

TRUSTED EYE

Post–World War II Adventures
of a Fearless Art Advocate

Claudia Fontaine Chidester

*With a foreword by Ann Reynolds
and essays by Graeme Reid and Dorothea Schöne.*




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A GOOD picture on your walls is like another window, through it you may enjoy the lovely scene and with the artist share the thrill that touched his very soul.

—*Paul Hammersmith*

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Uneven Histories

Ann Reynolds

During my first visit to Claudia Chidester’s home to view paintings by her father, Paul Fontaine, she brought out a selection of papers written and compiled by her mother, Virginia Fontaine, including scrapbooks and journals from the time their family spent in Germany after World War II. I was immediately drawn to these materials, in part because I had just begun working on a book project centered on a woman artist, Ruth Vollmer, who left Germany for the United States with her husband in 1935. At the time, Fontaine’s papers seemed to provide a qualified mirror image of the situation I was considering. Fontaine and Vollmer were motivated to travel in opposite directions for vastly different reasons, and with incommensurable degrees of urgency, about ten years apart—Fontaine relocated to be with her husband, who became a civil service employee of the U. S. Army of Occupation, and Vollmer was a German Jew fleeing fascism. World War II prompted both their moves, and each woman rather quickly adapted to her new environment and became the center of a heterogeneous circle of expatriates, refugees, exiles, returning exiles, and native residents. During this pre- through postwar period, such adaptive outsiders constellated numerous cultural communities based on shared interests as well as uneven circumstances. Virginia, through her husband’s association with the U.S. military, had access to resources that the Germans and other Europeans she befriended and worked with did not. Unlike her German friends and colleagues, she could travel

throughout postwar Europe relatively freely—and often for free. She shared her resources and freedom of access, making vital introductions and restoring connections among individuals across nationalities, political alliances, and generations. Neither Fontaine nor Vollmer is well known now or was particularly well known during her lifetime beyond the relatively small, overlapping social and artistic circles they belonged to. Yet within these circles they constituted worlds that truly mattered to others, then and long afterward.

Some of the cosmopolitan interpersonal worlds centered on women have been written into the history of post–World War II art; Peggy Guggenheim’s assistance to and cultivation of exiled European artists through her galleries in London and New York and her extensive social circles is the most obvious example. But there are many other women whose personal stories not only enhance established histories by elucidating the connections among individuals; their archives provide a clearer sense of the intricate fragility of these worlds and how interdependent these individuals were because of their relative status as expatriates, refugees or locals. Whether citizens of victorious nations or of nations under siege or defeated, their ethical and aesthetic commitments were not easily reconciled with their national identities. Fontaine’s archive, as elucidated by Chidester’s text, is rich with evidence of the complexity of her relationships, both personal and professional, with many different types of people. Chidester’s depictions of Fontaine’s efforts to support artists by obtaining visas, organizing exhibitions, and forging connections among them within the context of her everyday life—the dinners, cocktail parties, romances, and childrearing—change the presumed scale of what was significant and for whom. Also, within this type of history, Fontaine’s own “failures,” such as her inability to finish art school, become just episodes in her story, not the defining moments of her life, and one is able to more fully appreciate how the failed negotiation of one situation can lead to the successful exploitation of another.

Chidester was born in 1956, after her parents and oldest sister, Carol, had been living in Germany for ten years; her middle sister, Gigi, was born in 1948. So she is writing about a significant portion of her mother’s life that she did not share or barely remembers. This makes her mother’s archive central to her project, yet she does not put undue pressure on any individual document. She does not address or substantially supplement the archive’s lacunae, and she rarely speculates at length about potential nuances of relationships her mother had with particular individuals beyond the words on the pages of her letters and diaries. She also does not assume that these documents collectively encompass the history of the postwar European art world. She includes sidebars to sketch out the broader details concerning some of the institutions and many of the individuals her mother worked with, but she does not consistently embed her mother’s history within the familiar parameters of postwar European history.

She also writes, with a few exceptions, in the third person, signaling her professionalism and maintaining personal distance from a significant portion of the story she tells. This historical modesty and reserve preclude the intrusion of her apprehension as a child of the complex structure of her mother’s life. In this manner, not unlike the uneven circumstances of the individuals her mother writes about, Chidester acknowledges her uneven relationship to the adult situations she addresses, such as alcoholism and extramarital relationships with both men and women. Her book, then, is not a memoir; it is a biography that subtly frames primary documents so that Virginia Fontaine’s voice draws the threads of her own life together to tell a history that we all need to hear.

Monday, February 19, 1945⁵¹

50th Day—315 days to follow

<input type="checkbox"/>	CLEAR
<input type="checkbox"/>	CLOUDY
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	RAIN
<input type="checkbox"/>	SNOW

Stayed for lunch & then drove home to Stuttgart. At 6 Willi appeared with 2 students & Hermann Goets - who stayed on for supper - & talked well into the evening. Willi went off to bed early. Goets will come over again on Wednesday.

In the morning Willi & I had a leisurely breakfast & then he went into Paul's studio & painted a nice little picture for us - Picked up Fawer & took him down to the gallery - the car awaited them - & off to Stuttgart the 2 new week - later in the evening Fawer brought back the Jerry Can from Munich.

I took a much needed nap in the afternoon & went to bed early in the evening.

Paul had brought home the beautiful Jankowsky painting & had painted the frame nicely - It is one of the very best pictures we now own.

I must say that these past five days have been, strenuous, fun, interesting and at times exciting with several lively conversations.

Tuesday, February 20, 1945⁵¹

51st Day—314 days to follow

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CLEAR
<input type="checkbox"/>	CLOUDY
<input type="checkbox"/>	RAIN
<input type="checkbox"/>	SNOW

Barbara dropped in this morning for a short little visit - she has postponed her trip to Switzerland for a while.

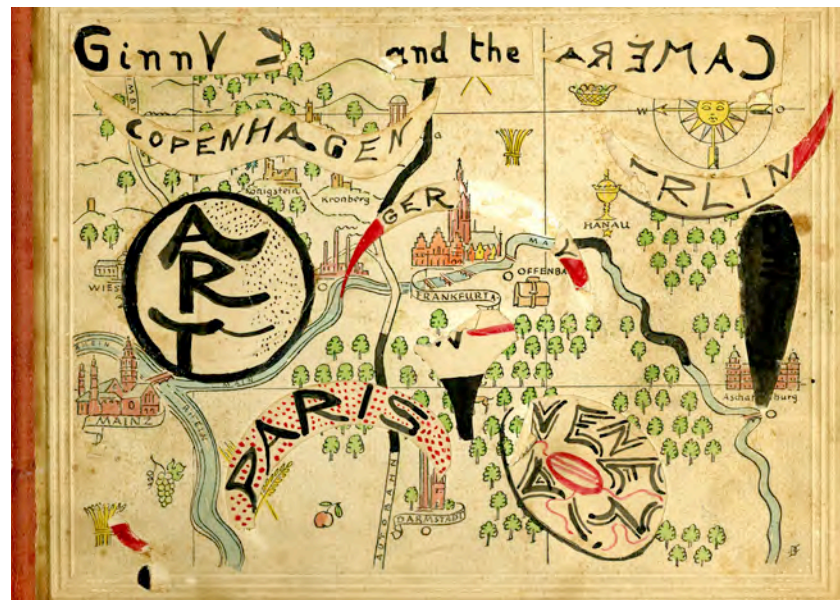
Preface and Acknowledgments

The impetus to write the story of Virginia Fontaine, our mother, began over a decade ago when I attempted to read her diaries. In 1951, she frugally reused a diary intended for 1945. Its onionskin pages were heavy with an upright scrawl in dense blue ink that had bled through the pages, obscuring her thoughts. How would I be able to understand the world she wrote about? If I just read the words, I would not understand their significance. So I did research and later referred back to the text, a process that would have been nearly impossible without a digital copy. There were too many details. Every day was packed with meetings, lunches, art opening, concerts, dinner parties or trips, as well as opinions. My memory of names, events, and places was no match for my mother's, and she wasn't alive to verify things. After attempting to transcribe the diaries, I hired a transcriptionist named Jennifer Cole. I thank her for her patience with the "squished" words. She reassured us: "I love working on them . . . your mother was an amazing person and I would have loved to know her . . . she cracks me up, a lot!!" We were hopeful that one day we might understand what Virginia accomplished with her life, if anything, beyond raising her children and supporting our father's career. Whether with horror or hilarity, my sister (Paula, aka Gigi) and I finally could see what Mother was thinking.

The second phase of discovery centered on her letters and photographs. I am indebted to the University of Texas School of Information students Clifford Allen

and Ben Philbrook for writing the finding aids after indexing and archiving the photographs and letters. I also wish to thank Karen Pavelka for her patient tutelage in paper preservation. My thanks go also to Katja Rivera, whose master's thesis in art history used material from the archive to describe the rich postwar German art community. Her work made it easy to see which events were important.

The archive has over 750 photographs and slides. A significant number of them are in a scrapbook for the years 1946–55, which also includes ephemera and newspaper clippings surrounding the gallery openings and music events Virginia attended. In addition, the archive contains 615 letters and over 400 monographs, all of them indexed. Two guestbooks are filled with signatures and artists' drawings of over 225 people out of the more than 500 whom Mother wrote about, individuals from the U.S. State Department, the military, the press, and the German art community, which included artists, dancers, singers, musicians, and architects as well as museum and gallery directors and art collectors. The diaries of 1951–52 describe hundreds of social gatherings. This book includes an index of all the persons of some historical significance mentioned in the diaries, letters, or guestbooks, or pictured in the photographs.



The website www.fontaine.org has scanned images of the scrapbook and guestbooks and transcribed diaries and a few of the important letters. To date, several published monographs have relied on Virginia's photographs and writings, including Dorothea Schöne, *Freie Künstler in einer freie Stadt* (DeGryuter, 2016); and Ulrike Fuchs, *Die Kunstvermittlerin Hanna Bekker vom Rath* (Peter Lang, 2013). The biography *Leopold Reidemeister: Ein deutscher Museumsman* (Brücke-Museum Berlin, Hirmer Verlag, 2017) used the rare photographs taken by Virginia of the exhibition of the Haubrich Collection in postwar Germany, organized by Reidemeister. In 2018, an authoritative biography of Hanna Bekker also used many of her photographs: Marian Stein-Steinfeld, *Hanna Bekker vom Rath: Handelnde für Kunst und Künstler* (Verlag Frankfurter Bürgerstiftung, 2018). I am forever indebted to Marian for writing this definitive work on Hanna Bekker, Virginia's mentor and best friend.

As both the writer and the archivist, I struggled with which voice to tell the story. For example, I often toggle between calling her "Virginia" and "my mother," but I mostly attempt to keep the story told in her voice through her writings. I view my position as that of a curator stitching her images and words together inside a few paragraphs of context.

I am indebted to Dorothea Schöne, from the Berlin Dahlem museum, and Graeme Reid, from the Museum of Wisconsin Art, for contributing essays that add additional context to Virginia's life, times, and contributions. Particular thanks goes to Ann Reynold's foreword text; she adds insight to the role of immigrant and expatriate women in art promotion, a topic of contemporary interest. I thank Olga and David Wise for their translations from the German.

I am thankful to my readers: the late Dr. David Gracy, the stalwart archivist of Texas and my archives professor

3. Guestbook Cover Volume 1, November 25, 1949 – June 26, 1951.



4. Virginia, 1947. Photo by Marta Hoeppfner.

at the University of Texas; Cliff Allen and Katja Rivera, who knew the material and could report on what I had overlooked; Deborah de Freitas and Kirk Walsh, from my Austin Bat Cave writing community; and P.J. Pierce, with her biographer's perspective. I am ever grateful to the dean of UT's School of Information, Dr. Eric Meyer, and the librarians of UT for help with getting access to research.

I also wish to thank the archivists Heather Winter at the Milwaukee Art Museum, Lee Grady at the Milwaukee Historical Society, Gayle Ecklund at the Milwaukee Public Library, Erin Dix at Lawrence University, Corey Stewart at the National Archives, and Sue Mayo at the National Stars and Stripes Museum for diligently answering my many requests.

I can't thank enough the many historians, art historians, curators, and writers who graciously referred me to other resources: Brandon Ruud at the Milwaukee Art Museum; Debra Brehmer at the Portrait Society Gallery; John Gurda, Milwaukee's historian-at-large; Dr. Beth Zinsli at Lawrence University; Lynne Shumow at Marquette University; Julia Bradshaw at Oregon State University, Corvallis; and Mary Chapin at the Portland Art Museum.

I would like to thank our one remaining Milwaukee cousin Linda Devitt, and husband Patrick, who have always been the most gracious hosts and provided valuable insight into our Hammersmith heritage.

Also, I am ever grateful to Kip Keller, editor extraordinaire, and Wendy and Sean Carnegie and Sally Kronson for the creative book design.

Most importantly, I thank my sister, Paula (aka Gigi), for her direct support and insight, for her patience with the hours of scanning and indexing the letters. She was witness to and validated much of what I was trying to describe. And I thank my husband, Phil, for leaving me alone in the studio or for getting me out of my chair to take a walk.



5. Fontaine apartment, Frankfurt c. 1952. Left wall: (partial view) Ida Kerkovius, *Landschaft*, 1948, wool tapestry commissioned by Virginia. Wall table left: Raul Ubac, *Komposition*, c.1951, slate carving. Ewald Mataré, *Eingekauertes Rind*, c. 1946, bronze sculpture. Wall table center: Shinkichi Tajiri *Untitled*, 1951, iron sculpture.

Wall Table right: Ewald Mataré, *Grasende Kuh II*, 1930, bronze sculpture. Center wall: Alexej Jawlensky, *Mädchenkopf*, 1916, oil on board and *Mystischer Kopf*, 1916, oil on board. Right wall: Ida Kerkovius, *Hexi*, 1949. Wool and mixed thread. Commissioned by Virginia. Center Table: Margrit Linck, *untitled bowl*, ceramic, 1952.

Prologue

A major U.S. museum retrospective of works by the Russian painter Alexej von Jawlensky (“Yav-len-ski”) was exhibited at the Neue Galerie in New York in 2017. In 2018, his *Blaue Kappe* (*Blue Cap*), a painting of a woman, from 1912, sold for \$6 million at Sotheby’s auction house in New York, thousands of miles from where he had painted it, in Germany. The evening auction had the excitement and pace of a horse race. The audience sat in modest chairs, shoulder to shoulder. Many were noting in the catalogue the gaveled prices. Others were quietly waiting. Some were in their eighties, dressed as if for the opera, and others for a business meeting. All were entranced by the British auctioneer as he took bids from those present and from the line of auction representatives on phones seated behind a high long desk along the wall. His pace slowed as the bids got higher and he kept pushing for more. As works sold, the sellers, often with family members, stood and walked out quietly, smirking or solemn, depending on the outcome. This Jawlensky was sold in the mid to late 1950s to a New Yorker, who transferred it a few years later to a London gallery that sold it in Switzerland at auction in 1962, and now it was for sale again. If Virginia were alive today, she would be sitting back smugly, remembering the day she first bought the artist’s work (but not this painting) from a gallery in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1947. She might have known the New Yorker who had owned this painting.

When Virginia arrived in Frankfurt in August 1946 with her young daughter Carol, the burned city was mostly rubble. As she wrote to her mother: “When it [Frankfurt] burned, Germans could read a newspaper in Hoechst, 15 miles away, at midnight.”¹



6. Paul W., Virginia and Mary Louise Hammersmith on Lake Michigan.

Virginia—“Ginny” to her friends—was born in the conservative midwestern city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1915, in the middle of World War I. Her grandfather Paul Hammersmith, a well-known etcher of Wisconsin landscapes, founded an engraving company where her father and brother also worked. She grew up relatively well off, with a maid in a three-story house not far from the wealthiest Milwaukee neighborhood along Lake Michigan, but she still worked as a camp counselor and

swim teacher. She was a Girl Scout, played sports, studied drama and violin, sailed, and rode horses. She attended the Yale University Art School during the Great Depression, met her artist husband, Paul Fontaine, and married in 1940. Paul was drafted in 1942, and when the war ended, three years later, it was difficult for him to return to the United States anytime soon, so she opted to join him in Germany. In a few months she had made friends with many of the Monuments Men—the military group charged with collecting art looted by the Nazis and returning it to the rightful owners—and the wives of high-ranking officers. She wanted to work in a position where her knowledge of art would be useful. In that pursuit, she met Hanna Bekker vom Rath, a renowned German collector, and quickly her life changed from being an observing newcomer to directly helping the surviving German artists. Through letters, journals, and photographs, she documented their work. The expected six-month stay became nearly twenty years, after which they moved to Guadalajara, Mexico, where she passed in 1991.

Virginia stood nearly five feet, six inches, higher with heels. She was broad-shouldered and straight-backed, with dark brown hair and large dark eyes. She had a noticeable but endearing gap in her front teeth, which she meticulously flossed, especially after eating her favorite white asparagus. She spoke with a neutral Midwest accent somewhere in the alto range; she smiled broadly and often. She answered the phone formally, “Virginia Fontaine speaking,” and took copious notes on her calendar and in little flip notepads. At home, classical music played on the radio the entire day. Virginia and Paul’s social calendar was full, and if not visiting the homes of artists or gallerist friends, they attended every opera, dance, symphony, and museum or gallery event available.

Virginia’s left-handed upright lettering and carefully crafted words fill hundreds of pages of records of her life, starting in 1935 when she entered the Yale University Art School. Several photo albums document her high school and early college days at Milwaukee-Downer,

her time at Yale, and my parents’ yearlong sojourn on Tortola in the British Virgin Islands. Guestbooks with signatures and artist sketches record over two hundred people who visited their home. She kept drafts of essays that may have been intended for publication, but not sent, and lengthy travelogues. Most revealing was one large scrapbook covering the years 1946–55 in Germany. Another large group of letters describe their twenty years in Guadalajara.

In the early years, her letters, mostly handwritten, were sent to her mother, Myrtle Bishop Hammersmith. But some typewritten letters, in duplicate and sometimes triplicate, were more like travelogues or treatises on the “state of the art world.” She sent them to gallerists and art-collecting friends in the United States or formatted them as photo-essays that could be published in magazines. After Myrtle’s death, in 1961, the collection of letters from Virginia became thin except for a few that friends or family saved and returned to her.

Virginia’s story encompasses many starts. Every one of her projects was an attempt to fulfill her family’s legacy, to make herself useful by belonging to many networks of people who were trying to achieve a goal. Fulfilling a need that others could not became her calling. She took on tasks ranging from the simplest, such as filling out forms to help artists cross into different zones during the Allied occupation of Germany to making a phone call to help a friend get into art school, to finding an opera singer for a producer, creating an art show that would travel to seven museums, building a show of sixty-nine artists’ work to be exhibited overseas, and helping clear the name of a falsely maligned dancer. Most importantly, her friends knew that the Fontaine home was open and that it always a place where they could stay. She was a friend to a handful of strong women and a few men who gave her the focus to exploit her strengths. But at some point, each of these relationships faded as she reached a goal and found a new focus, another problem to solve.

Our mother purchased art throughout the years she lived in Germany, and by the time I was ten, twenty years later, our six-room high-ceiling apartment in Darmstadt, Germany, had paintings on all the walls, and sculptures on all the tables. Her gift for choosing timeless art was just one of her many talents.

On days when she was home from her many travels, she was usually at the typewriter, smoking Salems, the better part of the day until a small plastic cup of bourbon was drained and she grew tired. She then slept the afternoon away until it was time to fix dinner before Dad came home from his job as art director for the *Stars and Stripes* newspaper. It was not until after our dad died in 1996, and we found plastic bags filled with letters and photos, that I started to uncover the layers of who she was outside my experience of her.

I knew her as a mother who held my head when I was sick over the toilet but also as someone who did not play with me. She would not make cupcakes for school or encourage us to have slumber parties. She had her own parties. I made my breakfast and lunches as soon as I could reach the stove and make oatmeal and boil eggs or slice the dense German bread with the hand slicer. She signed me up for horseback riding lessons, but would not stay to see my progress. At age eleven, I was expected to ride my bike the five miles to the stables. When the horse threw me on my third lesson, I never returned. She did send me to her seamstress for sewing lessons during the summer of my twelfth year, to which I rode the bus. One of her sayings was “A clean house is a sign of a misspent life.” Thankfully, we had maids, at least in the early days. I knew her as someone who liked entertaining and participating in artistic events but did not care for organizations such as the PTA or otherwise shallow and pointless women’s groups, both which she tried for a year. Our home always had visitors, and our lives revolved around them. Another of her oft-repeated sayings was “You can tell a lot about a person from what is on their walls,” and our walls were covered in art.

The extensive and detailed documentation that Virginia compiled gives a unique view into the time of Germany's rebuilding, particularly the role that people who were part the Occupation, such as Virginia played in helping artists sell their work and be exhibited again after the Nazi oppression. Her record reflects a portrait of how a country's rebuilding involves more than fixing the pipes and building roads. It is also about restoring cultural life so that the country would not only trust but also love the occupiers for attending to the art-starved hearts and minds of the people. Her photographs of painters, sculptors, dancers, and opera singers, along with her diaries detailing the hundreds of parties that she and Paul hosted, paint a vivid picture of a vibrant cultural time. She played a unique role in connecting Germans with Americans interested in the arts.

This documentation also shows how a married woman with children—no matter how qualified—had a hard time finding employment. It shows how a single-minded and expansive personality whom the community adored for her no-nonsense openness and ability to cut through red tape and solve problems was still criticized by her mother for not being more home oriented. Her letters

detail her struggles with marriage and relationships. She never agreed with the 1950s view of a wife's role as subordinate to her husband, and our father acknowledged her as an equal partner, but she struggled against her mother's open rebukes of her spousal and child-rearing decisions. Even when she was at Yale, she left herself open to criticism but continued to detail her every move, somehow knowing it mattered not what her mother thought in the long run. Virginia was fearless.

Lastly, the extensive record that she left behind shows her struggles with finding love outside the home and facing her husband's infidelity. Further, she documents how Senator Joseph McCarthy's call for extensive background checks affected her friends, an ocean away from Washington, D.C.

Throughout her life, Virginia seemed conflicted about making a name for herself. She gave up painting during her first year of marriage, because, as she often said, "a family can only have one artist." In its place, she began writing, photographing, informing, and curating. Nonetheless, she wanted a paying job so that she could be independent of her husband's tight grip on funds. But she didn't have a college degree. Virginia failed the fourth-year composition class at Yale. Of the twenty-six students in the Class of 1940, thirteen did not finish, seven of them women.² Because she did not have a diploma, jobs were harder to get. That setback did not dampen her ambition. Even while pregnant in 1956, she took classes with the University of Maryland's extension program offered by the armed forces, but again she received no final degree. She would always be someone who could only say "attended the Yale University School of Fine Arts," rather than "graduated from."

Dad had always insisted that Mother was an accomplished painter, and he was disgusted with Yale's treatment of her. Which is why when my sister, cousin, and I walked into the Milwaukee Public Library in the spring of 2017, we felt vindicated by finally having proof of her intention to be a serious artist. There we saw, in disbelief, a painting by Virginia Hammersmith, done at Yale in her final year and now a part of a show entitled "Wisconsin Women Artists."³ *The Flood*, a large painting full of color and action in a dramatic Depression-era style, shows a man holding a woman with a child as they work their way up the hill away from a raging river. It is in the permanent collection of the Milwaukee Art Museum, a fitting honor and an impetus for me to tell her story.⁴

7. Claudia Chidester and Paula (Gigi) Fontaine-Haake, Milwaukee Public Library, 2017. Photo by Linda Devitt.



8. M. Virginia Hammersmith (American, 1915–1991), *Flood*, 1939. Oil on masonite. 36 ¼ × 26 ¾ in. (92.08 × 66.99 cm). Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of Mrs. Erich Cramer Stern, M1973.115. Photographer credit: John R. Glembin.



9. Paul Hammersmith c 1898. Wall left: Charles Adams Platt, *Two Sloops*, East River, 1889. Etching, image size 11 ½ x 18 ¼ in. (29.21 x 46.36 cm). Location unknown. Wall Right: Paul Hammersmith, *Near Congo Square*, New Orleans, c.1891. Etching, 7 ½ x 5 ¾ in. (19 x 14.6 cm). Private collection.

My Avocation Has Always Been Art

Virginia's beginning as an artist was mainly due to the support and success of her grandfather Paul Hammersmith, who was entrepreneurial and adventure seeking. He was a first-generation, born-in-America son of a German immigrant, Herman Hammerschmidt.⁵

Herman and his brother Adolph, both university students, had left the civil unrest and high unemployment in Germany in 1848 to farm in Naperville, Illinois. Herman was eighteen. They left a stable family with a father who was a respected minister from the central Rhine River valley towns of Altena and, later, Munster. At the time, thousands of Germans fled to economic opportunities and freedom in America. Although the brothers were not farmers, they planned the trip, learned English, finished some military obligations, and did some "practice farming" at the estate of one of their father's friends.⁶

Immigrants to America came from all parts of Europe with only a chest or suitcase of belongings. The brothers left from Bremen on the newly built S.S. *Hermann*, a wooden paddle steamship 235 feet long, originally meant for hauling mail. Coal-powered, it had three masts as a backup. It accommodated 180 passengers, initially 140 in first class and 40 in second class, which grew to 200.⁷ The ship was so overfilled that the Hammerschmidt brothers and others were moved to the quarterdeck, an area generally reserved for the captain.⁸ Moving at only nine knots (a little more than ten miles



49. Posters for American soldier instruction: "A Good Soldier is Alert, Well-Informed, Responsible, Obedient."

We Found Ourselves Helping the Jewish Underground

There were events in her life that Virginia did not document officially, either in her letters home or in a diary, likely to avoid leaving any incriminating evidence. But shortly before her death, she wrote the following notes for a Yale alumni questionnaire. She never spoke of this in person. The year was likely 1947, when the British were preventing ships full of Jewish refugees from landing in Palestine. They had an annual quota of only 10,000 Jewish immigrants, and in April 1947 there were still 125,000 Jews in the American Zone and 15,000 in the British Zone, most attempting to leave Europe.⁸⁸ (Britain, which governed Palestine under a UN mandate, had to balance the interests of both Jews and Arabs in the territory; it therefore could not allow a huge influx of people from either group.) Virginia and Paul made regular trips to Switzerland to visit artists and galleries starting as early as November 1946. In the questionnaire for Yale, she writes of what could come from trying to help Jewish refugees attempting to flee:

We [Paul and I] found ourselves helping the Jewish underground as couriers of money to Switzerland—to purchase ships to take refugees to Israel. When I read in the local newspaper of an American woman army sergeant arrested on the Frankfurt–Basel train with \$50,000 on her—and being shipped home to the states [—] I stopped my altruistic support for the refugees.⁸⁹

The newspaper article she cites has not been found, but the event is entirely plausible, based on events reported in *Stars and Stripes* between August 1946, when she

arrived, and May 1948, when the ships were no longer needed, since Israel achieved statehood that month. The Jewish underground in Germany was very active, and Frankfurt's DP (displaced persons) camp in Zeilsheim had a large black market where much money was raised to send Jewish immigrants to Palestine.

Virginia spoke of her experiences with the black market in a lecture:

A large part of the best of Frankfurt residential area was fenced off with steel and barbed wire. There was only one entry and exit point. Fraternization was not encouraged. . . . When I brought a German guest to my home, I had to sign him or her in at a small green house at the entry point and bring the guest back the same way by 11 PM. A still dear German lady friend visited us every Friday on her bike to have a hot bath in our home. I recall the published story of an old deaf man taking out a bail of hay on his back. He did not hear the sentry's command to halt and was shot dead. Zeilsheim [was the] black market center [and the] route to Israel, [many left] by trucks at night. A wife was nothing on the other hand—sometimes they shipped her home pronto.

Commissaries and PX (post exchanges) were set up. At first it was mostly army rations[,] tin goods and military clothing. And before long the army imported seeds of all kinds and had specialists supervising celery crops in Italy, lettuce crops in Holland, tomatoes from the Canary Islands with stateside fertilizer to help avoid the constant danger of worm infestation from human fertilizer used on most farms. Meats came from the US, Argentina and later lamb from Australia.

In 1946-47 the roads were clogged with refugees walking and pulling carts from East Germany to West Germany. It was the coldest winter in about 100 years—even the Rhine river froze solid—Thousands died. Coal was provided to the compound and plenty of it was stolen. In no time the Black Market started and the cigarette, coffee and fat economy took over.

General Lucius Clay was in command in Berlin at the time and his wife originated the first Barter Market in Berlin, then Frankfurt and Munich and other cities followed. The Germans received barter tickets for their Meissen china, crystal, Leica cameras, binoculars . . . and the Americans brought in cigarettes, coffee, lard, tea etc for barter tickets—and clothing too . . . One General shipped home 10 grand pianos. A lower offi-

cer opened an antique shop with all the crystal he sent home. One Colonel went too far and took the crown jewels from their hiding place in the cellar of the Kronberg castle.

Wherever the US Army was stationed the best and largest castles, land houses and homes were taken over by the Army and the officers lived in grand style. They also took over all the grand Mercedes and VWs. No German had a car. They walked or had bikes. Only Americans could ride the one line street car which went back and forth from the Bahnhof [train station] to the compound. . . . We took trains everywhere. All we needed was military orders to take the US military train to Paris, Garmisch [a ski resort in Bavaria] or Berlin for free.⁹⁰

The black market was still active in 1948, even when Germans tried to export their goods officially:

As Paul's office is near the Export-Import office where the Germans must take their merchandize to get pricing, they also sell what they can on the spot—as something in the hand feeds them quicker than waiting for the few miserable marks returned to them after the product is sold abroad for dollars . . . Oyi, oyi, wait till you see my linen!⁹¹

The Frankfurt railway station, one of the busiest in the country, was raided routinely.⁹² In the spring of 1947, it was raided and closed for most of the day while 1,500 people were searched.⁹³ In March 1948, the Zeilsheim Jewish DP camp was raided, and authorities found six truckloads of contraband; many of the goods had been stolen from army supplies. Ships for transporting Jewish refugees needed to be purchased, and \$50,000 could buy a small one. Although transporting large undeclared amounts of money across borders was illegal, couriers, including a network of Americans, helped take the money to Switzerland, the main banking center through which funds for the Jewish resettlement effort flowed. Virginia was correct in being apprehensive that she would be caught.

She would soon find other ways to be useful.

U. S.-Manned Refugee Ship Seized at Haifa With Crew

Special to The New York Times.

JERUSALEM, March 9—The first unauthorized immigrant ship known to have been sent here by the Hebrew Committee of National Liberation was in the Palestine Government's custody today. Her crew of twenty-three, believed to be Americans, was arrested and will be charged in Haifa tomorrow with bringing the ship into Palestinian waters illegally.

The vessel, a former private yacht used in the war by the American Navy, reached Haifa early today under a British navy escort. All but two of her 599 passengers were immediately and peaceably trans-shipped to two ferry ships. The first left for Cyprus at dawn; the second followed about an hour later.

The immigrants, including 385 men, 194 women and twenty children, carried "identity travel certificates" issued by the Hebrew Committee of National Liberation in Paris. These were signed by Eri Jabotinsky, son of the late Zionist revisionist leader whose program was the original inspiration for the committee and the Irgun Zvai Leumi.

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'Black Travelers' Again Slip Across Austro-Italian Line

BRENNER PASS, May 14 (AP)—The "black travelers" again are moving secretly across the high 205-mile frontier between Italy and Austria—hoping to find a port somewhere in Italy from which to sail to Palestine.

They are the Jews of Central Europe, traveling without passports, identification or permits. The arrival of 75 of them last week in the French Zone of Austria heralded large scale resumption of their migration, stalled over the winter by low temperatures and high snows in the Alpine passes.

Nevertheless, Italian frontier guards said, they intercepted many even in the bitterest weather, struggling toward their warm prom-

ised land across the Mediterranean. French security officers at Innsbruck, capital of the French Zone in Austria, said they believed an intricately organized international body directs the movement of Jews through their zone into Italy.

Between 400 and 500 Jews a week get across the Italian frontier, they said.

The French were understood to have complained in the Allied Control Council in Vienna against American "negligence" in permitting so large a group as the 315 Polish, Czech and Romanian Jews who suddenly confronted two Austrian border police the night of May 13 at Gerlos Pass to enter without hindrance into the French Zone.

French Return 270 Zion-Bound Jews to U. S. Zone

LUDWIGSHAFEN, April 13 (UP)—A desperate run for Palestine ended last night, Tuesday night, they arrived back in Ludwigshafen at the almost completely destroyed railroad station, where the French threw a small guard around them for the night. Meanwhile, they had not eaten a full meal for two days.

Three of the leaders had chartered a car to Saarbrücken, and taking all papers except UNRRA issued DP cards, headed for Paris to arrange for a ship. They have not been heard from since.

Two women and their sick children were left in Saarbrücken. Several other babies were sick by the time they reached Ludwigshafen from lack of decent water and food.

Three Frenchmen, who had

300 Jews Reported Halted At Austro-German Border

MUNICH, April 26 (UP)—Seven truck-loads of Jewish displaced persons apparently headed for Palestine were turned back at the Austro-German border near Salzburg at 1:15 a. m. today, Army and UNRRA spokesmen reported unofficially.

An estimated 300 DPs were stopped by German police, turned over to Constitutional troopers and subsequently sent to a DP camp near Bad Reichenhall, officials reported.

The Jews said they had become lost while heading for a rest center

near Berchtesgaden. They did not say they were heading toward Palestine.

The Jews were riding in former Army two-and-a-half-ton trucks. Two of the trucks bore German license plates while the other five they belonged to an American agency, officials reported.

Army officials in Frankfurt, how-

ever, claimed the vehicles "were privately owned, and simply requisitioned by the Army as emergency vehicles owned by a private U. S. citizen here."

Finally, French officials in Ludwigshafen collected their sole remaining identification, the DPs' cards.

For two nights in Ludwigshafen the Jews continued to live in the five unheated, filthy cabs, sleeping in shifts on hard wooden seats. Last night, the French and American Red Cross supplied some milk for the 40 children, plus hot soup and bread for the 40 women.

Most of the Jews on the train admitted they would again for Palestine at the first opportunity.

One swarthy, youthful Hungarian Jew said, "I have seen plenty worse than this. I have been trying for three years to get to Palestine, and still haven't given up."

All of the Jews denied that their flight was part of the expected mass exodus of thousands of Jews from the American Zone to Palestine, but assured reporters that the exodus proper would "start in about three weeks."

They said they had not paid for the train, and explained guardedly that some "organization or another" was taking care of the bill.

They said members of their band came from camps all over the U. S. Zone, and first gathered in Munich three weeks ago. They were just as vague about "the organization" that called them together.

Leader Bares Story of Jewish Underground to Zion

By RICHARD S. CLARK
MUNICH, May 4 (UP)—A youthful leader of Hagannah, the Jewish Zionist Army, said today that the 20th-century underground railroad by which his organization has transported thousands of Jews from Poland and Germany to Mediterranean ports will continue smuggling its human cargo through the British blockade to Palestine.

The mystery of how an organization steered thousands in their flight from Poland last year, and still keeps about a constant stream of Palestine-bound Jews flowing, Hagannah is said to have a plan number two, or illegal immigration, was launched two years ago when it had carved some 13,000 Jews out through Bavaria alone, the report said.

Other sources here said only about 5,000 had come from this area.

"It is a kind of warfare," he said, "but we must get these people to a safe place. We must build a homeland. And we need them in Palestine for political reasons—to strengthen the Jewish community there."

Underground leaders in the DP camps are quiet and are told when and where their groups will report. The travelers strap on their backs a small pack including extra shoes, shirts, socks and toilet goods.

Difficulties today are far greater than we ever thought they would be," he commented quietly.

"No country will help us openly. The whole route has to be done in the underground way and at the ports we have to denounce our friends sometimes to get our people aboard ships."

Sometimes we run trucks toward the border into the French zone of Alsace or Germany. Sometimes they laybait, wait for darkness to walk over in isolated spots. Occasionally they continue walking."

Our crews, however, are ready for them along the route. Houses

which were ready to close their eyes before, won't do that now," he explained.

Several other sources here indicated that some French quarters are still giving unofficial cooperation.

Here's how: "Allyah Betz" works the emigrants leave their camps, generally in trucks. At successive rendezvous points they join with other groups until a transport of several hundred is under way.

Sometimes we run trucks toward the border into the French zone of Alsace or Germany. Sometimes they laybait, wait for darkness to walk over in isolated spots. Occasionally they continue walking."

Our crews, however, are ready for them along the route. Houses

are prepared at regular stopping points. Food is there waiting for them, although we have had misadventure when they had to go hungry.

"At the next border they may have to walk again. And so it goes. At the port, food and housing are provided for whatever period they have to wait. Some groups are lucky and proceed to ship immediately. Other groups have waited three to four months."

Previously, he declared, illegal emigrants were frequently able to board ship openly, either with forged visas or with connivance of local authorities.

Now we mostly load in secret. For protection, the routes are changed frequently.

The man who travels "Allyah Betz" needs no money, the underground worker said.

Jews' Migration Goal To Zion Set at Million

By DANIEL DE LUCE
FRANKFURT, May 27 (AP)—Veteran directors of Jewish underground migration declared today their long-range goal was the transportation of 1,000,000 Jews from Europe to Palestine.

Resettling more than 200,000 Jews from western Germany and Austria, they said, would be "only the beginning" in their postwar task of building a Jewish national state "which will give a sense of security to Jews everywhere in the world."

They listed these estimated populations as future citizen material for Palestine: Rumania, 350,000 to 400,000; Hungary, 200,000 to 250,000; Poland, 125,000 to 150,000; Bulgaria, 42,000; Yugoslavia, 12,000.

Frankfurt said he had no knowledge of the projected move, but added that his organization, unofficially at least, favored "all types" of immigration into Palestine.

"We have been hearing constant reports of a 'march on Palestine,'" Paul Edwards, American Zone UNRRA chief said. "However, so

many black market suspects heading for the British Zone on an inter-annual train, OMGH public safety officials suspected today.

Police became suspicious of the nervous manner in which Pinkus Bornstein, 33, and David Primkowski, 33, both of Munich, submitted to a routine black market spot check conducted aboard the train in the Dillenburg station.

Police found 24 wristwatches strapped around the men's legs. The watches were later described by Army agents as PX merchandise. The pair are being held in the Weizlar stockade for further investigation.

Refugees Shipped To Cyprus After Zion Sea Battle

HAIFA, July 19 (UP)—The first 1,500 refugees from the Exodus 1947, whose interception resulted in a fight between the passengers and the British boarding crew, were placed on the British steamer Ocean Vifor for transfer to Cyprus.

The steamer has already left port. The death list includes a German in his middle 20s whose name is not known and a 15-year-old boy, Polish-born, Hirsch Jacobowicz.

In a Haifa hospital the vessel, the ship, William Bernstein, of Los Angeles, died of a fractured skull. He had made his second voyage as a member of the crew of an immigrant ship.

The captain of the vessel, Bernard Marks, of New York, and crew members Cyril Weinstein and Arthur Stanley Ritter, both of Brooklyn, were arrested while at the bedside of Bernstein on the ship.

John Stanley Grauer, a reporter for the Churchman, who made the trip as an observer, claimed the ship was boarded 17 miles outside territorial waters.



51. Carol, Virginia, Gladys Anastasas, Maj. Henry Anastasas, and Nancy Tuttrup at an exhibition of paintings by Paul Fontaine, Frankfurter Kunstkabinett, Frankfurt, 1948.

In an Extremely Strategic Position

In the frigid winter of 1946–47, after finally hiring a housekeeper—she had fired several who misrepresented their ability to do the job—to clean the apartment and wash laundry and watch Carol, Virginia braved the cold that December and took a bus to the Wiesbaden Museum, which was the collecting point for recovered Nazi-stolen art.

Yesterday, with my pal Gladys [Anastasas], I bundled up in my field coat and snow boots and stumbled down to the Farben Building to catch the 09:15 bus to Wiesbaden⁹⁴ Zero weather, bright blue sky, and sore shoulders strapped with three bundles, one of which was a package of painting boards Paul had found for Alo Altripp, the first modern German painter I had found . . . An hour later we arrived in Wiesbaden and hiked over to the Landes Museum. The two MP guards we had talked to on our last visit were still playing cards in the sparsely heated entrance room. The German receptionist, bundled in a big sheepskin coat, struggled from behind his desk to reach the inter-communications phone, and soon Frau Hoburt [Renate Hobirk] came through an inside door to greet us.⁹⁵ I explained to her in German that I had paint material for Alo to leave in her care. She left the room and returned shortly with a written permit for me to go to her office. This was handed to the guards and I signed in a book and then followed the woman through the door, down hallways, empty galleries, rooms stacked with old masters and eventually to her spacious book-lined office . . . Last Sunday a very fine exhibition of Christmas pictures was opened in the front galleries. Choice works by Altdorfer, Caravaggio, . . . Rembrandt . . . Captain Edith Standon [Edith A. Standen], recently transferred director, and Mr. [Francis W.] Bilodeau, the new director

who came from the Marburg collection point, were on hand for the opening . . . Our small party of four were the only other Americans on hand which gives you an idea of the interest shown by the U.S. Occupation forces. Otherwise, the galleries were filled with bundled-up enthusiastic Germans . . . In four days time the pictures on the walls began to buckle and warp and the show must close and works go back to warm storage . . . I believe you now have an idea of the amount of guarding they give the Old Masters. Plenty! Actually all of this work is in hock. And the Germans must work it off if they want their stuff back. It is tied in with reparations . . . We went back to the museum at three to keep our appointment with Alo. During the day he is at the officer's club working on murals and eating one good meal there. Frau Hoburt [Renate Hobirk] took us to a little room she has in a back wing of the museum and where she has a stove, cot, and a few furnishings. She and Alo had a hard time keeping back the tears of gratitude for the things I brought them. Hans Wagner came in for his package and marks for the paintings we purchased from him last week.⁹⁶

Gladys and Hank Anastasas

Virginia's friend Gladys was married to Hank Anastasas. Born in 1909 in Texas, Hank graduated from Georgia Tech University with a degree in architecture. In 1940 he was the project superintendent and architect for the U.S. National Park Service's Civilian Conservation Corps camp at Tyrrell Park in Beaumont, Texas. In 1941 he began his military career in the coastal artillery as a first lieutenant in Galveston. He and Gladys were married before he joined the war effort. In 1948 he was appointed chief of the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Section in Germany. Gladys and Hank returned to Beaumont in 1951 and then went to Japan, where he was chief architect at the Design Division of the Fifth Air Force's headquarters. After Gladys passed suddenly, he married Florence Huntley Hay, whom they had known in Germany. Both Gladys and Florence were friends with Virginia.

Altripp told her what the end of the war meant for German artists:

You have no idea of the feeling we [Hans Wagner was present as well] have to be able to paint as we wish again . . . For twelve years we have been afraid and only dared to paint in secret, and of course, could not exhibit our work and were afraid to let anyone see what we did.

And he pressed her for an American gallery connection:

He looks up at me with his sharp eyes and says in his broken English "I would like very much to have an exhibition of my work in America. Do you think this Brown Gallery⁹⁷ would like to show my work?" . . . And considering the fact that anyone wishing to get into Germany today must have an iron bound reason and visa permit, I find myself in an extremely strategic position.

Virginia wanted to find art collectors and dealers as well as artists. There was an official list of dealers that had been cleared of any Nazi affiliation, but to shortcut the process, she asked Captain Edith Standen of the Monuments Men whom she should meet.⁹⁸ The captain gave Virginia the address of Hanna Bekker vom Rath in the neighboring village of Hofheim.

Virginia described their first meeting for the gallery owner Margaret Brown:

We had a hard time finding it, but it was sure worth the effort. She has a big country house but it was so darn cold. We could see our own breath in the living room. Mrs. Bekker is a marvelous woman in her fifties or so. Very tweedy and sharp and darn glad of the American cigs we offered her as we smoked from one room to the next to keep warm.⁹⁹

What she saw on Hanna's walls reminded her of the many exhibitions of twentieth-century German works that she had viewed or even worked with at the Milwaukee Institute of Art. For example, selections from the exhibition *Twentieth Century (Banned) German Art* from London's Burlington Galleries opened June 1, 1939, at the institute.¹⁰⁰ In 1946, before Virginia left Milwaukee, the museum exhibited a retrospective show

of Kandinsky's work from the Guggenheim, and in 1945 it hosted an exhaustive exhibition of 125 drawings and lithographs, including ones by German expressionists, from the Museum of Modern Art.¹⁰¹ Virginia had been thoroughly exposed to the artists whose works she saw on Hanna's walls: Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Alexej Jawlensky, Ernest Nay, Paul Klee, and others.¹⁰² She was amazed that these gems had survived the war and Hitler's thieves.

During the visit, Virginia learned how close Hanna was to these artists. She had protected and supported them throughout the 1930s by holding salon shows in her studio in Charlottenburg-Berlin, all while under the threat of being reported.

Hanna had had an unfortunate experience with the U.S. Army, so she may have been a bit suspicious of Virginia's motives.¹⁰³ Living quarters for American officers and soldiers were scarce, and any unbombed home could be occupied while barracks were being built. On May 15, 1945, Hanna was given ninety minutes to evacuate her home, allowed to take only food and clothing, leaving all valuables behind, so that soldiers could occupy the house. She was not permitted to return until the following October; happily, she found that the soldiers had left almost everything undisturbed except for one lipstick scrawl on the sculpture *Geneigter Frauenkopf* (Inclined Woman's Head) by Wilhelm Lehmbruck. A small swastika had been scratched into a wooden sculpture of Christ, which she had agonized over, worrying that it



52. Hanna Bekker in her studio, 1979. Wall upper left: Alexej Jawlensky, *Spanierin* (*Frauenkopf vor grauem Hintergrund*), 1913. Lower left: *Birnenstilleben - Früchtestilleben*, c. 1931; Middle: *Stilleben mit Lampe*, 1906/1908. Photo by Peter Jaeger.

would be hacked to pieces for firewood. She wondered why her house was chosen when plenty of much larger ones were in the neighborhood. It was certainly the most colorful. ¹⁰⁴

Hanna's parents promoted culture and philanthropy. Her father, Walther vom Rath (1857-1940), was a Frankfurt public prosecutor and politician. Her mother was the daughter of Dr. Wilhelm Meister (1827-1895), the chemist who co-founded Teerfarbenfabrik, Meister, Lucius & Co, and later became Farbwerke Hoechst, in 1863, a dye company that became a component of IG Farben in 1925.¹⁰⁵ Dr. Meister asked Walther to join the board of the company in 1893. Upon Meister's death in 1895, Walther set up the Dr. Meister Study foundation in honor of his father-in-law and was also a



53. Hanna Bekker's house, Hofheim, Germany. Date and photographer unknown.

major donor to the Frankfurt museums and the founding of the university.¹⁰⁶ Her mother oversaw a socially active home, where she frequently hosted concerts and lectures. They entertained a wide circle of Frankfurt and international luminaries, including painters, musicians, business owners, historians, bankers, state ministers, and diplomats. Outside of hunting season, the men's diversions included chess and the women's bridge. Hanna could play both.¹⁰⁷

Hanna had long kept her distance from the family. She married a world-renowned musicologist and Jew, Paul Bekker. When Paul and Hanna met, he was newly divorced, with a child. Her parents, who were not pleased, insisted on a six-month separation trial period before they would consider consenting to marriage.¹⁰⁸ She and Paul married in 1920 and struggled financially during the following years of hyperinflation. As her stocks (a gift from her father) and currency rapidly lost value, she sold her jewelry in Switzerland, where the currency was more stable.

Paul and Hanna divorced in 1930 when she found him to be unfaithful. She was left with three children. Hitler's rise to power forced Paul to leave Germany in 1933. Visas to the United States were not easy to obtain, so he had to spend time in Italy, Switzerland, and France before immigrating to New York in 1934.¹⁰⁹

Hanna's passion was art. She had learned how to paint under the private tutelage of the artists Marie Paquet-Steinhausen in Frankfurt, Ottilie Roederstein in Hofheim am Taunus, and Ida Kerkovius in Stuttgart, a painter from Adolf Hölzel's circle.

Hanna's financial independence gave her the power to help artists beyond buying their work. She set up a foundation for Alexej Jawlensky in 1929 to support him when arthritis prevented him from using his hands; he painted by taping the brushes to his wrists.¹¹⁰

54. Back: Willi Baumeister, Ida Kerkovius, Ottomar Domnick; front: Hanna Bekker, Paul Fontaine, and Ernst Wilhelm Nay, Carnival Party, Frankfurt, Germany, 1947.



After the war, the Americans froze all IG Farben assets, which made Hanna's stock holdings illiquid.¹¹¹ At the time of meeting Virginia, Hanna was cash poor but rich in friends and status in the art world. Her large three-story home became a meeting place, and sometimes a temporary home, for artists who had been forbidden to paint. Many were starving after the war, and her backyard garden produced food regularly. The painter Ernst Wilhelm Nay stayed for a brief while before getting his own place in Hofheim. Emy Roeder stayed for weeks at a time as a respite from Berlin, as did Karl Schmidt-Rottluff. Hanna built a two-story apartment building at the foot of her property for Karl and

his wife and other artists who were passing through. She lent a hand to musicians and writers too.

Hanna was planning to open her Kunstkabinett gallery in Frankfurt and needed to reconnect with the other artists she knew to be living in the countryside. Hanna and Virginia had enough goods, abilities, and connections to begin traveling. Virginia had the vehicle, gasoline, cigarettes, and food. The gasoline was dirty, so Virginia learned how to clean a carburetor; she also knew how to change a tire. Virginia could apply for the papers that allowed them to travel to different zones. Hanna had the artists' addresses. Virginia's German was passable, and Hanna's English was impeccable.



55. Willi Baumeister, Stuttgart, 1947. Two center paintings were in Fontaine collection.

Papers, Please

From the end of World War II to the establishment of a functioning German government in 1949, Germany was divided into four zones controlled by the United States, France, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. Each had full responsibility for managing the sheer chaos the country faced in May 1945: 1.5 million POWs, 1 million wounded soldiers, and millions of displaced refugees, many with no homes to return to, needed to be fed and housed. They issued food rations of 1,200 calories a day, though the fields were barren. Fundamental infrastructure related to roads, fuel, communications, and medicine had to be rebuilt. The rule of law, including police forces, had to be reestablished. Stolen assets, including artworks, had to be returned to the rightful owners. The occupiers' top priority was to stave off starvation, but they also had to deal with reeducation and denazification, getting workers employed, opening schools, and holding elections. Berlin, because of its unique position as the Nazis' capital, was also divided into four Occupation zones.¹¹² (Geographically, the city was in the middle of the overall Russian zone.)

Virginia's American status, international network of friends, and understanding of the bureaucracy around travel gave her unique opportunities to be helpful. Travel outside the territory of one's residence required an invitation. To go to Berlin (around 340 miles from Frankfurt), where she did not yet know any Americans, Virginia asked Margaret Brown, from the Boston

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