

Spain II.

Letters of an antifascist to her parents,
antifascists in Germany

Marianne's letters from Spain – II.

From 8 August 1936
to¹

Copies, the originals are in storage.

Completed on Father's birthday,
26 July 1946²

¹ Initially left blank, the completion date was, as stated further down, 26 July 1946.

² Marianne Angermann's father, Konrad Theodor Konstantin Angermann (1874 – 1946).

Berlin, August 1936

What follows is not an exact record of Marianne's letters. The originals are in storage. They contain much that is personal, and some of them are very short because they have been through two censors.³ We only record here what is of general interest.

Madrid, 8 / VIII / 36

We haven't heard from each other for so long! Yes, there's war here now, but we don't see much of it here.⁴ The gobierno⁵ keeps order rigidly, and we have everything we need. I have seen very little of these goings-on – or, actually, nothing at all because I very cleverly had to put myself to bed eight days before the war began⁶ with an awful middle ear infection. They opened up my eardrum while we were all still blissfully at peace, but unfortunately it was too late. It had all gone septic already. Then they tried a new French injection treatment which had no effect either. So one fine afternoon F and two doctors, with the help of Herr Ullmann,⁷ took me down all the many flights of stairs on a chair because the lift workers were on strike.⁸ Now the lift is operating again! They took me to be x-rayed and left me there overnight, allegedly because there were difficulties with transport. But when F arrived the next morning with the barber who cut off 1/3 of my hair I knew what was up. Actually it was good to hear only ¼ hour beforehand what was going to happen – that I was going under the knife again. F was present at the operation and in the afternoon when I came to. That had such a calming effect on me in this foreign country. He has been so concerned over the past weeks, and now that I'm home again he's doing everything he can to make sure I get better again quickly. Now I'm once more being given full board at Frau Ullmann's as I was in the first days of my illness.⁹ She's being terribly nice to me. You won't believe how much work she has with me. I wasn't allowed to move at all, she washed me and fed me and everything. Now I'm quite independent again. But she still takes me to have the dressing changed every day. I can already sit up properly again and write. F says I have the head of a buffalo – they had to take out such thick pieces of bone and were sweating at the effort, although they didn't have much on. They looked really funny in their white trousers, white aprons and little bakers' caps. But they did their job well! My noggin is really still quite sore, but it's getting better every day. It will still have to be dressed for at least another month. But F has found a hairdresser who's going to give me a wonderful hairdo afterwards! By the way, I was in Spain's most famous ear clinic with Prof. Tapia, father and son.¹⁰ They have quite a reputation abroad. Now you know everything that went on in the weeks I was so silent – a lot, but also not a

³ See the introduction for a brief discussion of international postal censorship in Spain and Germany in the 1930s.

⁴ Fighting would eventually reach the outskirts of Madrid in October of that year. The capital was, however, not free from outbreaks of violence. See the letter of 14 August below.

⁵ Sp.: government

⁶ i.e. 9 July 1936.

⁷ Probably Marianne's landlord, Peter Ernst Harald Ullmann (1905 – 1939).

⁸ See Marianne's letter of 28 / 6 / 36 in Journal 1. Workers responsible for operating and maintaining lifts belonged to the one of the many unions that were on strike in the final days of the Republic.

⁹ Marianne had previously employed someone to prepare her meals separately from the Ullmann household. See Journal 1.

¹⁰ This was the well-known otorhinolaryngologist, Antonio García Tapia (1875 – 1950). His son was Rafael García Tapia Hernando. Their private clinic was located in the Villa Luz in the calle General de Oraá in Madrid.

lot. Just one thing: don't worry about anything – neither my left lughole nor anything else. The world is full of news. So when you hear about refugee ships and trains just don't think that everything is a mess here.¹¹ Nobody's done anything to me. On the contrary, even the militia¹² are nice and make space for me on the tram when I go to have my dressing changed. There's no reason for me to join these refugees. For those who are as unpolitical as we are and only live for their work – there's nothing one needs to flee from!¹³ The mail is working well. The rebels couldn't cross the Sierra.¹⁴ Here is the seat of the legal gobierno. And the general who was supposed to be marching into the city at any moment to general acclaim has had to fight hard and constantly retreat.¹⁵

¹¹ Although they would no longer have been reading the Langenberg newspaper following their move to Berlin, Charlotte and Konrad Angermann would have found that its reports of events in Spain did indeed present an image of Republican chaos. The edition from 7 October 1936 had two stories on the Spanish Civil War which were headlined "The road to Madrid is open. – The Reds lose a bloody battle" and "15 317 refugees rescued." The figure in the latter headline represented a total for all those evacuated by Germany since hostilities had begun, the report claimed. (*Die Heimat am Mittag*, 7 October 1936)

¹² In the first days of the Nationalist uprising, power in the Republican zone effectively lay in the streets with the popular militias, armed groups which were affiliated to the anarchist and communist trade unions and their political representatives.

¹³ Marianne's upbeat assessment of her personal security is given some support by a brief article in the Republican newspaper, *El Liberal*, from 30 July 1936: "Berlin, 29th. – The National Socialist organisation of members of the Nazi Party abroad today received a telegram which, contrary to all that has been said, confirms that German subjects in Madrid are in the best of conditions." (p. 7) However, there were indeed incidents of violence against German nationals and their property in the Republican zone in the early days of the war. In light of the political and, increasingly, material support provided by Germany for the Nationalist rebels, such vigilante action was hardly surprising. The German school and the offices of the Nazi trade union organisation, the Deutsche Arbeitsfront (DAF), were ransacked in Barcelona, and German citizens were often arrested and their property confiscated by militias on the suspicion that they were collaborating with the rebels. The embassy complained that exiled German communists were often the chief movers of these events. In the most serious incident, on 23 - 24 July 1936, four DAF functionaries were murdered on the outskirts of Barcelona. The perpetrators were never found. (Morente, Francisco. "On hostile soil: Spanish Republican diplomats in Berlin at the onset of the Spanish Civil War." *Contemporary European History*, vol. 26, no. 1, 2017, 49–67. Here, 52 – 53)

¹⁴ The Sierra de Guadarrama lies to the northwest of Madrid. Stiff resistance offered by the Republicans there led the Nationalists to shift the weight of their attack to the city's southern approaches.

¹⁵ This was General Emilio Mola Vidal (1887 – 1937), who was in command of the forces attacking Madrid. Mola was so confident of success that he boasted he would be drinking a cup of coffee on the Puerta del Sol, in the centre of the capital, by 12 October. (Thomas, Hugh. *The Spanish Civil War*. London: Penguin, 2013. 419.) According to Geoffrey Cox, Madrileños responded to this threat "by setting out coffee for one on a table in the Puerta del Sol, and marking it 'Reserved for General Mola'." (Cox, Geoffrey. *Defence of Madrid. An eyewitness account from the Spanish Civil War*. Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2006. 38.)



A letter sent from the Republican zone (possibly Madrid) to Winterthur in Switzerland in 1937. The beige strip on the right hand side shows where the letter has been re-sealed by the censor who has also stamped it “censurada” (censored). This item was for sale on Ebay in January 2022.

Madrid, 14 / VIII / 36

And the postal service seems to be back to normal. I’m so happy that the book is now in your hands, even if it arrived late. I bought it on the Tuesday my last letter went off to you. Where has it been roaming around? What must you have thought, not getting a birthday letter? I asked Franz to cable you but he’s so stubborn. He said he doesn’t lie. If I’m in a bad way, he’s not going to write that everything’s in order. And that’s why you didn’t hear anything for so long. I thought you would be worried about the unrest here and that I was chained to the bed. F came every day, in spite of the dreadful shooting,¹⁶ and he would definitely have been safer at home. I was often really worried whether he managed to get home safely. Now it’s quite peaceful at night. The last train with German refugees is leaving about now.¹⁷ They will all be collected together in the Black Forest by

¹⁶ Republican units in Madrid did occasionally encounter their foe in the form of a last-ditch Nationalist sniper, and these incidents tended to produce promiscuous and lengthy shooting sessions by the militias who could sometimes be intoxicated by their own power. Even more worryingly from the point of view of a civilian, they were inclined to imagine Nationalists everywhere and respond in a trigger-happy manner: “The presence of pacos [i.e. snipers] was the last and desperate act of the defeated, a gesture which gave way to tremendous bouts of shooting in the streets that were prolonged unnecessarily, just to demonstrate the joy of having a firearm when no one was around to prevent the trigger being pulled. In view of this waste, the newspapers printed warnings: “Militiamen! Don’t waste ammunition!”, “Every bullet for the enemy!” But it was in vain. Shootings, exchanges of fire between one vehicle and another due to a groundless suspicion or because of a mistake, occurred frequently in an overheated and tense atmosphere [...]” (Abella, Rafael. *La vida cotidiana durante la guerra civil. La España Republicana*. Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 1975. 20.)

¹⁷ An article in *Juventud* (Youth), the official publication of the Federación de Juventudes Socialistas de España (Federation of Socialist Youth), on 8 August bore the title “Nazis escape. A visit to the German

the KDF.¹⁸ Don't donate anything to the refugees! Almost all of them could have stayed here.¹⁹ As long as they didn't draw attention to themselves, nothing happened to anyone. Any many people think of it as a cheap, enjoyable holiday trip. Nothing has yet been said about whether they will ever be able to come back. Just today I got my Residencia en España.²⁰ I can't imagine they would have issued it to me yesterday if there were any animosity on the Spanish side. And anyway I'm bound here by my contract and other reasons have motivated me not to join these 4000 alleged refugees.²¹ I think you understand me!²² Sure, some things have changed here. In Germany, as well, life was more pleasant in peacetime than it was in the war. All this dreadful suffering is heart-rending for me. Unfortunately at the moment I'm not able to help, but in a few weeks I certainly hope to be able to.

Perhaps everything will be over by then! I'm still going every day to have my dressing changed, a real chore which will probably go on for at least the next month. The warmth here means these suppurating things have to be freshened up a lot more often than they would at home. But it's no longer nearly as painful as it was at the start. I certainly didn't leave the clinic for money reasons. The ear doctors didn't have any treatment other than dressing. And now I can't be in any better medical care than that of F. He is firmly of the opinion that I had a second bout of scarlet fever and that's where the ear thing came from. Because the weight is just falling off me! And because I had scarlet fever once already, the second case was so untypical. In the clinic they charged 15 for the room instead of 22.50 pesetas and for the pharmacists, dressings, operation materials and anaesthetic 300 pesetas, but no doctor's or operation fees. So don't worry. The medicine with which F is getting me back on my feet is a bit dear. But I think the whole dubious exercise is costing me around 500 pesetas, not much more than I would use in the same period of time anyway. I pay my people here 5 pesetas per day. They didn't want anything at all, but I would rather have it this way. I get meals and need a lot of washing done, and Frau Ullmann takes me to have the dressing changed every day. She is charming. Everyone is nice to me, even the Spanish doctors. So why should I leave all that?

I would definitely not be in a state to make the long journey. I'm sleeping lots, I'm still very tired and so foggy-headed. Jim. Díaz certainly doesn't want me to even begin thinking about work. He was so nice and so concerned and had me picked up from the clinic in his

embassy in Madrid." It described scenes at the German embassy, and confirmed Marianne's information about the flight of her countrymen: "The Nazi cruiser 'Admiral Scheer' waits at the Mediterranean coast for a special train which, organised by the German embassy, will leave in the next few days from Madrid."

¹⁸ Kraft durch Freude (Strength through Joy), a Nazi organisation that provided leisure, recreation and holiday opportunities to German workers.

¹⁹ To speed up the evacuation and put pressure on people to leave, any Germans who elected to stay in Spain were required to give a written undertaking that they would not lodge claims for future compensation with the German government. In July 2000 Germans were evacuated and around 4000 followed in August. Van Norden, Jörg. „Heim Ins Neue Deutschland Adolf Hitlers“. *Die Evakuierung der Spaniendeutschen während des spanischen Bürgerkriegs*. Forschungen zu Spanien. Eds. Bernecker, Prof. Dr. Walther L., Dr. Francisco López-Casero and Prof. Dr. Peter Waldmann. Vol. 20. Saarbrücken: Verlag für Entwicklungspolitik Saarbrücken, 1998. 68-69.

²⁰ See Marianne's letter of 2 July 1936 in Journal 1.

²¹ See the introduction for a discussion of the numbers of Germans fleeing Spain.

²² This is probably a wording designed to escape the attention of censors. Marianne's reasons for committing to the Republic will have been partly personal – her relationship with a German-Jewish man – but they were no doubt also ideological.

own car.²³ They have all been requisitioned here for the war.²⁴ But the caretakers ask after me every day. Our former maid paid me a visit. And our present one, informed about the situation after making long telephone calls today and yesterday as to whether we can drive or not, constantly assures me that no one will harm me. And if someone were to try it on, then she would be there as well. There are so many things in the kitchen with which you can clobber someone. One day they were firing cannons here as well.²⁵ But everything is normal again, even the postal service.²⁶ If foreign countries would just let the Spanish get their own house in order without interfering, then everything would be well.²⁷ And don't worry about me. In our area everything is quiet. And I've just heard that

²³ The vehicle that picked Marianne up was probably the same one that, several weeks earlier on the day of the uprising (17 July 1936), had drawn unwelcome attention from inflamed townspeople on the outskirts of Madrid when Jiménez Díaz was on this way to his country retreat, a former 12th century convent, at La Cabrera, 50 kilometres outside the capital. On that occasion, he was being driven in his late model, expensive car by a uniformed chauffeur and accompanied by female servants. Given the heightened political tensions of the day this was inviting trouble, and the vehicle was stopped in the town of San Sebastián de los Reyes by a crowd of locals who, with their fists in the air, demanded that he make a donation to left-wing organisations such as the CNT and International Red Aid. (Pérez Peña, Fernando. *Exilio y depuración política en la Facultad de Medicina de San Carlos*. Madrid: Editorial Visión Libros, 2005. 105 ff.)

²⁴ The term 'requisition' can be interpreted fairly loosely in the context of a civil conflict. As Rafael Abella notes, vehicles were often confiscated in order to signal radical social change in the Republican zone. "Private cars were the first items of property expropriated as if they were intended to show the clearest possible sign of the social revolution. They were cars that were driven at enormous speeds in the hands of inexperienced or mad drivers, and whose bodywork proclaimed the origins of their new occupants: CNT, FAI, JSU, UGT, etc." (Abella, 16. JSU was the socialist youth organisation; the FAI and CNT were anarchist groups; the UGT was the main communist trade union.)

²⁵ The cannons heard by Marianne were almost certainly those involved in the siege of the Cuartel de la Montaña (Montaña Barracks) on 18 – 20 July, an early Republican success in the war. The Montaña Barracks were located on the Principe Pío beside the Manzanares River, a mere two kilometres from where Marianne was recuperating from her operation at the Ullmann's apartment. Troops stationed there were crucial to the success of the Nationalist uprising, but they had been unable to leave their base due to a blockade organised by the unions and armed militias supported by the security services of the Civil Guard and Assault Guard. On 20 July, three artillery pieces and a warplane from a loyalist unit began bombarding the barracks. A lack of unity amongst the besieged rebels meant that, while some attempted to give themselves up, others fired upon the Republicans who advanced to accept what they thought was a general surrender. Enraged, the crowd eventually broke into the barracks and a great number of defenders were massacred. The Nationalist commander, General Fanjul, was subsequently court martialled and executed for rebellion. (Thomas, 232-233)

²⁶ Marianne perhaps meant that the postal services within the contiguous Republican zones or with countries abroad were functioning somewhat normally again. Communication with friends or family in the Nationalist zones, however, was certainly not possible. "Mail from Andalucía failed to enter the province of Córdoba. [...] Telegraph lines were interrupted, cut. It was pointless to try and establish communications between Madrid and Burgos, between Barcelona and Zaragoza, between Gijón and Oviedo. It was impossible to enquire after news, to hope to hear the voices of friends and family across telephone lines which were cut off at the point where the two Spains staked out their first, hesitant boundary." (Abella, 13)


²⁷ At the outbreak of hostilities, France supplied weapons, aircraft and military personnel to the Republican side while the Nationalists received the same from the Germans and Italians. An international agreement not to intervene in the conflict was then proposed by the French government and, by late August, all the main European powers, including the Soviet Union, and the United States had agreed to abide by its resolutions. This concord was short-lived: on 25 August, the day after signing the Non-Intervention Agreement, Hitler made the decision to provide material support to General Franco, and a military emissary was despatched to Spain to draw up a shopping list for the Nationalist army. The Soviets had become signatories to the agreement on 23 August but, in the weeks prior to this, they had already been taking steps to strengthen their political and diplomatic ties with the Republic; shipments of weapons soon followed. (Thomas, 374 ff.)

there are still a lot of Germans here. Apparently about 100 are registered at the embassy.²⁸ There's still lots to eat and my ear is getting better by the day.


Núm. de orden **613**

Dirección general de Seguridad

Nombre **Marianne**
 Apellidos **Angeomann**
 Fecha del nacimiento **30 junio 1904**
 Pueblo de su naturaleza **Dresden**
 Nación **Alemania**
 Profesión **Química**
 Nacionalidad actual **Alemana**
 Domicilio **Francisco Rojas, 3.**



Pulgar derecho




FIRMA DEL TITULAR
Marianne Angeomann

La fotografía, huella y firma que anteceden, corresponde al titular.
Madrid de **6 AGOS. 1936** de 19.....
 P. D.
El Secretario General

Valedero por dos años, a menos que sea renovada.

Hijos menores de 15 años

	Edad	Sexo
	1936	

Marianne Angermann's security papers from 6 August 1936 after she had recovered from her serious illness. Hocken Collections MS-1493/001/001

Madrid, 22 / VIII / 36²⁹

... another letter in pencil but I'm still so terribly tired and I'm writing on my glorious terrace. I'm so delighted with your Easter deck chairs and couldn't have it any better in a sanatorium. My ear is doing fairly well. On top of everything there were also three boils in my ear canal which were just as painful as the middle ear episode. Two had to be opened up, the third did it by itself.

Two weeks ago the dressing was bloody every day still. Eight days ago it was full of pus. Now it's all clean and the deep hole in the bone no longer looks so toxic. Tomorrow, Sunday, F. will go with me to have it dressed. He inspects everything very expertly but afterwards has to have a very solemn morning snifter. On Wednesday in the afternoon we had a big outing to the Seguridad, where I finally picked up my Residencia en España. They were very nice, straight away gave me water to drink and assured me that, when

²⁸ The embassy was located at the corner of calle de Herosilla and Paseo de la Castellana. Marianne can be forgiven for not being well informed about the activities of the German embassy and her fellow expatriates because of her illness and long convalescence. In fact, around 700 Germans who were desperate to leave Madrid had been camping out at the Embassy and nearby properties on 26 July already. See the introduction for further details.

²⁹ On this day, a number of prisoners held in Madrid's Model Prison (cárcel modelo de Madrid), and who were suspected of supporting or sympathising with the Nationalist uprising, were summarily executed by anarchist militias.

one is sick, they are not such sticklers for the exact day. But in terms of my physical health it's reassuring to have secured papers from the authorities. Afterwards we had ice cream at Molinero. I still haven't been to the Institute. Sometimes my colleagues drop in. But they're all busy in military hospitals³⁰ and they don't have much time. Now the great heat has arrived. And I hadn't dreamed that I would be experiencing it with a less than cooling head dressing. You write that I should come home – the thought is so tempting. But it also has its negative sides. At the moment the long journey would be an awful exertion. And it's highly unlikely that all those who are falling over themselves to leave Spain will ever be able to return. Every job that becomes free is immediately taken by a Spaniard. And in 8 – 14 days I'll be able to work again. I'm also lacking in energy. Mother would certainly cook wonderful things for me – just thinking about it makes my mouth water. F. is touching the way he's always fussily bringing me ice cream. Today is dear Sunday, just as it is at home. During the day it was unbearably hot. Now as we're getting on towards evening it's glorious. I'm lying on the terrace and looking at the sky. There are colours here you simply can't imagine. Now there's a gentle wind coming from the Sierra. It's so impossibly beautiful that you can't understand why this country has to suffer so. Why is there no peace in the world, neither for countries, nor for people? Now the wonderful red reflection of the sun has gone, 7.30, and in 10 minutes it'll be dark already. It goes so quickly here, there's scarcely any twilight.

Today we ate liver with mashed potatoes and roast tomatoes. Just so you don't think there's nothing to eat here. I think things will be alright again soon, peace in the country! I'm starting to feel bad that I left you without any news week after week. But really, I thought with all the confusing stories in the papers that you would be worried if you knew that I was quite ill as well. So often I do things where I think I've considered it carefully – and then it turns out completely wrong.

Madrid, 1 / IX / 36

Time is galloping away, we are already in September. It does me such good to get lots of mail. The better I feel, the greater the boredom. I'm still not allowed to go to the Institute although I've had sticking plaster dressings since Friday. But I have to go and have it dressed every day and every few days the hair that has grown laboriously back has to be shaved off again. So we've decided to wait before going to a hairdresser. With a lot of cunning and trickery I wind both the hanks of hair I have left into two coils, something we couldn't do back in Berlin because I had too much. Now it works perfectly. Next week I'll probably be allowed back to the Institute and I'm looking forward to it like a little kid. At the moment I'm trying to cover up all the protruding bones by eating a lot. I've shrunk to 65 around the waist and 85 at the bust and that doesn't suit me. The injections of a colleague's new compound seem to be doing me a lot of good. Other people with similar ear conditions are surprised at my progress, especially in the last week. F. said straight away that such things last for months. And if we didn't have such crazy heat, I'd already be further on. The nights are wonderful. I lie for ages on the terrace. Today I saw a fantastic sunrise if somewhat involuntarily – there was an air-raid warning. Nothing ever happens, the defence and alarms are exemplary. But one is ordered to leave the upper floors. We were very well looked after by a very kind neighbour who invited us in today

³⁰ At least three of these colleagues – Franz, Carlos Jiménez Díaz, and Pedro de la Barreda Espinosa – worked at the Hospital No. 6 in Chamartín where Marianne later took up a position in the laboratory.

and for whenever it happens again.³¹ A very lively conversation took place which I could take part in effortlessly. At 5 o'clock there were fresh churros, a kind of very good pastry, which people here eat for breakfast. We ate them together up on my terrace and saw how beautifully the sun rose. Then I crawled into bed again and slept until 9 o'clock. So don't worry. People head off for a walk straight after and make very perceptive comments. The Spaniards have an admirable vitality. My life is trotting along. At around half past six F always fetches me for stroll which ends with us sitting on the street somewhere, he with a small glass of lager and I with frozen milk which tastes especially good. At 8.30 we're out sitting on my terrace again. In the evening I eat very little, generally an egg, a small, light pastry – of which there is a great selection here – and some fruit for afters. There's marvellous wine here, plums of various types, green figs and all sorts of other things. Such melons I've never seen in all my life. They lie in heaps in the stalls like beets do at home. Now in my leisure hours I'm devoting myself rigorously to Spanish cooking about which our maid knows a great deal. It's fun to find out how the things I enjoy eating are made e.g. beans boiled like we do, the same quantities of tomatoes peeled, sliced, fried in oil, both mixed together and seasoned, they taste wonderful. A thin slice of white bread, a slice of cheese, a slice of bread again, dipped in beaten egg then covered with breadcrumbs and quickly fried. So you see again we are living here normally and nothing is happening to us. Yesterday we heard quite by chance that the embassy staff left on Sunday. Apparently some newspaper said that you were supposed to report to the embassy.³² No one read it because there are so many newspapers here. And especially because I was sick the whole time. I always thought, because our exact addresses were registered with the embassy, and they knew that there only 80 of us still here – easily added up from their card index – that they would tell us about their departure. Perhaps there were some amongst the 80 who would like to have left but who were, like me, sick and didn't hear anything about it and couldn't get to the embassy.³³ And it's not true that everyone can come back. Some people were left standing there after three days without a place to stay, [that's] much worse because they weren't let back in. The few things they'd managed to put together here are lost. I don't think anyone in Germany could have offered me anything approaching the same kind of position I have here.³⁴ What do you mean by danger? No one is doing anything to me here. And chance occurrences can happen to people anywhere. I don't think I'm fated to die in the near future. That could have happened to me with my ear. I am an incorrigible optimist.

³¹ Hugh Thomas writes that the efforts of elected air raid wardens in the city's apartment blocks was rendered difficult by the summer weather in 1936: "The air raids caused the formation in Madrid of house committees in each block to organise listeners for the sirens which would be the signal to go down into the cellars. [...] At that time of the year, nevertheless, a black-out was hard to enforce, since closed shutters made the rooms within intolerably hot." (Thomas, 373)

³² According to Jörg van Norden (41), all Germans were urged to seek refuge at the embassy in a call that went out on 22 July.

³³ See the letter of 14 August 1936 (above) concerning the call for German nationals to register with the embassy. The German embassy eventually set up on a short-term basis in the Hotel Victoria in the coastal city of Alicante prior to diplomatic relations with the Republic being broken off on 18 November. (See: *El Liberal*, 6 November 1936. 1)

³⁴ See the discussion concerning the difficult position of women in the field of academic chemistry in Journal 1.

Undated

We seem to be having a wonderful autumn. During the day you can lie on the terrace whereas the week before you would have roasted. The nights are cool. I am enjoying these days and recovering in the fresh air. My ear is getting better. It's still just a little bit runny and they're considering whether F could eventually do the dressing. We have everything we need to hand. Otherwise I've got much better in the last few days. My daily routine is unvaried. Coffee at 8 o'clock, pottering till 9, then I go to have my ear dressed, towards 12 I'm home and have egg with red wine. Then I rest until the meal at 2.30, write, read. Today there is liver again. Great! After the meal, not forgetting the cigarettes, and above all the superb grapes, I sleep. At around 6 I have a cold bath and then we go for a walk until about 9 o'clock then the evening meal and soon after to bed, because I'm still supposed to be getting a lot of rest. Now that my ear hardly hurts any more it's a life that a working person is not used to. But it will soon come to an end.

Madrid, 23 / IX / 36
Plaza de las Cordes 3, Pension Roso³⁵

I am well settled in the boarding house and very satisfied. My room is again small but very pretty and up to date. The furniture is all stained brown, I can store a lot of things in the writing desk. At the moment I've only got some of my things here. I don't know if I'll shift back into my old apartment when I'm completely well again. The meals were impossible there. She doesn't understand anything about a household. And here the meals are so good.³⁶ F. wanted me to change straight after the hospital. That seemed like ingratitude to me when they'd all been so friendly to me. But I was happy to have an excuse. In the end F. was right – apart from the fact that he is always in favour of moving. I must eat

³⁵ Correctly: Plaza de las Cortes. (The name of the pension is later spelled "Rosso".) This is a street in the Barrio de las Letras, an area of central Madrid around two kilometres directly south of Marianne's last address in the calle Francisco de Rojas. No. 3 is on the corner of Plaza de las Cortes and calle del Marqués de Cubas. A number of accommodation businesses operated from this building. In 1935 both the Hotel Trianon Palace and the Pension Elorrio advertised their services in local newspapers; the Trianon Palace charged 12.50 pesetas per person for half board. (*Madrid turístico y monumental*. 3/1935, no. 2. 21) At the outbreak of the Civil War, the Consejo Superior de Protección de Menores (Chief Council for the Protection of Minors) operated from this address. On 26 July 1936 the newspaper *El Sol* (p. 3) published an article calling for information on the whereabouts of three children between the ages of four and ten who had gone missing in the turmoil of the first days of the war. Anyone with information was asked to contact the Council at Plaza de las Cortes, 3. Two of these children had been in a preventorium (a home for those predisposed to tuberculosis but without symptoms) in the Sierra de Guadarrama, where there was heavy fighting in the last week of July and the beginning of August. The elder of these two boys was described as a ten year old German national by the name of Gelmus Ger – possibly a Spanish mishearing of a name such as 'Helmut Herr'.

³⁶ Marianne seems to have undergone a very sudden and, for the reader, inexplicable change of heart in her attitude towards her landlords, the Ullmann family, at the calle Francisco de Rojas. Up until now, they had always been described in her letters in very affectionate terms and she had had no complaints concerning her tenancy. Indeed, she had been more than pleased with her treatment, and with the quality and price of the food that had been prepared for her there (see, for example, her letters of 3 January and 2 July 1936 in Journal 1). It may be that, in the revolutionary atmosphere of the time, the Ullmanns were no longer able to secure the services of a housekeeper, and that Frau Ullmann did not have the necessary domestic skills to provide for a convalescing patient. Another possibility is that the outbreak of the war had exposed a political rift between Franz and Marianne as Republican sympathisers on the one hand, and the well to do and conservative Ullmann family on the other. (See introduction for a discussion of Wilhelm Ullmann's political connections with German nationalists.)

properly, now that there is no longer an external cause for my loss of weight. And it's not quite so lonely anymore either. After dinner three or four of us sit around together, when the landlord turns up for a bit, and talk about our work or something else interesting. It's a bit more expensive than before but F. is right, your health comes first which you need for working and earning money. The tram connections to the Institute are good. I can get to the clinic for my dressing in 10 minutes with the Metro. So in the meantime I'm quite happy here. And because the time is past when you could go out in the evening, it's much nicer to be here. We also talk a lot about general scientific questions. So we are all learning a great deal. The landlord does indeed speak all languages, fluently, is a good conversationalist and has seen a lot of the world.

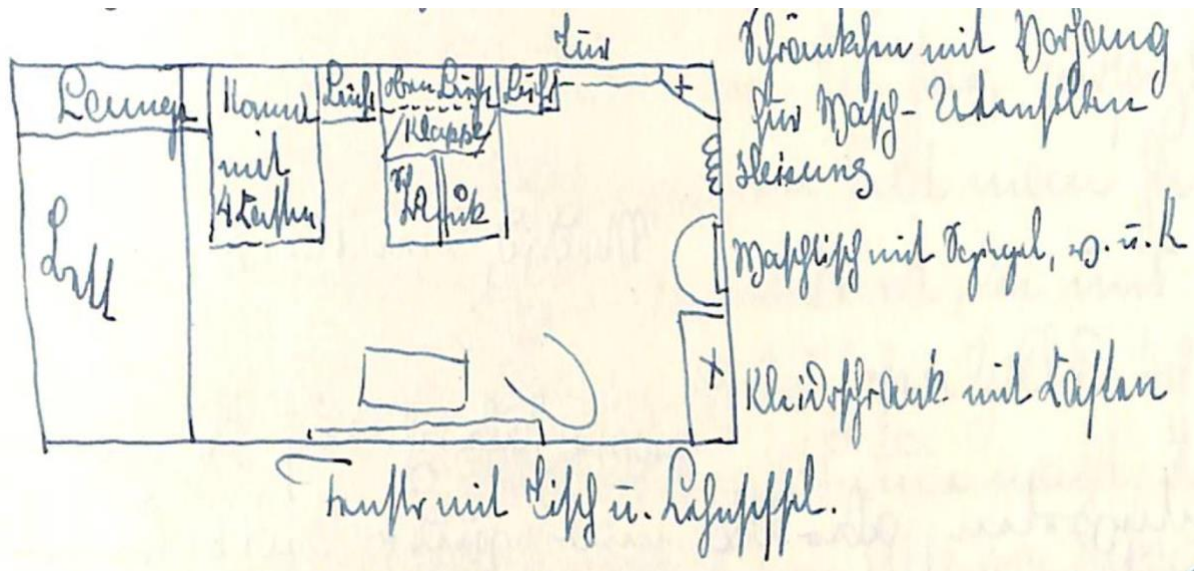


Plaza de las Cortes, 3. This was Marianne's address in September 1936.
Photo: Cecilia Novero, 2019

Madrid, 5 / X / 36

There's really no need to be concerned. My ear is as good as can be. It's still weeping a bit but it's always like that. Of course it's boring, especially the endless dressings. But what can you do but be good and do what the clever doctors tell you. It's good that you didn't book any airline tickets. First of all there aren't any at the moment and, second, it would

be pointless. Yesterday we were with some friends. Today the weather is dreadful. One just doesn't want to go out at all. Although it's not cold. The autumn is perfectly beautiful. Otherwise, there's nothing much to report. I'm writing to you so often and I'm surprised that you so seldom get letters. The mail here is quite normal. So you're having cool autumn weather already. And here it's like the end of August. My room:



Light
Bed

Little cupboard with w curtain
for toiletries.
Heater
Washstand with mirror
Clothes cupboard with chest

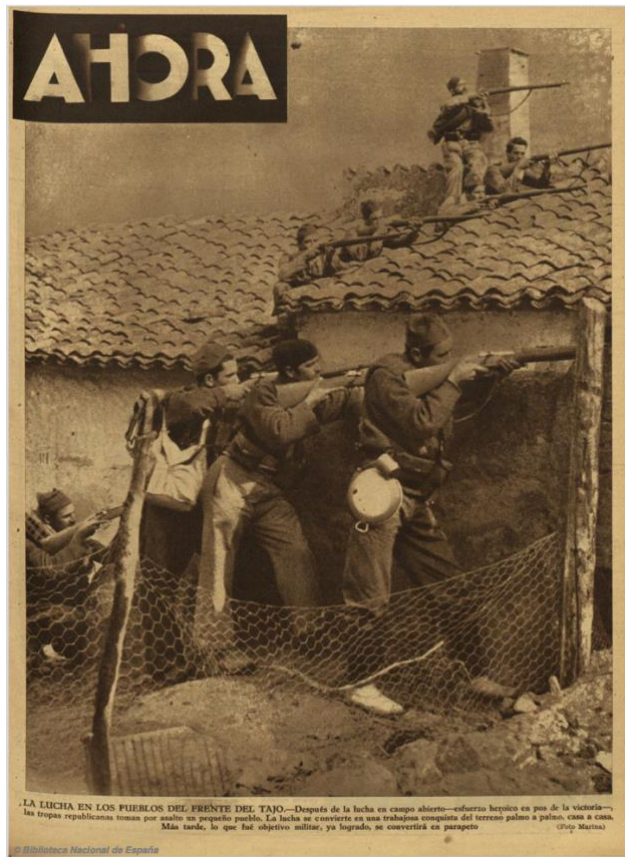
Window with table and easy chair

The writing desk is fabulously practical and saves space.

Madrid, 14 / X / 36

I've been in my new room for almost a month already and I'm quite content. A Hungarian doctor and a few Spaniards live here as well. One day is pretty much like another. My ear continues to do well. It's not at all hot. It's beginning to get noticeably cool. And the leaves on the trees are starting to turn yellow. One is beginning to think about one's winter wardrobe. I'm just happy that you got my post. If the newspaper

reports are upsetting then it's better not to read them.³⁷ It's really not worth it because we're doing fine here.³⁸



Ahora, 14 October 1936. A report on Republicans fighting in villages along the Tagus River.
Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España.

³⁷ Before publication, German reports of events abroad were first reviewed by the *Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro* (German News Office - DNB), the main National Socialist press agency. The editorial decisions made there about which stories were to be published and how they were to be presented needed to align with directives issued by the Ministry of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment. A sample of two of DNB's Spanish reports from 14 October (the date of this letter) provide an insight into the kinds of articles Marianne's parents would have been reading regularly: "Panic and food shortages in Madrid. - Burgos, 14 October. The latest bombardment of Madrid by three Nationalist bomber squadrons and two fighter wings was unusually heavy. [...] It could be clearly seen that the bombardment caused a massive panic. Refugees from Madrid report that the approach of the Nationalists has led to a clearly identifiable change in the mood. Recently, far fewer Red insignia and flags had been seen. Numerous members of the Red militias had gone into hiding and did not want to go to the front because it was "futile". [...] - Paris, 13 October. Travellers arriving in Perpignan from Madrid say that food is becoming increasingly scarce in the Spanish capital. One had to queue for several hours in order to get anything to eat. [...]" It is worth noting here that the source of the first story, Burgos, was the headquarters of the Nationalist military government, established on 23 July 1936.

³⁸ The Republican press in Madrid were naturally upbeat about Republican prospects. On the date of the letter, 14 October, headlines in the illustrated newspaper, *Ahora*, proclaimed military successes in Asturias, in northeast Spain: "Intense bombardment of the Pelayo Barracks in Oviedo, one of the main Fascist strongpoints. [...] In Oviedo our troops are fighting in the city streets. [...] Republican forces are fighting with admirable courage and valour, conquering the city bit by bit." (3) On the same day and in a similar vein, *El Liberal* reported on the heroic struggle of the Asturian miners, who were the main actors in the 1934 Socialist uprising: "The extraordinary bravery of the Asturian miners, which should be an example for everyone, is reconquering the city of Oviedo inch by inch." (1) Oviedo held out for three months against a Republican siege but was finally relieved by Nationalist forces in mid-October.

Madrid, 18 / X / 36

Though I might not have any letter to answer, because it's "dear Sunday" again, I just want to have a little chat with you. You are probably just now having a cosy cup of coffee on a blue and white table cloth. I hope you're enjoying it! Nicely said, don't you think? I think about you so much e.g. that last Sunday was a casserole day. I saw it on my calendar. And I thought about what you would be eating. Today we had a terribly delicious pork roast. And there are melons here, piled up like white cabbage in the Rhineland in autumn. So magnificent and so many, great big things for 30 – 40 pfennigs. I'm sticking to grapes. Yesterday I bought a litre bottle of genuine rum, not a blend, for 1.75. Sometimes we drink tea together here, to prevent colds. In general one lives here quite cheaply. Of course pumpnickel, crisp bread, 40 pfennigs at home, here they're 2 pesetas, such things are dear because of the high duties. I'm revising some mathematics at the moment which is a lot of fun. I recently bought a book on algebra, mainly to learn the terms in Spanish. Next month I'll buy a geometry book, a descriptive one as well, then I can draw. And once I've studied all of that then I'll purchase a collection of exercises so I'll have my reading all set for winter evenings. Work is going slowly. Too many people are missing - they're all busy in hospitals - to have the same routine as there used to be.

Madrid, 8 / XI / 36³⁹

The letter contains almost entirely personal information.⁴⁰ At the end: So farewell. You must always think that we are doing well here. It is very cosy in the boarding house. We all know each other quite well now. We are always playing cards in the evenings. Yesterday I won 40 centimos. But sometimes I lose as well. I like my room more and more, but that's almost certainly because I have company and don't have to eat on my own all the time. Poor Dr Horov is sick.⁴¹ We have just drunk a glass of vermouth with him. I am quite tired. You can hear the artillery here now.⁴² But there haven't been any more air-

³⁹ Two days earlier, on 6 November, the Republican government had evacuated Madrid and established itself in the coastal city of Valencia.

⁴⁰ This first sentence is an intervention from Charlotte Angermann.

⁴¹ Correctly: Dr Kroó. Dr Hugo Kroó (1888 Mukachevo – 1953 Madrid) was a Hungarian-Jewish physician. He is the "Hungarian doctor" mentioned by Marianne in her letter of 14 October and was probably the "very nice Hungarian" referred to by Marianne in her letter of 19 January 1936 in Journal 1. Kroó was affiliated as a Privatdozent to the Medical Faculty of Berlin University (the Charité) and was teaching at the University of Bonn when the Nazis came to power in 1933 when he was forced from his post. (It is possible that Marianne, at least, had already been aware of Dr Kroó before her arrival in Madrid, given that she was enrolled at the University of Bonn in the Winter Semester of 1932-33.) The Charité's historical memory project for those persecuted by the Nazis records that he was formally struck from their books in 1935. (See: <https://gedenkort.charite.de/menschen/> Accessed: 25 August 2020) By this time, however, he had already established himself in Madrid, where he headed the Chemotherapeutic and Microbiology division of the Fábrica de Productos Químicos y Farmacéuticos "Abelló". This chemical and pharmaceutical business, located in the Madrid suburb of Prosperidad, was founded in 1925 by Juan Abelló Pascual and was the first company in Spain capable of obtaining alkaloids derived from opium and coca. (See: de Jaime Lorén, José María. *Laboratorios Abelló, Fundación Abelló, Premio Científico Abelló*. Blog of the Universidad CEU Cardenal Herrera. <https://blog.uchceu.es/eponimos-cientificos/laboratorios-abello-fundacion-abello-premio-cientifico-abello/> Accessed: 12 December 2022) According to an article in *El Sol* (15 April 1934. 8) Kroó's assistant at the Abelló plant may also have been German: her name was Señorita Jelkmann.

⁴² By 11 November, Madrid was under serious threat as Nationalist forces advanced from the south and west. The university campus itself became the scene of bitter fighting on 15 November and would remain a battleground until the end of the war in March 1939.

raids for days.⁴³ The defence is exemplary. The people love their country and their city with such passion, that one can only hope that not too many have to sacrifice themselves. The sight of every wounded person causes a pain in one's heart and one wonders what the person who started it all feels like!

That was the last letter from Marianne in the old year.⁴⁴ At the start of December Gerharda Grooters told us that she had had a cable from her: all well. We have been writing once, twice a week without knowing if my letters arrived or not. We couldn't send any Christmas parcel. Fleuropa weren't accepting any flower deliveries for Madrid, nor the Post Office any telegrams. We put 50 M into her savings account for her so that it would be easier for her to pay life insurance. And all sorts of little things lie in readiness, in case we are able to send them again.

On 28 / 12 / 36

Gerharda Grooters writes that she got a telegram from Moni.⁴⁵
"I wish you and my parents a pleasant Christmas."

Last night, 2 / 1 / 37, a letter that we had written to Marianne on 14 / 12 came back. It passed the censor in Madrid, was delivered to the Pension Rosso and marked there "Absent. No address" and sent back from Madrid on 24 / 12.⁴⁶ We are at a loss what to do and terribly worried. Everyone advises us not to undertake any steps, neither through the Consulate⁴⁷ nor the Refugee Commission.⁴⁸ We wrote to Gerharda about when the

⁴³ The first air raid on Madrid had occurred on the night of 27-28 August 1936 but the systematic bombing of the city did not begin until 29 October. There remains some disagreement amongst scholars as to whether the primary targets of Nationalist aircraft in Madrid were civilian, with the aim of destroying morale, or military. Moreno Auriol and García Amodia claim that the principal objectives were prioritised on the basis of their military importance – railway stations such as the Estación de Mediodía (now the Atocha railway station) and the Estación del Norte, the Ministry of War, and so on. (Moreno Auriol, Jose Manuel and Daniel García Amodia. "Los primeros bombardeos „modernos“ sobre una gran ciudad." *Asedio. Historia de Madrid en la Guerra Civil (1936 - 1939)*. Madrid: Ediciones Complutense, 2018. 205 - 31. 208 ff.)

⁴⁴ This section is an intervention from Charlotte Angermann.

⁴⁵ Charlotte's familiar term for Marianne. Gerharda Grooters was clearly a family friend who lived outside Germany, since she was able to receive telegrams from Republican Spain. The name indicates that she was probably Dutch, so she may well have been Gerharda Johanna Grooters (1887 - ?), from Dinxperlo on the Netherlands-German border.

⁴⁶ It is likely that Marianne and Franz had moved at this time to another apartment at calle de Orfila 8, in the central district of Almagro. This is the address given on their work identification cards for Hospital No. 6 dated 9 September 1937.

⁴⁷ Any attempt to engage the assistance of diplomatic representatives at this stage of the conflict would indeed have been futile since Germany had already broken off diplomatic relations with the Republic and recognised Franco's rebel 'government', with its seat in Burgos, on 18 November 1936. The few Spanish diplomats loyal to the Republic who had remained at their posts in Berlin until early November (90% of the Spanish diplomatic corps sided with the rebels) either had to make their own way out of Germany to a friendly third country, or they were arrested and deported to Nationalist Spain, where they faced imprisonment. (Morente, 64 - 65)

⁴⁸ A number of different entities were involved in the repatriation and settlement of the Spanish-Germans. As Jörg van Norden (3) notes in his book on the subject, it was unclear where the various jurisdictions and financial responsibilities lay for contributing organisations as diverse as town and district councils, the Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labour Front), Kraft durch Freude (Strength through Joy), the Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt (National Socialist People's Welfare), and the Nationalsozialistische Auslandsorganisation (National Socialist Organisation for Members Abroad). An approach to any of these organisations for information on Marianne's welfare would doubtless have marked her as being

telegram was sent and from where. And we've asked Dr. Jenny in Madrid to enquire at the Pension Rosso where Marianne is, and if she is in good health. Perhaps he, as a Frenchman, will get some news.⁴⁹



Calle de Orfila 8, Madrid. This was Marianne Angermann's third address in Madrid to which she probably moved in late 1936. Photo: Cecilia Novero, 2019.

ideologically suspect, given that she had not contacted the embassy to register her interest in leaving Spain when war broke out.

⁴⁹ The Madrid newspapers of 1936 often quoted the expert opinion of a 'M. Jenny' or 'Federico [Frédéric] Jenny' on matters pertaining to the European economy (e.g. *El Sol*, 1 March 1936). It may be that this is the Dr Jenny to whom Charlotte was referring here.