of December, 1934. Uncle Otto Brehmer was called upon to testify concerning the divorce and he was in court the whole day, and when he came home that night, Aunt Henny said he was physically ill. All that dirty wash, all that dirty wash, was what he said over and over.

Dr. Wilhelm sought and won custody of his son, Werner. From the time Charlotte moved into the garage house until Martha moved to Zschippach, a 1600 acre Knight's Estate (Rittergut) with a 17 room mansion, Werner walked back and forth from one house to the other, both houses being on the same lot. Dr. Wilhelm won custody of Werner because he demonstrated to the judge that he was far better educated than Martha, and thus could provide a far better education for his young son.



Werner Wilhelm II

All of his life Werner was torn between the two sets of parents. In Grossobringen, he wandered back and forth between the two houses on one lot, each set of parents vying for his attention and affection. Werner's Mama Martha used to put an apron on her young son with a pocket in the front of the apron, then used to constantly pass him sandwiches out of the kitchen window which was at ground level, being in the basement, so that Werner would never be hungry. Werner felt that that might have been the start of his weight problem, giving him comfort food between meals.



Dr Werner and son Werner Wilhelm

Dr. Wilhelm was quite proud of his 2 year old son and decided to take him to Reichard's Gasthaus zum Stern down the street to show him off. Just when he had the biggest smile

on his face, holding little Werner up for all to see, Wernerchen let loose with the biggest pile of diarrhea right down his legs, out of his short pants and all over his father's trousers! Needless to say father and son made a quick trip back home.



Richard Brehmer & Christa Brehmer Fenge Otto, Chrosta, Henny, ?, ?, and Richard Brehmer Christa, Richard Brehmer & Werner

Werner made occasional trips to Lehnstedt to visit his cousin Christa Brehmer Fenge. Christa was the only child of his Uncle Otto Brehmer and his wife Henny, nee Hettenhausen. Uncle Otto was an intelligent large land owner who managed Lehnstedt first with his father Richard and his Uncle Herman Brehmer, then after their deaths in the 1930's he managed it alone with the help of his most capable wife, Henny. Henny was the only daughter of a large land owner and upon her parents' deaths she inherited a 320 acre Gut in Reiffenhausen, near Gottingen. The Reiffenhausen Gut was small compared to Rittergut Lehnstedt, so in the 30's and 40's Henny leased it out and managed Lehnstedt instead.



Werner Wilhelm II



Werner with his stock and hat



Christa Fenge & Werner Wilhelm II

Werner's mother Martha was a very religious person and so one Easter when Werner was about 4 years old Martha took pictures of him with the symbolic Easter props, a paschal lamb and a staff, signifying Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Werner's mother loved sheep and she wanted to raise sheep on her estate on Zschippach, but she was outvoted as they said it wasn't the right soil or the right environment (sheep tended to get hoof rot there) and also it was not profitable enough to devote their time to. But if Martha had had her way, she would have had sheep on Zschippach, profitable or not. For she just loved to sit and watch the sheep and the shepherd as he tended his flock.



Martha & Werner Wilhelm II

Another year Werner went Easter egg hunting with his mother. From the look on her face you can see how upset she was over her deteriorating domestic situation. Poor little Werner had no idea why his elders were in such a turmoil, which made his turmoil even greater, not knowing why his personal little world was falling apart.



August, Rosa, Werner, Eberhard & Kurt Wilhelm



Henny, Christa and Werner



Martha, Rosa, Werner II & Charlotte Wilhelm

Mama often took little Werner visiting both his father's and his mother's side of the family, both before and after the divorce, but Werner was most comfortable with his father's side as he saw them most often. The father was embarrassed and upset over the divorce and knew that he was not very well regarded by his ex-wife's side of the family, and with good reason, and for that reason he did not want his son talking to these people and thus forming a bad opinion of the father. So he bad mouthed the ex-wife's family and did everything he could to keep his young son away from these people. He also ran Werner down, telling Werner to stay away from these people, saying that Werner was not worthy of them and would be run down by the mother's relatives if he exposed himself to them and they saw how little worth Werner really was. I had a devil of a time in later years convincing Werner that he was of equal worth as the people I wanted to visit on his mother's side and that he should not be one bit afraid of visiting them. Werner gained a lot in self esteem once I dragged him around in Germany and he visited these people and saw that they held him in high esteem and that they liked him and were glad he visited them and shared with them some of his life experiences. He then felt very bad that he was not able to spend many of his childhood hours with these people as he found that they were interested in him and that they liked one another.



Henny Brehmer & Werner Wilhelm II

Werner and I sat for hours in Aunt Henny's wintergarten on Dahlmann Strasse in Gottingen while Werner told Henny all about his young childhood, how he was affected by the divorce, and how his father yelled and screamed at him and beat him repeatedly as he was growing up and how frightened he was of his father. Aunt Henny was very saddened by this information and told Werner that being his father was a doctor of medicine that she thought Werner would be getting the very best of care under his tutelage, guidance and care. She never dreamed that this cute little boy was being so abused by his own father.



Richard Brehmer & Christa Brehmer Fenge

When Werner went visiting to Lehnstedt in the 1930's he would visit little Christa his cousin, her parents, and his grandfather Richard. His grandmother Lydia Eschenbach Brehmer died shortly after his birth. She had had a hernia, was operated on by a well known professor in Jena, and due to complications of the surgery, died shortly afterwards of a strangulated hernia. One day his grandfather took Werner walking through the fields with him at Lehnstedt, and when they returned home, Werner's mother asked him what he thought of his grandfather Richard. Werner replied that he seemed nice, but that he had real long legs and walked awfully fast. We have some real cute pictures of Werner with his grandfather Richard in Lehnstedt, and also with his cousin Christa and Aunt Henny.



Christa & Richard Brehmer & Werner Wilhelm II

Grandfather Richard was a very energetic man all of his life, right up to the end when he was too ill to walk. Richard did not use horses or tractors when he went on inspection tours of the Rittergut, almost all of his inspections were on foot. He had long legs, as

Werner had noticed, and walked fast with long strides. Richard and his daughter Martha went to bed with the chickens and got up with the chickens. When the sun set, they were through with their work for the day and when the sun come up they were back in the fields.



?, Christa, ?, Henny & Otto Brehmer



Church near the Lehnstedt cemetery

Kirche zu Lehnstedt  
1333 erstmals urkundlich erwähnt  
1979—1982 renoviert

Martha, Werner's mother and Aunt Henny played both the piano and the organ, and both of them played for the church in Lehnstedt.



Werner Wilhelm in front of the Lehnstedt Church

Werner's father Dr. Werner played the piano as a young man in his home in Rossbacher Strasse 2a in Naumburg, but later as a physician he was too busy to play for pleasure. He learned to play the piano from his mother Rose Muller Wilhelm, who was a religious woman and who played religious songs on the piano at every birthday and holiday. Her favorite was "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty."



? & Werner Wilhelm II



?, ?, & Werner Wilhelm II



Werner Wilhelm II

Little Werner had a tricycle at a young age, which by today's standards looked quite primitive. Wernerchen rode his tricycle around his property and up and down the street of the village with his two young friends. Werner's closest friend was Martin Edner, brother of Martha, who lived next door to the south of Werner. Martin was full of the devil and was often getting Werner in trouble. Martin and Werner's favorite game as young children was "Hasschen in den Gruebe", which was played on a large metal cover

in the backyard of Werner's house directly under the waiting room of his father's practice. The two children would jump on the metal cover with full force and just love to hear the loud metallic "boom" that cover would emit. That game never lasted too long before the doctor would send one of his help out to tell the kids to cut out all that noise. Many years later, just two years before he died, Werner stood next to that metal cover and fondly related this story to me. Werner also told me that he and his mother had to leave by the back door of the house as the front door became the main entrance for the practice.

Martin also envied Werner his fine chocolate Easter bunnies. Every year Werner would receive one fine chocolate Easter bunny and Werner cherished his fine Easter rabbits so much that he would not eat any of them, but instead put them on a shelf in his bedroom and admired them. Well, Martin admired them too, but not for their looks, but rather for their chocolate content! One day Werner took a closer look at his bunnies and was shocked! Martin had eaten all the ears off his rabbits. He also ate the base of the bunnies too.

Martin loved fireworks and used to talk his father into buying him firecrackers. Werner tried to talk his father into buying him some too, but Dr. Werner just became outraged, saying that fire crackers were dangerous and also stupid. "Bang!", Dr. Werner would say, there goes another Mark! What a stupid waste of money!

Dr. Werner always wanted his son to be a real man, and was disgusted because he perceived his son to be rather delicate of constitution. One day Werner was playing with Martin outdoors and accidentally heaved a rock through the Thiele's window. Werner was terrified, just sure he was going to get half killed by his father. Instead his father went proudly over to the Thiele's and paid for their broken window; finally his son did something the father considered manly!



Werner Wilhelm II

Dr. Werner then bought Werner a set of jungle gym climbing bars to toughen the kid up. Werner, however, just stood on the ground and watched Martin climb to great heights and twirl himself all over the things. Dr. Werner was purple with rage that his son never had any use for these bars. Werner hated climbing things. He didn't like anything that made him feel unsteady, and swaying tree branches was one of those kind of things. Werner preferred good old terra firma under his two feet. I do firmly believe that Werner only made one attempt at tree climbing in his life, and someone snapped a picture of it to record such a historic occasion.

Dr. Werner was driven to fits of apoplexy watching Martin make a monkey out of his little Werner, but one day Dr. Werner got his revenge on that pesky kid. In one of his few fits of genuine rage, little Werner blew up at Martin and tossed a rock at him and struck him right in the head, sending a healthy stream of blood running down into his eyes. Martin started screaming, and Dr. Werner looked out the window to see what all the fuss was about and saw blood streaming down Martin's face. He immediately went outdoors and dragged Martin into his practice, sitting him down on an examination table. He then cleaned up the wound, stanching the bleeding, then took out a whole roll of gauze and wrapped up Martin's entire head in gauze, allowing only his eyes, nose and mouth to remain uncovered. He then told Martin it was a very bad wound and that he should go home because the doctor expected him to die before the night was over. Martin started wailing in sheer terror, running for home as fast as his little legs could carry him. A very worried mother of Martin returned to the doctor's office with her son, asking the doctor what he had told Martin, and what was under all those bandages!



? & Werner Wilhelm II



Werner in front of Grossobringen Villa

We have a very cute picture of Wernerchen, Martin and another friend sitting with their bikes in front of Werner's house in Grossobringen. Werner learned to ride a two wheel bike in front of this house. His father took him to a high class bike shop when Werner was 5 years old and Werner was very carefully fitted for his first two wheeler. The seat had to be at just the right height, the pedals just right and the handle bars at just the right height and distance from the body. While Dr. Werner was concerned about the right fit, little Werner was very worried whether he was going to survive this experience in one piece. But survive he did, and very nicely so. His father's chauffeur held onto the seat of the two wheeler and ran with Werner up and down the village street until Werner got the hang of balancing the bike. After Werner got himself up and running, he and his bike were constant companions for years and years to come, first his two wheeler, then later his motorcycle, both in Germany and in Canada.



?, Werner Wilhelm II & ?.

Werner was also very proud of the fancy, expensive scooter his father bought for him when he was about 5 years old. You didn't just push it along with your foot like other scooters, but rather once you got it going there was a kick plate at the back of the scooter,

and you kept kicking that plate down and the scooter went merrily on its way by itself. That scooter was the talk of Grossobringen and was the only one of its kind in the village.

Werner attended the village school in Grossobringen for the first 3 years of his schooling. The other children were much poorer than Werner was and there was some envy of his better clothing, but especially his better food. Werner's sandwiches were always first class and had the most expensive meats in them. The other children, by comparison, didn't even get any meat. The typical lunchtime sandwich for many of his classmates was a butter and sugar sandwich. The poor kids would look longingly at Werner's fine sandwiches, and before long they noticed that he was looking longingly at their butter and sugar sandwiches! Pretty soon Werner was trading meat sandwiches for butter ones and everyone was happy. Everyone, that is, except Werner's parents when they learned that they were paying for expensive meat and the kid was eating butter and sugar!



Charlotte, Dr Werner & Werner Wilhelm

Werner said that the teachers were forever calling his parents in for a conference due to his bad behavior and bad grades. You go, Dr. Wilhelm would say, I'm not about to embarrass myself going down there to hear about that useless lump. I was always the first in my class and studied the hardest and I can't figure out how I got such a lazy useless son! So Mutti would go, hear the litany of transgressions from the teacher, and then very fearfully she would return home and relate all to her husband. He would then blow up, first beat Mutti with his belt and then Werner. Oh, Werner, Mutti would say to him, you got to study harder and do well in school. I'm getting too old for these beatings from Vati! The teachers all said that Mutti had a very smart son, he just didn't apply himself very well, that he was mentally and physically lazy. But Mutti would remark that Werner would apply himself well enough whenever something was of interest to him!

One time Werner was cutting up in class throwing spitballs and the elder teacher, who had a Ph.D. and had spent most of his life teaching at the university, and now had to be satisfied with teaching young boys as the university retired him due to his advanced age, had more than he could take of Werner and really lost his cool. He screamed and yelled at Werner for turning the whole class against him and making a fool out of the esteemed teacher in the other pupils' eyes. Glasses off, glasses off, he hollered at Werner. Then he started beating Werner and striking him about the face and head, which was not tolerated by Dr. Wilhelm, who was always conscious of preventing a head injury. Werner really got the worst of it that time and there was nothing he could do to defend himself except put his hands up to try to shield his face. When Werner got outside the boys were all on his side. All of them said, tell your father what he did to you. My father wouldn't stand for that. He'd be right down here going to the principal and getting that professor fired. Werner just listened and said to himself, it'd be a cold day in hell before I told my father

what happened here in school today. If my father knew what I'd done to the professor, I'd be beaten twice as hard by him! Uh, uh, I'm just going to let this incident pass.

Werner was in a classroom with all boys most of his school years. The boys were taught mostly by professors who had a Ph.D. and who had taught for years in a university. When they got too old to be an effective university professor due to their outdated education they were retired from the university, and having no money for an early retirement, sought and obtained employment in the elementary and secondary school system. But after the maturity and discipline they were used to dealing with in the college level students, the teenagers drove them to the brink of insanity. And the students were well aware of this and took full advantage of the situation. Werner used to like to dream up pet nick names for the teachers that would fit their personality quirks, then disseminate this name throughout the school where, if it fit, would soon catch on like wild fire.

The teachers told Mutti something that was dangerous to the well being of the family under the Nazi's. The teachers were telling Mutti that Werner was asocial, which was a very bad thing to be under the Nazi's. You have to pretend to like people, he was told by his parents. But all of his life he had only a few close friends and was asocial otherwise. People in general were never high on his list of likes. The Lord created a beautiful world, Werner would say, and then he cheated it with the people.

Mutti's favorite story about the anxiety over Werner's school grades was the time Werner had to take the entrance exams for high school. If he did not pass these exams his academic future was over as he could not enter German high school and therefore there was no way he would attend a university. If you failed these exams you went to your choice of trade school. So Mutti and Werner were in a state of high anxiety over these exams. Werner took two days of exams, both oral and written. You could choose to take only the written, but Werner felt that he knew the subject content of the oral quite well and that taking the oral too would considerably improve his overall average. After he completed the exams, he came out of the classroom in a daze. Both his mothers were waiting for him on the street, Martha and Charlotte. "Well, do you think you passed?" was Charlotte's first question to Werner. I don't know was Werner's reply. "What do you mean you don't know, you must have some idea!" was Charlotte's rebuttal. We'll find out tomorrow, was Werner's reply. The teacher will read off all the grades in class. I don't think I can survive in this high state of anxiety till tomorrow was Charlotte's thoughts. Werner, you HAVE to pass this exam. Vati will kill both of us if you flunk this one! I know, replied Werner. I'm just as scared as you are! Werner told me that he had another important thought on his mind at that point. He was embarrassed to tears at having two mothers. No one else in his school had two mothers. It just wasn't done in those days. Divorce and remarriage was just about unheard of. Werner said he walked ahead of the two women, hoping that his classmates did not notice the two mothers and razz him to death over it. He says he apparently got away with it as no one said anything to him.

The next day Werner returned to school for his last half day. The main purpose of this last day was to find out your grades in the high school exams and to see whether you passed or not. Werner got an earful from both sides of the breakfast table as to how

important passing these exams were. He knew exactly what his father's position was on passing, and he didn't dare to tell Vati that he didn't know whether he passed or not. He just had to pretend that he thought he did and then hope and pray for the best. So off to school Werner went, his heart in his mouth. Werner's grades would be one of the last to be read, his last name ending in a "W" and the results being read in alphabetical order. Werner came out of the classroom in a total daze, where he was immediately confronted by Mutti, who was waiting on the sidewalk for him. "Well, DID YOU PASS!?", she asked, her voice not in its normal octave. I don't know, Werner told her. "WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU DON'T KNOW!?" Charlotte asked in a falsetto voice. I don't know, Werner said. Didn't they read off your name, Charlotte asked? I don't know, Werner said again. I was so scared, that by the time they got to my section of the alphabet, I didn't hear a thing. There was no way Mutti was going to go back to the practice and tell Dr. Wilhelm that they didn't know whether Werner passed or not, so Mutti dragged Werner back into the classroom, found his professor packing up to leave for the summer vacation, and asked him politely whether Werner passed or not. The professor looked down disinterestedly at his lists of students' grades, found Werner's name and said he passed. Charlotte and Werner were very light headed at that point and were trying to keep from fainting dead away on the spot. As their heads were clearing they heard the Professor say that Werner had done especially well in the oral part of the exam, but that he would have passed just on the strength of his written exams. So Werner and Charlotte began their homeward trek, two very relieved people with very weak knees. I'm sure that had he not passed, those two would have packed up and left home!

High school for poor Werner was just one academic crisis after another. German high school was much tougher than in America and only about 25% of the students who started high school in those days ever completed. It was equivalent somewhat to the American university curriculum and the children at that stage of their maturity were just not ready to handle that tough of a program. Werner's father ranted, raved, helped him with his homework, had Mutti help Werner, and when all else failed and the grades were not to the Doctor's satisfaction, beat the kid good with his belt, then beat the step mother.

Werner said his father was brilliant and remembered all of what he learned in the university without having to refresh his memory. Dr. Wilhelm taught Werner a little ditty he learned in the real gymnasium in Naumburg where you recited every Latin preposition in two different categories so you knew whether the preposition was followed by the dative or the accusative. Werner remembered this to the end of his days and he enjoyed reciting it. When Werner was really ill due to very high BUN and creatinine and was having periods of delirium, I asked him to recite this ditty to see if his memory was intact. He readily did so without hesitation or error. Werner's father was a real good teacher and Werner enjoyed learning from his father as his father was brilliant and very systematic in his approach to a subject. But the father had very little time to spend with his son as he had a very busy practice and was also head of the health department in the neighboring town of Coburg. So teaching was relegated in most part to Mutti, and occasionally to Mutti's sister, Gerti, who later became Uncle Kurt's second wife. Werner said that Gerti was very smart, very systematic and very kind and patient with a dumb kid, and he loved studying with her. It was a real treat when Gerti helped him with his

homework and he understood much more and learned faster and with greater comprehension of the subject at hand.



Werner Wilhelm in his Hitler youth uniform

Werner said that contrary to his appearance in the last years of his life, Mutti was very meticulous about his cleanliness and appearance. He was bathed often by her and she always saw that he wore expensive, clean clothing, freshly pressed. His hair was always freshly washed and every hair was combed into place, and he had a fresh handkerchief in his pocket. No, don't ever blame Mutti for my present day appearance, he would say. She certainly taught me better and cannot be blamed for what I look like today.



Charlotte & Werner



Martha, Rosa, Werner Charlotte



Werner, Rosa, August



Martha, Eberhard & Rosa

Werner admitted to me that Mutti, being much younger than his mother, was eager to do many things with Werner that his older mother had no interest in. For instance, Mutti would take him sledding and would sled along with him. We have a cute picture of Werner sledding with Mutti. She also went hiking in the woods with Werner and went bike riding with him. He had had many a good time with Mutti in his childhood.

Werner said his mama always liked his clear, light blue eyes and his soft, white blond hair. The other kids in school always teased Werner and called him "thick", but in looking back over his childhood pictures, it is obvious that he was not fat at that time in his life.



Elfie & Werner

Werner had a very cute love in his life when he was about 9 years old. She stood up with him at Kurt's wedding, and she was indeed, very cute. Her name was "Elfie" and he liked her very much. Just before he died he told me how much he liked Elfie and he wondered

where she was today and what she was doing. He remarked that he would have liked to marry Elfie, he liked her so much. Then he sighed and said that no doubt, Elfie was probably married and had a bunch of kids by now.



village school in Grossobringen

After 3 years of village schooling Dr. Werner pulled him out and placed him in the Schiller School in Gera where the education was better and the students and staff more cosmopolitan. However, years later Werner always said that everything he needed to know to run a nursing home he learned in that village school in Grossobringen, and that they had given him a very fine education.

Werner grew up in the midst of the Hitler era, and his father was constantly reminding him never to tell anyone of anything that was discussed at the dinner table as Dr. Wilhelm was very anti-Hitler and anti-Nazi, which was a very dangerous political position to be in in those days. In his Saturday Hitler youth sessions, they would pump the kids about their home life but Werner was well versed by his father as to what to say and what not to say.

When Werner was in school during the midst of the Hitler era he was asked to bring his family tree in to class. This was rather dangerous because his mother's side had some Jewish sounding names in it. Werner kind of hinted that he used some of his stepmother's tree to bridge this problem. Dr. Wilhelm was concerned as he felt that Eschenbach could be construed as a Jewish surname.

Werner's father was always cautioning him to never take any chances with his life as he was their only child. Don't do that to us, Dr. Werner would say to him if he contemplated doing something dangerous. Werner was never allowed to go to an amusement park as his father considered them to be unsafe. All of his adult life Werner was afraid of amusement rides due to the caution his father drummed into him.



Dr med Werner Wilhelm in Kassel



Charlotte Wilhelm

Mutti used to help Vati in his practice all day and then would leave the practice an hour early to start supper for the family. The doctor was a brilliant physician and was known for miles around as the best physician, so he had an extremely busy practice. But he had one bad fault which he also shared with his son Werner. He couldn't remember a name

or a face to save his life! People would come back to him every week and still he would not remember who they were. So Mutti saved face for him. As soon as Dr. Wilhelm would come into the room Mutti would say, Dr. Mrs. Helen Jones is here for you to check up on the stitches you put in last week. This way Dr. Wilhelm would immediately know who this patient was and what he was supposed to be doing to her.

One of the big traumas of Werner's childhood was when Dr. Wilhelm decided that his son's tonsils had to come out. Werner's father did not believe in using much in the way of anesthetic for this procedure so it often turned out to be a real wrestling match. Werner used to help his father by holding the patient down in the chair while his father yanked the tonsils out, so he knew what he himself was in store for, and he didn't like it one bit, but there was no saying no to his father. Werner was given a light dose of ether administered by Mutti and his father then proceeded to pull out the tonsils. Werner said that like when he had pneumonia, he had lots of funny things running through his head, and he felt like a train was rushing through, but he did still somewhat know what was going on while they were working on him, and that that was an experience he would soon not repeat. While under the ether he fought with his father and due to his strength the doctor had some anxious moments before the tonsils were out .

Werner said that the only childhood disease he had was measles, but he must have had chicken pox as well because he came down with an awful case of the shingles in April, 1989 due to the stress of negotiating for the purchase of Sun 'N Lake Towers.

Another time a lady from the village with tongue cancer came into his father's practice. There was no curing this condition, the father told the lady, but he could temporarily improve the condition by cutting out the cancerous spot. The woman lived in relative comfort for quite a period of time after the surgery and she was most grateful to Dr. Wilhelm. Then the spot re grew and every time she came to visit the doctor he would ask her if she wanted to go to the hospital for treatment of the tumor and each time she would say no, she just wanted to keep coming to see him. Finally she agreed to go to the hospital for treatment, but to no avail and she died soon afterwards.

Dr. Wilhelm's waiting room became overcrowded with perambulators so he solved the problem by building an open ended garage for the baby buggies next to the driveway of the practice.

Dr. Wilhelm was very much loved by his patients despite his blunt truthfulness and his gruff ways. But he could be most kind and gentle to a poor soul in need of his care. When he finally was forced to leave East Germany and flee to Kassel due to the Russians, his patients were in shock and the Communists even tried to get him to return to Grossobringen by offering to give him his son's villa in Grossobringen.

Dr. Wilhelm made home calls during his entire practicing years in Grossobringen, sometimes on his motorcycle, sometimes in his automobile. However once the war began in earnest the military was looking everywhere for motorcycles and had no compunction against confiscating them from private citizens. So for the duration of the

war Dr. Wilhelm dissembled his motorcycle and stored the pieces in several different locations to keep from losing it to the Nazis. After the war he reassembled it and used it again.

Werner never liked anything that was "unsteady", such as amusement rides, rocking chairs, swivel chairs, swings, etc. (So when, after Werner died, his chair began to rock by itself day in and day out in Sebring, and then later a rocking chair in the upstairs of the blue house started rocking by itself, it put me in a quandary because Werner never liked things that rocked. Maybe after he left his body he didn't have to worry about his stomach getting queasy anymore.)

Werner also never liked to play any ball games. He said he couldn't see the ball when it came near him and he always ended up getting struck by the ball. This was probably due to his astigmatism, as well as the fact that he was very near sighted all of his life.

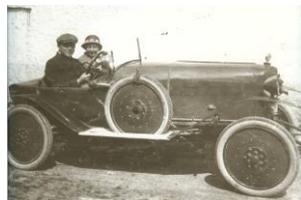


Werner Wilhelm II

Sports were never of any interest to Werner. He hated all sports, games, etc. except bike riding & swimming. That was very bad in the Hitler era as sports and gymnastics were of utmost importance as training for future military service. Werner was abominable in all sports and hated even trying. The teacher warned him that he was going to get a failing grade in sports as he couldn't do tumbling and high jumping and pole vaulting like the rest of his classmates, and in those days if you flunked gym, you flunked to whole grade and had to take everything over the next year. So Werner went home and discussed this with his father. The solution they came up with was this: Werner was very good in swimming, so he demonstrated all his swimming skills, and to avoid a failing grade, Werner did what no other child had ever done, he climbed up the 30 foot high diving tower, almost died of trepidation, but realizing it was dive or flunk the whole grade, he took a couple of deep breaths, then in his own words, "dove for his life". He successfully completed the jump, then went home and told his father. His father then completed the second leg of his plan to save his son: he gave his son a doctor's excuse saying that due to his bad heart he was to be excused from physical exercise for the next 6 months. Werner passed gym with a "D" and was saved from failing the grade. Werner said another kid tried the 30 foot dive after him and seriously injured his back, so that was the end of the 30 foot dive in that school.



Wilhelm Grossobringen Villa



Dr Werner & Martha in his first auto

Martha's father, Richard Brehmer, gave Martha and Dr. Werner a handsome start in life, especially for those days. He bought 5 acres of land on their wedding day, paid for the construction of a very large comfortable Villa with garage on that land, bought Dr. Werner a new car (he had been making all his home calls on a motorcycle prior to that time) and had promised to pay a handsome dowry of \$45,000 in the near future.

He also paid for a fairy tale honeymoon for his daughter and Dr. Wilhelm at Bad Kostritz, a very swank hotel in a famous resort town in those days. Years and years later, in 1984, Werner and I stayed at that hotel when it was under the Communist control, and even with it having been run down after 40 years of no repairs and little occupancy, Werner and I also found it to be still a most romantic spot to spend our vacation. The rooms were old, but large and airy. The shower was down the hall, but very elegant when you consider the period in which it was built, and the manager of the hotel most charming and sincere in his desire to make your stay a most pleasurable one. The biggest negative feature in Werner's estimation was the fact that it had no elevator. Another big negative in Werner's feeling was the fact that it was almost a mile's walk from the train station to the hotel. I found this fact to be one of the most charming aspects of the experience as the walk was through a most picturesque and charming zoo. The botanical aspects of the zoo were top notch, and in the evening the lit up old fashioned street lamps were of another place and time. It reminded me of the "Old Lamplighter" song. The area was quiet except for the chirping of the birds in the trees, and on the last leg of the journey one stopped over an old bridge and watched the waterfall in the distance.

My Werner tried to solve the 1 mile walk aspect of the trip by calling a taxi. As soon as we got off the train and found out it was one mile to the Hotel, Werner looked around the train station and spotted a telephone. He immediately picked up the phone and tried to reach the operator. No luck, the phone was dead. He went right away to the station master and reported that the phone was out of order. The station master gave him a little smile and thanked him for the information. Werner complained that now he couldn't call a taxi and would have to walk. The next night Werner made a bee line for the phone to call a taxi, and once again, no luck. The phone was dead. The third night the same problem. The phone was dead. Werner went to the stationmaster and raised the devil. Why was the phone still out of order? How come no one fixed it yet? Werner said he was sick of walking! His 17 year old cousin Andrea smiled at him with a pathetic look on her face. Suddenly, it dawned on Werner that he was in East Germany, the land of inaction. How long has that phone been out of order, Werner asked Andrea. Oh, about 6 months was the reply as we were about 1/4 of the mile down the road, walking to the hotel, much to Werner's frustration. What did you want to use the phone for, asked Andrea, for after all, no one else in East Germany has a phone, so who would you want to call? I wanted to call a taxi! bellowed Werner. You don't need a phone for that,

answered Andrea. The taxi cab driver lives right across the street from the train station. @#&\*, replied Werner! You mean I've been walking home the last 3 nights for nothing!! Yup, giggled Andrea. If you would have asked me about the taxi, I would have told you how to get one. But you never asked me.



Andrea Bamberg & Werner Wilhelm II

The next morning we were checking out of the hotel with lots of baggage, so Werner asked the hotel manager to call the taxi for us. Can't do that, was the reply. Why not? asked a very irritated Werner. Because he doesn't have a phone, the manager replied. Doesn't have a phone! How in the hell do you get him to drive you anywhere, screamed Werner, whose face was now turning a deeper shade of red. You walk over to his house, was the manager's reply. Walk over to his house! Why the hell would I want to walk over to his house to get a ride. By the time I walked to his house, I'd be right across the street from the train station, screamed Werner, in an ever ascending octave, as the absurdities of life in East Germany was making him lose what little composure he had left. You're right, replied the manager.

Still somewhat dizzy with this East German logic, Werner and I started out on foot with all the luggage for the Bad Kostritz train station. We went only a short ways when we spotted an old man with a very small horse drawn wagon making his way very slowly in the direction of the train station. Werner suddenly got some steam in his pants, dropped his luggage and ran after the horse drawn cart. The man stopped, Werner told him he'd give him 5 Marks to take him and our luggage along. The man agreed, Werner hopped up on the wagon, hollered at me to bring all the luggage, which I did. I piled the luggage on the wagon next to Werner, then due to lack of space, I walked along behind the wagon till we got to the train station, then unloaded the luggage, while Werner thanked and paid the man. I can assure you that on Dr. Wilhelm's and Martha's honeymoon, albeit a much earlier time in history, things did not go that badly. In 1925 there was horse drawn public transportation to take the high class guests to and from the train station, and no one laughed at you like you had a screw loose when you asked for help with your luggage. Only under a communistic system is such an attitude an everyday occurrence.



Richard Brehmer



Otto Brehmer

When Dr. Werner started sneaking around with Charlotte Nauel, he soon realized that that \$45,000 dowry was going to be a dead horse when his father in law found out he was playing around behind Martha's back. So when Dr. Werner heard that his father in law was buying apartment buildings with Otto in Weimar, he confronted Richard, saying what right did he have to buy apartment buildings before he paid off the dowry. Richard paid him off shortly after that, and was he ever disgusted when he found out about him playing around with Charlotte while he was demanding payment of the dowry!



Werner Wilhelm II in front of the Villa



Werner Wilhelm II

Werner gave his parents the scare of their lives when he was 5 years old. Dr. Werner continued to make home calls on his motorcycle and one day he decided to take little Werner along with him. They spent the whole day on the motorcycle in cold weather and when they got home Wernerchen was feverish and out of sorts. Within a short period of time it was obvious they had a crisis on their hands as the child developed a very serious case of pneumonia and became totally delirious with a very high fever. Dr. Werner called in a well respected colleague as he did not trust just his own judgment in such a serious situation, and with dread he had to walk over to the Villa and inform Martha that her son may be dying. Wernerchen told me just before he died that he remembers this period of delirium, that he saw lots of funny and scary animals and had many disjointed thoughts. The doctors decided to x-ray the child to see how badly the lungs were filled with fluid and they soon got another jolt to their nervous system - Werner's lungs were not only filled with fluid, but from birth the child had a very enlarged heart! Werner soon got over his pneumonia, but for the rest of his life the enlarged heart was a shadow that loomed over his life. He was very fortunate under the circumstances to have lived for another 60 years with such a bad heart, but it did sap him of his energy and he often found himself in bed by 5:30 p.m., trying to recoup his energy for the next day.

For the last 10 years or so of his life his heart leaked blood out of all his heart valves because the heart was so large that the valves couldn't completely close and the blood rushed back and forth around the edges of the valves.

Werner was never taken for a ride on the motorcycle after that as his mother was nearly hysterical over nearly losing her little boy.



Werner Wilhelm II

When Werner was 5 years old Dr. Wilhelm wanted him to be able to handle himself in social and business situations, so he gave Werner a bill to pay and money to pay it with and told him to go down into the village to pay the bill and to make sure he brought home a receipt. Werner was so small that at first the clerk didn't even see the little tyke, and then when he got her attention, he gave her the bill and the money and she tried to send him on his way but he wouldn't leave. He looked at her and kept saying, "eine Twittung, bitte". What's a Twittung" one clerk said to another? Finally the other clerk figured it out. The little guy wants a "Quittung" (a receipt)! So they gave him a receipt and he was merrily on his way back home, his first business transaction accomplished in fine style.

Werner had a very interesting hobby as a very small child, he liked collecting expensive, exotic rabbits. The hired help built him a condominium like structure for his rabbits and soon he was seriously into collecting rabbits. He soon found himself buying and selling various kinds of rabbits, shipping them by rail all over Germany. At the height of his hobby he had 89 rabbits in their hutches. Charlotte said that at a very young age Werner would stack his money into piles and count it, and that he was fascinated with the acquisition and retention of money. He spent little or no money, saving everything. He had a big savings bank, where you could put money in, but not take it out, that is, until Martin came on the scene! Werner found out one day that Martin had busted the bottom out of Werner's bank and persuaded Werner to spend some of the money on fire crackers. Werner enjoyed the fire crackers for a brief spell, then regretted spending his money on such a short lived pleasure.



Werner dressed up for Fasnacht

One year Werner's Mama Martha decided to dress him up as a girl for Fasnacht, a German feast day much like Halloween. She curled his hair, put him in a blouse and skirt, and put a babushka on his head and lipstick on his lips. He made such an adorable little girl. But the patients had a field day telling the stern no-nonsense Dr. Wilhelm that his son was out front dressed up like a little girl. Dr. Wilhelm flew out of his practice, confirmed that the son he already thought too delicate was dressed up like a girl, and he blew up like a Roman candle, pulled his belt loose from his pants, and Martha soon discovered what her ex-husband thought of Werner being dressed up like a girl! That was the last time Werner walked around sporting a skirt, that's for sure! (I tried to get Werner to dress up like a girl for a play we were presenting in Sebring, he thought about it, then said, "no way".)



Werner in his Chinese Fasnacht costume

Another Fasnacht that Werner remembers was when his mama dressed him up Chinese style with a Chinese lantern. He like that costume and no one got into any trouble with Vati over it that time around.



?, Werner Wilhelm II & Martha Wilhelm Bamberg

Mama Martha liked dressing up little Werner in sailor suits before he was 10 years old. He looked adorable in this type of dress and Vati had nothing derogatory to say about it, so this style of dress continued until he was too old to wear such styles. It was just such a sailor suit that he was dressed up in to be a member of uncle Kurt's wedding party when he was 10 years old. Werner had two main memories of that event - how scared he was

when he had to recite a rather elaborate piece of prose by memory in front of a whole group of people, and secondly, how sharp he felt he looked in his sailor suit. All Werner's clothes were expensive in those days. Just a few days before he died he was reminiscing about some of the expensive children's brand name clothing he wore. Bleyle was one brand that Rudi and Werner both have in common. Rudi showed us a young boys picture of himself and his family where Rudi was wearing a Bleyle outfit just before his dad passed away on cancer. Rudi was quite young when he lost his dad.

Once, when wearing his sailor suit, Werner saw that Mutti got into a lot of trouble with Vati. The offense? Vati discovered that she had put a bobby pin in Werner's hair to keep it out of his eyes. That sure didn't sit too well with Vati! Uh, uh.



Charlotte Wilhelm, Werner Wilhelm II, Martha Brehmer Wilhelm Klodmann & Rosa Mueller Wilhelm

Werner was the favored grandchild with his grandmother Rosa Muller Wilhelm. Vati was grandmother's favorite child and she saw the shadow of her favorite son in his only son. Picture after picture, we see Werner next to his grandmother or in her arms. Rosa was just sick when her son divorced Werner's mother. She was a very Christian woman who was devoted to her principles and for the rest of her life she never accepted Charlotte Nael as her daughter in law and in fact would not let Charlotte into her home until a number of years later. She considered Martha to be her only legitimate daughter in law. Grandmother Rosa told Dr. Werner that he had a fine wife Martha and that he was not to bring Charlotte or her daughter Astrid into her home.



Werner Wilhelm II, Rosa Wilhelm & Fritz Wilhelm

You can see in many of Werner's childhood pictures that due to his father's harshness and also due to the divorce, that he was often an unhappy, pensive little boy. He was scared to death of his father and especially of the beatings he knew he would continue to receive every time something didn't strike his father's fancy just right and he was very angry with and resentful of his father's harsh handed methods of dealing with him. But he did love his father and he often said that it was due to his father's harsh discipline that he is as successful as he was. So it was a double edged sword.



Martha Edner, Werner Wilhelm II & Lotta Thiele Dassler, Villa in Background

Several times something broke down in the practice and Dr. Wilhelm had to call a tradesman to get it fixed. The doctor was a very busy man and he did not let whatever was broken interfere with the running of his practice. When the tradesmen were done with their repair work, they came to the doctor for payment and he was too busy to stop working to reckon the bill, so each time, he told them to go next door to the Thiele household and they would pay them. After collecting several bills the Thiele's came over to Dr. Wilhelm and asked the doctor why he kept sending the tradesmen over to their house as it was his bills, not theirs and they didn't have near the money the doctor had. The doctor replied that he sent the tradesmen over to them for payment as they had more time to pay him than the doctor did, and besides the Thiele's had all their money handy in the pillowcase, whereas the doctor had all his money in the bank earning interest!



Lotta Thiele Dassler

Emma Thiele and her daughter Lotta Dassler were always known all over the village as the Village Newspaper. If you wanted to know anything going on in the village just ask the Thieles! Especially if it concerned the doctor and his family as they lived right next door and heard everything that was going on, especially when the doctor blew up and things got hot! The roughest time of all was when Werner brought home a less than promising report card. Boy, did the feathers ever fly then! The doctor would go through the roof, then he would beat up Werner with his belt, then the step mother. The screaming could be heard all over the village! The Thiele's would put their ears to the window so they could hear everything that was being screamed over so they could report it word for word all over the village! The village just reveled in news of what was amiss over at the doctor's house!



Werner Wilhelm II, age 17

Werner said he was beaten with regularity by his father over the years from the time he was quite small until he was 17 years old. He said he greatly resented all those beatings and hated having all his transgressions become public record throughout the village, however he credits his father's sternness and physical punishments with making him a success in life. He said he was a poor, and lazy student, would not have studied and absorbed his lessons without his father's persistence, and would not have internalized his work ethic without his father's guidance and strong willed tactics. He said he finally received his last beating when he was 17 as he discovered he could outrun his father, then stay out of his way until he cooled off. The last time his father raised his belt to him, Werner took off flying around the corner, his father in hot pursuit. His father slipped on a rug, lost his balance, and fell, hitting and breaking his nose against the telephone stand. "It served him right that he broke his nose against the telephone stand", Werner said to Mutti. Mutti replied, "Ah, Wernerchen, that's our Vati, we don't talk that way against him!" In looking back at those times I believe that the main reason Werner's beatings stopped is that the year was 1945 and poor Dr. Wilhelm, who was in the midst of losing everything he and his ex-wife ever worked for or owned, had more important and life threatening problems on his hands.



At the time that Dr. Wilhelm was building out the garage into a home for him and Charlotte, Charlotte decided to pick some of the ripe cherries from Martha's sweet cherry trees, so Charlotte climbed into a tree and started filling her apron pockets, and soon she was reaching ever farther out to get some cherries, and before she knew it she overextended her reach and fell out of the tree and landed right on her wrist. It didn't take long to figure out that that swollen wrist that now bulged out at a funny angle was broken. Charlotte was terrified to have it reset so she hid the wrist from Dr. Werner until it was too well healed to be reset without rebreaking it. Till the day she died she had to live with that malformed wrist, but one good thing came of the broken wrist - her gold

bracelet no longer fit on this wrist so Dr. Werner bought her a larger one. Later on when Werner and Sandy visited her in Muehldorf, she gave the smaller bracelet to Sandy.

Another Charlotte Nauel Grossobringen story that Lotta Dassler enjoys retelling was the time that Dr. Wilhelm got real mad at Charlotte, so he locked her out of the house, then took off. Charlotte was madder than a wet hen at being locked out and was determined to get back into the house, so she went over to the Thiele residence and asked Lotta's father if she could borrow his tall ladder. Mr. Thiele didn't think it would reach the upper windows, but Charlotte badgered him into putting the ladder up against the upper window that had been left open. The ladder did not reach to the window, but ended just short of it. It won't work, Lotta's father told Charlotte. I don't care, I'm going to try to get in with it, she replied. Mr. Thiele held the ladder, with a grimace on his face as Charlotte climbed it with determination. When she got to the top rung of the ladder, she opened the upper window wider, and with an upward lunge, flung herself through the open window. With a dress on, Mr. Thiele must have had quite a view of Charlotte from below as he gazed upwards!

Another Charlotte Nauel story that Werner related to me a few times, always with a sheepish grin on his face, and with a little embarrassment in his demeanor was the following: Charlotte always considered herself to be quite "chic", always dressing in the latest style, and always doing whatever was considered to be the height of fashion at the time, so when a nudist camp was formed in her area of Germany, naturally it was the latest of the "in" thing at the time, so Charlotte had to be part of the new in crowd. Charlotte joining a nudist camp was no concern of mine, but what I highly objected to was the fact that she took little Werner with her and exposed him to this environment, which to the present time one can tell by his demeanor that this experience was just too much for a little boy to handle.

Another practice of Charlotte's that I highly objected to as I felt that it was very improper behavior on the part of a step mother is the fact that she bathed him regularly, right on through the teenage years and well into his manhood. This nonsense did not stop until I went to Germany with him and one look at my face when this subject was brought up convinced Mutti and Astrid, who also bathed Werner, just what I thought of this practice.

Mutti had no religious feelings, and she strongly felt that when you're dead, you're dead. But going to the right Church was considered by her to be the "in" thing to do, and after exploring the various possibilities, Mutti chose the Methodist Church because they had the best social gatherings. So on an occasional Sunday, Werner and Mutti would stroll off to the Methodist Church. Dr. Wilhelm, who didn't believe in what he considered to be utter nonsense, stayed at home.



Dr med Werner Wilhelm

Dr. Wilhelm was a dyed in the wool atheist and he never had any religious leanings. This is an interesting observation, considering that both his father and his mother were quite religious, and in fact his mother played the religious song, "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" at every festive occasion. It was probably Dr. Wilhelm's humanistic education at the Naumburger Dom that instilled in him this lack of belief in God.

Dr. Wilhelm had one minister as a friend whom he had many a theological and other arguments with. Dr. Wilhelm was attracted to this minister not because of any religious reason, but rather that this man was brilliant and a real scholar and gave Dr. Wilhelm considerable mental stimulation. When Dr. Wilhelm dropped dead without warning on the pavement in front of a jewelry shop in Kassel, the family contacted this minister who had transferred to a church over 200 miles away. The minister came and conducted the funeral services for Dr. Wilhelm without question or hesitation.



Charlotte Nael Wilhelm

A cute Charlotte, Dr. Wilhelm story concerns money. Mutti was given a household allowance to buy groceries, clothing, sundries, etc. It was an adequate budget, but had little room for slop. If she wanted to buy wurst and ice cream at the wurst stand or Hotel Eliphant, she had to watch her pennies. Mutti worked hard in Vati's practice, so she was often short on time, and things didn't get organized as well as she would have liked. Often, as she was running through the practice, into the living quarters of the house as she was late putting supper on the table, she would sling her change down on a table, intending to put it away later. In the meantime Vati would come up from the practice, see the money laying around loose, and would pick it up and put it in his pocket, and that would be the end of Mutti's spare change to go for an ice cream, sausage, etc.

Vati and Mutti also had another cute game they played. Whenever Vati needed to bring instruments home or to the office he would sneak them into Mutti's large purse. She

would wonder why her purse was so extraordinarily heavy until she found the instruments sitting in the bottom.

Werner remembers a few more cute stories of his early childhood in Grossobringen that he related to me through the years. One time he told me that Lotta Thiele, his next door neighbor, was always very bossy to him and he was always bratty to her and they were forever aggravating one another. One day he mouthed off to her once too many and she had enough, so she grabbed his sassy little 5 year old body, carried him across the main street and dropped him into a ditch full of water! That was kind of hard on his dignity and he never forgot it.

Another time when he was about 7 years old his father told him that as a member of the most prominent family in the village he must always be kind to older ladies and to help them when they were in distress. Within the same week an old lady fell down in the street when Wernerchen was near by and he ran to offer his aid. He helped the lady up, picked up her fallen packages and helped her home. His father was very proud of him when he related that story to him that night at suppertime. (What his father would not have been proud of is if he saw his son in September of 1992 get into a heated argument with a Jewish lady from Brooklyn who moved in and then refused to pay the correct amount of rent. Werner and the lady got into a big dust up in front of SUN 'N LAKE TOWERS when she tried to board the van for a shopping trip, Werner got in front of her and blocked her way with his fanny. When she tried to push her way past his big butt, he stepped backwards, throwing her head first into the garden bed. Not exactly the boy scout type of behavior his father was trying to promulgate!)

Lotta and her mother Emma were excellent seamstresses and did much of the sewing for the Wilhelm household, both for Martha and for Charlotte. After Martha moved to Rittergut Zschippach, Emma went there and sewed all the drapes and table clothes.



Werner Wilhelm II

Poor Werner and every other schoolboy in Germany got every Saturday morning ruined during the Hitler years as they had to go every Saturday morning to the Hitler boy scouts. What it amounted to was a major brain washing session in which the children were taught what a great nation they were living in due to the efforts of Hitler and his regime.

Werner lived right over the hill from Buchenwald, but that camp and its activities were not known to him until well after the war was over. Charlotte Nauel told me that they knew it was some kind of detention center and once she and another neighbor tried to leave food at the fence but they soon found that was not possible, for the center was well guarded on all sides and it was surrounded by a double row of fencing spaced wide apart.

They, being part of a small town, were also not aware of the mass extermination of the Jews that was taking place, and in fact had relatives and neighbors and fellow farmers that were Jewish and who were not picked up during the war years, but who were picked up and thrown into Buchenwald by the Russians after 1945. Charlotte also told me that when the Americans opened Buchenwald and released the prisoners in 1945 she and Werner and her husband were gone for the day and when they returned the prisoners had broken into their home and had stolen anything of value, food, money, jewelry and other valuable possessions. They sympathized with the released prisoners but were disgusted to have lost all of their valuable possessions.



Heikelheim Windmill

When Werner was entertaining Lotta Thiele Dassler in SUN 'N LAKE TOWERS in Sebring in April, 1992, she was teasing him about having learned how to swim in Heikelheim Pond in the neighborhood of Grossobringen. Werner replied that he learned swim when he was 5 years old, but not in the Heikelheim Pond, but rather in the municipal swimming pool in Weimar. Mutti put him on a stick and held him up in the water while the instructor taught him the proper strokes. Werner took well to water and in his later years he swam across Lake Zurich in Switzerland and several miles to an island in Florida and then back with a blood sugar of 550!

Martha planted many sweet cherry trees when she first moved into the Villa in Grossobringen. They bore very heavily in the years to come and the farm help from Zschippach used to come and harvest the cherries and sell them in Weimar. These cherry trees are still bearing fruit to the present day and are being harvested only in part by the people of the village. But eating the cherries may be hazardous to one's health as they sit adjacent to a toxic waste dump. (Martha also planted an entire cherry orchard (Kirsch Plantage) in Zschippach in back up on the hill. Werner and I stood in t his cherry orchard 50 years later as Werner reminisced that his mother planted a number of these trees with her own hands. )

Werner was never much for farm work or any physical work for that matter. During the war years a student was required to work an entire month in the fields to help out the short handed farmers. Werner skirted this obligation by getting a letter from a neighboring Gut owner falsely stating that he had worked in that family's fields.



Werner Wilhelm II & Martha Brehmer Klodmann

Werner and Mutti used to go to Hotel Eliphant in Weimar and stop and have an ice cream there. Don't tell Vati, Charlotte would tell little Werner, he wouldn't approve of us spending that kind of money on an ice cream!

Werner and his Mama Martha used to go to Hotel Eliphant in Weimar to partake of pigeon soup. The pigeons came from her Rittergut. The manager of the Rittergut would sell the pigeons to the hotel and then Martha would go there shortly afterwards to partake of the delicacy of fresh pigeon soup. Martha always had digestive problems, having come from a family whose members succumbed to stomach cancer, so she always enjoyed her pigeon soup, telling Werner that this soup was always soothing to her digestive tract.



Werner Wilhelm II

Werner's Mama Martha used to take him to the Glockwurst Stand in Weimar for a roasted wurst. Werner loved those sausages and really looked forward to his trips there. He used to tell his mama that he could see the smoke from the wurst stand 5 miles away in Grossobringen! One day Dr. Wilhelm discovered that his son couldn't see very far beyond his nose, that the poor kid was really near sighted. When Martha heard that her ex husband was taking the kid for glasses, she was sad as she didn't want to hide his cute looks. "He doesn't need glasses", Martha told Dr. Werner, "he can see the smoke from the Glockwurst stand in Weimar 5 miles away", she told him. "What a bunch of nonsense", bellowed Dr. Wilhelm!

Dr. Wilhelm tried to get Werner to feel proud about wearing the glasses, so he told Werner how intelligent he looked with his glasses on. But Werner said that the glasses did not make him feel proud, they made him feel scared, for they were one more thing that got the tar beat out of him when the glasses got broken, which seemed to be fairly often. "OH NO, not again," Mutti would wail when the glasses got broken, "now Vati is going to beat us both!"

Dr. Wilhelm bought Werner a fancy electric train when Werner was only 5 years old, and Werner said he hated that thing, for his father was the only one that got to play with it, and then before Werner ever got near the thing it fell off the track and broke and that was the end of that.



Charlotte, Werner & Dr. Werner Wilhelm

Dr. Wilhelm and Charlotte Nael married on 10 October, 1934 in Rosslau, Charlotte's parent's home town, at 10 Markt Strasse. Charlotte's father was a Captain on the high seas for years, but by the time they were married, her father was too old for this stressful occupation and he was now sailing boats up and down the Elbe River, which ran by their house. (Werner always liked to tease Mutti and call the Elbe the "Mississippi River".) Dr. Wilhelm's parents were real old fashioned moral people and they believed what God had put together let no man put asunder so they were furious with their son for divorcing Martha, and they refused to attend the second wedding to Charlotte. Dr. Wilhelm had driven over to his parents' home with Charlotte in order to introduce his new fiancée to his parents. But his parents blew up and told them they were not interested in seeing her and to get her off their doorstep. Many years later Dr. Wilhelm brought his new baby Astrid and Charlotte over to his parents to visit and once again the parents blew up and told them that they were not interested in meeting them and to get them off their front steps.



Fritz Wilhelm & Werner Wilhelm II in Rosslau on the Elbe River

Werner was fortunate enough to get a few rides on Mr. Nael's Elbe River boat which he docked on the Elbe river not too far from their home in Rosslau. Werner has a few pictures of himself and his cousin standing outside this riverboat.



Ontel Fritz Nael  
Tante Erika  
John Huss

Werner had another cute story about the Nael family and one very tragic one to tell years later. When he would go over to the Nauels to visit in Rosslau Mutti had a rich uncle that owned a lumber yard and he had a habit of giving 5 Mark pieces to the little children when they came to visit, so Werner always waited expectantly for his 5 Marks when he went visiting. Several times he got that coveted 5 Marks, but other times the

children that were related to the Uncle by blood got the coin and Werner was overlooked. That bothered him to this day!



Gertrude mit Eltern  
Otto u. Minna



Minna Minna  
(die Mutter von Gertrude  
+ Lutz)  
darüber Gertrude  
2 Schulfreundinnen  
Otto - Vater  
+ Lilla

Now for the tragic story. Werner's father and mother married within a short time of one another and both sets of parents wanted privacy in the early stage of their marriages, so they sent Werner off to live with Charlotte's mother in Rosslau. Werner said she was very kind to him and treated him like a grandson. He said one day she spent the entire day doing a huge wash by hand over the scrub board in cold rainy weather. After she got done with the wash it was about 4 o'clock and cold and rainy. She was soaked with sweat from all that hard work and was ready to take a rest. However Werner had heard of the 1000 year old oak tree and was dying to see it. He coaxed and coaxed and finally Charlotte's mother agreed to walk with him to see the old oak tree. True to Werner's life long inclinations of avoiding excess exercise at all costs, he rode his bike while the old woman walked. Werner would ride his bike up ahead, then circle around and back to catch up with the slower walking lady. When they got to the 1000 year old oak tree Werner was enchanted with it, but by that time the older woman was soaked, chilled to the bone and thoroughly exhausted. They then returned home, Werner on the bike and the older woman on foot. She immediately got into something warmer and drier, but by now it was too late. She soon took a chill, took to her bed, came down with a severe case of pneumonia and within 5 days after the trip to the 1000 year old oak tree, she was dead. Everyone at the funeral whispered behind Werner's back that the trip to the 1000 year old oak tree killed the elder Mrs. Naul, and to the day he died, Werner was firmly convinced that he had killed Mrs. Naul by insisting that she go to the 1000 year old oak tree in the rain when she was exhausted and chilled. And she was such a kind, nice person, too, he would always add to the end of the story.



Opa Naul  
Otto



Minna Minna  
(die Mutter von Gertrude  
+ Lutz)

The question would come up that Mrs. Nael was such a kind good person and Mr. Nael was also a good, upright man, so where did Charlotte get her devious ways from? The answer would always spring up that she got her ways from an uncle who owned a lumber yard who always did things in a backhanded manner.

When the elder Nauels died, Dr. Wilhelm purchased the Nael property in Rosslau from the estate and so the property should belong to Astrid and her half brother Werner today, Werner always told me.



Martha & Dr Werner Wilhelm



Werner in front of the Jena train station



Werner in front of Jena University

Martha Elisabeth Brehmer Wilhelm had first met Dr. Werner Wilhelm at a dance given by the Higher Daughter's School she was attending at the time. The Doctor was in medical school at the nearby University of Jena and was urged by his parents to attend these dances and try to find a wife there as only the upper class women attended this school and with him becoming a doctor a woman with money and a title would consider marrying him even though he came from a lower class background. Werner had been in love with a lovely, intelligent woman in Naumburg earlier, but his parents quickly squelched this romance as the woman had neither breeding, property nor education and they wanted someone special for their brilliant son. Dr. Werner was brilliant without equal from birth. He outshone all the other children in class and was double promoted a number of times. He was so much smaller than the other children in class it was ridiculous. It was unheard of that a child from Dr. Werner's background would be allowed to go to high school, let alone to college or medical school. It just wasn't done in those days. A stone cutter's son, albeit a highly talented one, followed in his father's footsteps. However, in this case Dr. Wilhelm was so brilliant that from the first class onward he was treated with deference and respect and he was soon allowed into high school at age 10, and then later into the Real Gymnasium in Naumburg as a teenager. There he was a scholar without equal and earned the title "Primus Omnium" (first of all) in all his scholastic endeavors, from high school through medical school. But the poor kid stuck out like a sore thumb for two reasons - he was puny beyond belief compared to his classmates, especially after he was double promoted, and secondly all the other kids were rich and wore the best suits whereas Dr. Wilhelm showed up to school wearing white cotton, which really looked shabby next to the others in their fine tweed suits. Werner's siblings were of ordinary stock like their parents, so Werner was their shining star and they wanted him to have the best in all things in life.



Rittergut Tuenschuetz



Rittergut Kischlitz

So when he dated and brought home for their approval Martha Brehmer, they were delighted. Martha came from a long line of minor nobility, the Eschenbachs going back to 1769 in Tunschutz as Gut Besizers and before that they were Gut Besizers in Kischlitz going back at least to 1526. The Brehmers were also a fine family of minor nobility, going back to the 1800's in Ostramondra, to 1613 in Wiehe where they owned a castle like dwelling with many fine out buildings, and before that they owned a fine Gut in Braunsberg in East Prussia. Martha's Uncle Hugo Eschenbach was a magistrate in Guthof in East Prussia where he had a Domain consisting of 25,000 acres of prime land. Uncle Hugo also was a major investor in the electric works in Camburg by Casekirchen, in the infant days of electricity. Uncle Hugo Eschenbach and his brother Otto Paul also had installed the stained glass windows in the church in Tuenschuetz. And Uncle Otto Paul Eschenbach, the last Besitzer of Tuenschuetz, not only ran his Gut, but had also started a Silver Fox Farm on the premises, which won him fame throughout Germany at that time. He was awarded a silver trophy cup for his endeavor. This cup has been in the possession of Werner Wilhelm. The silver fox farm was not successful only due to the timing of the endeavor. It was started at a time of great financial turmoil in Germany and buying a fox stole for the woman in his life was just not on the minds of the men in Germany who were struggling to restore some sort of normalcy to their lives and finances.



Lisa, ?,Hugo,Martha,Toska, Marg,Otto, Christa,



?,Toska,Lisa.?, ?,Emilia Bernhard, ?,Lydia,Martha, Otto, Richard, Otto, Herman Richard, Henny & Margarete



Bernhard Eschenbach

Many of the men in the Eschenbach family married millionaire women and the family was known in Germany throughout the 19th and 20th centuries as one of the most prominent large land owning families in the country. In fact even under the communists, who held wealth in contempt, honored the Eschenbachs with a memorial stamp which stated that they were long standing prominent farmers in Germany. So the Wilhelm family welcomed Martha Brehmer with open arms. But what no one reckoned with was the vast difference in their temperaments and family backgrounds. Dr. Wilhelm came from a lower class background, and on the Muller side of his family, which he took after, they had very high strung nervous systems and were real screamers, although they were none the less brilliant people. Martha, on the other hand, came from a family of high class, quiet, dignified people. Martha on the other hand, although coming from an excellent genetic background, was quite average in intelligence and couldn't hold a candle to her husband's brilliance. Martha was the vessel through which young Werner inherited much of his brilliance, but she herself did not inherit that which made so many of her family members exceptional. So Dr. Werner soon found himself unhappy, dissatisfied and frustrated. Martha just was not the conversationalist he expected and she was also not helping him in his practice. She was very calm and quiet and their personalities just did not mesh. He was a screamer and she cringed and tried to please him, without success. Plain and simple he had married her for her money and social position, and now discovered that it just wasn't worth it, that he didn't want to spend the rest of his life with that kind of personality. So when Charlotte came along, he was ripe for the picking and was an easy conquest.

After the divorce, and especially after the remarriage of Dr. Wilhelm to Charlotte Nael, poor Martha felt like a 5th wheel and soon set out to find herself another husband. Within 9 months she found another physician, Dr. Alfons Klodmann, a physician who practiced in Greitz. He was her age and had a very good reputation as a physician. So on the 10 of August, 1935 Martha married once more to Alfons Klodmann in a fine hotel in the neighborhood of Greitz, in Bad Kostritz. Unfortunately for Martha, this love was also star crossed and short lived - on the 5th of June, 1936 Martha received a phone call - her husband of 9 months was found face down dead, shot up with morphine and his wrists slashed in a Berlin hotel room. Martha was in a total state of shock and called Charlotte

and asked her to accompany her to Berlin to identify the body and make the necessary arrangements. Poor Martha, married twice, both times for her money and social position, without lasting success. Dr. Klodmann, shortly after his marriage to Martha, tried to mortgage her property given to her by her father in order to raise cash for himself. Richard Brehmer got wind of this and went into court in April, 1936 and obtained from the judge what amounted to a post nuptial prenuptial agreement, which stated what was Martha's was hers alone and Dr. Klodmann was to keep his hands off her property and money. From that time on, Dr. Klodmann started losing interest in Martha and turned instead to his secretary, with disastrous results. Dr. Klodmann practiced in Greitz, which was in the neighborhood from Zschippach, so I asked Werner what he was doing with his secretary in Berlin, which was miles and miles removed from Greitz. He replied that they were there for a medical conference, and while there the Doctor and his secretary supposedly had a mutual suicide pact, and after the doctor was shot up with morphine his wrists were slit and he bled to death. The secretary was seen leaving the motel room, alive and well. It was the general opinion that she did him in, however, due to the political climate of the Hitler era, her involvement in the suicide was never explored nor questioned. Also due to the political climate of the times, they were not able to bury him till over a month after he died. And Martha was made to pay for the cleaning up of the motel room where he bled to death all over the expensive oriental carpet.

Werner remembers something of his relationship with Dr. Klodmann and he had nothing but good to say about the man. Werner said he was always treated with dignity and respect by his stepfather and the doctor was always a gentleman. Werner said the doctor had a chauffeur driven limousine and whenever Werner and his mother wanted to go somewhere the doctor made his chauffeur and limo available. Werner also remembers being taken for ice cream with the doctor and his mother. But Werner's father and Charlotte stated that the doctor was a morphine addict and was after Martha's money. Shortly after the marriage, Martha went to Dr. Wilhelm, her ex-husband, and told him that Dr. Klodmann wanted a huge sum of money and what should she do about it? Dr. Wilhelm told her with disgust in his voice, "Why don't you ask your father that same question?" Evidently she did, as the court action followed shortly thereafter.



Rittergut Zschippach



Charlotte, Werner, Martha, Rosa Wilhelm & Waltrout Rau & ?

Richard Brehmer was sick about the situation of Dr. Wilhelm and his girlfriend living on the Villa property, property that he had bought as a wedding present for his daughter and which he intended to have turned over to his grandson, little Werner, when he was of age. So after the divorce was final, Richard bought a \$3 Million dollar estate for his daughter

& her son, on Rittergut Zschippach near Gera. It was an outstanding estate. It contained a 17 room mansion, a brick factory, a lime factory, a cemetery, a whole village of fine worker's houses, a church and many fine farm buildings. Martha was not able to move there immediately as there was a lessee there who refused to move after the sale, so Richard had to pay a small fortune in a settlement to get the man off the property. He had to buy his farm instruments, mostly all junk which he trashed afterwards, in order to get the man off the property. We have to greatly admire Richard Brehmer for his not inconsiderable efforts to acquire and set up Rittergut Zschippach for Martha and her son Werner as Richard was suffering on stomach and pancreas cancer at the time of the acquisition, and he worked long and hard on this project, despite his exhaustion and pain.



Martha Klodmann & Fritz Kraer

Richard knew that Martha had to have a good manager for the Rittergut as she did not know that much about running such an affair by herself, so after interviewing all the local prospects, he decided on hiring Fritz Kraer, the young son of the elder Mr. Kraer, who was a very respected farmer in the region. Richard liked the bright, forward leaning ideas of the young Kraer and he figured that when the boy got in a pickle, his wise old father could always help him out. Choosing the young Fritz Kraer as manager caused a lot of jealousy and hard feelings among the older candidates for the job as the older ones felt that they were better qualified due to age and experience, and in the end this jealousy cost young Fritz and his bride their lives, for at the end of the war some of the villagers denounced Fritz to the American occupational forces, he was picked up and thrown into concentration camp, and as a result of the sufferings and deprivations suffered there, he contracted leukemia and subsequently died, leaving behind a young wife and a new born daughter. The wife died shortly thereafter, and the daughter was left all alone in this world to be raised by Fritz Kraer's mother. But the Grandmother was very kind to her, and what is almost a small miracle, the Kraer house remained intact and she was able to reclaim it when she reached her majority. This indeed was a small miracle for the Russians and communists decided to put strangers in the house with the elder Mrs. Kraer and little Heidi. They both were forced to sleep in the kitchen as the communists said the young couple was of child bearing age and thus needed the bedroom. The daughter, Heiderose Kraer Baum now lives in that home with her husband and children and now her eldest daughter, Carmen Baum Oertel, is married and lives downstairs in that home with her husband and child Stephanie. Heidi's younger daughter Kirsten, her man Jorg and child Jenny have also built onto the same home and the extended family all live under the same roof. Heidi and her husband Jurgen are very pleased with the situation, saying that they are now set for their old age. It is a perfect arrangement. The younger ones all go out to work and Heidi who has had 3 hip surgeries, stays home caring for the children and cooking for the whole family. Werner felt very close to Heidi and felt very bad for what had happened to her and her parents. "I and my family had nothing to do with what had happened to them," Werner replied. "It was the Americans and the

Communists & the traitors in the village who did that to them. But still, they suffered because they were loyal to me and my mother, and for that I feel bad." That is why he left some money for Heidi and her grandchild Stephanie, whom he really liked. (He played cards with Stephanie and he cheated and she caught him at it and was very kind about calling him to task for his transgression, and for this reason he was really taken with her. He also greatly admired her high IQ and her advanced social skills.)



Martha Klodmann, Werner Wilhelm II & Rosa Wilhelm

Werner's fondest memories were of his days on Zschippach with his Mama Martha. Several weeks before he died, I asked Werner this question, "Werner, if you could be any place you wanted to be at any time in history, where would you be?" His answer, without further thought or hesitation was, "Back home on Zschippach with my Mama." He was also "into" having "high tea" at 4 p.m. daily in the last few weeks of his life, something he never did as a businessman prior to this. He told me at the end that if there is life after death, he will be home with his Mama Martha having high tea in the Wintergarten in his mansion on Zschippach every day at 4 p.m.

Here are some of Werner's fondest memories of his years on Zschippach:



Werner on horse „Bianca“



Werner on „Bianca“ with Rittergut workers



Werner on „Bianca, the horse

Waltrout was the daughter of Otto Rauh, one of the managers on Zschippach. She was the strong, stout, tomboy type and she was eminently suitable for working on the farm. One of her main occupations was to run the tractor in the fields, and she also handled teams of horses with expertise. Werner was always somewhat jealous of her skills and felt inadequate next to her. But Werner always explained the difference in their farming skills by pointing out that Waltrout was always on the farm, while Werner was sent away to school in Gera, and could only come home on weekends. And when he was home he

was not allowed to operate anything dangerous as he was their only child. Waltrout, on the other hand, was a most capable young girl and could handle most anything on the farm.

Otto Rauh also taught Werner some fundamentals of bare back riding, albeit on a very tame horse, and also started to teach him the basics of hitching a horse to a cart, going for a ride, then unhitching the horse. Werner was at school most of the time and when he was home his parents were very cautious about his safety, something that Werner also learned from them as they wanted to take no chances on losing their only son, so lessons in horsemanship were few and far between. So as a consequence Werner never learned any proficiency with handling horses. When Werner was on a horse on Zschippach most or all of the estate managers were on hand to assure his safety. We have several pictures of Werner on horseback on Zschippach. The handwriting on the pictures is that of his mother Martha Brehmer Wilhelm Klodmann. Werner was on a horse only once more in his lifetime, when he was in his thirties a girlfriend talked him into riding a rented horse with her. It was a gentle horse and there were no mishaps but Werner had a devil of a time getting on and off of that horse!

Just outside the mansion, a stream runs through the property. They dammed up the stream and made a delightful pond in the low part of the meadow by the house. Once per year the smelt would run through the stream. The managers would run nets in the pond and catch large amounts of smelt. The men would have a large wooden barrel filled with milk waiting for the smelt catch. As they caught the smelt, they would dump them into the barrel full of milk so they would "shit themselves out", to use Werner's expression. They would then build a fire outside and roast the smelt over a open fire, and everyone would have their fill of a hot roasted smelt dinner.



a black expensive Cornwall pig belonging to Martha Klodmann

Twice per year the managers would slaughter a pig. All the farm hands would join in the work, and after the pig was butchered down into the various cuts, they would then make the pork sausage, and each worker would then take home a piece of the pork sausage for his family.

A sad story regarding pig slaughtering. The Nazi's showed up at the Rittergut one day with a group of men in their open truck. They explained to Martha that these men were Ukrainian prisoners of war and that they were to sleep in her barns and help her with the farm work, and that they were assigned to her till the end of the war. Her fear over having foreign prisoners of war on her property were soon allayed, for these turned out to be really decent, hard working people. All summer long they worked themselves to the bone, from sunrise to sunset. And soon they found themselves at harvest time. These

men were the hardest working people she ever had, working themselves every day to a point just short of exhaustion. After two weeks of such hard physical labor in the fall bringing in the harvest, Martha and the managers agreed that the ban on letting these people have any meat to eat was ridiculous in the present set of circumstances. Martha was raising corn wall breeding pigs, a very expensive pig. They were black and much smaller than the usual cheaper variety of pink pig, and yielded much less meat and fat than the garden variety pink pig. So she made a deal with one of her managers' fathers, the old Mr. Kraer. She traded him a pink pig for a Cornwall one. Mr. Kraer was delighted for money wise he made out like a bandit. Martha was happy for now she had a lot more meat to feed the Ukrainian workers. They were under strict quotas for meat due to the Hitler regime and the war, and slaughtering a pig was forbidden for themselves, much less for the Ukrainian people. So they slaughtered the pig in secret, in a barn, in the dark with no one but the farm workers around. Well, there turned out to be a traitor in the crowd who notified the Nazis, who came out to Zschippach, found the pork, and arrested both Martha and Fritz and threw them into Buchenwald. Martha got out after 6 weeks detention because she was needed to produce food for the war effort, but her stomach was ruined from starving in Buchenwald, and she never fully recovered from that experience. Fritz was also later released, but his health also suffered. Years later, Werner found out from Otto Rauh, when he was in his 80's, that he too was sent to Buchenwald for his part in the pig slaughter, but he was not sent until Martha was released, so that there was always one manager on the Rittergut.

The Nazi's also showed up with another truck load of people that they dumped on Martha's doorstep - civilians from the big cities that wanted to escape the American and British bombings. Martha and Werner hated these people, all they did was complain and try to get out of the farm more food than they had ration stamps for. But they, on the other hand, had no intention of working. They were just squatters, unwelcomed visitors. Martha got rid of these people as fast as she was politically able to.



Richard Brehmer



?, Otto, Christa, Henny Brehmer, Martha, ?, Richard Brehmer

Grandfather Richard used to come visit with them in Zschippach, and he would like to play Scot, a German card game like Euchre, with the other older men in the village. Sometimes they played in the Wintergarten of the mansion, and other times Richard went to the Gasthaus around the corner from the mansion on the village road and played cards with the men there. Werner learned some of the basics of that card game from watching, and at the end of his life, in September and October of 1992 in Sebring, he played this card game first with the Baums from Zschippach, then with the Schroeders, the Burgermeister and his wife, from Grossobringen. Both sets of couples secretly told me

that I played with better finesse and strategy than Werner did, but that didn't matter. Werner always won no matter what he did, and no matter whether he fully understood the game or not. I sometimes wonder if someone from long ago in his family wasn't standing over his shoulder and whispering in his ear!



?, Martha Klodmann in Zschippach Wintergarten



Martha Klodmann & Charlotte Wilhelm in Wintergarten

The Wintergarten on Zschippach holds some of the happiest memories for Werner and his mother. The Wintergarten was a feature present on almost all Rittergut mansions. It was a large room, the upper half of the room all glass enclosed, and the room always faced south to catch the intensity of the winter sun. The families almost always entertained their guests in this room, and this room was the setting for 4 o'clock high tea in Werner's family. We have pictures of the Wintergarten at Rittergut Zschippach showing Mama entertaining her father Richard, Charlotte Nael Wilhelm and her 2<sup>nd</sup> husband, Dr. Alfons Klodmann. Rittergut Lehnstedt also had a lovely Wintergarten. After the Russians confiscated Lehnstedt and Uncle Otto and Aunt Henny were forced to flee to the west, Otto bought an apartment building in Gottingen and one of his first projects was to build a Wintergarten onto his personal apartment. This was the most enchanting part of his apartment and certainly a delightful place to sit and have a dinner or tea. On the two occasions that Werner and I visited Aunt Henny in Gottingen, she most lavishly entertained us in this most beautiful Wintergarten. To me those visits to Tante Henny were like a window on the past. I felt like I was in a Wintergarten of old, especially with that fine white wicker furniture and Tante Henny's enchanting presence. And walking back into the main body of the house one saw those exquisite pieces of furniture saved from Rittergut Lehnstedt. Massive fine wooden pieces, too large for the house but perfect for a massive Rittergut. A very sad reminder, I'm sure, for Tante Henny, for what she had lost due to the criminal communistic regime.

Fritz Kraer was always trying something new in his management of the Zschippach estate. One year he decided to try growing a different variety of onion that had never been tried in that part of Germany before. All the older farmers badmouthed Fritz's onion growing efforts, saying that the reason that those onions were never grown in Germany before was that they wouldn't grow in this kind of climate. Well, it turned out that the older farmers were partially right. That kind of onion just wasn't right for that part of Germany. The climate just wasn't right and also Rittergut Zschippach had a very sandy soil, not like the rich loam soil that Rittergut Lehnstedt had. Come harvest time, those onions were significantly undersized, so much so that they looked like overgrown green onions. The older farmers guffawed and said, "I told him so". Fritz felt kind of

bad, but he harvested these onions anyway and said to Martha that he would try to sell them on the highway along with the rest of the produce and see what happens. Werner happened to come home for the weekend just as the first batch of onions were put out on the highway for sale. Werner sat down for supper, and as he started to eat his dinner the first car pulled up to the vegetable stand. Werner offered to go out and sell the vegetables and let the older folks eat their dinner uninterrupted. Werner said he got an awful lot of exercise that weekend, most of it due to those darn dwarf onions. Word got out all over Gera that there was a farmer in Zschippach selling the most delicious new kind of onion in his vegetable stand, and people for miles around flooded to Zschippach to buy the dwarf onions. They kept raising the price of the onions and made much more money on them than if they had been full grown. Nothing further was heard from the older jealous farmers about young Fritz Kraer's dwarf onion folly!

Zschippach produced miles and miles of wheat fields, more than the eye could see in any direction. Come harvest time there was so much hundred weight of grain that it could not be transported very far and had to be milled locally if one was to make any real profit on it. There were two granaries that were in the right distance of Zschippach, one near Dorna and one near Brahmenau. Two Jewish men owned the granaries. They were related, and every Passover they sat down to dinner together and decided what was going to be the cost of processing the wheat. As a result of this dinner the price was fixed and it mattered not to which granary one took the wheat, the price was identical. Years later, Werner sneaked back to Zschippach when it was still under Communist rule to once again, after 40 years, get a glimpse of his most beloved estate lands. Getting to Zschippach was easier said than done. We took the train to Gera and got off there. We were scared to death in Gera, for in the train station every 5 feet flew a Russian or an East German flag. And standing under the multitude of flags, were over 300 Russian soldiers, all over 6 feet tall with broad shoulders and mean Eurasian appearing features. And suddenly there was a loud boom!, and the entire foundation of the train station shook. I asked, "What was that!" and someone replied that the Russians were playing war games in a near by field. We soon found we could not get a taxi as it was raining that day and the local people who normally walked, were utilizing the taxis. So Werner approached the desk of the Hotel in Gera where we had stayed overnight and asked them if they could find us a taxi. All the licensed ones were taken, they replied, but if we were willing to do something somewhat illegal, he could try to find us a "bootleg taxi" (schwarze taxi). Werner agreed, and soon a car pulled up and we were on our way to Zschippach. We soon learned that we were driving with Herr Schmeisser, the son of the granary owner in Brahmenau. Herr Schmeisser told us that, although he is Jewish, he survived very well under the Nazi system and made a fair amount of money. We were careful not to do anything illegal, and to keep our heads low, he explained. The disaster came after 1945 for him, as well as for many other Jews in the area, for the Russians did not like the Jews anymore than the Nazis did, and Herr Schmeisser was picked up by the Russians and thrown into Buchenwald in 1945 and he was not released until 1953, when there was such an uprising among the Germans over the Russian oppression that the Russians were afraid that the Americans might intervene unless they "lightened up" a little, which they did, in part by releasing the Jews and the Germans from Buchenwald. Werner asked Herr Schmeisser why he did not jump to the west after his release from Buchenwald. He

replied that his parents refused to leave East Germany and he did not want to leave his frail, elderly parents alone. When we were on Zschippach, Werner got out of the Taxi and began to walk around the village, but not in the vicinity of the mansion. Herr Schmeisser was quite insistent in asking Werner why he was on Zschippach. I had told Werner to answer that question by saying that he was a worker's son, had grown up there and wanted to see his childhood home again. That was the truth, I told Werner, and yet did not reveal his identity as the Rittergut owner, which would be very dangerous for him, as Werner had signed in the Gera jail that he would never return to this region. But, no, Werner could not leave it at that, for he was very proud of having been the owner of this large estate, so he said to Herr Schmeisser, "Do you remember Martha Klodmann, the owner of this estate?" Yes, replied Herr Schmeisser, even though I was but a boy at the time." Well, I am Werner, her son", Werner replied. I could have just about died on the spot! Oh, my God, I thought, now what's going to happen when we get back to Gera? I could have strangled dear little Werner's neck with my bare hands! We walked into the cemetery, to the cherry orchards and the stand of white birches, and then left and returned to Gera. Herr Schmeisser drove us right up to the front of the train station, then got out of his car, walked up to a Russian General, and had a very involved conversation, and I was sure I knew just who was the topic of conversation! If they take Werner and not me, how am I ever going to get him back out of here, I wondered. But miraculously, they looked with mild interest our way, then walked on. Whew!



Rosa Wilhelm with Werner on the ledge above the door

When Werner was on Zschippach he showed me where the Herrn Haus ( 17 room mansion) stood before the Russians tore it down in 1945. He then showed me where there was a ledge over the stairs where he used to sit when he was a boy. He told me he had a picture of himself sitting on that ledge with his grandmother standing under him on the ground below. When the hated Pendorf came out to the estate with the scroll in his hand in order to proclaim that he was confiscating Zschippach "in the name of the people" (no one has ever been able to figure out just who "the people" are), he jumped up onto this very same ledge that Werner was sitting on in order to make himself appear more impressive. Werner really hated that guys guts and he really wanted to do the guy dirt, but by the time Werner got back to Zschippach, Pendorf was dead and buried in Werner's cemetery. You can bet your bottom dollar that if Werner ever got Zschippach back in his lifetime the first thing he would do would be to evict Pendorf from his cemetery. Some morning early as cars were passing by they would notice a partially decayed skeleton laying by the side of the road.



Rittergut Dorna

A very cute story about the Willi Berger family, the Gut owners in neighboring Dorna. The Dorna Gut lands directly abut up against the Zschippach lands, and contain about 320 acres, more or less. The Berger family on the mother's side is a cousin to Werner's mother Martha, having Brehmer ancestry in common. One day Martha invited the Berger family to dinner for the express purpose of having the Berger girls and her son Werner become acquainted. The Bergers and Martha had previously discussed how advantageous it would be if Werner would marry one of the Berger girls as the Berger father had said if that were to happen he would deed all of his Gut and the neighboring lands to the daughter that married Werner so that the 2 estates could be combined into one. No way was Werner hot on this prospect as both girls were older than him and ran over him like a steam roller. Asked later which girl he preferred he said Marianna, that Liselotte was far too bossy. When Liselotte was asked by her parents what she thought of little Werner, she replied, "oh, he's so cutely cross eyed!". Werner was heartily offended by that and never got over that remark. "I was never cross eyed!" was always his reply to that remark. The Berger family remained on the Gut until 1960, then fled to the west at the last possible moment. Marianne divorced, then remarried an owner of a brewery and is very well off. The Bergers should get all of their land back as they did not leave until after 1948. But alas, the Gut no longer stands, having burned to the ground in the 1980s.

When Werner went to the Schiller Schule in nearby Gera, he decided to bring a classmate home for the weekend with him, Wolfgang von Graebitz. Wolfgang was a very late in life child, had very weak eyes to the point that they could not be fully corrected with glasses, and was quite frail and small in stature. However, the kid was absolutely brilliant and was an outstanding musician. Wolfgang assured Werner that he absolutely could not go home with him for the weekend as he had to spend hours daily on the piano in order to polish up his musical skills. Werner told him that was no problem, that his mother had a fairly new piano he could practice on. Wolfgang used to dazzle the class with his piano playing skills by playing 4 handed on the piano with the teacher. So Werner talked Wolfgang into a pajama party one weekend at Zschippach. Right after he got there and put his things in the guest room he went straight to the piano and started practicing. Soon the boy let out an agonizing sounding howl that set everybody's ears at attention. They all came running into the salon to see what the problem was. Wolfgang was absolutely hysterical. My ears!, the kid screamed, my ears! This piano is so out of tune it hurts my ears! I can't even think of practicing on it! Martha was quite put out as she and her family used this fairly new piano regularly and no one else's ears were ever

offended by it, in fact it sounded fine to everyone else. But Wolfgang's ears were very fine tuned, indeed, and he knew what sounded right and what didn't.

So, let's go out and play, little Werner suggested to his friend. So Werner and his friend went outside and got a couple of bikes out of the barn and they started riding down the road next to the Rittergut. Bad choice again. First off, bike riding was not Wolfgang's forte. Secondly, Wolfgang never had to contend with livestock, so when an animal started making a lot of noise and chasing after Wolfgang, he went hysterical again, fell off his bike and skinned his knees. When he caught the sight of blood running from his knees, he couldn't contain himself. The whole village knew of his terror. He was out of his skin, he was so upset. Martha and the farm managers looked at one another as they washed and dressed the knees of this wailing banshee and with unspoken communication they knew what they were going to do with this city boy. They dropped him in the middle of a farm wagon, hitched up the horses, and drove him home, and that was the end of his farm visit. Werner often talked of Wolfgang in his later years, saying that he is sure that Wolfgang is a Professor of music somewhere famous, probably in Vienna and that he wished he could see him again. Werner felt sorry for Wolfgang as he lost his elderly father at a very young age and was raised by an equally elderly mother. In such an environment, the poor kid was old before his time.

Werner had his own study that his mother especially furnished for him. All the pieces were made out of solid cherry wood, and Werner just loved this room, especially the cherry wood desk. But this room also held the bitterest of memories for Werner, memories that he carried to his death with him. Werner and his mother were picked up, along with all the other large land owners, and thrown into prison in September, 1945 as a result of the Russian "Agrarian Reform", and when Werner got out of prison 6 weeks later he discovered that the Russians had flattened his mother's 17 room mansion to make sure that they would never return. So Werner made a formal petition to the Russian prison officials for the return of his cherry wood student's furniture, wherever it might be. Like all other correspondence of that time with the Russians, his request was ignored. Shortly before he died he once again said to me, "I wonder what happened to my cherry wood student's furniture. I have searched and asked everyone, and no one knows what happened to my cherry wood furniture."

Shortly after Werner's death, I sent death notices to his relatives in Germany, and in April, 1993 I received a letter from his cousin Helga Eberlein Fichter, daughter of Willy Eberlein and Martha Eschenbach, who was the daughter of Otto Paul Eschenbach, the last owner of Tunschütz before the Russian occupation. Helga said in her letter that her family for years and years had had Werner's cherry wood furniture in their home in Tunschütz, but that when they fled to the west in 1953 the furniture was left in the Gut in Tunschütz and they do not know its whereabouts after that. How Werner would have loved to have known that! And to think that he had met Helga twice in September and October of 1991 and had never thought to ask that question!

The second tragic story that wound itself around Werner's cherry wood desk involved his father, Dr. Wilhelm. Dr. Wilhelm decided out of the blue to establish a canned god's

factory on his ex wife's property in Zschippach, and so one day, while still married to his second wife, the doctor moved into Martha's mansion in Zschippach and lived with her again while establishing a sauerkraut canning factory behind her house. (This canning factory idea that the doctor dreamed up would have made the families millionaires had the Russians not intervened and destroyed the free enterprise system as the factory was conceived in the right place at the right time otherwise. Gera was an excellent location, Martha owned her own railway line coming right into the canning factory area for loading and unloading, Martha was growing the cabbage herself, and the public couldn't get enough of his newly canned product. Dr. Wilhelm was going to expand into many other products as well once he got himself fully operational.) But family relationships were strained due to the divorce and they started getting on each other's nerves and poor Werner became the target of his father's discontent. So one Saturday evening, sitting at Werner's cherry wood desk, the father wrote a letter to his brother Kurt Wilhelm and his wife Gerti expressing his strong discontent with his son, Werner. He wrote many things against poor Werner in this letter, and told his brother and sister in law how disappointed he was in the boy, and that in contrast, how happy he was with his little daughter Astrid, and that "Astrid is my star and my world rises and sets around her." The father then rewrote this letter, as he often did, and threw the first copy in Werner's waste basket next to the desk. Werner and his mother found this copy later and were very hurt and upset that the father would sit in their house at his son's desk and talk against him. They felt that this was unforgivable, and Werner never forgot this. Years later, when Uncle Kurt was visiting Werner in Utica, they spoke of this letter and Kurt was as upset with his brother as Werner was.



Werner on Vallanca on Rittergut Zschippach

Werner was on the horses on his estate only occasionally, and only with a manager in attendance as they did not want him injured. Werner was never at home on horseback, and his horsemanship days were for show only. He trotted along for a few feet only, then was taken off the horse before anything happened. We have a few cute pictures of him on the back of "Vallanca".

One day Werner decided that he was going to take a horse and wagon ride "solo" as he felt he was old enough to handle the horse and wagon. So the managers hitched up the horse to the wagon and gave Werner directions on which route to take that the horse was familiar with. Werner handled the horse and wagon fairly well for a novice and got there and back with his dignity intact, or so he thought. Werner got down from the wagon after

having parked it next to the mansion, and he was in the process of removing the harness from the horse when as a sudden the horse spotted his girlfriend down in yonder pasture on the other side of the mansion, and knowing Werner carried no authority, he started off at a dead trot. When everyone saw what was happening, all hell broke loose as the path the horse intended to take was a very narrow one, as it was bounded on one side by the mansion and the other side by the gate and fence and could barely accommodate the horse, and the wagon was still half attached to him! Unable to do anything else, Werner jumped to one side as the horse came flying through, and the wagon broke into splinter-eens when it smashed up against the house and fence. The horse was also somewhat injured in the melee, but did recover. Werner's dignity never did recover, and the people on the estate are still laughing over this escapade to this very day.

Werner and his mother were very proud of Zschippach and made many plans for its future together. When Martha first took over she planted a whole cherry orchard, which produces a multitude of cherries to this very day, but not to the point that it would if had been cultivated by western standards. The Wustenhain section of the estate held special appeal to Martha and she dreamed of building a hunter's cabin in those woods and going there for a holiday with little Werner. They had many plans for trying out different kinds of crops that had not been grown in that part of Germany before. And of course they realized that Vati had an excellent thing going with his canned goods factory. But all of this was not to come to pass, for in September of 1945 the Americans made a secret deal with the Russians, trading one small sector of Berlin for all of Thuringen, and overnight Thuringen went from being in the American sector to being behind the Iron Curtain for 44 years.

And then there were the sad and tragic stories connected with Zschippach:



Peter, Werner's Spitz

Werner had one beloved dog in his childhood years, Peter. When Werner was 5 years old he noticed that someone in the village had a black Spitz. Werner told his mother he would like to have one just like that, but he would prefer a white one. So soon after that Martha bought him a white Spitz which they named Peter. Peter went to live with them on Zschippach, and that dog just loved the freedom to roam the fields, both alone and with Werner. When Werner was home he and the dog were inseparable. The dog slept in the house when Werner was home and at high tea time Werner's mother would serve the dog hot chocolate either in the kitchen or in the Wintergarten. One day Werner decided that he wanted a professional picture taken of Peter so he convinced his mother to take Peter to a photographer in Gera to have his picture taken. After the photographer

took Peter's picture, he convinced Werner and his mother to have their pictures taken together. That is why we have the lovely oval shaped picture today of Werner and his mother together, taken when Werner was about 8 years old. We used this picture on the back of our wedding booklet, and when I entombed Martha in Holy Sepulchre below her son Werner, I placed in her crypt this picture and a picture of Zschippach.

Every time Werner came home from school in Gera he looked for Peter, who usually came running out on the road to greet him. This time when the farm worker came with his horse and wagon to pick Werner up from school, he seemed quieter and sadder than usual. When Werner got home, at first there was no Peter to greet him. Then Martha told the white Spitz to run out and greet Werner. The Spitz came outside, but did not respond to his name when Werner called him. Werner scrutinized the dog and decided that the dog did not look like Peter, was too small, and the personality was not that of Peter. Also, he did not respond to Werner at all. Werner confronted his mother with these facts and she tearfully admitted it was not his beloved Peter. When pressed for an explanation she told Werner the following tale. It was harvest time and the workers went into the field with the thrashing machines, cutting down the wheat. Peter joyfully followed the workers as he always did, and suddenly the workers lost track of Peter in the high wheat and unknowingly Peter suddenly cut across in front of the thrasher and the machine cut half of his two front paws off. The dog was in shock, then in horrible pain and bleeding profusely. One of the workers ran and got a gun and shot the dog through the head, thus ending the life of Werner's beloved little fluffy white companion. Werner never got close to a dog again until he was over 50 years old and bought a German Shepherd in Utica which he named "Bear". Mama Martha later told Werner the rest of this story. She was frantic with worry about how the death of Peter would affect little 10 year old Werner so she decided to buy another white Spitz, hoping Werner would not notice the difference. After she bought the Spitz, and just before Werner was due home, the darn Spitz ran away and couldn't be found anywhere. So Martha bought a second Spitz for Werner and shortly after the ruse, the first Spitz came back home and now Martha had 2 Spitzes. But Werner never took to these 2 dogs nor to any other dog his Mama or his father purchased. His heart belonged to Peter and he was faithful to him alone.

Werner and his Mama had several more close calls in the Nazi era due to her lack of enthusiasm with the Nazi regime. One time the Nazis showed up and said that they heard that she had a huge picture of von Hindenburg in her home but none of Hitler. That was true so Martha was sweating bullets, wondering what to do to get herself out of this pickle. Young Werner, who was home at that time, saved the day. He said, "Sir, we have a picture of Hitler prominently displayed. It's in my study so I can gaze on it every day when I do my homework." He then took them to his cherry wood study and showed them a small picture of Hitler that was tacked up on the wall. That was sufficient to get the whole family out of hot water for the time being.

Another time the Nazis were back, this time on a complaint that Martha was displaying the flag of the pre-Hitler regime instead of the Nazi flag. Again, this was the truth, but once more, Werner saved the day. That old flag is just a conservative decoration that

goes along with the era, he told the Nazis. I have the Swastika displayed on the wall of my cherry wood study. Which he did, and once again they left satisfied that this family was at least paying lip service to the Nazis. Years later, just before Werner died, he and the Baum family were discussing how many traitor families there must have been in Zschippach at that time as someone was always turning in someone else in the village for non compliance with the regime, be it Nazi or Communist, or even American during their brief occupation of Thuringen. To this day they are not sure who the skunks were other than Pendorf and Rotfuchs, whose devotion to the system was open and obvious.



Otto Rauh, Werner Wilhelm II & Clara Rauh

Recently Werner received letters from Otto Rauh, which he returned promptly and with affection. Whenever we went to Germany we made a point of visiting Otto Rauh as he was a most loyal and devoted manager to Werner and his mother and Werner was most grateful for all that Otto had done for the Wilhelm family over the years. When the Rittergut was confiscated by the Communists in 1945 Otto did everything in his power to get the Rittergut returned to Martha and her son. Otto wrote letters and even went to the government, telling them what a good manager Martha was and trying to get her estate back for her, all to no avail. Otto went to jail several times due to his loyalty to Martha, so Werner was very grateful to him. But Werner always warned me that Otto's wife Clara was not loyal and came close several times to getting him and his mother in hot water with the authorities, so I was to be very careful as to what I did or said in front of her. So when Otto died the relationship between the Rauh's and Werner cooled right off, and in fact became downright frigid. Clara was furious over this and wrote Werner, and after his death, me some very scathing letters saying after all she did for Werner and his mother she did not deserve to be treated like this. I was not around in those days so I have no opinion of my own in this matter and have to rely on Werner's and the Baum's judgment. And the Baums are very much against Clara Rauh, saying that she was a traitor. Clara and her children had some very acrimonious words for the Baum family, accusing them of "having stolen Werner from them".

Another sad Zschippach story was Werner's confirmation. Werner was one year late being confirmed because his academic studies the year before were too heavy for him to be able to study for Confirmation too, so Confirmation was put off one year. The next year only girls were being confirmed and Werner was a little shy and embarrassed in being in a class of all girls, but somehow he persevered and made it through. But as with his baptism, he being of a prominent family, it was decided that he was to be the only one confirmed that day, so it was set up for him to be confirmed in the village church in Zschippach, which his mother owned. Pastor Papp was on hand to confirm him, and all the relatives from both sides of the family were on hand for this big event, all that is

except Charlotte and Werner's new half sister Astrid, who grandmother Rose Wilhelm, among others, decided were definitely declassé, and not at all welcome at this family gathering. Needless to say, that made Dr. Wilhelm feel uncomfortable and out of sorts to have half of his family ostracized from this family gathering. So he was very grumpy and embarrassed himself twice over before this day was over. The gathering was held in the two large dining rooms which were adjoining, and each of which had brand new gorgeous and expensive parquet flooring freshly laid. There were over 40 people, all relatives, at the confirmation. The entire village was watching to see what kind of meat Martha was going to serve her guests as she just got out of Buchenwald for butchering the pink pig, and most meats were rationed and it was forbidden to butcher them for your own use. Martha got around this interdict by raising turkeys for the celebration as turkeys were not rationed. It was a grand occasion and the food was splendid, having been catered by one of the finest hotels in Gera. After the dinner the guests began presenting Werner with his gifts. The father knew that Martha had bought Werner a gold watch for the occasion, so he bought Werner a thick gold chain to go with the watch. The watch was presented first, and when Dr. Wilhelm saw that the watch had a thin gold chain attached to it, he quietly put the thick gold chain back into his pocket and Werner received no confirmation gift from his father. Then the biggest faux pas of all occurred when Dr. Wilhelm started complaining to Werner's Uncle Otto Brehmer in front of others how stupid Werner was and that he was afraid that the kid was going to flunk out of high school, and if he should flunk out, would Uncle Otto take him on his Rittergut Lehnstedt and make a decent farmer out of Werner? Uncle Otto, listening to this diatribe in front of the other relatives, was embarrassed for Dr. Wilhelm, and said quietly that he would be glad to teach Werner farming, but that he would not have the chance to do so as Werner was a very bright boy and would not be flunking out of high school. Otto had not received a certificate of maturity from a German high school, but had instead went on to 2 years of college to study farming, as most of the Rittergut owners of his day had done, and like Uncle Herbert Eschenbach wished he had received the certificate and completed 4 years at the University. And Uncle Otto was certainly expecting young Werner to complete the high school and university 4 year curriculum. Uncle Otto, being very much a gentleman, with kind and soft spoken ways, did not appreciate the loud and rough ways of Dr. Wilhelm, especially at a family gathering honoring the very child he was tearing down in public.



Henny & Otto Brehmer in Wachtberg



Dr. med Werner Wilhelm

As was stated earlier, the church in Zschippach belonged to the Rittergut Besitzer, in this case, Werner's mother. She was expected to completely support the church and the pastor, and in her bill of sale it specifically spells out how much grain and produce was to be given to the church for its needs per year. Pastor Papp was the minister in Werner's

years on the Rittergut & he served their needs well. Zschippach was not his only parish, he traveled to many of the small surrounding villages and performed services for them as well. The church figured prominently in the lives of the farmers in that village. Every day at high noon the Angeles bells in the church tower would ring and every worker would stop working, face the church tower, the men would remove their hats, and everyone would send up a few fervent prayers to God before heading home for the noon time meal. And Peter would howl! The religiously inclined workers said that Peter was praying, but the bad tongues would say that the church bells hurt his ears! Shortly after Werner's death a eerie experience happened in Werner's home in his downstairs rec room. I was sorting through his 30 year old things from the Wyoming and Dix apartment days when suddenly a clock that had never been touched in over 30 years suddenly began clanging its alarm clock bells, and simultaneously a dog just outside the house howled. What is going on, I wondered, and checked my watch immediately for the time. It was exactly high noon, with all three hands on my watch pointing straight up. I then went to Wil Mar to eat lunch, and at once it came to me what had happened and my hair stood on end thinking about it. Werner told me if there was life after death he would be back on Zschippach, and with this he was reminding me of his Peter and the church bells on Zschippach at high noon. Just one more demonstration for me that he was alive and well, had survived death and was back at home on his beloved Zschippach!

Werner's school years in Gera were some of the toughest years of his life for several reasons. The academic demands on him during his high school years were horrendous and he was in constant fear of flunking out. Life would have been much easier for him had they been peaceful years instead of war years, but due to the war there was much turmoil in his family's life. There was also the divorce and the double remarriages with their attendant adjustments which left Werner out in the cold as he was the fifth wheel for a number of years. Then he was given to Charlotte's mother until her death from pneumonia, which Werner felt was his responsibility. Then Werner was sent to the Schiller School in Gera and was boarded out with a stodgy old professor and his family. Werner's father and Charlotte then went to Derenburg to run Uncle Kurt's pharmacy as Uncle Kurt was in Russia fighting for the 3rd Reich and his first wife was dying of consumption and there was no one to care for his 6 year old son, Fritz. Werner's mother's marriage to Dr. Klodmann was going very sour, especially in light of the fact that her father was taking Dr. Klodmann to court to make sure that he kept his hands off of Martha's money and property. And Martha's father was dying of stomach and pancreas cancer, was in terrible distress and was spending much time at either Lehnstedt or in the university hospital in Jena. Werner was only about 5 miles away from Rittergut Zschippach, but due to the turmoil Martha was not letting him come home weekends and he was left all alone in Gera with a professor who showed him no interest or kindness. Werner was in great emotional distress and was begging Mutti and his father to come and get him or to let him stay in Derenburg with them. Dr. Wilhelm and Charlotte were having their own personal crisis at the time. Mutti was in Derenburg for awhile, had established a close friendship with a Mr. Tucher there, and suddenly after 13 years of a childless marriage, she found she was pregnant with Astrid. So at that time in the family's life, Werner did not fit in anywhere. In his childhood Werner was often finding himself to be the poor little rich kid that seemed to have lots of money but no personal

attention from the professional people who professed to have his best interests at heart, but who had little time to spend with him due to professional and personal commitments elsewhere.



Werner & Astrid Wilhelm

When Astrid was born, Werner was upset and disgusted. He had no use for another child in the family. He had been the only child for 13 years and that was the way he wanted it. He said when he held the infant Astrid in his arms all he felt was jealousy at having to share his parents' affection and attention and disgust over the new baby. If it had been a boy, that would have been even worse, he had said to me.

Werner said that during his school years in Gera the 3 smartest kids in his class all had last names beginning with the letter "W", Wilhelm, Willing and Weisse. Werner was always acknowledged by his teachers as being a very smart, but rather mentally and physically lazy kid. But they all realized that when it came to money, Werner was brilliant without equal and had every interest in that subject.

Werner said that the elder professors who taught them always were having fits over the mental sluggishness of him and the other boys in his class. He loved repeating what one professor was always telling them in his class, "boys, boys, boys, getting you through your certificate of maturity is harder than getting a camel through the eye of a needle!"

Another story Werner was fond of telling over and over again from his Schiller Schule days was the following. The subject in history at that time was Bismarck. The boys were told to study this man's life and be prepared to answer questions the next day in class. Werner did not study at all and the next day the professor gazed upon Werner's dreamy face and soon figured out that Werner was not following the class discussion at all, so he decided to make a monkey's uncle out of Werner in front of the class. The professor asked Werner one question after another about Bismarck and Werner could answer none of them. Werner was starting to sweat a little when the professor told him he was about to send a pink slip home to the parents, which was a very serious thing in those days as it was a warning to the parents that the kid was close to being expelled. So Werner woke up a little and started looking worried. The professor then decided to try to give the kid a break and asked him, "Tell me anything you know about Bismarck!!". Werner thought hard, then came up with this brilliant idiom that Bismarck once said. "Bismarck once said", Werner related loud and forcefully, "that you should not study history, you should make history!" The professor thought that that was a very clever way of working one's way out of a difficult situation, and gave Werner a passing grade in history that day.

Werner said that under the Hitler system it was treacherous to try to hide your faults and transgressions if challenged by a person in authority. If you were asked by the teacher or by the police, etc. "Who did this", and you were the guilty party, the easiest way out with the least amount of punishment is to jump up and say in a loud voice, "I did that Sir!". If you immediately admitted your fault and said you were sorry and looked like you were sorry, then usually you got away with little or no punishment and were given a second chance. Several times in America in his later years when Werner had problems with the local governments, he would mumble and grumble that the American legal system was worse than under the Nazis, that at least with the Nazis if you admitted you were wrong and said you were sorry all was forgiven.

Werner had a high old time on the train on the way home from school once which could have gotten him into a concentration camp if it wasn't for the fact that his father knew the train officials and handled the situation with kid gloves. Werner wrote up a flier and then made hundreds of copies. The flier was written as though it was done by the Americans and he scattered the fliers all over the countryside from the back of the train as his classmates looked on in amusement. Stay awake tonight and watch, for your liberation is close at hand, said the flier. No one under the Hitler regime thought that message was very funny and the flier was shortly brought to the attention of Dr. Wilhelm. Dr. Wilhelm took a deep breath, thought real fast, then came up with a brilliant solution. The doctor went to Werner's bedroom, counted out the amount of money that Werner had saved up, and suggested to the train official that they fine him that exact amount of money. The train official went along with the suggestion and Werner said it took him a long time to figure out how the fine came to the exact amount of money he had saved up.



Werner Wilhelm II & Rosa Wilhelm

Werner was the favorite grandchild of his grandmother Rose Wilhelm and he got to visit with her on occasion. One of Werner's fondest memories of his Grandmother Rosa was the fact that when he graduated from high school she was very proud of his accomplishment and made a big fuss over him. She said that his graduation from high school reminded her of an earlier time when her own son Werner graduated and how proud she had been of him, her first born son and the first in her family to graduate. Werner said that grandmother Rosa was the only one who gave him any recognition for having completed a very formidable task under difficult circumstances.



Martha Bamberg, Erhard Wilhelm & Rosa Wilhelm



Erhard Wilhelm

When he went to visit grandmother Wilhelm, it was usually Uncle Erhard Wilhelm who came to pick him up in his touring car, the "Adler" (which means Eagle). It was a real neat expensive car and the pride of the Wilhelm family. Uncle Erhard was very fond of taking long trips with his Adler and taking the family with him. Werner got to go on a number of these neat trips with the Wilhelms. One of the trips that Werner remembers best was the trip to Dresden with Erhard, his grandmother Rosa, his Aunt Martha Bamberg and Erhard's 20 year girlfriend (and who was also his cousin), Irmgard. Werner said they had picnics along the way and camped by the roadside in a tent at night. He was totally taken by the city of Dresden and remembers it as one of his best vacations to this day. Shortly afterwards World War II broke out and Erhard was one of the first to be drafted due to his government status and due to the fact that he was a single man without children. Erhard was not long into the military service when his family got a black bordered telegram saying that Erhard was no more.



Erhard



Erhard



Erhard



Erhard

Uncle Erhard was one year younger than Dr. Wilhelm and was an intelligent man, although not nearly as intelligent as the doctor was. Dr. Wilhelm put Erhard through the university and afterwards Erhard got a job as a government official. Erhard took a lot of interest in the Wilhelm home at Rossbacher Strasse 2a in Naumburg and helped his father August with the transporting of the marble statues and carvings, and also with the upkeep of the home. Erhard did all the decorating and stuccoing and painting of the homestead, and until last year, all the interior of the home is the way Erhard left it when he went off to war. Kurt Wilhelm the youngest son, also tells of his having to help his father pull the flatbed wagon up the cemetery hill by hand as his father was getting too weak to do it himself. The father did all of the carving in the garages behind the house and had a show room window in what is now the first of the front parlors, the first room to your left after you enter from the front door. When they sold a cemetery marker or a statue, they had to get it from the house at the bottom of the hill, up the steep hill to the cemetery. Kurt said the flat bed had a rope on it, and he would sling the rope over his shoulder and pull. The only boy that appeared to have inherited any of the two August Wilhelm's truly remarkable artistic ability was Erhard, but he was not as good as the forefathers.

Surprisingly, our Werner did inherit some of this ability and was able to draw some truly beautiful landscapes. But drawing landscapes didn't make money, so Werner never did develop this talent. Stone cutting lead to the demise of the second August Wilhelm as he had a lot of stone dust in his lung and lost part of his lung. He died due to an inability to breathe, but in looking at the rest of the family, I feel that this was due in most part to the congestive heart failure suffered by all the rest of the Wilhelms, especially in light of the fact that August Wilhelm was 81 years old when he died.



August II in his workshop



August II



August II's painting



August II's painting

The one big hurrah in the second August Wilhelm's life was when he organized a big protest of all the stone cutters and their helpers in the park in order to demonstrate for better wages. August was truly a renowned artist, but in those days being an artist was a breadless art, as they were paid very little for their efforts. The outstanding success in his life occurred when the German government was looking for an artist to remake the face of the "Ute", a very famous German statue that was first carved in the Naumberger Cathedral in the 11 hundreds, and whose face had been destroyed by vandals. Of all the artists who submitted proof of their work August was commissioned to do the work. So the face you see on the "Ute" today was carved by Werner's grandfather, August Wilhelm. The statues of the Ute and her husband are very interesting in that they were carved in full life size in those days, and today these people look like children in stature because they are so short compared to present day people!

Erhard's brother Kurt Wilhelm was all of his life the born loser. Kurt was drafted one year before the war began and was not released from the Russian Prisoner of War camp in Siberia until October, 1946. Kurt was married in 1938, and little 10 year old Werner was his flower boy. Werner was very worried about having to serve in this capacity as he had to memorize a long passage that he had to recite during the marriage ceremony, and he was scared to death he might flub it. But Werner performed brilliantly and was adorable in his little white sailor suit that he wore for that occasion. But poor Kurt did not fair so well. In looking back over his marriage, Kurt was sure that his wife and her parents knew that she had tuberculosis but concealed this fact from him so he would marry her. Shortly after they were married his wife was expecting his son Fritz, but Kurt never got a chance to enjoy his son as they drafted him into the army. The next year the war broke out and Kurt was a soldier for the duration of the war. In the beginning Kurt was stationed in France, but after France fell and things got hot in Russia, he was moved to the Russian front. Kurt fought for years in Russia, and in 1944 Kurt was one of the troops that was storming Moscow. Suddenly Kurt heard all of the officers shouting to the troops that they were completely surrounded by the Russians and that every man should try to save his own life. Just then a bullet went whizzing into Kurt's helmet and struck him along the side of the head. The curved design of the helmet kept the bullet from penetrating into Kurt's brain, so the wound was a non-lethal one.

Kurt was then captured by the Russians and was force marched to a Siberian Prisoner of War camp. Shortly after he arrived in the camp he contracted malaria. He had no protective clothing as winter approached, so he darn near froze to death. Not to mention almost starving to death from lack of proper food. When I asked Kurt what the most horrible part of his war experience was, he laughed until tears ran down his cheeks, his voice cracked, and he said in breathless laughter, "the body lice!" And he started scratching himself just thinking of the lice. Ooh, they were awful, he laughed. One consequence of Kurt's Prisoner of War experience was that nothing ever fazed him after that. Kurt calmly faced whatever came in life. He said after Siberia, nothing ever mattered that much anymore. He said no matter what happened during the course of a day, he knew that come nightfall he'd have a good dinner and a warm bed waiting for him.

Kurt said that in October of 1946, just as the snow was flying the Russians suddenly opened the gates of the camp and told the men to head for home. Kurt said he started walking home with no shoes and no shirt. He said he got real lucky. The first night a Russian farmer let him sleep in his barn and also gave him a shirt to wear. The second night he also found a barn to sleep in and the guy gave him a pair of old shoes to wear. It didn't matter that the shoes didn't fit, at least they kept his feet from freezing. He said sometimes he could hop the Russian train for awhile until they came to a place where the tracks were blown up, then they had to walk again until they found a stretch of track with a train on it. Eventually he walked in the front door of his parent's home in Naumburg. The family were flabbergasted as they were sure he was dead since it was 1947 and they had heard nothing of or from him for years. When Dr. Wilhelm saw the pathetic shape his brother Kurt was in, with malaria and nothing but a 103 lb. bag of bones and suffering from frostbite and utter exhaustion, he predicted that Kurt would not live another year. But Kurt surprised them all, living way beyond Dr. Wilhelm, and almost longer than his son Werner, having died in 1988 at the age of 81. But Kurt was in for one shock after another now that he was home. He came in to the home to find his beloved mother Rosa with her legs swollen up like tree trunks, open sores all over her lower legs, on her death bed, just about gone from heart failure. And he learned that his brother Erhard had been dead for years in Russia. And to his utter shock he learned that his wife was dead of consumption and the family did not even know where his son was! And now his very prosperous pharmacy in Derenburg was under Communist control, so that was the end of his prosperity. At least the pharmacy was saved for his return as Charlotte ran it for him in his absence.



Erhard Wilhelm & Fritz Wilhelm

Kurt went searching for the son he never even knew as he was off to war before the child was born. He found the son after a long search and was sick when he heard what his son had to say about his mother's last hours. When his wife knew that the end was very near she called her 6 year old son to her side and gave him a hand written will that she had just completed. The will gave to her son the money and property that had belonged to her. She told the boy to guard the will and give it to the Wilhelm side of the family when he next saw them. She explained to him what a will was and how valuable that piece of paper was for his future. Fritz put the will in his pocket and when he went to bed that night someone slipped into his bedroom and removed the will from his pocket. Without that piece of paper, Fritz never inherited his mother's possessions.



Rosa Wilhelm

Kurt stayed in Naumburg to visit with his mother in her last days. For months on end, Rosa Wilhelm lay in her small bedroom in the back next to the kitchen as she was no longer strong enough to get up. Finally, the end came and the family laid her out in this same bedroom. After the wake was over, the funeral wagon came, and her body was transported up the steep hill across the street from her home on Roszbacher Strasse to the cemetery at the top of the hill. The final religious services were conducted in the second chapel at the entrance to the cemetery where there stands a row of chapels. From the chapel the family walked behind the wagon as her body was conducted to the Wilhelm family plot, where generations of Wilhelms have been laid to rest. The grave digger continues digging down until he strikes either a wooden coffin or bones. Then he quits digging and the burial takes place at that level. The graves can be dug up to three graves deep, one coffin being placed on top of another. The Wilhelm family grave markers contain multiple names, showing all of the persons buried in that plot. The Wilhelms have 3 plots side by side, for a total of 9 possible grave plots. These plots are used over and over again as the coffins and bodies disintegrate with time. At a much later date, when Werner, Uncle Kurt and I visited the Wilhelm family plot, Aunt Martha came along with us and stared at the 3 plots with a serious frown on her face. Kurt later told us that

as Martha became sicker, she started visiting the family plot on a daily basis, staring at each of the 3 plots. Finally, years later, one of the plots was sunk in when she came to look at it. The relief on her face was evident. "Oh, good, now there is a place for me to be buried since one of the wooden coffins has disintegrated!", she sighed.



Woodlawn, Kurt's 1<sup>st</sup> resting place



Kurt's crypt in Holy Sepulchre

Surprisingly to me, Uncle Kurt chose not to have himself and his second wife Gerti buried in the Wilhelm family plot in Naumburg, nor in any other plot in that Naumburg cemetery. Instead he chose to have Gerti and himself buried in Kassel. As Gerti lay dying, he asked Astrid, then Werner if Gerti could be buried in the Dr. Wilhelm family plot in Kassel. Werner paid for this plot and is the owner of it, and on the papers in the cemetery office he listed Kurt and Gerti as possible occupants of the 3rd grave as there are 3 plots, one for Dr. Wilhelm, one for Charlotte and one extra. Astrid said no, and Werner never gave Kurt an answer, so Kurt bought a plot across the way kitty corner from Dr. Wilhelm's plot for himself and Gerti. He had the stone lettered with his and Gerti's name. But in 1987, when he knew his end was very near, he came back to America to Werner and me and asked that we bury him here in America. It was his fondest wish to have his body remain in this country. Which Werner did, placing him in an indoor crypt in Woodlawn cemetery, then after Werner's death, I had Kurt's body removed from Woodlawn and placed in Holy Sepulchre cemetery in the Wilhelm's Divine Word family room in section 167, directly across from Werner. Believe it or not, it was a much bigger project to move Kurt's body 4 miles from Woodward and 8 Mile Rd to Holy Sepulchre cemetery at 10 Mile and Beech Daly! I was considered next of kin in the case of Martha Klodmann and the Stadt Friedhof in Frankfort wanted Martha's body removed from their crypt as they wanted to use it for storage of transients so they did everything in their power to make the transition go smoothly. In Martha's case Werner was entombed on the 16<sup>th</sup> of January, 1993 and on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February of 1993 I witnessed the re entombment of Martha in the crypt directly below her beloved son.

In Kurt's case, the cemeteries made a federal case out of the move, so to speak. I was not the next of kin in this case as Kurt had a son Fritz in Kassel, so he had to give his permission for the move, but he was not able to complete all the legal paperwork as he was in Germany so he had to have his attorney draw up power of Attorney papers for me to act in his behalf only in this one regard. Months later, Kurt was resting in peace in Werner's Family Room, as close to Werner in death as he had been every winter in his

last years. The Family Room is heated, which would have pleased Kurt as he came to us every winter as he had no heat in Derenburg whereas we always keep our heat on 72 F.



Werner Wilhelm II in Uncle Kurt's pharmacy

While Kurt was away to war, Mutti would often go to Kurt's pharmacy and help run it in his absence. Sometimes she would take 10 year old Werner with her if he was not in school. One of his fondest stories of his days in Derenburg was the day that Mutti had some errands to run, so she told young little Werner to watch the store for her and if customers came, to sell them what they wanted, and to make change out of the cash register, then place the money in the register. She showed Werner how to run the register, which was an old, very simple affair. She then left and after a few customers straggled in and out, one of Werner's playmates from Derenburg wandered in the store. Didn't they tell you what you should be doing while you're minding the store, the friend asked Werner? Of course, if a customer comes in, show him what he's interested in, take the money, make change, and put the money in the cash register. Ya, but didn't they tell you what else you should be doing?, the kid asked Werner? No, what should I be doing, Werner replied. Here, I'll show you, the kid answered. The kid then picked up a handful of condoms Kurt kept on the shelf behind the cash register, found a straight pin, and began punching holes in the condoms with the straight pin. This is what you should be doing, the kid replied. Werner just watched the kid do it, but did not do it himself. Werner had no idea what those rubber things were for or why they should have to have holes punched in them. For weeks afterwards, customers were returning condoms to the drugstore, as they had tried them out with water first and found out that they leaked! But as for those that didn't check them with water first, I'm sure that there are a few inhabitants of Derenburg in their 40's that have that kid to thank for their existence!



Werner Wilhelm with his camera

Werner had Kurt to thank for his first camera. When he was about 9 years old, shortly before Kurt went to war, Kurt presented Werner with a nice camera. Werner was very enthusiastic about his new possession and went about taking many pictures. We have some cute pictures of Werner with his first camera, and also Werner standing in Kurt's pharmacy.

Getting back to Kurt's cash register, it was an old, basic, heavy metal simple model. You hit the cash button, it went DING! and the drawer flew open. One day when Dr. Wilhelm came to visit Kurt, Kurt proudly displayed to the doctor his brand new fancy cash register that did everything possible at that time. It had a fancy adding machine tape in it and kept track and added up all the sales for the day and gave you a permanent record. Kurt was very proud of his new toy. But his happiness was short lived. Dr. Wilhelm blew up, screaming his head off and whacking Kurt a couple of good ones for being so stupid. You idiot!, screamed Dr. Wilhelm. Don't you realize that that cash register leaves a perfect audit trail for the tax man? He'll know exactly what you have sold and how much money you have taken in! Get rid of that thing and put your old cash register back where it belongs. With the old one, your amount of sales tax is what you say it should be!

There was another time that Dr. Wilhelm came to visit Kurt in his pharmacy and slapped him silly as soon as he set foot in the door. Kurt always liked the girls and there was no getting that out of his system. One day they needed some stock out of the upstairs stock room, so Kurt sent the female clerk up to get it. The clerk had to climb a ladder to get to the upper store room. She had a skirt on, so Kurt stood under her and was really enjoying the scenery from below. When the girl got part way up the steps, Kurt slipped his hand under her skirt and patted her fanny through the underwear. Just at that time the doctor walked in the door and viewed these goings on. He marched right up to his brother Kurt and slapped him across the face with such force that it sounded like a shot gun going off! It temporarily embarrassed Kurt, but it surely didn't slow him down.

Kurt used to make, package and sell his own products, mainly cosmetics, perfumes and paints. The perfumes and cosmetics he used to label under "Ku Wi San", his own brand. They were quite popular and he made good money on these products, until he was drafted and that was the end of the profitability of the Drugstore forevermore, first due to the war and his absence, then afterwards due to the fact that the pharmacy was located behind the Iron Curtain. He used to mix paints before this practice was common, and the villagers were very happy to be able to purchase almost any color they desired.

One of the pharmacy stories Kurt just loved to tell occurred just after her returned home from the war. All during the war women were not able to purchase sanitary napkins as the raw materials were needed for bandages. So when the war was over, they asked and asked and asked him to order them. He ordered and ordered but they never seemed to come in. Finally, one day a whole shipment arrived, so he passed the word along, and soon every woman in town of child bearing age was coming into his pharmacy and purchasing this long desired product. Then during the course of the following month, all of these same women were coming back into his pharmacy returning these napkins. Kurt's eyes watered with laughter when he explained why these napkins were returned. It seems

that the Russian supply truck stuck these unwrapped napkins right next to uncovered fiberglass insulation rolls, so when the women wore the napkins, they darn near itched to death from the fiberglass!

Werner would never eat saltine crackers. One day, after asking him to try one and he refused, I asked him why he wouldn't eat just one. Because of Uncle Kurt's pharmacy, he answered. What's his pharmacy got to do with you not eating saltines, I asked. Well, Kurt used to sell those things, and he kept his extra supply in the upstairs store room. One day he told me to go up there and bring some down.

When I got up there I found mouse dirt all over them and the supply was half eaten. Kurt just put out and sold the uneaten half. That was the end of cracker eating for me!

Another Derenburg story that Kurt loved to tell was the following, which I think was purely fiction, but Kurt always got so caught up in the story that he would lose his voice for laughter and the tears would just flow down his cheeks: There was a dance hall in town, with a beer garden attached to it. Both the dance hall and the beer garden were on the second floor. It was a very popular meeting place for the whole town and always very well attended. One of the fellows in town was trying to attract the attention of one of the eligible young girls, with no success. As his frustration increased, so did his drinking. Toward the end of the evening the poor guy was polluted up to his eyeballs, and turning to his friend said, "Where's the toilet, I'm sick!" The friend told him that there was an upstairs outhouse just across the hall from the dance hall, and pointed to it. The fell just went a flying in that direction. Much later he came back to where his friend was sitting, with a very woe begone look on his face. Are you feeling better, the friend asked. Ya, but now I have a new problem. I threw up with such force that I lost my false teeth, he exclaimed. I can't afford a new pair, they're too darn expensive. All is not lost, his friend replied. The upstairs out house has a trap door to it that you can access from the yard downstairs. Just walk down these stairs, go around the corner, open the door and find your teeth. Got a flashlight, the drunk asked? Nope, was the reply, you'll just have to find them in the dark. The drunk then plod very heavily down the stairs, and disappeared around the corner. He was gone for hours, it seemed, and never came back. The friend, who remained upstairs began to get concerned about him. Finally the friend stuck his head through the hole of the outhouse and shouted, "Are you down there?" Ya, the drunk replied. "Did you find your teeth yet, the friend hollered through the hole?" I found three pair so far, the drunk replied, but none of them fit yet!

Charlotte's last visit to Derenburg to help out with Kurt's pharmacy ended very dramatically at 11 in the evening. Vati appeared suddenly out of the blue and said, "pack up real quick, we're leaving now". Mutti said, Vati, its real late, you've been driving for hours, the baby is asleep, lets leave first thing in the morning. Get in the car, Vati shouted. The Russians are marching on Derenburg and they will be here by morning. We have to leave now or never. So the family hastily piled their belongings in Vati's car and they headed for the west. Why did Vati ever go to Kassel, Werner asked Mutti when we were visiting her in Astrid's house in Muhldorf? Because that's where the car ran out of gas!, was the reply. Vati always wanted to go to the Rhein river so he could jump over the boarder into France if all of Germany were to be taken over by the Russians as Vati

could speak fluent French. Vati stopped in Kassel as his Uncle Edgar lived there and he figured that Uncle Edgar, being a rich, well educated, influential man, could help him get a new start in this strange town. But when Dr. Wilhelm arrived on Uncle Edgar's street, Edgar was standing out in the street in a state of shock. His home had just been bombed right down to the cellar by the Americans and was on fire and he was uncertain at this point who among his family members was alive or dead. So when Dr. Wilhelm barged in and asked for help, Edgar replied roughly that there was no way he could be of help, that he had a crisis of his own on his hands and that was all he could handle at the moment. Ridiculously, Dr. Wilhelm always held this against Uncle Edgar.



Edgar Mueller

Now for a more humorous story about Uncle Edgar Mueller, brother of Dr. Wilhelm's mother Rose Mueller Wilhelm. Edgar, like Dr. Wilhelm and our Werner, was a brilliant man, but very high strung. Brilliance and a short fuse seemed to go together on the Mueller side of the family. It seems you couldn't have one without the other. Well, Edgar certainly had them both. He was an engineer with Siemen's Electric in Germany and was one of the top men in the company. He was very creative, and had a high level of intelligence. He also had very little patience and was easily aggravated. One day he went to his wife's sister's house for dinner, his first dinner invitation there. The sister set what she felt was a fine table and served a very nice dinner. After the dinner the women gathered up all the china, preparatory to washing the dishes. Edgar walked out to the kitchen, picked up the whole stack of the china, and smashed them into the garbage, saying that that china was garbage and that is where it belonged, in the garbage. Poor Edgar's wife was horrified at his behavior, and begged his sister not to take offense, that Edgar always made things right in the end. Edgar's wife left her sister's house in total mortification, but come Monday morning a delivery truck pulled up to the sister's house and delivered the finest looking set of Meissen Porzellan, the finest china money can buy in Germany.



Martha Wilhelm Bamberg



Susanne Bamberg, Kurt Bamberg, Rosa & Fritz Wilhelm

There is one more Wilhelm war story that shocked the family and permanently affected young Martha Wilhelm's life. Martha married a little late in life for those times, she was roughly 30 when she and Herr Bamberg pledged their troth. Martha had two lovely children in quick succession, Anne Rose and Kurt. They lived in the house next door to her parents, at Rossbacher Strasse 1. Herr Bamberg was a good provider, he bought and sold cattle for a living. He was an auctioneer and traveled from town to town auctioning off the livestock. One day he held an auction in the market place in Apolda, and as luck would have it, the only bomb of the war to fall Apolda fell directly on Herr Bamberg that day, leaving Martha a young widow with two small children. The Wilhelm family provided for Martha as best they could through the years. Dr. Wilhelm always told his two children to never forget Martha and her children, for after all, Martha was his only living full sister. Dr. Wilhelm always sent her care packages and when Rosa died, Dr. Wilhelm purchased the Naumburg Rossbacher Strasse 2a home from his brothers and sisters, giving Martha her share of the proceeds from the sale of the home "3 times", due to her grave financial need. Werner seldom sent anything to Martha because of the awful thing she was overheard to have said about his mama when his mother escaped from the Russian prison in Gera and went to Martha's home for help.

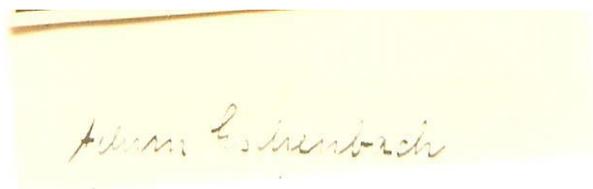
Werner said that only one bomb fell near him in World War II. He did not see it as it fell, but only heard about it and as a young boy scout he was sent to the location to see if he could be of assistance in helping people who might have been hurt by the bomb. Some people were hurt, but Werner's assistance was not needed and the crisis was soon over, at least as far as the Boy Scouts were concerned.



Herbert Eschenbach



Joachim Eschenbach



Werner's cousin Achim (Joachim Eschenbach), son of Herbert, was drafted early in the war and was sent to Weimar, 5 miles from Werner's birth place, for induction into the army. Achim was sent first to Greece, where he had an almost vacation like period in his life. His father was so glad that Achim was sent to Greece first so that he had a few good weeks before facing the horrors of Russia. After Greece, Achim was made a Lieutenant and was sent off to Russia with his troops. Achim was a very brave, bold, loyal member of the German army and fought hard along with his men. Just a short time before the end of the war, Achim was shot in the face and the German army made arrangements to send him home to recover. Achim, however, had different ideas. He said he had to be loyal to his men and demanded that he be sent back into the field to lead his men, which he was given permission to do. A Russian blitzkrieg ensued a few days later, and Achim was never seen or heard from again. His young body lay dead among the thousands of other German soldiers who died on the battle field that day, and he lies somewhere in Russia in a mass grave. He was Herbert's only child and I have always felt that his first loyalty

should have rested with his parents, not with his troops. Herbert and his wife took Achim's death very hard, and after the war was over, Herbert tried to look up some of the men in Achim's unit to discuss the Russian experience with them. Herbert was shocked to discover that of the entire unit of 100 men, only one man survived, and he was very badly disabled for life.



top: Herbert, Margarete & Elisabeth Eschenbach lower: Hugo & Toska Patschke Eschenbach

Herbert, on the other hand, had fought through all of World War I and II and came out unscathed, for Herbert had an instinct for survival, and whenever things got very hot and the Russians were advancing onto the home front, Herbert would suddenly remember that he was the owner/operator of a very large estate and that his services were urgently needed on the home front. Time after time in both wars he did this and as a consequence, or maybe just due to pure good luck, he came out of both wars without a scratch. But he almost got himself killed in peace time after the First World War due to his arrogance as a German Officer. As we know, Germany lost the First World War and what was once West Prussian territory, now became once again Polish, and Herbert's Gut was sitting in what had just become Poland. And the Polish people were not too friendly or receptive to the Germans, especially after what they had just gone through. Herbert, on the other hand, was oblivious to their feelings for Germans, and being it was a cold day, he decided to wear his German Officer's fur coat, which he was very proud of. And to add insult to injury, he left the German Officer's patches on the coat for he was very proud of his rank. He walked down the middle of main street on his way to the bank in Ols, when all of a sudden total bedlam broke loose and there was shooting everywhere in the street. The bank officer, who knew him personally, pulled him inside the door way, so that he was concealed until the shooting died down. For goodness sakes, Herbert, the bank officer told him, get rid of that coat, or at least don't wear it in public in these times or you are going to get yourself killed for sure!

Herbert's father, Hugo Eschenbach, brother of Werner's grandmother Lydia Eschenbach Brehmer, suffered grievous loses at the end of both wars. Hugo was an Amtsrat (magistrate) and had a Domain of about 25,000 acres which he received from the Kaiser before the turn of the century. Every 5 years or so a representative from the Kaiser would come out to the Domain to check on production and the condition of the estate and would always be well pleased and was certain that Hugo was distributing the proper amount of grain and gold to the Kaiser. Hugo, in the meantime, starting buying up land adjacent to his Domain as it became available. He also owned Rittergut Wilschkowitz,

also in West Prussia, which he inherited from his father in law when his wife's only brother was killed while felling trees in the forest. One of the trees fell the wrong way and crushed the 20 year old man, leaving Hugo's wife, Toska Patschke Eschenbach, as the only inheritor.



Herbert    Margarete Lisa    Emilie  
Hugo        Toska                        Eschenbach

Later on Hugo inherited another Rittergut in West Prussia when an uncle of his wife died leaving no heirs. This Gut he gave to his son Walter. When Walter moved into the Gut he was amazed at what he found on the second floor. It turned out that his uncle was very much into bird collecting, and the bedrooms on the second floor were filled with stuffed birds, mounted and placed in replicas of their natural habitats, representing every known bird in Germany at that time. It was a marvelous collection and fascinated everyone who saw it. Walter left it intact for a time, but as he started having children he needed the room for bedrooms, so he donated the entire bird collection to the local museum in Breslau. The barn also yielded up a surprise for Walter. His uncle saved everything, so when he bought modern day china, he threw the old tin dinnerware into the barn. He also had many other antiques that were removed from the house and placed in the barn. Walter had no idea of what this stuff was or what its worth was so he threw it all out. When Herbert found out how valuable these antiques were in his later years, and how hard these artifacts are to come by, he was very disgusted with himself. Oh, the ignorance of youth, was his reply to what he had done.

Walter and this Rittergut had a very tragic ending. In 1945 the Russians started storming the area, first with fire power, then with their Russian panzers they rolled right into town. As luck would have it, one of the Russian panzers rolled right up to Walter's Rittergut. Walter was an avid gardener and was very proud of his botanical efforts and that darn panzer rolled right up to his most elaborate garden, and no way was Walter about to let it roll right through his flowers, so he stood in front of that garden and refused to let that panzer advance any further. Yup, you guessed what happened next, that big panzer rolled right over Walter and that was the end of him! I always thought Walter should have been thinking more of his big family and less of his flowers at that point in his life, for his poor wife had to face the Russians and fleeing East Germany all by herself after Walter's death. But they said that poor Walter had been suffering for a number of years from horrible, unrelenting headaches, just like his father Hugo did, and he couldn't think for the constant pain. It was said that this constant, relentless pain left Walter in quite a state of depression in his last years, clouding his reasoning.



Hugo Eschenbach

Hugo was on top of the world financially, intellectually and socially until the end of World War I, when his comfortable world began to unravel. With the loss of the war the German Domain status went down the drain as the land was no longer a part of Germany, but rather became part of Poland. The Polish government came around to Hugo's Domain on occasion from 1918 to 1921, telling him he was doing a fine job and that he still had possession of those lands. What the Polish government was really doing was having Hugo keep the estate in good order while they were biding their time until they had their government in firm enough control to be able themselves to manage the Domain. This occurred in 1921. As usual, they waited until Hugo complete the harvest, then confiscated the harvest, telling him he had been a bad manager. Hugo said as the politician said this, you could see the embarrassment on his face as he saw the bountiful harvest of wheat as far as the eye could see. When Hugo pointed out that some of this land belonged to him personally, they had to pay him differently for that part of the harvest, and that for the relatively small amount of harvest from his personal land, he received far more money than for harvest of the 25,000 acres. Hugo was forced to leave because he was a German in Polish territory. He was an outsider, the enemy. His brother in law Richard Brehmer was right when he said in 1933 "The government is the biggest crook."

Hugo retired after he lost the Domain, and with the funds he had in his possession he bought Rittergut Stradam for his son Herbert, located in the neighborhood from Oels, not far from Breslau. Stradam had much poorer soil, being largely sandy in composition, and Herbert was not the manager his father was, so the yield on this estate was far less per acre than on the Domain. My favorite story from Rittergut Stradam is told by Herbert in his story. Herbert came to Stradam in the evening hours, very tired and hungry, so very glad that that long wearisome journey was over. As he approached Rittergut Stradam he expected to be all alone in the mansion. But when he got there an old servant lady, whom he called his old darling, had a candle burning on the table at the front entrance, and when he arrived, made him a quick, simple meal, apologizing, saying she didn't know he was coming. Herbert described the old darling as a simple, salt of the earth woman who remained living in the 19th century. Shortly after he took over Herbert had the mansion wired for electricity. This the old darling could never fathom. Every time she would walk through the mansion she would flick on a light, then stand there shaking her head in amazement over the magic of electricity.



Hugo & Toska Eschenbach & family

Hugo and his wife Toska lived with Herbert and his wife on Stradam till the end of World War II. Herbert at that time was very busy trying to figure out which way the war was going. He heard every imaginable rumor, which seemed to change hourly. Sometimes it was said that the Germans were winning, sometimes all was lost. Herbert seemed to get his best information from the bank, but even that was not for sure. But one day the Russian guns could be heard getting closer and closer to Oels and it was now obvious who was winning. Herbert, being very clever, got permission to leave the German army who was defending itself by the trench that the Ukrainian girls scouts had dug at the end of town a few years earlier to prevent the advancement of Russian tanks into this territory, and to go to his wife and neighbors, who were fleeing for their lives before the arrival of the Russians. Herbert's wife was a very practical woman, and by the time Herbert arrived back home after going to the bank and listening to the latest news on the Russians, he found that his wife had 4 rubber tired farm wagons all packed several stories high with their possessions, and she had convinced the neighbors to do likewise. However, 3 to 4 feet of new snow had just fallen and Herbert knew he wasn't going far on the open road with rubber tires, so he went to a neighboring farm and had chains made up to put on all of the rubber tired wagons. Herbert then put his 84 year old parents, Hugo and Toska Eschenbach in the middle of one of the wagons and covered them completely with carpets and blankets. Then on January 14, 1945 they set out for the west and freedom. They didn't get beyond Breslau when it was obvious that their elderly parents were both suffering from hypothermia and frost bite. So Herbert was forced to take his parents to the hospital in Breslau and to carry on to the west without them. A real tragedy occurred 6 months later. On the 4th of July, 1945 Hugo and Toska lost their lives at the hands of the Russians and are buried in an unknown grave. What an unbelievably tragic end to such a brilliant man's life! To have been the most intelligent and industrious of men, to have had 25,000 acres of Domain land, to have been the magistrate of his district, to have been one of major founders of the Camburg electric works and the Tunschütz silver fox farm, and now he is killed by the Russians as an unknown person and to be dropped into an unknown, unmarked pauper's grave. Unbelievable!



Lischen Eschenbach

Herbert's sister Elisabeth Eschenbach, known affectionately by her family as Lischen, blamed Herbert for the death of their parents by not keeping them warmer in the wagon train. Herbert was furious with his sister's big fresh mouth, and had this to say in reply to her accusations: Lischen, only one week earlier you could have got our parents out of Breslau and to the west in the warmth and comfort of the German train system. That you failed to do so until it was too late and the train no longer ran, is your fault and will forever be on your conscience. I only did what I could after you failed in your duty to our parents.

Werner and Uncle Hugo Eschenbach had many things in common, physically, intellectually and personality wise. Both had the same build, a large forehead, a big barrel chest that produced a loud, booming voice, and relatively short legs. Both had a remarkable ability to manage land, property, money and employees. Both became very successful millionaires through their own efforts. Both were determined men who steam rolled over others who got in their way, and who produced desired results regardless of whatever or whoever got in their way. And both were protective of their employees who were loyal to them. In my opinion, Werner was much closer genetically to Hugo than were any of his sons.

One of the fun stories about Hugo in his prime is the following: One day Hugo got a late start and was hurrying to catch the train because if he missed the morning train he would have to wait several hours for the next one. Just as he got into the train station the train started to pull away. HALT! He shouted in his very loud, booming voice. The train engineer, thinking that someone had fallen under the wheel of the train, immediately stopped the train. While all the train personnel jumped off the train and was inspecting under all the wheels, Hugo calmly got on the train and took a comfortable seat and waited for the train to start again. Finally, the conductor realized that there was no emergency and he bore down on Hugo with a vengeance. He was threatening to charge Uncle Hugo with a misdemeanor because he stopped the train. But Uncle Hugo, being much smarter than the conductor, merely told him, "You didn't have to stop!" The conductor, realizing that he had been outwitted, merely walked away.



Werner Wilhelm II 1944

The last year of the war effort really upset Werner's education as they took all the school boys out of the classroom and made soldiers out of them. In the field the boys would get one half day of schooling in if nothing was happening in the way of combat, then they would be used to man anti artillery guns. Werner was stationed in Dux bei Brux, in the pine forests in the east. The month I was born and was resting safe in my crib, Werner was fond of telling me, he was marching knee deep in snow midnights and freezing to

death, defending his country in the last hours of the war effort. Werner was a machine gunner, and it was his job to shoot down enemy aircraft. There were 4 barrels on his machine gun, and he had 3 other men that loaded the strips of ammunition in each one of these barrels while he shot the guns. The other men had to be real careful not to get their arms or legs caught in the ammunition strips. Werner, on the other hand, was to aim and shoot the guns. He had only one crack at shooting down a plane. One day he spotted the plane, looked at it through his field glasses, then aimed and started shooting down the plane overhead. As a sudden, one of his men put his hands over Werner's eyes, which was the signal to stop shooting as the guns were so loud that you could not hear the human voice over their noise. Werner stopped shooting, and looked around. Its a good thing you didn't knock him out of the sky, his man said, as that is one of our own planes! A little while later the German flier came into Werner's camp, madder than a wet hen, demanding to know who was the stupid son of a bitch who almost blew him out of the sky. That was not one of Werner's finer moments, that's for sure!

One day when Werner was first in the school boy branch of the service, he was called up to the head quarter's office. He couldn't imagine what he'd done and he was scared. When he got there they were making a big fuss about his condition, but he couldn't believe his ears over what he was hearing. They were carrying on very seriously because he had flat feet, very flat feet, I might add! But I've had flat feet all of my life, Werner replied nonchalantly. That made them even madder that he was nonchalant about his flat feet. But my feet don't bother me in the least, he replied. Wrong thing to say again, Werner. Flat feet were almost a crime against the motherland! They gave him corrective shoes to wear. He didn't dare to tell them that these shoes created the very painful condition that they were designed to correct.

Werner was a Faehnlein Fuhrer, which meant he was a youth leader and had 30 men under him. He carried the flag and the other boys marched behind him. This was mostly an honorary position as he was too young to be in the regular army till the very end of the war. His brother in law, Kurt, on the other hand, who was the same age as Werner but who was in Czechoslovakia during the war, had a more exalted position and had 100 men under him. Kurt enjoyed those days very much, playing make believe leader of future soldiers, marching around to war music.

Werner remembers a most embarrassing moment during his Saturday boy scout days during the war when they were standing at attention while on parade and Werner was the flag bearer. They stood in one spot forever, it seemed, and as a sudden Werner started feeling very faint. The girl standing next to him saw that he was about to pass out so she stepped forward and took the flag from his hand. He then passed out cold, but at least he didn't have the added disgrace of having dropped the flag.

Just before the war ended Werner was released from the school boy military branch of service and told to go home and sign up for the regular army. Now this was getting serious as at this point in the German army everyone was getting slaughtered wholesale and the country was running out of human cannon fodder. Dr. Wilhelm was beside himself with worry as he said he did not want to lose his only son in the last few days of a

fruitless war. So he came up with a brilliant idea. He had his son Werner register for entry into the Equestrian branch of the military, a branch to which Dr. Wilhelm belonged in the First World War, and which still existed, but which had few or no members at this point in the war. Werner's application fell through the cracks and he was never called up for active duty before the war ended.



Toward the end of his life Werner found his military youth book which was stamped with all the places he had been sent to as a youth soldier boy, and he was so happy to review this book and its attendant memories.



Martha Klodmann & Fritz Kraer

Meanwhile, things were getting dangerous for Werner and his mother on Zschippach as the war was coming to an end. At first, things looked like they would be returning to pre-war status fairly soon and that things would soon be back to normal on Zschippach. VE day came and went, the war in Europe was over and soon the Americans came flooding into Zschippach. The Americans were for the most part friendly and they provided the people on Zschippach with cigarettes and chocolate. But there was one tragic consequence of the Americans coming to Zschippach. The traitors, as active as usual, and as undercover as usual, turned in Fritz Kraer as a Nazi. The Americans picked him up and threw him into prison. It was later found out to be a false accusation and Fritz was released, but not before he caught pneumonia and was gravely ill. He died a short time later of a blood disorder.

A servant girl from the village came into Werner's house one night with a grave dilemma she wanted some advise on settling. She had fallen in love with an American soldier boy,

albeit on short acquaintance, and now he was asking her to go with him tonight, as the American troops were pulling out secretly in the dead of the night and would be totally gone by tomorrow morning. This gave Werner and his family the first inkling that they were being abandoned by the Americans and might be left to the folly of the Russians. And this is exactly what happened. When they woke up in the morning not an American was in sight, but the Russian troops were everywhere! At a secret conference that the Americans, the Russians and the English held in 1942, post war Germany was tentatively divided up between the super powers and Thuringen, Werner's province, was given to the Americans. However after VE day another conference was held by these powers and it was agreed to that in return for America getting one small zone in Berlin, that they would give the Russians all of Thuringen. Werner and his family lost over \$4 Million on that little secret conference!

The first thing that the Russians demanded was that all of the Germans surrender all of their weapons. Werner had to turn in his service revolver and all weapons in the house. He said he did not dare to hold anything back for if you were caught with a weapon they would execute you on the spot.

The next episode with the Russians occurred to Werner under the overpass between Zschippach and Gera. Werner was on his motorcycle when suddenly a Russian soldier stopped him, showed his authority, then demanded that Werner give him his watch. Werner was furious but gave up his watch without protest as he was concerned that the Russian was going to steal his motorcycle as well.

There was much talk among the residents of Zschippach, as well as among Werner's relatives and friends as to what the future would bring now that the Russians were in control. There was also much speculation as to how long the Russians would remain there. Most people thought that the Russians would be leaving in a year or two.

In the meanwhile, Werner's mother Martha Klodmann was offered a 10 carat diamond for her entire estate. She was in a quandary over this offer and asked her ex husband Dr. Wilhelm what he thought. He told her that due to the circumstances he thought it might be wise to take the diamond. She was very attached to her Rittergut and chose to keep it. Only the future will tell whether this was a wise decision or not. At the present time we are sitting on a suitcase full of original deeds to the Rittergut Zschippach properties, and due to the present decision of the West German government these deeds at the present time are worthless pieces of paper. But this story is not over yet, and who knows what the future governments may decide. Although, when keeping in mind what Grandfather Richard Brehmer said in 1933 "the government is the biggest crook" any good outcome from the Office of Property Matters is highly unlikely. The communists are still running the reparations part of the German government and believe me, they are the masters of deceit and giving the royal run around to the legitimate owners of these former estates until they finally give up and walk away. (The reparations office has very thick bullet proof glass and a locked door as they are very cognizant of the fact that one or more of these very frustrated, cheated former large land owners may one day come out shooting,

especially in light of the fact that all of these land owners are over 70 or 80 and have little time left and therefore little to lose.)

1945 was a very dangerous, unsettled time, especially for those with property or money or political influence. Have nots can do well under any regime, for most governments allow people enough to eat, a place to sleep and some forms of entertainment to keep the masses from revolting. But people with wealth and influence can lose everything in the blink of an eye when the government changes. And so it was with Werner and his mother. The Germans in the Russian occupied zone knew enough to keep their mouths shut and their eyes open for they had heard plenty of horror stories of the Russian soldiers from the world war I & II era. It turned out that those world war I & II horror stories were mild compared to some of the atrocities committed by the Russians in the 1940's.

The Russians were highly visible that summer. The troops were everywhere; not only in the big cities like Gera and Weimar, but they also pervaded the entire countryside and were seen in Zschippach and Lehnstedt. The food supplies were delivered by Russian war trucks, so the Russians could be seen lumbering through the countryside in their huge 1930 vintage war trucks. The area around Buchenwald, just over the hill from Werner's Villa in Grossobringen, was turned into army barracks for the Russian troops and their families. To this very day the Russians are still there with their families as the Russian government is so poor that they cannot support all the returning troops. The troops and their families are not so happy about returning to Russia as the standard of living is much higher in Germany.

Farming went on as usual for Werner and his mother on Zschippach. Otto Rauh returned from war and resumed his duties as a manager on Zschippach. Fritz Kraer borrowed the money for seed and supplies from the bank for Martha, as was her custom every year and planted a full compliment of crops in all fields for that year. They were looking forward with the end of the war to the removal of rationing and the restrictions as to what crops they could raise. They felt that with the return of the free economy they could make more money. Fritz Kraer also borrowed money from the bank for Martha's estate and purchased some fine quality horses for the field operations where horses were still very much in use for pulling farm wagons. Before his death Werner's Grandfather Richard Brehmer had also purchased some very fine, expensive, progressive farm machinery to harvest and clean the grain as it was pulled from the fields, again with a bank loan. The harvest in Zschippach was always plentiful, and there was never any problem in repaying the installment payments on these outstanding mortgages.

There was a pinch on farm workers, however, for with the end of the war the Ukrainian prisoners of war all left Zschippach and set off on foot for home, with a word of thanks from Martha and Fritz Kraer for all of their hard work during the war years. And the local workers were far fewer than before, for an appalling number of local farm boys were slaughtered in Russia and would be forevermore laying in some unmarked mass grave in the middle of a battle field. Werner was a school boy and so for most of the year he had been in the Schiller School in Gera and unavailable for helping on the farm. Interestingly enough, a mandate during the Hitler years, due to the fact that so many able

bodied farm men were off to war, was that every school age boy and girl had to put in one month's work on a farm and had to bring in a certificate to school in September from a farmer attesting to the fact that he had put in his one month's work. Werner always got his certificate which his mother arranged with a neighboring farm, but knowing Werner, the amount of work energy expended on farming was light if at any.



Lydia Eschenbach Brehmer, Richard, Otto, Martha, Herman & Friedrich Brehmer



Rittergut Lehnstedt

Things were about the same on Rittergut Lehnstedt. Grandfather Richard Brehmer was now dead, having died of stomach and pancreas cancer in 1936. He was now resting in a handsome family plot with his brother Herman on the Rittergut Lehnstedt cemetery on the outskirts of the town in the vicinity of the Protestant church where Aunt Henny and Werner's mother played the organ for years. But Uncle Otto and Aunt Henny had a full house for when Herbert Eschenbach left Breslau with his 4 rubber tired farm wagons full to the 2nd story level, together with 4 of his neighbors in tow, he ended up at Uncle Otto's Rittergut Lehnstedt. Werner said he and his mother would have hosted Herbert or any of his neighbors, but they were never approached by the family to do so, probably because it was quite politically dangerous to receive refugees from East Prussia. It was quite magnanimous and brave of Otto and Henny to host so many people with so many possessions, especially since the wagon train stuck out like a sore thumb.



Herbert Eschenbach & Werner Wilhelm II

Herbert went into Weimar one day for supplies and was picked up by the Russian troops who were doing a general roundup of all adult males they found in the streets. They took Uncle Herbert to jail in Weimar. Believe it or not, Uncle Herbert, who was 55 years old, but thin and as wiry as a teenager, jumped several 6 foot high barbed wire fences and escaped to freedom. On his way walking back to Rittergut Lehnstedt he saw a farm wagon full of new prisoners being taken to Weimar and on this wagon was Uncle Otto Brehmer. That's the only reason that Aunt Henny knew that Otto was taken prisoner, for he was working in the fields and simply disappeared as far as she was aware, until Herbert told her otherwise. For 6 months Aunt Henny had no idea where Uncle Otto was

for the Russians tell you nothing, and if you know what's good for you, you keep your head low under the Russian system or you might be the next one to disappear.



Herbert Eschenbach & Werner Wilhelm II

Uncle Herbert was picked up by the Russians in Lehnstedt again, but he convinced them that he had no land and was only a visitor there. Herbert thinks they may have checked with Breslau first before letting him go, to see if he was wanted there for anything. Herbert was sick about abandoning his Rittergut Stradam, so a little while later he actually bicycled across Germany and back to the Breslau area from Lehnstedt to see what was happening. When he saw the Russians had his property in firm control, he bicycled back to Lehnstedt, but at the same time led some more of his workers to freedom by showing them the way to Plauen, which led to Bavaria. Herbert said that in his later years he never came across any of his fellow citizens from the Stradam area except for one neighbor who ended up in West Berlin near his apartment buildings. Werner came across someone from Stradam one day in a train in the 1980s, who explained to Werner one good reason why Herbert never came across many people from the Stradam area. The Russians were heavily occupying the Stradam area and the local people greatly resented their presence and defied their orders. Well, the Russians don't cater too well to defiance on the part of their subjects and one day when they had enough they rounded up all the local dissidents, tied them to trees in the Breslau area, doused them with gasoline and lit them with a match, using them as torches to light up the evening sky.



Herbert Eschenbach

Uncle Herbert returned to Lehnstedt, then found a Gut for rent in Ottstedt as the owner was still a prisoner of war. Herbert felt that the Russian occupation would end in a few years so he decided that Ottstedt, being in the middle of Germany was a good place to remain until Germany returned to normal. Herbert remained in Ottstedt for about 3 years, until the Gut owner returned from war and wanted to work his Gut himself. Do you remember Uncle Herbert, Werner asked the Mayor of Magdala, Herbert Goetz, in a neighboring town to Ottstedt and Lehnstedt when he visited him in the 1980s. A small smile appeared on the Mayor's face and he replied, "What I remember best about Herbert

Eschenbach, is that he plowed his fields in officer's boots and white kid gloves". Werner smiled, saying, yes, indeed, that would be Uncle Herbert, ever a gentleman farmer.

Aunt Henny asked us to visit the Mayor of Marsdorf and to give him some West German cash, as she said he was very instrumental in helping her get out of East Germany to her Gut in Reiffenhausen at a time when she was all alone because Uncle Otto had been imprisoned by the Russians, and she had never forgotten that kindness. The Mayor and his wife were very gracious to us during our visit to their home.



Werner Wilhelm II & Herbert Eschenbach

When Uncle Herbert had lost his lease on Ottstedt, he then set off to West Berlin, as his wife had relatives there, some of whom were quite influential in the government of that city. Everybody told Uncle Herbert he was out of his mind when he decided to invest his funds to build an apartment building in West Germany. Being right in the middle of the Communist zone, they said, it was bound to fall to the Communists sooner or later, and then where would he be financially. But Herbert decided to try his luck in this most cosmopolitan of cities. When Herbert knew the Russians were advancing on the Breslau area, he gathered up his cash, stocks, bonds, silverware, etc, put them in a tin box and buried them in the forest, some way away from his property. He later dug them up and took them with him. He was so depressed about the uselessness of most of the investments he inherited from his father Hugo that for 6 weeks after he got into Berlin he never opened the cash box. Finally, he realized that this depressive state had to end and that it was time he faced reality, so he took his tin box to the bank and opened it up in front of the investment counselor. Stock after stock they took out of the box and scrutinized it. Worthless, was the answer one after another of the stocks being evaluated, 10 cents per share, 50 cents per share, was the answer for the rest of the stocks. But sitting in the bottom of the box was Herbert's crown jewel and his salvation for the years to come. Daimler (Mercedes Benz) came through the war unscathed and was worth about \$40,000. So with this stock as down payment, Herbert approached a cousin of his wife, who was in the government and who was in a position to grant government building loans. Due to the \$40,000 the cousin was able to demonstrate Herbert's solvency, and together with Herbert's experience as a Rittergut owner/operator, he was approved for a loan to build 3 apartment buildings on one piece of property in the Dahlman section of Berlin. Herbert asked the young Werner to go in with him on the building and operating of this project. Werner considered doing it but his father told him to stay away from the people on his mother's side of the family, and Werner also had his heart set on going to America, so he turned Herbert down. This was a blow to Herbert as he was over 60 years

old when he started this project and his only son Achim was killed in the war. So he was all alone. As a result of Werner's refusal to join him, Herbert then developed a closeness to his brothers Gunther's and Walter's children, Ingeborg Naeve and her cousin Rolf who was a professor in Jena. Herbert was worth over \$3 Million when he died. Herbert had this to say about his financial success in his twilight years : In my lifetime I set many ships out to sea and in my later years the ship bearing my Berlin apartments was the one that returned to me.

A bit of a satirical story pertaining to Herbert's sunset years. Herbert was a classical male chauvinist, in the extreme. To the point that when he wrote his life's story, he never even mentioned his mother or grandmother by name, merely mentioning them as a wife of the father and grandfather. This mental set got him into big trouble with his wife Ursula. His wife was quite a wealthy woman in her own right, and through the years a considerable amount of money was inherited from her family, but when they started discussing estate planning, Herbert let it be known that all the money was going to members of his side of the family as he was the head of the house and the money belonged to him and it was up to him to dispose of it. Right? Wrong! said his wife's attorney. At the ripe old age of 83 years, his wife surprised him with a set of divorce papers! And she meant it too. She went through with the divorce and demanded and got half of the assets of that marriage. And she got her own apartment right across from Herbert in the divorce settlement too. So they continued on living as man and wife, but she now had some breathing room with her own apartment, and she started enjoying herself by spending some of that money on trips, some with Herbert, some alone. And when she died she was free to will her share of the money to whom she pleased. In her twilight years she became a truly liberated woman. This would never have happened, I believe, if Achim had lived as he would have been their sole heir without question.



Werner in front of the University of Jena medical building



Werner's student room in the U of Jena

Werner had graduated from high school in Dux bei Brux, while in the army there, and going to school half days. He now applied at the University of Jena, where his father had attended, to go to medical school there. But they decided that his high school education was not complete and that he was not ready to attend the university there. So, as a consequence, despite being graduated, he had to go back to high school for the summer in order to complete what high school subjects they felt he had missed out on. At the end of the summer he graduated the second time and received his certificate of maturity (Abitur) once more. As was stated earlier, only grandmother Wilhelm gave him any recognition for his efforts as every one else in his family was too busy trying to pick up the pieces of their life after the long war. Werner was very hurt that no one else in the family had acknowledged this milestone in his life.

Come September, 1945 the harvest was plentiful. The farm workers on Zschippach, as well as Lehnstedt, worked very long, hard hours bringing in the harvest, as they were short on help. But finally, come mid September, the harvest was complete and the grain was all bundled in the fields, waiting to be taken to the granaries either in Dorna or Brahmenau. Once the grain was sold, the annual grain, horse, and machinery mortgage payments would be made.

The days immediately after the Communists took over East Germany were hay days for the never do well punks of the area, for the Communists elevated many of them to the status of officials in order to use these fellows to do their dirty work for them. The punks just loved lording it over the landed gentry, for whom they had harbored a deep seated jealousy. Pendorf, the neighborhood punk in Zschippach, attained this new status under the Communists. One day he came up to the mansion in Zschippach, jumped up on the roof of the mansion, waved a red Communist flag, then unrolled a scroll and read from it, proclaiming that in the name of the people, he was confiscating the Rittergut. No one seemed to know for sure what this all meant, especially coming from the mouth of a punk. They were soon to find out!

Another punk that received an elevated status overnight was a fellow by the name of Rotfuchs (means red fox in English). He enjoyed confiscating estates and enforcing restrictive measures on the local population. He was a hard line, dyed in the wool Communist. Everybody hated his guts. He just loved stripping people of everything they owned, stating that the Communist system of everybody being equal was the proper way to live. After stripping hundreds of people of their possessions, he suddenly saw the light, and jumped the border to the west, decreeing that he now espoused capitalism. The West German government set him up handsomely in the Hamburg area, giving him a job, money and possessions. Werner was so mad he saw red. He discussed this with his Uncle Otto Brehmer, who also saw red and felt that Rotfuchs had a hand in confiscating Rittergut Lehnstedt. One day Werner sat talking to Uncle Otto, saying that he was going to stalk Rotfuchs in Hamburg, and when he found Rotfuchs alone in a dark alley, he was going to bash his brains in with a 2 X 4. Uncle Otto, who was sick to death over losing his 1300 acre, multi million dollar estate to the Communists, thought this was a splendid idea, and told Werner, "I'm with you all the way, let's go get him!" They would have been off and running that very day had not Aunt Henny and Werner's father put an immediate kibosh on that idea, saying it wasn't worth it to be caught and spend the rest of their days in prison. Werner always greatly regretted not going after Rotfuchs. He said he was sure he would have got away with bashing his head in.



Werner Wilhelm II & Gisela Seibicke in Zschippach Friedhof near Pendorf's grave

When we went back and visited Zschippach in 1991 Rotfuchs was long gone, both from Zschippach as well as from this earth, but in walking through the Zschippach cemetery Werner came across the grave of Pendorf and he went totally wild. Pendorf buried in his cemetery! That was too much for him to bear. I wonder if I can find a shovel around here so you can dig the son of a bitch up!, he said. Can't seem to find a shovel. At least I could shit on his grave, Werner then said, but I can't seem to shit right now! Can you shit, he asked me? No, I don't think I could shit right in the middle of the cemetery in broad daylight, was my reply, much as I could engender a feeling of real hatred for the guy if I tried.

One day Werner, a young teenager just finishing up his high schooling once more, was coming home to Zschippach from the Schiller School in Gera. Coming around the corner of the brick walled main street leading from the main highway to the Rittergut on this fine September day in 1945, he saw a very large black limousine with a red flag flying from it, sitting by the front door of his mansion. He saw some men dressed up in Russian uniforms standing by the limousine. Werner had been taught that this Rittergut would belong to him as soon as he reached maturity, so at all times he was to act as the owner. Werner therefore walked up to these men and said to them, may I help you? Are you the owner's son, they asked him? His reply, yes I am. Then you had better come with us too, they told him. You had better bring your winter coat along with you, they said to Werner. Werner then followed them into the mansion, and he often said that he would never forget the sight of his mother as he entered that mansion in search of his winter coat. His mother was coming down the large, winding, center staircase, her coat over her arm, and her face a beat red. Werner and his mother then got into the Russian limousine and were immediately taken to the prison in Gera. Werner's mother was the only woman land owner so she was placed in solitary confinement in an old, medieval wooden cell. The cell had only one very small window, and it had a large, heavy wooden plank door. The door had a sliding wooden partition that closed over a small open window with bars in it. They kept the sliding partition on the door closed except when they passed her something through it, so most of the time the cell was in darkness, like in the middle ages.

Werner fared a little better than his mama, for he was placed in a large single cell with 38 other landowners from the district of Thuringen. The Communists had picked up all the landowners within a 24 hour period and had placed them in the same cell. By

incarcerating all the influential men in the area, the Communists assured themselves that their takeover would occur unopposed. Werner often told me that his incarceration with these 38 men was a privilege, for he had never before or since spent time with such a fine group of people. They were all wealthy, influential gentlemen of good character and high breeding. One of the older men told the group on the first day of captivity that they must be careful to keep their spirits up, and in order to do so, he suggested that every day one of the men tell a story out of his life that would be an inspiration to the others. An so for the 6 weeks that Werner was there he heard these men's story of their lives. Werner was very impressed, and was very upset with himself that he did not write these stories down for future reference.

Werner's mother's CPA must have been living under an unlucky star for he was at Rittergut Zschippach that day to pick up a duck for his family for dinner and was present when the Russian limousine pulled up. They took him along to prison as well, not knowing if he was related to the family or not. He spent 4 weeks in prison on bread and water because he had the misfortune to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Every day Werner wrote the same letter to the warden. Dear Warden, the letter went, I am just a school boy. I belong in school. I do not know why I am here. He would then sign it and send the letter to the warden.

There was no bathroom in the men's cell. Rather, there was a large barrel set in the middle of the room so when you had to do a job, you hung whatever over the barrel. Every morning the guards came and hollered, "barreling". They then opened the cell door so that two men could carry the barrel down the hall and empty it. The elder men told Werner and another younger man in his twenties that they should be the ones to empty the barrel every day due to their strength and the fact that the older men felt that such a job was too demeaning to them. Werner said he was glad to do that job, for it got him out of the cell, and when he got to the toilet, he could take a shit in the toilet instead of the barrel.

The food was typical Russian prisoner style. He was given a slice of bread, a glass of water, a scoop of spinach and salt. For supper you got a potato as well.

Six weeks later, suddenly a guard came one day and called out two names, Wilhelm and Reichard. They were to follow the guard and go to the front office. When they got to the front office it became apparent that they were being released. Just sign here never to return to Thuringen, the guard said, and then we will release you. I'm not going to sign that, Werner burst out with indignation! Mr. Reichard, a fine, statuesque elder ailing gentlemen of 74 years said to the warden, Mr. Warden, sir, may I have a few words alone in private with the boy? Yes, came the reply. The warden took Werner aside and said to him, "Listen son, you are never going to get out of here unless you sign that paper. If your father were here he would tell you to sign it. Since your father is not here, I'm standing in his place and I'm telling you to sign it. After you get out of prison and go back to your father, then you can fight for what you think is right. But here and now is not the place to do your protesting. So Werner walked back into the other room and

signed never to return. Ever since that time when I was forced against my will to sign that paper, Werner said, my signature doesn't mean that much. What means a lot more is my word.

Can I see my mother before I leave, he requested of the warden. Yes, was the reply. So Werner was taken from the second floor where the men were detained to the 3rd floor where the women were. Werner said as he walked through that jail he felt real light headed and wobbly from no real food and from being detained in one small room. The real world was much too big and too bright after that cell for 6 weeks. When he saw his mother's medieval cell, it made him sick. He could not fathom his mother enduring such a dark, damp solitary existence. And he knew what a bad stomach his mother developed from her incarceration in Buchenwald a few years before, so he was beside himself with worry for his mother's well being. But there was nothing he could really do about it. Are you okay mama? was his question. I'm okay, son, was her reply. Werner, are you being released, she asked? Oh, that's good. Son, go to Vati in the west. And do everything he tells you to. And go to college, like he did. Oh, and Werner, if you should come back to visit me here, bring me a slice of real bread, okay? That broke Werner's heart, both at the time it was said and also to this very day. All he and his mother had to eat in those cells were bread, water, a cup of spinach and salt.



Jena train station where Martha Klodmann escaped from the communists

Six months after they were picked up a plague of sorts broke out in the prison in Magdeburg and many of the prisoners were dying. The Russians decided to transfer the landowners to Magdeburg, for if they were to die of the plague that was there, their deaths would be an act of God, so to speak. So Martha was placed on the train to Jena, where they had to transfer in order to get on the train that went to Magdeburg. There was a man prisoner sitting next to Martha and when they got off the train in Jena, the train station was packed like sardines with post war travelers. How can they possibly tell the prisoners from the other passengers? asked the fellow prisoner. Let's walk sideways through the train station and see if we get away with it, was the man's suggestion. So they walked sideways, appearing to all the world as though they were husband and wife, and got into and through the station without being detected. They then walked to the city sidewalk, over the street into the fields beyond, then hid there till dark. They then walked after dark. Martha decided to walk to her sister in law, Martha Bamberg's house in Rossbacher Strasse 2a in Naumburg, a rather long hike. She got to the door of the Wilhelm residence absolutely exhausted. She opened the street door, crossed over to the apartment door, opened it somewhat, then waited for Martha to end a sentence before barging in on the conversation. What Werner's mother heard from Martha's mouth was this: Its good what happened to Martha. Its good that she lost everything. Martha

walked back out the door, quietly shut it, and no one ever knew she had been there. But Martha Klodmann had told her son Werner what she had heard, and for the rest of his life he resented what Aunt Martha had said about his mother and it prevented him from sending the care packages that his father asked him to. Werner and Uncle Kurt got into a big argument over giving packages to Aunt Martha shortly before she died. Why should I after what she said about my mother, Werner growled. Because she's your aunt and needs the parcels, Uncle Kurt replied, and besides Aunt Martha is so stupid that she doesn't know what she says! You can't hold what she said against her.



Sandy & Werner Wilhelm, Martha Bamberg and Kurt Wilhelm

Aunt Martha supported herself from the time of her husband's death in the middle of the war until her death in the 1980's mostly by growing her own meat and vegetables. She had a goat while grandmother Rosa Wilhelm was alive as Rosa liked the more digestible milk that the goat would give. They always had rabbits that they kept in a rabbit hutch out back of the house just outside the back door, just to the north east of the back door. Rabbits were a major source of meat summer and winter. Martha would go out to the garden with a sickle in hand and would scythe some high grass that she kept for that purpose and stuff it in the rabbit cages for fodder. Martha had a very extensive vegetable and flower garden out back on lots 2a and 1. These were at their best while grandmother Rosa was living and suffered somewhat after her death. Martha tended the fruits and vegetables and did her own canning to get her through the winter months. Martha was always very poor, but did much better under the Communist system, which rewarded non productiveness and protected the non working sector of the population to a much greater extent than the capitalistic countries did.

Martha learned to put up with the shortages of the Russian system. Coffee, cocoa, chocolate, bananas, pineapple, oranges and grapefruits became nothing more than a dim memory of bygone days for these people. They soon learned to do without. Martha would go everyday and stand in line for a Christmas tree in Naumburg, and every day they would run out of trees before she got to the front of the line. And every day she would go back again and stand out in the cold and after 2 or 3 weeks she would be rewarded for her diligence by dragging the tree home for the coming holidays. They drank chicory and called that coffee. And when the relatives from the west would come to visit, they would always bring some of this contraband with them and the East Germans would have a few weeks enjoyment of these forbidden pleasures. The East German government could not afford to import these items from the Western nations so they outlawed them for sale or use to keep the money within the country.

Martha also received care packages from Astrid, who was always very well to do, but Martha and her family soon came to resent that all that was in these packages were Astrid's castoffs, and worse yet, old clothing that Astrid picked up from the rummage grab bag in town. They wanted new western things, and soon both Astrid and Martha were angry at one another, Astrid because these people were not undyingly grateful for the used clothing, Martha because Astrid was flush with money and could have bought them new things. Soon, Astrid being indignant at their lack of gratitude, stopped sending parcels, labeling these people ungrateful. The East Germans felt, good riddance to her parcels, as they contained unusable junk, and they were sick of her holier than thou attitude toward them. Astrid didn't go to East Germany for visits after her father died as she was afraid that being born in East Germany, they might not let her back out again. Uncle Kurt, once he turned 65, was able to go to the west on visits and he would bring back oranges and bananas. These items were highly coveted.

When Martha lay dying with bone cancer in the 1980's Uncle Kurt brought her back a sack of oranges per her request. She really loved these oranges, but after having ate the oranges, she cried and said to Kurt that all the other Wilhelm women other than her had fine jewelry through the years and that Martha felt so bad that she never had even one piece of fine jewelry. Kurt cried, ran out to a jewelry store and bought Martha a fine gold ring with a nice stone in it with the \$5,000 he had earned working at Wil Mar the winter before. Martha love that ring and wore it till she died a short time later. She was buried in the local Wilhelm family plot with her forefathers. Uncle Erhard's name is on this plot but his body is not there, it is in Russia. The name on the stone is for memorial purposes only.

Uncle Kurt did not fulfill Dr. Wilhelm's prophecy of being dead within a year from the ravages of war. But Kurt was very ill and did suffer for years afterwards as the result of the starvation he experienced in the Siberian prisoner of war camp, from the malaria he contracted while in the camp and the head wound he received at the end of the battle while he was storming Moscow. When Kurt came home he was a very sick and exhausted man. And he had so many shocking experiences to face when he arrived home, a wife and brother dead, a mother dying, a brother in law killed by a bomb in Apolda, leaving his sister with no means of support, and among other disasters of the time, he now found his pharmacy in Derenburg almost worthless due to the fact that it was now in the Communistic zone. Kurt was always the born loser. And so it was with the location of his pharmacy. To the north and south of Derenburg, the line dividing East from West was to the west and his pharmacy would have been in the free zone, but in his area the line zigged to the east, including his pharmacy in the Russian zone.

Kurt's brother Dr. Werner Wilhelm tried hard to get Kurt to jump over the border, abandoning his pharmacy and starting over again from scratch in Kassel. But Kurt knew Derenburg, knew every citizen who lived there, was loved and respected there, all his friends were there and he just didn't want to be confronted with all that stress of having everything new and all that debt of starting a new pharmacy. So he stayed in Derenburg. He was bone tired and Derenburg was familiar, it was home. And Kurt was never one to covet money.



Charlotte Naue Wilhelm & Gerti Naue Wilhelm

He soon met Gerti Naue, as she was the sister of Charlotte Naue Wilhelm and had helped out in running Kurt's pharmacy at the end of the war. Gerti was also physically and emotionally in very ragged shape as her beloved husband, Max was killed toward the end of the war, leaving her with two small children to raise alone. Gerti suffered from a very serious kidney infection for years during the course of the war as there were no antibiotics available in those days. She suffered on that infection for years afterward as the infection ruined much of the function of her kidneys.

Gerti and Kurt soon started dating and they felt it was a good idea to get married and raise their children together. Again, Kurt was the born loser. Right after they married the German government announced that Gerti was eligible for over \$1,000 per month German widow's war pension as her husband Max was a high ranking German officer. But because she was remarried, she did not get one penny of that pension.

Kurt reclaimed his son Fritz from relatives who were caring for him and Gerti and he established a home for his son, and her twin children, Jurgen and Irmgard in Derenburg upstairs from the pharmacy. Kurt lived there with his wife Gerti until she died, then later by himself. In the last years of his life he would live in Derenburg summers and spend the winters with Werner and me in Utica. At first I thought he came to Utica because he liked to be with Werner and me, but I later learned that the heating system in Derenburg is so poor that he would have froze to death if he remained there. So every year Kurt would come to America for my birthday and would go back home after his birthday in March or after Easter in April.



Elke

Gerti wanted to get her children out of East Germany when it became apparent that the Communists were erecting the wall, so she sent her daughter to live with Dr. Wilhelm,

Charlotte and Astrid in Kassel. Uncle Kurt said that Astrid was so upset over sharing her apartment, bedroom and life with Irmgard that she told her parents that Irmgard was making homosexual advances toward her. Dr. Wilhelm and Charlotte, hearing these accusations, sent Irmgard away. They got her a position as a maid in Switzerland. Irmgard and her family were very upset over this turn in events, but there was nothing they could do about it. There is a nice ending to this story, though. Irmgard met a very nice man of a wealthy, upstanding family and got married and moved back to Germany and she has had a very comfortable life since. Irmgard and her friend travel over most of the world, taking several substantial foreign vacations yearly.

Jurgen got married and had two children. The pressures of married life got to him and he committed suicide. I asked Uncle Kurt why Jurgen did that and he replied that when Jurgen was having emotional difficulties that none of the family was supportive of him and he felt he had no place to turn for help so he bailed out of this life, leaving behind a young wife and two small children. Jurgen is buried in the same cemetery in Kassel as his mother Gerti and his uncle, Dr. Wilhelm.



top: Gunther, Martha & Helmut Eschenbach  
Margarete Eschenbach & Willy Eberlein, ?

Uncle Willy Eberlein was the husband of Martha Klodmann's first cousin, Margarete Eschenbach Eberlein, daughter of Otto Paul Eschenbach. Margarete was born in Tuenschuetz just after the turn of the century. She and Willy met when he as a young man came to Tuenschuetz to inspect some land his father owned adjacent to the Eschenbach land. The land was of no real value for the Eberleins as they owned a paint factory in Saalfeld and one in Munich in the west. Anyway Willy met Margarete and fell in love with her and asked for her hand in marriage.



Martha, Gunther, Margarete, Helmut, ?  
Martha Eisenschmidt Eschenbach, & Otto Paul Eschenbach

I have always been fascinated by the young pictures of Margarete for she bore an uncanny resemblance to Werner in his youth. It is actually hard to figure out whose picture it is until you look closely at the dress and then at who else is in the picture in order to set the time period. We have a copy of their very fine wedding picture in Tuenschutz prior to the outbreak of World War II. They had two daughters and when they were still very young, Willy Eberlein was drafted and left Tuenschuetz to serve as an officer in the German army for the duration of the war. Willy's father, Paul, was left behind to manage the paint factory in Saalfeld. Due to the war, Paul sold the paint factory in Munich but kept the one in Saalfeld.

After the war was over, Willy Eberlein returned to his family in Saalfeld and retrieved his wife and daughter from Tuenschuetz where they had been staying with her parents. It was a sad and strained home coming for Willy. He learned that his wife's two brothers, Helmut and Gunther, had been killed in Russian, leaving Otto Paul Eschenbach, the present owner of the Tuenschuetz Gut, without male offspring, the first time that had happened since the traceable beginnings of the Eschenbach family going back to 1526. Otto Paul was totally devastated by the loss of his two sons and was suffering from heart problems which his physician felt was brought on by the heavy psychic load of having lost his two sons, and now having to deal with the Russians. Otto Paul offered Willy Eberlein the Gut in Tuenschuetz, together with all property and buildings thereon. Willy was absolutely worn out by having served the duration of the war in the German army, and now that he was back home his father expected him to take over the management and control of the Saalfeld paint factory. That was enough for Willy at the moment, that and becoming reacquainted with his half grown family, whom the last time he had seen them, were infants.

Willy was having a fine roast beef dinner with his father and mother in their home in Saalfeld, when suddenly, in the middle of the dinner, the Russian soldiers walked into the home, walked up to Willy and grabbed him by the arm pits and carried him off out of the home. He ended up in Buchenwald in September, 1945 and remained incarcerated there until 1953, when he was let out because the Germans were so upset with the Russian rule that the Russians feared a revolt and eased up on their heavy handed tactics in order to pacify the masses of the German people.



Margarete Eschenbach Eberlein & Willy Eberlein