



Letter from Max Bredig to Georg Bredig and Marianne Homburger, February 1, 1936

Bredig, Max Albert. "Letter from Max Bredig to Georg Bredig and Marianne Homburger, February 1, 1936," 1936. Papers of Georg and Max Bredig, Box 1, Folder 22. Science History Institute. Philadelphia.

<https://digital.sciencehistory.org/works/x78peme>.

Courtesy of the Science History Institute, prepared May 20, 2025 21:34 UTC

Translated by Jocelyn R. McDaniel

English Translation

Image 1

February 1, 1936

Dear Father and Anndel,

I probably haven't written since January 21st. I've been so busy that I couldn't find time to write until now, on a quiet Saturday evening. Thank you very much for the letter you sent on the 25th, as well as the cards you sent on January 27th and 30th, and for the laundry package. I was very pleased to hear that the new maid is working out well. Hopefully, it will continue that way. Where did you find such good luck? I'm also doing well. Hebrew isn't easy, but it's still enjoyable. I'll tell you more about the laboratory later. Regarding your various inquiries, Anndel: if you don't plan to use Father's tailcoat and Father, you believe that you won't need it either, I could have it tailored for me here. I could wear it in case there are weddings, baptisms, or other occasions in the future. So, if you don't need it, please send it. Thank you very much! Regarding the sofa in the bedroom, I don't agree with giving it away. I think it doesn't bother anyone there, and it's useful for guests who stay after dinner,

especially in the summer. It may also be useful in cases of illness. I'm not thinking too much about saving it for later, although it's probably still in good condition. I recently bought a pair of pajamas, so now I have two good pairs and two less good ones. I also have at least six nightshirts. Maybe I'll buy a very good one made of silk.

February 2, 1936

Even on a "quiet" Saturday evening, I couldn't get any further because I talked to Dr. Peschk. and made an appointment to discuss the issue of medical residency. He didn't understand the case any more than I did. How is it possible that a Frenchman fought on the German side? He also mentioned that if the person has a German license to practice medicine, nothing would officially stand in the way of settling down. The person's prospects essentially depend on their ability, although private health insurance companies

Image 2

(page 2)

have recently become difficult. Did the person previously have a practice in Berlin? If it was in a private apartment and the person was capable and well-liked, their chances of regaining it are not all that bad.

Let's turn our attention to the question of the piano. Many people think that our plan to spend more than 200 Marks on an old instrument is crazy, and suggest that we sell it, even though we would receive very little for it. They suggest that we could likely purchase a good one for cheap during a house clearance. However, I believe that the matter is not as simple as that. Recent events have caused me to reassess the situation. I may not be staying here for as long as I initially thought. There was an anti-Semitic scandal in the laboratory recently, which you may recall from my previous stories, and the situation has changed considerably as a result. Therefore, I believe that neither selling nor purchasing a new piano is the right course of action at this time. At present, I have not experienced any negative consequences, but the situation remains uncertain. H.H.F. recently informed me that my employment with him may not continue beyond this year. However, the situation seems to have stabilized somewhat, but I must remain prepared for any eventuality. The recent incident only affected the gentleman involved and his innocent and popular secretary. The gentleman no longer enters the laboratory and will soon be leaving for the U.S.A after taking his exams. The secretary had already resigned effective April 1st, which makes the action taken against her even more incomprehensible. She will be leaving in mid-March. I have been warned that I may be the next target, but the timeline is unclear. Some have even suggested that someone of equal standing could replace me, but H.H.F. has denied this possibility. He has

advised me to retain my position but consider other prospects only after I am free to do so. At present, no action is being taken. Nevertheless, I am calm and ready to face whatever may come my way.

Image 3

(page 3)

However, considering the circumstances, we should reconsider whether transporting the piano is still a good idea.

Additionally, what are Goldschmidt and Fajans planning to do? H.H.F thought that Fajans might already be in England. Is there anything he could do to help me? Nonetheless, I believe that I could find a better opportunity elsewhere if necessary.

Interestingly, just before the incident, H.H.F expressed during a conversation about my future that he did not want to lose me for selfish reasons. Unfortunately, he could not offer me anything better than what I have now.

We will see when we get to that point!

At your request, I am enclosing a duplicate copy of my income tax return. Please send it back to me once you have reviewed it. Unfortunately, I have reached the lower limit of a new tax bracket, which means that I now have to pay around 120 Marks in taxes. This is a significant amount of money for me. I had hoped that the typewriter I own could be counted as an income-related expense towards my salary or capital assets, but unfortunately, it cannot. Selling the typewriter wouldn't help me to lower my tax bracket either. However, next year my income from capital assets will be considerably smaller as the conversion bonuses are being discontinued. As for the other issue, I am not sure what you are referring to. Please let me know if you need any further information.

Schnell is doing very well in H. I recently went to his brother's house for dinner and played the piano. He was recently married. On Thursday, I will see Dr. Peschk again. I haven't seen the Guttman boys. I was upset to hear about Werner's retirement.

At Schnell's request, I sold his book "Natural Sciences" to J. for the offered price. I find your idea about using ultrasonic waves very original. Could you tell me more about how it would be carried out?

Neveu's doctoral thesis supposedly caught the attention of Mr. Schleede, who succeeded K.A. Hofmann and is also our competitor in the phosphate field. Schleede was particularly interested in the carbonate apatite that Neveu produced, but did not preserve. The new

doctoral student has continued the work, including the production of potassium homologues, and is doing well. I have a good working relationship with him. He was previously the head of the student body at T.H. and is originally from Berlin. My Chinese doctoral student is currently finishing up his publication.

There is nothing new to report otherwise. Greetings to both of you!

Max